

Process, Values and Local Wisdom of the *Martabas* (Saying Mantra) and Natural Resources Utilization in the Simalungun Indigenous Society in Indonesia

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Keyword: process, values, local wisdom, martabas, traditional treatment, Simalungun ethnic, indigenous community.

Abstract: Various methods and approaches have been utilised to search the oral tradition of Simalungun's *martabas* (or saying mantra) which still has strong roots in villages in which villagers remain to hold their cultural bases. The utilization of different methods and approaches are aimed at understanding the cultural representations of process, values, and local wisdom which are considered urgent especially when the local community concerned are willing to have options in solving their problems, that is, traditional treatments. Since the research tries to understand the conceptualisations of abstract ideas which were identified from the oral stories told by participants as well as from practices, semi-structured interviews were carried out with the indigenous Simalungun people to open the cultural domains. The results show that in the *martabas* as folk beliefs the process, values, and local wisdom represent the embodied experiences which are important as vehicles of expressions and culturally influenced by the spirit of abstract world. We argue that while culturally influenced process, values, and local wisdom shall mark the participants who are strange in their ways of doing, a direct look at their underlying frameworks finds that they spiritually connect with unseen world that is intrinsic to their experiences. Understanding the *martabas*'s process, values, and local wisdom can contribute to the expansion of Simalungun's local genius which is perhaps unreasonable anymore in the modern life although the *martabas* remains to exist up to now.

1 INTRODUCTION

Simalungun's *martabas* (or saying mantra) functions as an abstract media to hold traditional (or non-medical) treatment from uncertified figure whose skills are to utter mantra and who treats the patients with unbelievable but magical words. The today's polemic that is happening in local society is that the *martabas* is assumed to be bad practice and it is even very taboo though it is itself referring to the process of delivering petition to the owner of the universe. In addition, the local society argue that when somebody requires traditional treatment and goes to *martabas* expert, or shaman, he is considered to have neither belief nor religion. The assumption, of course, makes the *martabas* undesirable and even shunned by some local people, especially those who are still young today. Therefore, the research questions in this study are focused on (1) how does the *martabas* anthropologically perform during

treatment process and what values and norms do the *martabas* have?; (2) what local wisdom does the *martabas* contain; and (3) how to revitalize the *martabas*?

2 PROCESS, VALUES, AND LOCAL WISDOM

Masinambow (in Bawa 2004: 1) argues that culture as the process and product of human thoughts, feelings, and behavior has its own distinctive features, so each culture should preserve or retain its own richness. As the cultural product the *martabas* is an oral tradition which is indicated to have polite communication since it is addressed directly to god. Sibarani (2004: 170) argues that politeness means the ordinance and customs that prevail in an civilized society to maintain good relationships among fellow human beings. Modesty is a

behavioral rule established and agreed upon by a particular society so that politeness becomes an agreed requirement in social behavior).

The language style which is orally spoken by a shaman (*datu*) can attract the attention of patients and influence them and can be considered a medium by younger generations to learn their native language. Sibarani (2004: 59) argues that language may be used as the expressions of cultural values which consist of expressive culture, traditional culture, and physical culture and the expressive culture might include feelings, belief, intuition, and ideas and collective imaginations. Meanwhile, traditional culture can refer to religious values, the *adat* rules, and customs; physical culture refers to the one which can be utilized by people in their everyday activities. In this case the *martabas* is of course rich of traditional expressions consisting of values which are sometimes hard to believe or to realize although in the past it was dominantly believed by local people when they treated their diseases or uneasy feelings.

3 TRADITIONAL TREATMENT

Decree of the Minister of Health No. 1076 / MENKES / SK / VII / 2003, states that traditional medicine refers to medication and treatment by way of medication, and its treatment refers to experience, hereditary skills, education / training and is applied in accordance with prevailing norms. Materials and ingredients in the form of plants, animals and mineral materials, alloy or mixed ingredients have been used for experiential treatment (Noorkosiani 2009: 130).

