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Local Wisdom in the Figurative Language of the Randai Tradition in Aneuk Jamee Weddings: An Anthropolinguistic Study

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A B S T R A C T

In oral cultures, language is considered a vital means of transmitting social norms, values, and local wisdom to the next generation. This study discusses the Randai tradition in wedding ceremonies in Aneuk Jamee, Aceh, Indonesia, and reflects on the role of figurative language in conveying local wisdom. Based on Minangkabau culture and its acculturation into Acehnese culture, Randai incorporates poetic language and proverbs, as well as symbols associated with artistic and moral values. The research employed an anthropological approach and was conducted in Ladang Village, South Aceh, Indonesia, using observation, audio recordings, and in-depth interviews with five elders in the community. The results revealed that the local wisdom embedded in the figurative language includes: harmony on 'politeness and thoughtful speech', and 'social equality', education on 'responsibility and commitment', and 'obedience to custom and discipline' (5 metaphors), cooperation on 'gotong royong' and 'unity and mutual support' (1 hyperbole), spirituality on 'humility and modesty' (1 litotes), and another in spirituality on 'optimism and hope' (1 paradox). This tradition not only reflects the shared values and cultural continuity but also functions as a living course, communicating ethics, emotional intelligence, and intergenerational respect. In a modern context, it strengthens group identity while encouraging younger generations to uphold ancestral wisdom. The use of such devices showed that Randai is not just a form of entertainment but also a medium of culture and education, strengthening the Aneuk Jamee community's moral and Islamic values and identity, especially among the younger generation of Acehnese.

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a multicultural country with highly diverse ethnic groups, each with its own unique culture and traditions. The issue of tradition is a primary concern because it is a system of beliefs and unwritten history passed down from generation to generation that regulates interactions between individuals in society (Sibarani, 2015). These practices are usually preserved through ceremonies, one of which is art performances (Li & Seekhunlio, 2025; Primadesi, 2013), and taught through performative forms such as mantras, proverbs,

and advice given during various ceremonies, such as agricultural rituals, funerals, naming of babies, and the marriage process (Meiliana, 2020; Supriatin, 2012). They are not the dead parts of the past, but traditions that survived and thrived under modern conditions (Oyenyi, 2021). They serve as disseminators of local wisdom and forms of community identity (Ramli et al., 2024).

The most prominent type of oral tradition is proverbs, which reflect cultural values and social expectations, are considered not only as a linguistic tool but also as a guideline for how one

should behave and as a means of historical and cultural identification (Coşan & Karabağ, 2015; Dwivedi, 2015). They are not only a form of cultural preservation but also function as symbolic and social language in changing times. They serve as repositories of cultural norms, folklore, and belief systems, all of which shape a community's cultural and national identity (VijayaKumari, 2018). In the Hadoti culture in India, for example, cultural expressions play a pedagogical role and act as a means of passing cultural knowledge (Kammampal, 2022). Therefore, proverbs are essential in preserving and maintaining classical and cultural identity.

In Aceh, Indonesia, the Simeulue Nandong oral tradition, for example, serves as an educational resource for environmental learning, emphasizing the need to care for the environment for generations to come (Lubis, 2019). Yulsafli (2022) studied the traditions of Manoe Pucok and Seumapa in Nagan Raya and demonstrated the importance of these representations and interpretations of local knowledge in conveying religious and cultural principles across generations. The Seumapa tradition not only strengthens the identity of the Acehnese but also strengthens their religious and social unity (Muthalib et al., 2024). In addition, Febriani et al. (2020) examined proverbs spoken during the Manendai procession at Tapaktuan weddings, demonstrating that this type of expression remains a part and symbol of the weddings. Jaya and Daud (2017) also examined Melengkan as one of the Gayo wedding traditions, which is also a form of giving advice, maintaining oral beauty, and preserving historical memory. Such rituals demonstrate the power of oral culture to protect social values and hold the community together.

The dynamism of using proverbs can also be seen in the Aneuk Jamee community of Aceh, Indonesia, whose roots in the Minangkabau culture have been accentuated by the Acehnese. They have settled in various areas of Aceh, including Singkil, Southwest Aceh, and Simeulue (Ansari & Mardhatillah, 2020; Fatianda, 2022). Some studies on Randai discuss how Randai became a performance in Minangkabau (Hadi et al., 2021; Kartomi, 1981; Pauka, 1998; Zulkifli, 2013). It presents a blend of pre-Islamic aesthetics and ideology, a cultural response to the social changes of the 1930s (Erlmann, 2005; Hadijah, 2019). It is a performing art in the Minangkabau tradition that

