Toponym investigation as introduction to the local value in Cirebon City

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Abstract. Places name in Cirebon City is strongly influenced by geographical, biological, socio-historical elements, folklore, and local figure. Toponyms in Cirebon City have local values that be used as learning resources. This article aimed to describe an investigative process carried out by students and local value study based on Cirebon City toponym. The study was conducted in four sub-districts, namely Kejaksan, Pekalipan, Lemahwungkuk, and Harjamukti. There was a total of 50 location names. The investigation was carried out by conducting in-depth interviews with various community leaders, elders, keratin (palace) guides, and kuncen (caretaker). Investigation result exhibited that Cirebon toponym has a unique background and strongly influenced by geographical, biological and socio-historical, local figure. It is specifically influenced by the development of Islamic civilization through the Cirebon Sultanate and Sunan Gunung Djati. Therefore the toponymy in Cirebon City has the potential to be used as an introduction to essential local values.

1. Introduction

“Geographical name as cultural heritage” [1], a statement affirming that a study of place names (toponymy) is significant because it is part of national culture. A toponym is a form of local culture that cannot be separated from human impression of a place. The concept of naming a place is a form of connection between language, culture, and human thoughts or impressions of that place [2]. Geographical conditions, environment, diversity of languages, and local history (events) can be revealed through toponymy exploration of a place [1] [2]. In fact, in some countries with unstable administrative conditions, toponym has become an attraction to boost the local geopolitics [5]. Some of these things make toponym as an interesting object to be examined.

The toponym is necessary as it can also be used to examine the aspects of local culture in order to preserve the nation’s cultural heritage. The language used in geographical naming indicates the cultural assets of a nation. In terms of language, the naming of an area is arbitrary, even though there is always a meaning behind a place name. In the toponymy system, there are life or philosophical values that become the characters of language and local community [6].

Toponymy conditions in urban areas with high developmental growth are getting further away from local values. Even some national policies related to naming the geographical objects (roads in particular) are not in line with the concept of sustainability. The same case happened in Cirebon city
where massive growth and development increasingly eliminated the existing local identity. Place naming in Cirebon city is quite unique and has its own character. The place naming in this city is very much affected by several elements such as geography, biology, folklore, socio-history, and figure [7]. On the other hand, most of the population have no knowledge related to the origin of toponymy in the city [8]. Based on some of these backgrounds, toponymy has urgency as a cultural product that needs to be recognized and preserved. Furthermore, in education, toponymy is a potential object of student investigation as a means of recognizing the geographical, historical, and social environment in an urban area.

In recent years, many toponymy studies have focused on the origins, etymology, and linguistic anthropology [2], [9], [10]. In fact, there are studies that reveal the advantages of toponymy studies economically when associated with tourism activities [11]. On the other hand, this article tries to explain the process of introducing environmental and local values through toponymy investigations in universities as well as describe the pattern and results of the investigation. This article will also reveal students' positive perceptions on the investigation practices and the difficulties they faced in the field.

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2. Methods

This study used descriptive qualitative approach. The data analysis was analyzed inductively. The observed, collected, and described data were drawn into a conclusion. There were two focus studies in this study. First was the activity of students in conducting toponymy investigations. Second is the results of student toponymy investigation which was studied to obtain the local values and pattern of place naming. The object of toponymy study was in Cirebon city, which was spread in four subdistricts consisted of Kejaksan, Lemahwungkuk, Pekalipan, and Harjamukti. Fifty (50) toponymies were selected through the Indonesian Topography Map as the object of investigation. Students conducted toponymy investigations by interviewing the informants such as: local public figures, kuncen (gatekeeper/spiritual guardian), head of RT/RW, head of government, and palace guides. Data from informants was triangulated to ensure the data validity.