Traditional medicine with *martabas* will fade because it is not preserved or used again. These problems result in huge losses to the community. Sibarani (2012: 2) reveals that the cultural traditions or oral traditions of the past cannot possibly be present today exactly as they have been transformed in such a way that they may even have "died" because they no longer live in their communities but their values and norms can be actualized in the present. The values and norms of cultural traditions or oral traditions can also be used to educate children to strengthen their identity and character in the face of the future as the nation's future generations.

4 CONCEPT HEADING

Several technical concepts in this section are discussed as Duranti (1997:14) argued there are three major theoretical areas that have been developed within linguistic anthropology. Each of these areas is devoted to the understanding of one of the following analytical nations, for instance performance, indexicality, and participation.

4.1 Performance

Language is understood in the process of communicative activities, actions and performances that require creativity. Language as a lingual element that stores cultural resources cannot be understood separately from the performance or language activity. Duranti (1997: 14) reveals that the concept of performance work from a number of sources and can be interpreted in various ways. According to Bauman (1992) the concept of performance is the actual execution of an action that is contrary to capacity, models, or other factors that present a potential such as an action or an abstraction of that action. Hymes (2010) revealed that language studies must pay attention to themselves by describing and analyzing the ability of native speakers to use language for communication in real situations (communicative competence) rather than limiting themselves to describe the ideal potential abilities of speech speakers to produce grammatical sentences true (linguistic competence). A communicative event is the basic unit for a similar communication descriptive goal including: the same topic, the same participant, the same variety of languages. Communicative actions generally border with interactional single functions, such as referential statements, requests, or orders, which may be verbal acts or nonverbal acts Muriel (2003: 23-24). Then Bauman (1992: 45) reveals the concept of performance as a frame that is placed on the quality performance of the communication action itself.

4.2 Indexicality

Indexicality comes from the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce who distinguishes marks from three types, namely index (index), symbol (symbol), and icon (icon). The index is a sign that indicates that there is a natural and existential relationship between the marking and the marking. The concept of an index (indexicality) is applied to linguistic expressions such as demonstrative

pronouns (personal pronouns), personal pronouns, time adverbs (temporal expressions) and adverbial places (spatial expressions).

4.3 Participation

Participation views language as a social activity that involves the speaker and listener as social actors. According to this concept the study of social activities is more important in the study of the text itself.

4.4 Concepts of Values and Norms

Cultural value is an abstract concept of basic problems that are very important and valuable in human life (KBB). Value is good and bad. According to Haviland (1999: 333) reveals that culture is a set of rules or norms shared by members of the community, which if carried out by its members, gives birth to behaviors that are deemed appropriate and acceptable to all members of the community. Then Mahsun (2001: 2) says that culture consists of values, beliefs and abstract perceptions of the universe that are reversed and reflected in human behavior.

Saryono (1997: 3) also revealed that cultural values are an abstract phenomenon, ideal and not sensory or invisible. Cultural values can only be known through understanding and interpreting human actions, actions and speech. Koentjaraningrat (2004: 5) says that the system of cultural values consists of conceptions that live in the minds of most citizens, about things that they should consider very valuable. Cultural values are values that are agreed upon and embedded in a society, organizational environment, community environment, which are rooted in a habit, belief (believe), symbols, with certain characteristics that can be distinguished from one to another as reference to behavior and responses to what will happen or is happening. Sibarani (2004: 59) also says that language is used as a means of cultural expression. Cultural values that can be conveyed by language as a pathway to cultural succession are divided into three interrelated parts of culture, namely: (1) cultural expression, (2) traditional culture, (3) and physical culture. Cultural expression: includes collective feelings, beliefs, intuition, ideas and imagination. Cultural tradition: includes religious values, customs, and habits. Physical Culture: includes original works that are used by people in daily life.

Prosser (1978: 303) says that value is the deepest cultural aspect embedded in a society. Furthermore

Prosser classifies values into five parts, namely (1) Value related to God, (2) Values related to and correlate with nature, (3) Values related to and correlate with time, (4) Value related to and berorer with activities, (5) Value related to and related to human relationships.

