A Linguistic Study of Toponymy and Environmental Identity in Sundanese Ethnic

Ujang Komara[a*], Cece Sobarna[b], Gugun Gunardi[c], Ahman Sya[d], [a]Student of Doctoral Program Linguistics Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences,Universitas Padjadjaran, [b,c,d]Linguistics Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences,Universitas Padjadjaran, Email: [a*]u.komara1910@gmail.com

The study highlights current global threats towards the indigenous identity of toponymy. This study's qualitative research uses the descriptive approach to offer a new model suggesting linguistic study as the primary basis in the development of toponymy, particularly in relation to economic commodities. The concept of toponymy is currently considered inessential in the designs of local government programs and those of other development sectors. Linguistics plays a significant role in these programs. The findings show that the linguistic features of toponymy reflect unique morphological and semantic contents related to water, biological ecosystems and historical events, signifying its interconnection with environmental identity. In particular, the derivative forms and connotative meanings of toponymy indicate that naming a place reveals ideas, motivations, and the willingness of the community to apply local values to preserve the indigenous identity of the surrounding environments. The current shifts of human behaviour and mind-sets, as well as the destruction of natural resources may potentially lead to crises of toponymic identity in future years. The complexity of these issues necessitates further research formulating initiatives to enable the safeguarding and reconstruction of toponymic identity.

Key words: *A Linguistic Study, Toponymy, Environmental Identity, and Sundanese Ethnic.*

Introduction

Toponyms, also known as place names or geographical names, use language symbols to describe objects, concepts, and processes in naming places that relate human ideas to objects, such as mountains, rivers, seas, islands, cities, villages, and so on. They may be said to represent the oldest living part of human cultural heritage, in the sense that they have been handed down orally from generation to generation for hundreds or thousands of years at the place where they were coined. As Taylor (2016) stated, toponyms can be a source of information regarding a society's history, customs and past events and they play a vital role in human society. Names existing in all languages and place names are an indispensible part of international communication. This has been acknowledged by the establishment of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). One of UNGEGN's tasks is to coordinate international efforts on the proper use of place names (Allan F. Lauder and Multamia R.M.T. Lauder, 2015). Toponymy is defined as the study of a place based on the historical and geographical information, using words or a collection of words to show, explore, and identify a geographical territory (Bishop et.al., 2011).

Linking geography and language, place names are material and metaphorical, whilst being substantive and symbolic at the same time. Place names are names that reflect language users' perceptions of and relations with their environment, produced by complex interactions between mind, culture, and environment (Taylor, 2016). Place names do have meanings that are used and valued for other reasons. When people settle down in a given area, they name the place for reasons of identification, but when names are created, morphological structures as well as denotational meanings are considered (Helleland, 2012). The members of the speech community operate the rules of use between the name and the object denoted by it and in certain situations, referring to places using their proper names. The individual acquires the knowledge of names and develops his or her language use within the community while he or she also influences the language use of the community (Reszegi, 2012). In this respect, the analysis of toponymy is focussed on the structure of words and parts of words, such as <u>stems</u>, <u>root words</u>, <u>prefixes</u>, and <u>suffixes</u> (Brown, Dunstan, 2012). It uses an inflectional and derivational approach to describe the morphological patterns of names. Names, being words that exist in a language, are supposed to have some form of formation pattern (Marjie-Okyere, 2015). In morphology, the basic units of the word are morphemes. Words occur in the structure of phrases -Morphemes -Words -Phrases -Clauses -Sentences (Amvela, 2007) and words consist of bound and free morphemes. A bound morpheme cannot stand alone and is usually attached to other morphemes while free morphemes can stand alone as independent words. Free morphemes are usually called roots and don't have affixes (Yule 2006). Moreover, it is also concerned with the analysis of lexical semantics that is inseparable from denotational and connotational meanings (Cruse, 2011), focussing on the conventional word meanings (Yule, 2006).