combines elements of martial arts, choreography, music, and drama, and can be expanded through the use of native instruments, such as the *talempong* gongs and the *saluang* flute (Erlmann, 2005). Therefore, it is performed by combining elements of music, dance, drama, and martial arts, where each performance represents cultural values (Alhamdi et al., 2025). The values of local wisdom in Randai, Minangkabau, are based on the philosophy of "*basandi syarak-syarak kitabullah*", namely Minangkabau customs originating from natural philosophy and Islamic teachings derived from the Quran (Bahardur, 2018). In addition, Minangkabau Randai performances serve as a medium for conveying moral messages, customs, and historical narratives that are inseparable from the lives of the Minangkabau people (Alhamdi et al., 2025). Apart from being a form of entertainment, Randai shows vary in form and function, one of which is in Sawahlunto, where Randai is performed at weddings to welcome guests of honor (Putri et al., 2015).

In Aceh, Randai, in the context of Aneuk Jamee, is a fusion of Acehnese and Minangkabau oral tradition performed during the wedding procession of the Aneuk Jamee community. The Aneuk Jamee form of Randai has significant differences from the traditional Minangkabau form. In the Aneuk Jamee community, the Randai tradition is part of the *maantra marapulai* process of escorting the groom. Before the Randai tradition is performed, the groom and his group arrive at the bride's house, humming religious songs and accompanied by the *rebana*, a traditional percussion instrument. Once they arrive in front of the groom's house or at the home of a neighbor or relative of the groom, representatives of the bride and groom perform the Randai (Ishak et al., 1987; Manan, 2014). Randai is performed as a conversation between representatives of the bride and groom, using the *pantun*, a traditional rhyming verse accompanied by *salawat* (prayers or blessings) upon the Prophet Muhammad (Manan, 2014). The *pantun*, a traditional rhyme and poem, is recited to sanctify the marriage and ensure its happiness (Ishak et al., 1987; Manan, 2014). The Randai performance continues until the bride's family allows the group of men to enter the house (Manan, 2014). These Acehnese traditional marriage proverbs are rich, in line with Islamic values, and do not conflict with applicable Sharia law (Samad & Munawwarah, 2020).

Randai, which develops in the Aneuk Jamee community, has specific characteristics and cultural values rooted in the tradition of South Aceh, Indonesia. In the Samadua sub-district, the community-employed Randai are not yet well explored and have received little attention. Therefore, the research questions of this study are:

1. How is the Randai Procession in the Samadua sub-district of Aceh, Indonesia?
2. What are the local wisdom values embedded in the figurative language expressions in the Aneuk Jamee Randai in the Samadua sub-district of Aceh, Indonesia?

Using an anthropological approach, this study aims to reveal the hidden meanings of social wisdom and cultural values by observing the use of figurative language (Colston & Katz, 2004; Harun et al., 2020; Hidayati, 2017). The theory of local wisdom from Sibarani (2013) and the analysis of proverb usage from Kennedy and Gioia (2005) were used to analyze words conveying social values or local wisdom values in the Aneuk Jamee Randai tradition. These findings are expected to contribute to cultural preservation, community education, and the revitalization of oral traditions within the Aneuk Jamee community.

II. METHODS

This study employed a descriptive, qualitative research design with an anthropological approach to explore the relationship between language and culture (Sibarani, 2013). The qualitative method allows for an in-depth, flexible exploration of participants' lived experiences and cultural expressions, particularly those embedded in the Randai oral tradition. This approach supports a holistic interpretation of both linguistic forms and sociocultural functions (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024).

The Aneuk Jamee community is predominantly located in Blang Pidie, Susoh, Tangan-tangan, Labuhan Haji, Samadua, Tapaktuan, and the

Kandang area (Pemerintah Aceh, 2018). The Samadua area predominantly uses the Jamee language in daily life and in cultural and religious activities. The residents of Samadua are native Jameenese who still firmly adhere to the culture and traditions brought from Minangkabau. These traditions have developed well and are still preserved by the community there. This is in contrast to other areas such as Tangan-tangan, Kandang, and Kluet, which still practice the Aneuk Jamee tradition but use a plural language, namely Acehnese-Jamee or Jamee-Kluet, as the language of communication in the tradition (Pemerintah Aceh, 2018). Therefore, to obtain accurate results regarding the Randai tradition in Aneuk Jamee weddings, the Samadua region is the right choice for this research.

This research was conducted in Ladang Village, Samadua District, South Aceh Regency, where the Aneuk Jamee community still practices and preserves the Aneuk Jamee wedding tradition and actively uses the Jamee language for communication and in traditional customs. The Randai tradition in Aneuk Jamee weddings is performed only during the *dohai* procession, a meeting between the families of the bride and groom, and the *maantra marapulai* escorting the groom. This research analyzes the Randai tradition in the *maantra marapulai*, escorting the groom during the phase.