| Sub-District | Location                               |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|
| Kejaksan     | Kejaksan, Kesenden, Samadikun, Kebon benteng, Krucek, Kedrunan, Kebonbaru, Jalan Kusnan, Jalan Suratno, Pancuran, Tandabarat, Makamkembar, Kegiren, Pamiiran, Sukapura, Karangpura |
| Pekalipan    | Pagongan, Pruajakan, Pekalangan, Gudangair, Keboncai, Pamudjudan, Panjunan, Jagabayan, Kebonpring, Karangmoncol, Pasuketan, Pekalipan, Pekiringan, Astanagrip |
| Lemahwungkuk | Lemahwungkuk, Karanggetas, Kacirebonan, Kesepuhan, Mandalangen, Jagasatru, Pegajahan, Puloharu, Gambirlaya, Kesunean, Sitimulya, Cangkolan, Deli, Kejawan, Pengampon |
| Harjamukti   | Pegambiran, Kutaisirap, Kejawan, Patireman, Sirandu |

3. Results and Discussion

Data analysis was divided into three major themes as follows: student investigation process; toponymy patterns and local values, and student perceptions of the investigation learning process.
3.1. Investigation Process of Students

Before the implementation of toponymy investigation, students consisting of two classes were divided into five groups in each class. Each group consisted of 5-6 people who were divided randomly. Students were then given an investigation instruction containing procedures and assignments that should be completed for seven weeks.

There were several stages used in the investigation process: 1) choosing topic/area; 2) formulating and designing instrument; 3) data gathering by using the designed instrument; 4) and data analysis.

Choosing topic/area required students to determine the location for the investigation in 5 toponymies. They collaborated to determine and viewed the locations through maps, so that they could determine the route of investigation appropriately and effectively. A good planning was important to make it easier for students in conducting technical investigations.

Designing instrument was a process of collaboration among students in making questions that aimed to answer the problems raised. The list of questions was then discussed with the lecturer for approval.

Data gathering was held for two weeks. The students conducted an investigation by visiting the agreed location directly. They conducted interviews with the head of RW/RT who then took them to local public figures. Students can immediately communicate with Kuncen in locations having cultural sites such as cemetery, tajug (pyramidal or pyramid square ornament which is usually used for sacred building in Southeast Asia), wells, etc.

Data analysis was performed after students were absolutely sure that the required data had been collected. The students analyzed the data from each toponym. Then, it was described into an interesting narrative. Furthermore, the narrative was discussed with the lecturer to get the best form.

Finally, the students must interpret the data reporting of findings after the data were analyzed. They collaboratively made investigation report. Lecturers were also involved in directing and helping to interpret the values that were attached to the toponym that had been identified. After the report was completed, the students perform presentation and reflection on learning together.

3.2. Patterns and Local Values of Toponymy

Students in groups had conducted an investigation and managed to collect the data from 50 toponyms in Cirebon city. However, the results of the toponyms description have not been able to show local values and determine the pattern of place naming. Therefore, the meaning of toponym and drawing conclusions for the pattern of place naming must be performed by the research team.

### Table 2. Place naming pattern

| Toponym Naming Elements | Place Name                              |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Geographical            | Karangmoncol, Lemahwungkuk, Kedrunan, Pancuran, Kesunean, Tandabarat, Pulobaru |
| Biological              | Kebonbaru, Keboncai, Pasuketan, Kebonpring, Gambirlaya, Pegambiran, Pegajahan, Sirandu |
| Folklore                | Makamkembar, Karanggetas, Patireman, Kegiren |
| Socio-History           | Kebonbenteng, Pagongan, Gudangair, Pruakran, Pekulangan, Krucuk, Kesepuhan, Kanoman, Kacirebonan, Cangkolan, Pamudjudan, Kutasirop, Kejawanan |
The results of the investigation show that there are four elements affecting the toponym pattern: geography, biology, folklore, socio-history and figures. Naming based on geographical elements is affected by physical environmental conditions in that place. For example “Lemahwungkuk”, here the naming is affected by topography, “lemah” means land, dan “wungkuk” means bent, so that it means “bent land” in English. It has a slightly wavy terrain morphological pattern. The toponym contains the value that the local community in the past cared about the morphological conditions of the place, so they named the place according to its natural appearance.

The geographical location of the coast also has an effect on the place naming. For instance, a place called "Kedrunan" comes from the word "Nderu", this word was taken because in the past, in this region there was a sound of waves that "roared", so it is called as "Kedrunan". At present, it is quite far from the coast, but there is no wave sound heard, and it is caused by sedimentation which results in the emergence of land arise. The phenomenon of land arise is originated from "Kesunean" toponym that comes from the word "sunyi" or quiet, because in the past, this area was a land arise due to sedimentation from a river that empties into the coast of Cirebon. Over time, this region was soon occupied and formed a village called Kesunean.