Toponyms or place names can be a source of information about a society's history, customs and past events (Taylor, 2016), that create a sense of identity in a place through attachment feelings of belonging. People are connected by place names which recall experiences and memories of shared feelings. People thrive on developing familiar connections with each other in a community by having the names and the stories create the spirit of a place (Helleland, 2012). The names contain ideas and understanding towards ecosystems that primarily reflect the social identity or as a branding of those places, even branding of a nation (Kostanski, 2011) that create strong feelings among large groups of people, especially in multi-ethnic areas (Lietz, 2009). Place names can be conceived of as a component of self-identity (Hernandez, Hidalgo, 2007) since they represent the construct of social and power relations, through which the identity of place is being formed (Berg & Voulteeenaho, 2009), and commemorate important events or personalities from a country's history as significant expressions of national identity with powerful symbolic importance (Duncan, Light, 2004). In this respect, toponyms are some of the most durable of national symbols, and are important features of national and territorial identity (Saparov, 2003). They create nostalgia in people mentally for cultural and personal experiences covering the symbolic meanings of how a sense of identity is fostered in place names (Alderman, 2013).

The study commences with a preliminary investigation to ensure that the primary focusses of the research are appropriate for identifying the roots of the problem. The results indicate that in the Sundanese ethnicity, specifically the Tasikmalaya Regency, located in the Southern Area of West Java Province, Indonesia, the preservation of toponyms as part of the indigenous cultural heritage has been an important issue for the last few decades. The primary concern is the global trend towards minimising the roles of toponyms, which are currently considered inessential in the community. The contemporary problems are identifiable from several important aspects that may trigger crises for toponyms in future years, as follows: (1) linguistic documents and a formal transcription system of toponyms are not available yet since they are mostly developed using verbal communication (2) both native peoples and local governments do not have sufficient knowledge about the insights, views, and roles of toponyms (3) the massive use of foreign languages in new settlements, such as the BKR Regency, Grand Mayasari Estate, and Royal Emerald (4) the shift of place names, for example, *Pacuan Kuda* became *Dadaha* several years ago (5) the loss of indigenous identity of toponyms, such as *Kudang Pasantren*, meaning the Centre of Islamic Centre. The place name was interconnected with a great historical figure, KH. Muhammad Soedja'I, popular for *Mama Kudang*, as the first founder of Islamic Center in Tasikmalaya, recorded with other figures, such as KH. Abdullah Mubarrok, the founder of Suryalaya and KH. Zainal Musthafa, the founder of Sukamanah in Singaparna Tasikmalaya. *Mama Kudang* was closely related to the history of the Tasikmalaya Regency, that sucessfully established the association of mufti with 1,350 members. Unfortunately, the remains of this historical inheritance are not

visible nowadays (6) the shifts of native peoples' mental capacities and life-styles. Lauder, Multamia R.M.T (2015), stated that the issues of toponymy are related to the global agenda of UNGEGN to promote the use of local language in naming places, since toponyms are currently implicated in broader issues of power, identity, memory and culture (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010). In brief, Indonesia will be a rootless nation, its citizens condemned to live forever on the margins of a globalising world without a true sense of who they are or where they are going (Carey, 2014).