Five traditional elders, selected as key participants, were purposively sampled based on their roles and expertise in Randai performances (see Table 1). Each participant held a specific position within the cultural performance, such as narrator (Rhymer), advisor (*Tuha Peut* in Acehnese), or ceremony organizer, and was considered a key cultural custodian of Randai. The diversity of their professions and origins provided fruitful perspectives on the tradition.

This study uses several data-collection tools to ensure a comprehensive and culturally sensitive

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

No.	Name	Age	Occupation	Position in the Randai	Origin
1	MR	52	Public Servant	The Rhymer	Gadang Village, Samadua
2	AK	55	Public Servant	Tuha Peut	Gadang Village, Samadua
3	PA	46	Entrepreneur	Secretary of Ladang and the Rhymer	Ladang Village, Samadua
4	MZ	52	Entrepreneur	Tuha Peut	Baru village, Samadua
5	KM	72	Retiree	The Rhymer	Ladang Village, Samadua

approach. Data collection was carried out through observation and participant interviews to preserve both linguistic content and performative elements. First, the observation guide provided a structured framework for documenting key performances, including linguistic features, symbolic gestures, and contextual interactions. Observations were made by recording the Aneuk Jamee Randai process using a recording device (i.e., a cell phone). The participants in the process were representatives of the groom, namely the rhymer, *Keuchik* (head of the village), *Tuha Peut*, father of the groom, and several people who brought gifts (*hantaran*).

Meanwhile, representing the bride were the rhymer, *Keuchik*, *Tuha Peut*, *Niniak Mamak* (an informal traditional leader who plays a central role within the matrilineal extended family) of the groom, the father of the groom, and close relatives. Second, interviews were conducted with the five elders (see Table 1) to obtain in-depth insights into the meanings of the Aneuk Jamee Randai pantun verses. The semi-structured interviews focused on the values of local wisdom and proverbs found in the Aneuk Jamee Randai process. These interviews were conducted in Aneuk Jamee and Indonesian to ensure clarity, accuracy, and respect for local linguistic norms. The interviews were then transcribed and translated to ensure accurate interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Data were analyzed using an interactive model (Miles et al., 2018), which involves a systematic five-step process. First, transcription and translation were conducted, with all recordings from observations and interviews transcribed verbatim and translated into English, to maintain consistency throughout the analysis. Next, redundant or unrelated content was removed during data condensation to allow the researchers to focus on information directly relevant to local wisdom and figurative language. The third step, categorization and coding, involved organizing the data into thematic groups based on the structure and types of figurative language, such as simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole (Kennedy & Gioia, 2005). In the fourth step, interpretation of cultural values, these figurative expressions were analyzed using Sibarani's (2013) framework, which identifies five domains of local wisdom: harmony, cooperation (*gotong royong*), spirituality, education, and environmental stewardship. Finally, in the conclusion-drawing phase, emerging

patterns and themes were synthesized into narrative descriptions to answer the research question of this study.

III. RESULTS

Description of the Randai Procession

This research was conducted in the Samadua area of South Aceh, specifically at two weddings in Ladang Village, Kasik Putih, South Aceh, Indonesia. The Randai ceremony took place at the bride's house, with the bride's rhymer, TM (aged 68), and the groom's rhymer, MB (aged 56), each delivering traditional rhymes. The Randai tradition at Aneuk Jamee weddings was not originally native to the Acehese community but was introduced from the Minangkabau culture. It merged with Acehese practices, resulting in a unique cultural expression over time. While the form of the Randai has evolved, it remains rooted in traditional values and Islamic teachings. Although there have been adjustments over time for modern contexts, the cultural norms and values embodied in Randai stay intact and continue to guide social behavior.

"Our tradition is a blend of Minangkabau and Acehese influences. Randai originated in Minangkabau, and while we follow their customs, many elements have been merged with Acehese traditions. That's how Randai evolved into the version practiced in the Aneuk Jamee community." [AK]

The *maantra marapulai* (escorting the groom) ceremony is also known as *pasang suruik* (ebb and flow), a phrase with symbolic meaning in this community. *Pasang* (ebb) refers to the act of bringing the groom to the bride's house and her family's formal acceptance of him. *Suruik* (flow) refers to the groom returning to his parents' home, now accompanied by his bride.

Thus, as MR explains, Randai is more than a ceremonial performance; it serves as a symbolic



Fig. 1. Traditional Randaiprocession at an Aneuk Jamee wedding in Samadua subdistrict

confirmation of marriage, a public announcement, and an expression of respect. The performance begins with a gesture of goodwill from the groom's representative, who presents *hantaran* (gifts) to the bride's family. These offerings, which comprise traditional attire, Aneuk Jamee dishes, betel nut, and other items, carry cultural significance.