The meaning is the meaning or purpose of the speaker or writer; understanding given to a linguistic form (KBB). The meaning of meaning is the meaning, the purpose of the speaker or writer and the meaning given to a linguistic form. Foley (1997: 5) Meaning is a concept that is notoriously difficult to understand. "The concept of meaning is absolutely fundamental to the field." The concept of meaning is truly fundamental to the universe. The meaning in question is the meaning that has a relationship between sign and sign is an intrinsic fact about the natural world, the relationship between closeness or cause and effect. The closeness relationship in question is an action that has feedback between markers and markers.

4.5 Local Wisdom

Local wisdom is a view of life and science that is based on the noble values of culture that are used to create or improve the prosperity and peace of the community itself. Local wisdom comes from two words: wisdom which means wisdom, while local is (local) that is local. Simply put, local wisdom can be interpreted as wisdom, ideas, local values that can be utilized in managing or improving the welfare of people who have the culture themselves. Sibarani (2018: 40) said that local wisdom is indigenous or local genius of a society derived from to make peace and improve the community welfare.

According to the Indonesian dictionary of local wisdom, namely community maturity at the local community level which is reflected in the conducive attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives of the community in developing local potentials and resources (material and non-material) that can be used as a force in realizing changes to better or positive direction. The local community referred to in this case is a traditional community of every cultural tribe that has local potential to make the community live better.

Sibarani (2014: 114) revealed that local wisdom is the wisdom or original knowledge of a society that comes from the noble values of cultural traditions to regulate the order of society. Furthermore Sibarani revealed that when related to culture, local wisdom is a local cultural value that can be used to regulate the order of community life wisely or wisely. In line

with this statement means local wisdom comes from the values, norms, rules of local culture that can be used or used properly to regulate the life order of the community itself.

Kartawinata (2011: 7) revealed that local wisdom related to culture has an important meaning to maintain the sustainability of culture, as well as to maintain its sustainability. What's more, at this time many foreign cultures have been entered and adopted by Indonesian society in general and the local community in particular. Sibarani (2014: 116) revealed that understanding local wisdom can be approached through structural, cultural and functional perspectives. From the structural perspective, local wisdom is understood from the uniqueness of the social structure that develops within the community.

Then more clearly, Sibarani (2018:1) argues that local wisdom consist of two types of core local wisdoms, namely: 1. Local wisdom for people's welfare of prosperity and local wisdom for human beings' peacefulness or goodness. The local wisdom having purpose to create peacefulness comprises the politeness, honesty or integrity, social loyalty, harmony, commitment, positive thinking and compliments.

4.6 Concept of Revitalization

Revitalization is an attempt to revitalize an area or part of a city that once lived but experienced a decline or degradation. Revitalization is a process, method, act of reviving or reviving (KBBI). According to Danisworo (2002) revealed that the revitalization approach must be able to recognize and utilize the potential that exists in the surrounding environment such as history, meaning, as well as the uniqueness and image of the location. Then Rais (2007) revealed that revitalization was an attempt to revitalize an area or part of a city that had once lived, but suffered a setback. In the revitalization process, an aspect of the area that is covered is improvement from physical, economic and social aspects. In this case the revitalization process is not only oriented to the completion of physical beauty, but must be complemented by the improvement of the economy of the community and the introduction of existing culture to the next generation.

4.7 Anthropolinguistics

Anthropolinguistics is a branch of the study of culture. Duranti (1997: 2) says that linguistic

anthropology as the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice. Linguistic anthropology as the study of language as a cultural source and speaking or speaking as a cultural practice. Furthermore Hymes (in Duranti 1997: 2) said that linguistic anthropology is as a study of language and language in the context of anthropology. "The study of speech and language within the context of anthropology". Salzmann (1998: 3) also says linguistic anthropology is the study of language (language) within the framework of anthropology. "The study of language (or speech) within the framework of anthropology".

In addition, Foley (1997: 3) also said that anthropological linguistics is a part of linguistics that is related to the place of language in the social and cultural context, which plays a role in shaping and maintaining cultural practices and social structures. "Anthropological linguistic is that subfield of linguistics which is concerned with the place of language in its wider social and cultural context, its role in forging and sustaining cultural practice and social structures". Sibarani (2004: 50) says that anthropolinguistics is a branch of science that studies the variety and use of language in relation to the development of time, differences in places of communication, kinship systems, the influence of ethnic habits, beliefs, language ethics, customs, and other cultural patterns from a tribe.