Previous research dealing with toponyms and identity has been conducted by Paul Woodman (2014). The findings show that there are four layers involved in the interconnection between toponymy and identity. There are those who give and use toponyms in situ, there are those who do so far from afar, there are also the toponyms themselves, and finally there are the places and features to which the toponyms relate. These players act out a complex relationship between toponymy and identity that is intimate, intricate, ongoing, and sometimes changing. Examples may be drawn from Europe, Asia, the United Nations, and even the imagination. The identity is projected on to a place or feature by the bestowal of a name or names. The examples we have considered in our journey from Kolkata to Kaliningrad and from Germany to Japan, have demonstraded this to be true in a variety of ways. The relationship between toponymy and identity is indeed both complex and fascinating. From our points of view, this former research only explores how toponyms relate to identity, without addressing aspects of linguistic study, seeing the changes of toponyms only from physical features, such as spatial landscapes. We propose that obtaining comprehensive data regarding the interconnection of toponyms and identity requires a linguistic study since toponyms not only reflect the physical features of places but also constitute indigenous cultural values, such as naming motifs, native peoples' characteristics and the interelated local traditions. As Ulman (2012) stated in reference to toponyms, words or phrases have competence to refer to an event, matter, goods, and cases existing in the real world outside of language. Reference words as a symbol or sign have a connection with something signed; and the linguistic uniqueness can reflect not only physical characteristics of the place but also characteristics of the community and the people's linguistic history. This includes derivation and inflectional processes, preferred prefixes used and so on. Different morphologies may have an effect on the meaning of a name (Crystal, 2003), and during the naming of places in a society, the morphological and semantic aspects are considered together to bring out the meaning of the toponyms (Haspelmath, 2002).

The study highlights the linguistic elements, focussing on the morphological and semantic aspects of toponymy that are used as the basis of exploring the former status and the contemporary interconnection of toponyms and environmental identity. It is theoretically based on the anthropological linguistics or ethnolinguistics that view the language as a part of cultural signs in the community. Language is closely related to the cultural background as the

realities of experience, knowledge, and insight from the users that functionally reveals the process of naming the places, and connects them with the socio-cultural contexts in the community. Foley (2001) stated that ethnolinguistics is a search for the meanings in linguistic practices within wider cultural practices that views language through the prism of the core antropological concept, culture, and, as such, seeks to uncover the meaning behind the use, misuse or non-use of language, its different forms, registers and styles.

The study offers a new model of preserving toponymic identity, that considers it essential to involve a linguistic study as the prominent basis in toponymic development. In other words, prelimanary linguistic study should be utilised by toponymic development policy-makers. Massive destruction of toponymic identity is taking place, due to the reckless decisions of local governments that view toponyms as economic commodities, such as tourism objects and new settlements, and the policy-making of toponymic changes. The contemporary evidence shows that toponymic development mostly stresses commercialisation or business sector interests. In this respect, toponyms are only used as objects to increase profits or income, for both local governments and investors with little interest in the preservation of toponymic identity.

Materials and Methods

The study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive qualitative approach developed by Miles and Huberman (2014). The form of data collected in the qualitative approach is in the forms of words and not the series of score. Data sources consist of primary and supporting data. The primary data are taken from informants who are capable of giving the required information, and the supporting data are gained from documents available from the local government, libraries, and the community, either individuals or groups. The study of toponymy includes field research that obliges the researchers to record and collect other unwritten information in the interview section via observation. It describes and explores the existing phenomena about the interconnection between toponyms and environmental identity, either former or current, from the linguistic point of view. The numerous forms of data or information are collected for further examination through a variety of angles, or from different people.

Data Collection

The process of data collection in this research is conducted through three categories: unstructured observation, in-depth interview, and documentary study. Unstructured observation attempts to observe and develop the power of tracking various things that happen in the field. It is intended to obtain direct descriptions as a means of cross-checking ideas taken from documents and informants. In-depth interview utilises the technique of re-

checking or clarifying the information received. Interviews are conducted through face-to-face communication between the researchers and informants. The questions are flexible, depending on the current condition in the field. Meanwhile, documentary study is a method of collecting the qualitative data by seeing or analysing documents created by individuals or groups of people that reveal the earlier phenomena in the forms of transcription, illustration, and monumental creations.

Respondents

The respondents of the study are not selected randomly but consciously so as to fulfil at least two critera, those who are reachable and those who have a lot of information to impart. The researchers attempted to find people who are capable of providing sufficient information related to the main focusses of study. The term 'reachable' in this context means that the respondents are easy to meet and ready to share information with the researchers.