"The exchange of rhymes is not merely entertainment; it symbolizes that the couple is officially recognized under customary law. It also serves as an introduction of the bride and groom to both the families and the local community." [MR]

Moreover, the rhymes exchanged during Randai not only convey poetic expression but also convey important teachings. They represent moral, religious, and social values passed down through generations. PA also informed that the rhymes cited in Randai are also for all ages to hear and understand.

"The Randai is also a medium for sharing advice, prayers, and guidance; it is not only for newlyweds but also for everyone present." [PA]

The rhymes aim to instill harmony and uphold community values. They serve as a cultural bridge between families and a form of intergenerational dialogue. Hence, in the Aneuk Jamee community, Randai acts both as a ceremonial ritual and as a medium for preserving communal identity and traditional values.

Local Wisdom in the Figurative Language of Randai

Based on observations conducted at a wedding ceremony in Samadua, the Randai utterances contained four types of figurative language, with metaphors occurring most frequently, followed by hyperbole, litotes, and paradox. From the interviews, it is revealed that these four forms of figurative language convey substantial elements of local wisdom, which are transmitted to the community indirectly.

Metaphor

Metaphor, the most frequently used figure of speech in Randai, appears in five stanzas to communicate moral and social values in vivid, symbolic language. The following metaphorical rhymes reflect 'politeness and thoughtful speech':

- [1] *Rumput liea tumbuhan di tambak*
Wild grass grows near the embankment
Tumbuh di sampiang daun pandan
Growing beside screw pine leaves

Mangango baru mangecek

Only after hearing should one speak

Baliak talantang baru dikecek an

Only after understanding should one comment

The Randai rhymes in (4) are cited by MB, the Rhymer from the groom's side. According to KM, the metaphor "only after hearing should one speak; only after understanding should one comment" symbolically conveys cultural preferences for politeness and consideration in the Aneuk Jamee community. This phrase teaches the obligation to speak after listening carefully and understanding fully, especially in social and ceremonial contexts. This prevents speaking without knowledge, as it can lead to misunderstandings or rude responses. In other words, this symbol explains that speech is a person's trust and wisdom. In addition, this metaphor supports self-control, polite communication, and intellectual humility, all of which are highly valued in conventional cultures that emphasize harmony and respect. Functionally, this idiom serves as a code of conduct to ensure meaningful and polite communication, as it encourages people to think about what they are going to say before saying it. Another function is to control oneself by thinking before speaking so as not to hurt the other person. MR also adds that this expression teaches polite speech and emphasizes that every word carries moral weight, especially in formal contexts such as Randai.

"These rhymes remind us to speak politely, especially during the uniting of two families. The goal is to speak in a way that pleases the other side and avoids offense." [KM]

Another metaphor is also found in the following rhyme, recited by MB as well, from the groom's side. The local wisdom embedded in this metaphor is 'social equality'.

- [2] *Inti palo alah mamirah*
The nutmeg core turned red
Di enggek an ka dalam kual
Placed in the cauldron
Duduak awak samo randah
Sitting, we are equally low
Tagak juwo awak samo tinggi
Standing, we are equally high

The stanza "sitting, we are equally low; standing, we are equally high" conveys a powerful message about social equality and mutual respect within the Aneuk Jamee community. Symbolically, this metaphor uses "high" and "low" to emphasize

that everyone has the same level of dignity and value, regardless of their social status, wealth, occupation, or age, especially in the context of a community or ceremony. By describing physical equality in sitting and standing positions, this expression upholds the idea that in carrying out traditional customs, no one is higher or lower than anyone else. This reflects cultural values rooted in humility, unity, and justice, where decisions and interactions are carried out in a spirit of togetherness and equal voice. Functionally, this metaphor not only guides interpersonal behavior regarding equality in the community but also strengthens community identity and harmony. Respecting one another without discrimination strengthens bonds within the community. Furthermore, applying this value in society can prevent conflict and serve as a reminder to be humble. PA adds that this metaphor also encourages peaceful interaction, in which rank and status are set aside to foster mutual respect.

“It means that we are all equal; no one is smarter or more socially elevated. Everyone is treated the same in our community.” [MR]

The following metaphor in [3] is recited by TM, the Rhymer from the bride’s side, which shows ‘responsibility and commitment’ in the following statement: “we have already opened the tray; not a single thing is missing; the words have been understood, the promise has been made.”