A phenomenon that signifies the hydrological potential of the past in Cirebon city is also enshrined through a toponym. "Pancuran" according to the explanation of one of the local public figures, it comes from the word "mancur" or fountain. In the past, there were wells with water from the ground around this place. This is a hydrological phenomenon called artesian wells. As time goes by, due to settlements density increase and the excessive use of groundwater, the artesian wells are gone. Based on the toponym of "Pancuran", the value that can be pointed is hydrological conservation value. Humans will greatly affect the hydrological conditions in which they live, therefore the groundwater should be used carefully and sustainably.

In addition to the geographical conditions that affect the place naming in Cirebon, biological factors also play a role. Plant names are frequently used as a place name in Cirebon. For example, "Keboncai" derives from the words "kebon" and "kucai". "Kebon" is a garden and "kucai" is a kind of green plant that is added to food, its function is similar to celery or parsley. Kucai (garlic-chives in English) can be found in many Cirebon foods, such as: Empal Gentong; Lengko Rice; Gapit; and fried snack. Local people believe that this leaf can lower the cholesterol quite effectively. Based on the narrative of the elders, this place was once a garlic-chives garden where the residents planted it as a livelihood.

Another name related to the presence of plants and affects their livelihood is "Sirandu". The meaning of "si" in Cirebon Language is "place" while "randu" is Randu Tree or "White silk" or "Cotton tree" in English and "Ceiba pentandra" in Latin. This tree fruit is called kapok. In the past, it was used as a mattress, pillow and bolster. The last two decades this place is the center of makers of mattresses, pillows, bolsters and crafts made of cotton. However, since the foam mattress and spring bed are popular, kapok mattresses began to be replaced, and one by one the craftsmen closed their business.

Other places that have biological place naming elements and have an effect on past activities are "Pegambiran" and "Gambirlaya". Both places derive from the word "gambir". Gambirlaya is a place
with abundant Gambir trees (*Uncaria gambir*), while Pegambiran is a place that used to sell Gambir. Gambir in the past was used to "Menginang" (an Indonesian tradition of chewing materials such as nut, betel, gambier, tobacco, limestone, and clubs). This commodity had high value at that time.

Like in West Java, place naming in Cirebon is also quite affected by folklore [13]. Folklore is an oral tradition passed down among generations. The place naming based on folklore in Cirebon cannot be separated from the development of Cirebon as the center of culture and growth of Cirebon Sultanate. As identified, the name of "Karanggetas" which derives from the word "Karang" means "land/place" and "getas" derives from the word "patah" which means broken. The name of this place comes from the story of Sheikh Magelung Sakti who had long hair, but none of the people could cut it. Then, he met Sunan Gunung Djati who was finally able to cut the hair. “Getas” or broken comes from the story of the lost of power in Sheikh Magelung Sakti hair. The myth that has developed to this day is that people with magic from outside Cirebon will lose their strength if they stay there, even the second former President of Indonesia is reluctant to pass Karanggetas when visiting Cirebon.

Many place names in Cirebon are affected by socio-historical elements. Place names indeed have value, both in practical terms, and they are also needed to maintain the social functions even ideology [14], [15]. Like the place name of "Sitimulya" that comes from the words "siti" means "place" and "mulya" means "noble" or "holy". is the reason for this place naming is a historical site, namely Pejagragan Mosque which is the oldest tajug in Cirebon, built by Prince Cakrabuana (Founder of Cirebon Sultanate) in the 14th century. The historical function of the name is needed to maintain the existence of this place.

Figure also plays a role in the background of place naming. The results of the investigation show that there are local hero names which are used as place names, which are "Samadikun", "Kusnan", and "Suratno" and there are still many that have not been used as the investigation object. The name of the religious leader is also used as a place name such as "Pangeran Kejaksan ", "Astanagrip" which is the cemetery of "Syekh Maulana Maghribi", "and “Kesenden” from Arya Sandi. The local public figures’ name who are considered to have contributed to the prosperity of the surrounding population are also used as the place name, such as "Deli", a Chinese figure whose name is used as a road name in the coastal area of Cirebon.