Research Sample

The research sample does not represent a specific population. It is more focussed on the capability of sample participants to provide comprehensive information, so that the sample is small, rather than representative.

The location of the study is the Pamijahan toponym, one of the place names in Sundanese ethnicity, located at the Southern Area of Tasikmalaya Regency - West Java Province. It is specifically located in the Bantarkalong subdistrict, around 250 km from Jakarta, the Capital City of Indonesia, 150 km from Bandung, the Capital City of West Java Province, and about 65 km from the Central City of Tasikmalaya. The area is around 40 km from the South Coast of Cipatujah, that has a population of around 6385 people. It is a hilly area located at the river edge, with the genuine natural features as the navel of village, and an altitude around 650-900 metres above the sea level. In addition, it includes the zone of the Eastern Mountain range, featuring a lot of natural caves, one named the Safarwadi cave.

Geographically, the Southern Area of the Tasikmalaya Regency passes through the chain of volcanos in Java Island so that the region naturally has fertile land and large water resources. In addition, it is located in the mountainside of Galunggung with a tropical climate supplying productive rainfall and water absorption. It is therefore recognised by the native people as a fertile and prosperous land. Such natural conditions provide a significant impact on almost all sorts of socio-cultural paradigms, including the former creation of toponyms. Meanwhile, the uniqueness of the Pamijahan toponym is closely interelated to the philosophical values of the term 'Sunda' that morphologically derives from two syllables, namely 'Sun' that means "self" and 'Da' that means 'environment.' The domain 'self' indicates the interrelationships

between humans, and the domain 'environment' shows the interconnection between humans and the natural environment.

This toponym has been selected as the object of research due to several aspects: firstly, the importance of toponyms had been developing for centuries, since the period of Dutch colonialism and the spread of the Islamic religion. It was designated by the classical story of the space of time and the content of local cultural values, showing the uniqueness of naming linguistically, so that we are motivated to know and understand it more deeply. As one of the most popular religious tourism objects, this toponym attracts thousands and even millions of visitors, and is therefore susceptible to global impacts and should be immediately safeguarded. Finally, no similar research has been carried out on the subject, as is identifiable from the inavailability of documents and formal transcriptions on toponyms.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of organising and configuring data into patterns, categories, and basic descriptions. It is conducted by organising, classifying, giving codes, and categorising data related to the research questions. The process of data analysis consists of three aspects: data reduction, data display, and conclusion or verification. Data reduction is concerned with allocating codes to display the required data and combining the information in order to formulate a conclusion. Conclusion or verification relates to the process of formulating the data configuration to test the validity of the results.

The data analysis comprises aspects of linguistic study relating to morphological and semantic aspects, the former status, and the contemporary development referring to the interconnection of toponyms and environmental identity. With respect to this, the data analysis is conducted through the following steps: making a note of field data and giving codes in order that the sources of data can be constantly traced, collecting, choosing, classifying, synthesising, making means of action and index, categorising data through meanings, patterns and connections and reporting the general findings.

Discussions
A. Linguistics Morphology and the Semantics of Pamijahan Toponymy

The process of creating toponyms is interconnected with the use of language elements, such as morphology and semantics, that are configured through a set of rules organising the ways of their use in the unity of language meaning. At the moment a name is given to an object, the language of the name-giver provides both the elements needed and the structures to join them together.

Pamijahan morphologically comprises four syllables, '*Pa-mi-jah-an*' and three elements of word formation, namely 'prefix (*pa*) + stem (*mijah*) + suffix (*an*)'. The composition of *'stem + affixations'* refers to a poly-morphemic word signifying a derivative or complex form reflecting a complex way of thinking in naming a place. Such morphological constructs indicate that toponym and language use demonstrates the close relationship between bearing a name and belonging to a community. Such a construct presents the power of peoples' mentalities by showing feelings of attachment and self-belonging towards the preservation of environmental identity.