[3] *Dari Sawang Bungo ka kampung Suwak*

From Sawang Bungo to the village of Suwak

Sasimpang manuju kampung Jilatang

At the crossroads leading to the village of Jilatang

Simpang lain ka kampung Gadang

From another turn, we arrive at the village of Gadang

Carano alah kami bukak

We have opened the tray

Indak ado suatu apupun yang bakurang

Not a single thing is missing

Kato alah di pacik, janji alah dituang

The words have been understood, the promise has been made

The metaphor in the sentence “we have opened the tray” reflects strong cultural values of responsibility and commitment in the Aneuk Jamee community. MR explains that the opening of the carano (ceremonial tray) symbolizes the official start of a serious and respectable marriage negotiation process. This shows the community’s readiness and sincerity in fulfilling their obligations. In addition, the social function of this

figurative expression is to signify that the situation or moment is official and considered serious. The phrase “not a single thing is missing” symbolizes a commitment to perfection and integrity, where everything expected has been carefully prepared and presented. Finally, the metaphor “the words have been understood, the promise has been made” conveys that a statement has been fully understood and is considered a binding commitment once spoken. In this context, the words spoken are not trivial but are respected as a moral obligation that must be fulfilled. In addition, the phrase explains a person’s self-esteem, which can be trusted with what has been said or promised. KM explains that this shows the community’s respect for honesty, accountability, and cultural responsibility. Socially, this phrase teaches character education about the importance of commitment and honesty.

“Fulfilling promises is not just an obligation; it reflects trust. When a promise is kept, it shows that a person is trustworthy and respected by others.” [KM]

‘Respect for tradition and legacy’ is another wisdom found in the metaphorical stanza of TM, the Rhymer from the bride’s side, in [4].

[4] *Hiduik an api di hari sanjo*

Light the fire at dusk

Mamanggang sakam dai pado lai

Roasting rice husks is better than anything else

Hiduik sandaran adat, mati tatinggea namo

Live by tradition, die with a name to be remembered

Awak doakan jangan tapanjek buluah baduri

We pray that you don’t step on thorny bamboo

The proverb “live by tradition, die with a name to be remembered” reflects the cultural values of respect for tradition and the desire to leave a meaningful legacy in the Aneuk Jamee community. This shows that living according to custom (customary law and tradition) is not only a moral obligation, but also the foundation for gaining honor and lasting memories. This phrase also conveys adjusting one’s behavior, values, and decisions to inherited cultural norms, thereby demonstrating loyalty to ancestral teachings and community identity. It can be said that everything done in the community is based on the customs or laws that govern it. The social function of this phrase is to control the morals of the community so that they obey every custom or rule that applies. The phrase “die with a name to be remembered” emphasizes that a person’s legacy is measured by their loyalty to these traditions. MZ asserts that a

person gains respect and is remembered fondly by future generations through respect for culture. The social function of this phrase is that by following every customary law that has been agreed upon, one will leave behind respect and a good social identity.

“Customs are a moral compass and foundation for identity, ensuring that future generations will respect one’s legacy”. (MZ)

The next metaphor that reflects ‘obedience to custom and discipline’ can be seen in the stanza said by MB, the Rhymer, from the groom’s side.

[5] *Di jaja sawah nagai*
The land fields are plowed
Supayo sanang bataman padi
It becomes easier to plant rice
Di aja aja badan kumbang marasai
The body is trained to feel like a beetle
Awak bajanjang naiak, batanggo turun
We ascend by steps and descend by stairs

The proverb “we ascend by steps, and descend by stairs” illustrates the local wisdom of the Aneuk Jamee community, which centers on adherence to customs and discipline. This proverb reflects the belief that every action in life, whether moving forward, advancing in rank, or making decisions, must follow a proper, orderly process. In addition, the metaphor symbolizes the need for humility, self-awareness, and ethics in social life. The metaphor of ascending cautiously through steps and descending through stairs implies that one must respect the established path and not rush or bypass traditions. Indirectly, this phrase reminds the community to be polite, patient, and not arrogant in society. This reflects the cultural emphasis on following procedures, respecting hierarchy, and acting with patience and careful consideration, as evidenced by AK:

“It emphasizes that everything must follow a proper sequence and respect the procedure. Whether in ceremony or daily life, there is a right way to do things.” (AK)

In the context of ceremonial practices such as Randai, this metaphor underpins the importance of maintaining dignity and adhering to inherited norms. Eventually, the metaphor teaches that dignity and harmony are preserved when individuals follow cultural rules and proceed thoughtfully in all aspects of life.

Hyperbole

Although hyperbole is found only once in the Randai oral tradition, it conveys powerful emotional and cultural messages about loyalty and community support. The wisdom of ‘unity and mutual support’ can be found in [6], recited by MB from the groom’s side.