This study uses anthropolinguistic parameters, namely: (1) interconnection, (2) Cultural Values, and (3) continuity. Assessment shows the meaning or function, to the values or norms, and finally comes to the local wisdom of the aspects examined. Sustainability shows the state of the object under study including its cultural value and inheritance in the next generation of Sibarani, (2014: 319).

4.8 Oral Tradition

Pudentia (2007: 27) defines that oral tradition as a discourse that is spoken or conveyed from generation to generation includes oral and literary ones, all of which are delivered orally. Lord (1995: 1) affirms oral tradition as something he speaks but writes it down, and the recipient does not read it, but hears it. Taylor (in Daud, 2008: 258), defines oral tradition as materials produced by traditional societies, in the form of narratives, traditional customs, or practices, including rituals, traditional ceremonies, folklore, folk songs, dances and games. But this mode of delivery of oral traditions is not only in the form of words, but also a combination of certain words and actions that accompany the words.

Tradition will also provide a set of models for behavior that includes ethics, norms and customs.

Furthermore Sibarani (2014: 7) revealed that the discourse of oral tradition is not only in the form of fairy tales, mythology, and legends with various messages in it, but also about the cognitive system of society, sources of identity, means of expression, religious systems and beliefs, formation and affirmation of adat - customs, history, law, treatment, beauty, creativity, the origin of society, and local wisdom in the community and its environment. Disclosure of orality is conveyed primarily by relying on memory factors.

4.9 Simalungun Batak Society

Society is a number of people in the broadest sense and bound by a culture that they consider the same (Alwi Hasan et al., 2005: 721). Society is also referred to as a group of individuals who live in a certain place interacting with each other in a relatively long time and become a rule that must be obeyed by members of the community itself so that gradually form a culture. Society is also a social system which consists of the number of social structure components, namely family, economy, government, religion, education, and social strata that are related to each other, work together, interact, relate, and interdependence (Jabrohim, 2004: 167). Simalungun ethnic is one of the ethnic who lives in the Simalungun district area which is currently based in Pematang Raya. The Simalungun community has a very close family relationship. This can be seen from the lineage and kinship system adopted by the community such as Tolu Sahundulan. The ones included in the tolu law are: children, tondong, pakon boru. in this study, researchers will determine the location of research in Dolok Pangaribuan sub-district, Nagori Dolok Village as the research area.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Approaches

Methodologically, this study uses descriptive qualitative methods with an ethnographic approach. Ethnography is a written description of social organization, social activity, symbolic and material sources and the practice of characterization of certain groups of people. Ethnography is the written description of the social organization, social activities, symbolic and material resources, and interpretive practices characteristics of a particular group of people Duranti (1997: 85). Ethnography

offers a collection of techniques to achieve goals or to obtain objective data and a sense of empathy through direct participation in the social life of the community. Researchers are asked to be directly involved in every activity carried out by the community so that researchers become part of the community. Then the researcher will be able to obtain purer data because the researcher makes himself a subject of his experience.

5.2 Research Location

Research in anthropolinguistics is part of field work or often referred to as field research. The data in this study were obtained directly from informants or what was referred to as shaman which was being spelled. Data collection will be done in Simalungun district. Simalungun Regency is a district in the province of North Sumatra. The capital of this district is Pematang Raya. The Simalungun tribe is a native of the district. precisely in Dolok Panribuan sub-district. The names of villages in the subdistrict include: Bandar Dolok, Dolok parmonangan, Dolok Tomuan, Mount Meriah, Marihat Dolok, Marihat Raja, Nageri Dolok, Siatasan, Tiga Dolok, Ujung Bondar. A description of the research location can be seen in the figure below:

5.3 Types and Sources of Data

In accordance with the title of this dissertation, the source of the data in this study is the martabas pattern observed when the datu / informant is performing a ritual in martabas. Sibarani, (2014: 289) revealed that the determination of informants is very important in collecting data with open and in-depth interview methods. Qualitative research informants must be in accordance with the objectives of the research (purposive informants), namely those who know best and are most able to provide information on the problems to be examined.