In the Sundanese language, the stem *'mijah'* can be defined as '*fish lay eggs*' and the word Pamijahan means '*the place for fish lays egg*'. It comprises two connotative meanings, '*the place with crowded of people*' and '*the place with collective migrations of religious belief.*' Pamijahan that means '*the place with crowded of people*' is closely interconnected with the presence of two archaeological sites, the Grave of an Islamic Disseminator (*Syeh Abdul Muhyi*) and the Safarwadi Cave, that have attracted millions of pilgrims, both local and foreign visitors. Those sites contain some of the most popular religious tourism objects in West Java-Indonesia. With respect to this, Pamijahan as *'the place with crowded of people'* is symbolised like '*the place for fish lays eggs*'. Another connotative meaning indicating *'collective migrations of belief"* is in line with a folklore tale regarding the process of spreading the Islamic religion in this area. The first time *Syeh Abdul Muhyi*, the prominent disseminator of the Islamic religion, visited the place, all the people were Animism followers. One of the ways to encourage them to devolve to the Islamic religion was the use of fishing in the river with '*buhu*' (a Sundanese traditional instrument for fishing made from bamboo). The native people were invited to get the fish together, and his extraordinary power (in Islamic religion called '*karomah*') was attested with the help from God that the '*buhu*' were always full of fish whenever he uttered '*syahadat*' before fishing (I testify that there is no God except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is messenger of Allah). This successfully persuaded the people to collectively devolve from Animism to Islam. '*The place with collective migrations of religious belief* was symbolised like '*the place for fish lays eggs.*'

B. Former Status of Toponymy and Environmental Identity

The interconnection of toponymy and environmental identity was identifiable from various local wisdom values in the community that were recognized from the salient features of a place, either physical or non-physical characteristics, as follows:

(1) Toponimi as Representation of the Natural Environment

Toponymy morphologically includes a derivative or complex form that indicates the interconnection of hydrology and biological-ecosystem elements. It is a symbol that the natural environment is the primary basis for naming the place.

The interelationship of toponymy and hydrology elements is visible from the connotative meaning of Pamijahan as 'the place fish lays eggs,' that obviously refers to water. It is highly related to the information from informants that Pamijahan, until the year of 1980s, was a place with abundant water resources and fertile land. Moreover, the connotative meaning of toponymy is related to the use of the words 'fish' and 'eggs' showing the interconnection of toponymy with the element of the biological-ecosystem, in this case, fauna.

(2) Toponymy as the Representation of Historical Events

The use of historical events in naming place is signified by the connotative meaning of Pamijahan as 'the place fish lays egg' with the connotative meaning of 'the place with collective migrations of religious belief.' It is in line with the historical background of Syeh Abdul Muhyi, as a disseminator of Islam, who successfully changed the native people's belief from Animism to the Islamic religion.

(3) People's Characters as the Reflection of Toponymic Identity

Toponymy provides a significant impact on building the native peoples' characters towards the surrounding environment. This was identifiable from their feelings of attachment and self-belonging towards the natural resources and historical events around the region. At that time, they would utilise their own potency to defend their way of life as either individuals or members of a community. The reality of their interconnection with the element of hydrology was, for example, visible from the various maxims in Sundanese language, such as '*kacai jadi saleuwi kadarat jadi salebak*,' meaning that people should cooperate with others to create a peaceful life. *'Pindah cai pindah tampian'* shows the needs to raise togetherness among the members of community; and '*herang caina beunang laukna'* means people should achieve something aligned with the prevailing rules, norms, and ethics in the community. In the Sundanese language, '*cai*' means 'water.' In addition, there are also maxims that are interelated to the elements of flora, such as '*indung tunggul rahayu, bapak tangkal darajat,'* showing the connotative meaning that children should respect and appreciate their parents. The word '*tunggul*' means 'tree stump', *'ambekna sakulit bawang'* reflects the people's habits of getting angry with others easily. The word '*bawang*' means 'onion' and *'bonteng ngalawan kadu'* indicates that the poor cannot confront the rich, or the small can not fight the large. The word '*bonteng*' means 'cucumber.' Meanwhile,elements of fauna were used in the

