

ABSTRACT

This research is about the tradition of *Nasi Hadap-Hadapan* in the wedding ceremony in Malay Ethnicity in Tanjung Balai. The aims of this study is to determine the symbolic meaning of the food in the tradition of *Nasi Hadap-Hadapan* and to acknowledge the importance of it in the wedding ceremony in Malay Ethnicity in Tanjung Balai. This research uses qualitative research method. The location of this research is in Tanjung Balai. Data collection techniques are carried out using observational field research, and interviews. The results of the study found that food serve in the event have the symbolic meaning which shows the philosophy of life. *Nasi Hadap-Hadapan* is an important tradition although in the implementation as the tradition is not as strict as it used to be. The tradition of eating *Nasi Hadap-Hadapan* has become a culture that must be maintained and developed until posterity later.

Keywords:*symbolic meaning; food; nasi hadap-hadapan; tradition*