[6] *Bungo tanjuang di atas pasak*
The bullet-wood flower blooms atop the stake
Elok ancak kumbang bungonyo
Graceful as its petals unfold
Jalan ka pusek bumi nandak ka umah dusanak
We have walked to the Earth’s center, heading to our kin’s house
Untuk maantek saurang kumbang jo
To offer just the beetle

The hyperbole of “we have walked to the Earth’s center, heading to our kin’s house; to offer just one bridegroom” powerfully expresses the Aneuk Jamee community’s local wisdom of unity, mutual support, and dedication to relationships. This expression symbolizes that the Aneuk Jamee community works together, helps one another, and strengthens family ties among community members. AK emphasized that such hyperbole is meant to inspire and convey devotion through vivid descriptions. The phrase suggests a great effort, symbolized by traveling to the very center of the Earth, not for personal gain but for a shared purpose: delivering a single *kumbang* (beetle), a humble but meaningful offering. This act represents how far one is willing to go for the sake of kinship and community harmony, even for something seemingly small, as said by KM:

“The phrase represents how far we are willing to go to support one another. Even if the help is not material, our moral support is unwavering.” (KM)

The “beetle” here may symbolize a bride or a valued individual, and the journey reflects the community’s commitment to upholding social and familial responsibilities. The hyperbolic journey stresses that no effort is too great to fulfill communal obligations. It also supports the idea that true unity is shown through action, where individuals prioritize shared well-being and emotional bonds over convenience or self-interest. This metaphor captures a cultural ethic of selflessness, solidarity, and togetherness, with ceremonial importance.

Litotes

Litotes is used once but serves as a powerful expression of humility, an essential virtue in the

Aneuk Jamee tradition. The wisdom of ‘humility and modesty’ is found in the rhymes expressed by the bride’s side by TM, the Rhymer.

[7] *Angin barat galombang gadang*
The west wind brings great waves
Payah urang pai kalauit
It is difficult for people to go to the sea
Di dalam adat awak pangalaman kurang
In matters of custom, we may lack experience
Ilmu pun balun sagadang rambuit
And our knowledge is still no thicker than a strand of hair

The litotes “in matters of custom, we may lack experience; and our knowledge is still no thicker than a strand of hair”. The word “hair” symbolizes the wisdom of humility and simplicity of the Aneuk Jamee community because of the thin and small shape of hair. By deliberately downplaying their experience and knowledge, Rhymer demonstrates a cultural preference for understatement rather than showing off. Even when someone may have significant understanding or competence, expressing oneself with humility is considered a sign of respect, both for tradition and for those present, as described by AK and KM. Socially, this pantun serves as a reminder for the Aneuk Jamee community not to be arrogant about their knowledge.

“Even if we know more, we speak modestly. It’s part of our tradition.” (AK)

“Modesty is considered wise and respectful. We avoid boasting. It helps build respect and maintain harmony.” (KM)

This expression supports the social value that true wisdom comes with modesty. It encourages individuals to remain open to learning, acknowledge the contributions of elders and peers, and avoid arrogance. In communal settings, especially during ceremonial performances like Randai, such humility fosters harmony, prevents conflict, and encourages the expected respectful tone in cultural discourse. This litotes is not a sign of ignorance but an artistic strategy for honoring tradition and maintaining social kindness. Such expressions were particularly noted during the groom’s introduction, where a humble tone ensured a respectful and receptive environment.

Paradox

The paradox appears in one stanza and reveals the community’s outlook on fate, hardship, and moral perseverance. Thus, the wisdom of ‘optimism

and hope’ is found in the stanza recited by TM, the Rhymer from the bride’s side.

[8] *Manampuah jauh ka Jambu Apha*
Far to Jambu Apha
Nandak mancai buwah dalimo
Want to look for pomegranates
Memang parlu kumbang ko kami aja
Indeed, we need this beetle to come
Biea nasib balak isuak mambaleh guno
So that fate, someday, may return the favor

The paradox “indeed, we need this beetle to come; so that fate, someday, may return the favor” expresses the Aneuk Jamee community’s optimism, hope, and belief in reciprocal destiny. At first glance, the idea of needing something now for fate to repay it later seems contradictory. However, this paradox reveals a cultural philosophy: today’s actions, even small gestures like welcoming a symbolic “beetle” (representing a bride or guest), can sow the seeds of future blessings. It exemplifies that goodwill and sincerity are never lost but instead circulate through fate and time. This belief, expressed by KM and PA, is that such paradoxes serve to build emotional resilience. They reflect a rooted belief that life’s challenges have meaning and moral value.