following maxims, for example, *'asa nanggeuy endog beubeureumna'* reflects the copious people's care for, and love of others. The word '*endog*' means 'egg', *'adean ku kuda beureum'* shows people's wish to be rich using the wealth of others. The word '*kuda*' means 'horse', and *'buluan belut, jangjangan oray'* is used to inform someone trying to attempt the impossible. The words, '*belut*' means 'eel' and '*oray*' means 'snake.'

People's emotional ties towards the natural environment was visible from how native people cultivated the land at that time. They had their own ways or principles of how to cultivate the farming land. At that time, people were accustomed to using two buffalos to plough the rice fields, by themselves or with help from others. The uniqueness was visible from how they sang songs during the process of ploughing the land. They did it not only to entertain themselves but also to use the surrounding ecosystems as a part of communication practices between humans and the natural environment. They never used chemical fertilisers to plant rice, but they could produce a satisfactory rice yield. Such local tradition was closely related to the doctrine of Islam as stated in *Qur'an* that '*whatever is in the heavens and on earth, let it declare the Praises and Glory: for he is the Exalted in Might and Wise*' (The Battle Array, 01).

The power of the farmer's love towards the natural environment successfully developed a level of farming productivity superior to that of other regions. At that time, Pamijahan was popular for the stock of rice that could allow distribution to other places in the Tasikmalaya Regency.

(4) Tolerance among the Members of the Community

The socio-cultural values in the community were signified by the growth of knowledge and understanding about the doctrines of Islam that generated the tolerance of each individual, member of the community, visitor and the surrounding environment. The tolerance among the members of the community was identifiable from the local traditions that built the brotherhood and peacefulness principles, showing the spirit of each individual in helping and giving to one another without violence, quarrels or oppression. In addition, the tolerance was clear from the habit of welcoming visitors with friendly and familiar attitudes. At that time, the native people used to serve a glass or a cup of tea to whomever visited their houses and they gave it free of charge. The tolerence towards the natural environment was reflected by the native people's custom of maintaining the balance of nature and the preservation of natural resources. They created a variety of rules, norms, and ethics with the doctrines of the Islamic religion as the prominent basis to improve the people's awareness and interest towards the natural environment. The Islamic religion taught the followers to love and respect nature, as stated in *Qur'an*: '*Do no mischief on the earth. After it hath been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the mercy of Allah is (always) near to*

those who do good' (The Heights, 56), and '*From the land that is clean and good, by the will of its Cherisher, springs up produce, (rich) after its kind: but from the land that is bad, springs up nothing but that which is niggardly: thus do We explain the Signs by various (symbols) to those who are grateful*'(The Heights, 58).

Each constructed rule was by agreement reached among the members of the community and no-one violated them, such as the prohibition to smoke about two hundred (200) meters away before entering the grave of Syeh Abdul Muhyi.

(5) Power of belief

The connotative meaning of a toponym as '*the place with collective migrations of religious belief'* was highly influencial to the formation of socio-cultural values in the community, and one of the most significant features was identifiable from the people's power of belief in the values of Islam. The doctrine of Islam regulated the native people's living conditions, leading to the development of the first centre of Islamic civilization in Tasikmalaya. The presence of hundreds of Islamic Centres and Mosques is the evidence that this religion was firstly developed in this area. At that time, the native people were recognised as the ethnic group that were obedient to executing the whole doctrine of Islam, such as praying together in the mosque, paying for tithe, performing optional praying, doing the obligatory fasts in the fasting month, and so on. The mosques surrounding the place were always full of people day and night who wanted to deepen their knowledge of Islam. Hostility and conflict among the members of community were in contradiction with the prevailing socio-cultural values.