Toponym in each place has a specific cause, meaning or purpose [16]. It can also be in the form of spatial relics or missing social realities [17]. This must remain hidden from the next generation, because to reveal the background of the place naming in Cirebon City has become increasingly difficult. Apart from the large number of elders who have died, the community's concern for toponym is low. The increase in population specifically from the migrants also becomes a factor in the loss of cultural heritage.

### 3.3. Student Perception after Conducting Investigation

This group investigation objective is not only to find out the origin of a name place, but also to study more broadly. In addition to cognitive development, students need the development of soft skills that will be useful in the future. Group investigation encourages students to be actively involved with their group at various levels of cognitive, affective, and behavior [18].

Students have been asked to write down their perceptions of the investigation practice that had been conducted. Several students wrote that their knowledge increased:

“Because of this investigation practice, as a student I can find out about the local culture in Cirebon City, know the origin of the place name, even though it was quite complicated during the implementation, eventually we can find the answer.” (Finie)
“Through this study, I became aware of Cirebon region and also gained more useful knowledge. In addition, I became familiar with the names of heroes in Cirebon City.” (Laras)

Students also experience various problems in the investigation process. Even so, they tried to deal with the problems and find the solution. Each member tried to focus and work together to complete the project. The process of solving this problem formed the attitude to be committed, have mutual trust, mutual understanding, and cooperation.

“We had difficulty in finding the interviewees. Since there were some elders who have passed away and some have not been able to speak clearly. Our house is far apart, so it is necessary to arrange time to meet and conduct an investigation.” (Nabillah)

“In my opinion, when investigating this assignment, I came to know what it meant to be socialized and how to work together well. However, there were a few difficulties faced, like enduring the sun heat, and unifying opinions among group members.” (Salsa)

They were also trained to use maps in this investigation. Most students are not native to Cirebon, so they actually do not have the mental map of Cirebon City. Through this investigation, students can train their abilities in using digital maps. Here are some of their difficulties in finding the destination

“We had trouble getting to the place, because our google maps confused us, even though we finally arrived safely.” (Fitri)

“I had lost direction when going to the Kasepuhan Palace, by using the map we were able to get there” (Hilda)

One of the objectives of this investigation is to develop student communication skills. Apparently, some students benefited from this practice.

“Learning a lot to communicate well and the basic attitude of each person you met.” (Fatmawati)

“I feel more courageous to interview others.” (Rahmawati)

Most student perceptions of the practice are very positive. The difficulties faced are considered to be a valuable experience. They are also very happy to get to know the new place, and know the historical, cultural and social values obtained during the investigation. Doing work outside the classroom was fun for them, especially with classmates. This practice encourages students to solve problems. They argue and brainstorm to solve problems encountered. The process can develop their soft skills, and they realize it. The value of cooperation is an important point, they conducted an investigation by conducting time management, routes, costs, tasks and commitments between members.

It can be concluded that the students’ positive responses to this group investigation consisted of four categories: 1) Knowledge increase related to local values; 2) Positive perception related to problem solving; 3) Positive perception of communication skills; and 4) Positive perception related to cooperation between group members. Practically, the group investigation practice will be able to directly develop the work skills, teamwork, social relationships, and friendships [19].

4. Conclusion

This study generates several conclusions, first related to the process of investigation conducted by students. Students undergo an investigation in several stages, which are: 1) choosing topic/area; 2) formulating and designing instrument; 3) data gathering using the designed instrument; 4) and data
analysis. Students in general can perform the process well. Despite getting a lot of difficulties, everything can be resolved until the reporting process. Second, related to the results of toponym investigations. The place naming in Cirebon city is affected by several elements, consisting of geography, biology, folklore, socio-history, and figure. These results reinforce the previous research [7]. There are value and meaning in each toponym that is identified. This can be a great potential in utilizing topography to get to know the environment. Third is the perception of students after conducting an investigation. Students' perceptions of group investigation in the field are very positive. in addition to become more knowledgeable, they revealed that their soft skills such as work skills, teamwork, communication, social relationships, and friendships developed

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