“It teaches us to be patient. Difficult moments are part of the journey toward something better.” (KM)

“It’s about hope. Even when facing hardship, we believe good will follow.” (PA)

This wisdom encourages patience and trust in life’s balance, believing that kindness, effort, and integrity will ultimately be rewarded, even if not immediately. It teaches the community to act not only for instant results but also with faith in the future and a hopeful heart, strengthening endurance through hardship and uncertainty. Thus, the paradox becomes a poetic way of saying: do good today, and good will find its way back tomorrow.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study has revealed the rich Randai oral tradition as practiced in traditional Aneuk Jamee wedding ceremonies, focusing on the local wisdom values embedded in its figurative language. Analysis of the Randai proverbs revealed a structured representation of community values communicated through metaphors, hyperboles, litotes, and paradoxes in the stanzas. Within Sibarani’s (2013) framework of cultural values in oral traditions, they fall into the following domains: harmony on ‘politeness and thoughtful speech’,

and ‘social equality’, education on ‘responsibility and commitment’, and ‘obedience to custom and discipline’ (5 metaphors), cooperation on ‘*gotong royong*’ and ‘unity and mutual support’ (1 hyperbole), spirituality on ‘humility and modesty’ (1 litotes), and another in spirituality on ‘optimism and hope’ (1 paradox).

The most prominent value is politeness, which is conveyed through metaphor and litotes. For instance, the stanza “*mangango baru mangecek, baliak talantang baru dikecek an* (only after hearing should one speak; only after understanding should one comment)” illustrates the ethical communication norms upheld in the Aneuk Jamee community. In addition, within the Aneuk Jamee community, politeness also serves as a social identity, and maintaining good manners enhances social harmony. This explains that customs are tools for shaping society to be polite and humble, and that they serve as social norms (Manarfa & Lasaiba, 2023). In sociolinguistics, politeness is a strategy for reducing face-threatening acts and demonstrating care for others (Borris & Zecho, 2018). Hadijah (2019) further emphasized the importance of polite expression and respectful language in Randai. Moreover, the use of litotes in “*ilmu pun balun saladang rambut* (and our knowledge is still no thicker than a strand of hair)” reflects humility, which is a central cultural value, to show how modesty in communication fortifies social cohesion. Humility is a rhetorical device that maintains social harmony and mutual respect (Kumentas et al., 2024; Rehg, 2013). It is not only a form of politeness but also a tool to strengthen bonds between community members, mutual respect, and avoid potential conflicts. This explains that the function of this phrase is to regulate how to behave in society, providing harmony as a form of community identity.

The second most emphasized value is responsibility, articulated through hyperbolic expressions such as “*jalan ka pusek bumi, untuk maantek saurang kumbang jo* (we have walked to the Earth’s center, heading to our kin’s house; to offer just one beetle)”. Although exaggerated, this expression conveys a profound cultural norm of mutual support and responsibility, illustrating that no member should bear burdens alone. This is interpreted to mean that, within the community, solidarity is not only mutual assistance and helping one another, but also a social bond that must be

practiced within the Aneuk Jamee community. Solidarity is a readiness to share with others considered equals because of shared traits or similarities (Vandeveld, 2024). Rustiyanti (2020) also observed that communal cooperation and empathy are central themes in Randai performances. Therefore, the use of hyperbole enhances the performative and rhetorical strength of solidarity as a foundation of community life. Indirectly, this phrase explains that every individual in society has a role in maintaining balance and order within the community.

The following key theme is social equality, such as “*duduak awak samo randah, tagak juwo awak samo tinggi* (sitting, we are equally low; standing, we are equally high).” This imagery reflects a non-hierarchical worldview that emphasizes equal relationships within the Aneuk Jamee society. Therefore, bringing together personal, family, and community values is important for creating social harmony. This explains that social and economic differences do not apply within the Aneuk Jamee community. Personal values build a person’s character, family values guide good behavior, and community values help keep society organized (Amanah et al., 2025). In this context, Hadijah (2019) also noted that respectful speech and mutual acknowledgment are cultural indicators of harmony among Minangkabau-related communities, which further validates the egalitarian and unifying function of figurative language in Randai.

Commitment is closely linked to responsibility, found in “*kato alah di pacik, janji alah dituang* (the words have been grasped, the promise has been poured out).” Commitment is closely linked to responsibility, found in “*kato alah di pacik, janji alah dituang* (the words have been understood, and the promise has been made).” Commitment has a deep meaning in a social context, which is related to responsibility. This metaphor underlines the moral weight of verbal commitment and the importance of honoring agreements. In other words, this phrase emphasizes that for the Aneuk Jamee community, promises are sacred and must be kept; breaking them will damage the existing social order and moral values. Regarding this, Pfortmüller (2018) agreed that commitment holds the community together and helps it grow stronger, not just for short-term pleasure but for lasting unity. Thus, Randai instills a sense of duty and reliability in the community (Rustiyanti, 2020).