(6) Togetherness among the Members of Community

Togetherness among the members of community was a predominant behavioural trait of the native people, identifiable by how they built the places for the observance of religious duties. They were faithful in sacrificing their power, property, and thought. They used to provided aid to their neighbours by assisting with building or renovating houses. People also helped one another with weddings, contributing items such as rice, bananas, chickens, and money.

C. Current Status of Toponymy and Environmental Identity

Toponymy as the representation of a link between communities and their environment seems to have declined along with hazardous global threats. It follows that people living in the sites for some time would tend to lose their memories of place when seeing massive changes to the surroundings, resulting from the influences of the modern world.

(1) Changes of People's Characters and Destructions of Natural Environment

Feelings of attachment and self-belonging towards natural resources has changed in recent years. It is particularly visible from people's characters that they have become greedy towards nature. Their ways of thinking are no longer based on willingness to live in harmony with nature, but in exploiting it to achieve more luxuries in life. This excessive exploitation has triggered the destruction of natural resources, thus harming the living ecosystem. Until the years of 1970-1980, the surroundings still showed the affluence and beauty of nature with the river rich with fish and never drying up even in the dry season. But the horrifying destruction of surroundings within the last 30 years has triggered complex problems. Farmers now are often not capable of planting rice, particularly in the dry season, due to the shortage of water.

(2) Decline of People's Beliefs

One of the biggest impacts of modernisation is the decline of people's belief in Islamic doctrines. Most of them, particularly those living near the archaelogical sites, show new ways of thinking, and lifestyles that are more oriented to worldly interests. They take the benefits of place as popular religious tourism objects to enrich themselves. Unfortunately, such attitudes cause many to ignore their obligations to execute the command of Islamic activities and rules. Group prayer in mosques, for example, has been decreasing, specifically in the case of the younger generations. Those are signals that toponym does not wholly represent the environmental identity.

(2)) Drastic Changes of People's Tolerance and Togetherness

The existence of toponymy and environmental identity faces the threat of the drastic shifts of socio-cultural paradigms, whereby native peoples are showing more individualistic principles. The warmth of emotional relationships among the members of community has been tainted by the unfriendly attitudes of some native people. They consider their personal interests of greater importance than care for others. There is an embarrasing phenomenon demonstrated by some native people in which they attempt to cadge money from visitors to build or renovate mosques. This is clearly incompatible with the former characteristics of native people, who would sacrifice their property and energies to build the facilities for the observance of religious duties.

Concluding Remarks

The research findings indicate that the former creation of toponymy incorporated local values and wisdom, visible from the linguistic features reflecting the unique morphological and semantic contents. In particular, the derivative form and connotative meanings of toponymy

referring to water, biological ecosystems, and historical events signified its interconnection with environmental identity. It contained ideas, motivations, and willingness of communities, as a communication network between people and their environment, specifically showing their feelings of attachment, self-belonging and wishes to preserve the natural resources and memory of historical events.

The contemporary development of toponymic identity shows a lot of differences from the former status quo, denoted by the shifts of people's characters and mind-sets leading to massive destruction of natural identity. This should encourage reflection for each individual, community member, government, and private sector, particularly when designing strategic government programs.

The study offers a new model of preserving toponymic identity to empower the functions and important roles of toponymy. Local governments and private sectors are advised to conduct a preliminary linguistic study before empowering toponymy for the purpose of economic commodities, such as tourim objects, new settlements, and changes of names. In other words, linguistics cannot be separated from these programs. It is contradictory for reckless government policies to provide a licence to the private sectors that only accentuate profit-making, eventually leading to the destruction of place identity. This new model stresses the principles affirming the relevance of toponymic development that enhances the empowerment of place identity. Such identities are being marginalised by the execution of indigenous socio-cultural for the sake of new trends in global world. Finally, to solve these complex problems, further research is needed that will be concerned with methods of safeguarding and reconstructing the toponymic identity.

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