The following significant finding is the value of optimism, expressed through paradox in “*memang parlu kumbang ko kami aja, biega nasib balak isuak mambaleh guno* (indeed, we need this beetle to come; so fate, someday, may return the favor). This paradox offers a philosophical stance toward life: current efforts may not yield immediate results, but hope persists. Functionally, this paradox teaches society that life is not always good, but instills the belief that every problem faced will be rewarded with goodness in due time. This shapes the moral education of the Aneuk Jamee community, emphasizing the values of patience and perseverance. It resonates with Scheier and Carver’s theory of optimism, as described by Marelich and Piercy (2020), in which optimism is viewed as a stable expectation of positive future outcomes. The poetic paradox signifies cultural resilience, teaching the community to endure hardships with faith in eventual reciprocity.

Discipline is expressed in two metaphorical stanzas. The first, “*hiduik sandaran adat, mati tatinggea namo* (live by tradition, die with a name to be remembered)”, affirms adherence to cultural norms as a path to personal honor and communal legacy. Hadijah (2019) agrees that discipline in Randai is linked to structured rituals and heritage preservation. In the context of Aneuk Jamee culture, obedience to customs is not only a formal aspect of society but also a form of respect for the values that ensure a harmonious life within the community. Functionally, this metaphor guides the community to behave well and each member to act in accordance with what is expected for their own interests and for the community’s. Discipline is commonly understood as a means of correcting behavior, helping individuals learn to act responsibly and respectfully (Qiu et al., 2024). The second metaphor, “*awak bajanjang naiak, batanggo turun* (we ascend by steps, and descend by stairs)”, conveys the gradual, rule-bound nature of tradition. It reflects the normative education embedded in the culture, as discipline is the product of consistent social training and adherence to norms (Khatun & Siddiqui, 2018; McDonald & Hershman, 2011). This phrase explains the same thing: that everything done, every step taken, must be governed by applicable norms and ethics.

This study shows how figurative language in Randai serves as a medium for transmitting local wisdom and systemizing values such as politeness,

solidarity, harmony, commitment, optimism, and discipline through poetic expression. This study contributes to understanding how oral traditions serve as a medium for moral communication and a regulator of social relations within communities. The study of Randai in Aneuk Jamee’s marriage builds on Sibarani’s (2013) theory, which holds that oral traditions and the use of figurative language are not only means of conveying messages but also of regulating and maintaining social relations within the community. This also proves that oral traditions can adapt to changing times without altering the values or norms of the customs themselves. Therefore, the Randai tradition in traditional Aneuk Jamee weddings is considered a system of moral education for the community, not merely a performance or ancestral heritage.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings in this study, the Randai tradition originating in Minangkabau has been assimilated with Acehese customs and Islamic values to reflect the unique cultural identity of the Aneuk Jamee community in the Samadua district, Aceh, Indonesia. Although the process differs in Aceh, the basis of the values conveyed remains the same: Islamic law. The Aneuk Jamee community still uses Minangkabau as the language of communication in the Randai tradition. Furthermore, the verses in Randai performances use figurative language that has a special meaning, conveying local wisdom and moral messages to the bride and groom and the wider community. Far from being mere entertainment, Randai is a meaningful communicative medium that conveys social norms, ethical teachings, and community values through figurative language.

The figurative language used in Randai, such as metaphors, hyperbole, litotes, and paradoxes, serves to transmit local wisdom across generations. The research identified the following local wisdom conveyed through Randai: harmony on ‘politeness and thoughtful speech’, and ‘social equality’, education on ‘responsibility and commitment’, and ‘obedience to custom and discipline’ (5 metaphors), cooperation on ‘*gotong royong*’ and ‘unity and mutual support’ (1 hyperbole), spirituality on ‘humility and modesty’ (1 litotes), and another in spirituality on ‘optimism and hope’ (1 paradox). Each value embedded in Randai serves not only as a guide for individual conduct but also as a

basis for sustaining communal relationships and maintaining social order. The verses used in Randai performances serve as cultural tools for the Aneuk Jamee community for education, socialization, and moral instruction.

The limitations of this study lie in its scope and participation, which focus on a specific region: the Aneuk Jamee community in Ladang Village. The primary data were drawn from some informants and focused on figurative language and local wisdom. Future research is recommended to explore Randai across diverse regions or related ethnic groups, including performance analysis, and investigate how younger generations perceive and adapt these traditions. Interdisciplinary approaches and the development of educational materials embedded in Randai also support cultural preservation and value-based learning.

CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

W.D.A: Conceptualization, data curation, fieldwork and data collection, formal analysis, investigation, and writing the original draft.

Y.Q.Y.: Supervision, methodology guidance, validation, and writing concerning review and editing, and finalization of the manuscript.

Z.A.A.: Supervision, conceptual support, and writing in the process of review and editing, with particular assistance in drafting the manuscript.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical research principles, with informed consent obtained from all participants in interviews and audio-video recordings during wedding celebrations. Their participation was voluntary, and thus, confidentiality and anonymity were ensured. The data were used solely for academic research in accordance with institutional guidelines.

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DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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