Oral data will be obtained through interaction between researchers and informants. The researcher conducted an interview with the informant / resource person directly by asking several questions that had been prepared in advance. Then the researcher will also retrieve data through a recording device. Researchers will record all processes in martabas.

5.4 Method of Data Collection

This research is not limited to the discussion of the text and material co-text but also the broader context

so that it can reach its function in sustaining cultural practices. In this research, what appears in the form (Surface Structure and context) is a symptom or phenomenon that occurs because there are hidden things that are content (values, cultural norms and local wisdom). This is like the opinion expressed by Praenkle and Wallen (2007: 430) that qualitative research focuses on a holistic picture, namely a detailed description of an event or describing the quality of the relationship between one event and another. In the context of this research what is meant by the relationship of one event to another is the relationship between humans, nature and God that is represented from cultural activities.

Sibarani, (2014: 283) also revealed that the research paradigm would determine data collection methods. So it needs to be understood that data collection starts from data about form as a surface layer that focuses on the quiet data of the text, the co-text and the context. Then data is collected about its contents regarding the meaning, functions, values, norms, and local wisdom as content of oral traditions. Furthermore, he also revealed (2014: 285) that qualitative research there are several types of data collection that can be applied, namely (1) direct participatory observation method (direct, participatory observation), (2) open and in-depth interview method (in-depth, open-ended interviews), (3) focus-group discussions, and (4) written documents.

5.5 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study is usually done with two procedures: (1) analysis during data presentation and, (2) analysis after data collection. Both of these procedures were carried out in this study. The first procedure is carried out through the following stages: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation with matrix image patterns, (3) tentative conclusions / verification to be verified, either by data triangulation or by triangulation of data retrieval techniques. The step of the analysis process is called interactive model analysis (Miles & Huberman 1984: 21-25).

The second procedure is carried out by: (1) transcription of recorded data, (2) grouping or categorizing data from records, (3) interpretation of cultural values, (4) Inference from these cultural values.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Tabas and Martabas

As it has been previously explained that martabas is one of the areas of study in anthropolinguistics. Martabas is a one-way communication process done by a datu (shaman) to the creator of the universe. According to the Great Indonesian dictionary mantra (Martabas) are words or sentences that are read or spoken, can bring magic (to treat illness and so on). Martabas is an activity or ritual performed by a shaman (datu) by pronouncing a text that is believed to grant the wishes of its uses. Martabas is almost owned all the tribes that exist in the world, including Indonesia. Indonesia is filled with ethnic diversity even sub-ethnics so Indonesia also has many incantation. In the Simalungun community, martabas can be classified into three major parts: (1) Martabas for ordinary treatment, (2) Martabas for unusual treatment (Utility / occult), (3) Martabas for treatment such as antidote. The first part of martabas for ordinary treatment is martabas to treat physical illnesses. Physical illnesses such as: toothache (whether exposed to caterpillars or rotten or to newborn tooth teeth), abdominal pain, snake bites (snake venom), etc. The second part is martabas to treat unusual diseases. What is meant by unusual diseases such as: exploited for use, possessed by spirit, etc. And the third part of the form of preventive like: eating food that has been given read-reading, sweeteners and so forth.

6.2 Types of Tabas

The types of Martabas as described previously in the simalungun community have three major parts: Tabas to treat common disease (TPB), Tabas to treat unusual diseases (TPTB), Tabas for provision of an antidote (TBT).

A. Tabas for TPB

Tabas is pronounced when a datu wants to treat a patient who is sick ordinary, the pain is referred to as a toothache, stomach pain or sickness caused by a virus that causes pain. Examples of tabas to treat common diseases (TPB) in this Simalungun community are:

- 1) **Mangarou Totok** (specifically totreat newborn toothache)

*Ham siraja bangkut appa ham siraja
musul-usol.*

the activities of the community speakers will affect the way of language and way of thinking. Crystal (1987: 8) says that the magical influence on language is a theme that radiates throughout literature and legends around the world. Language especially written language is believed to have special powers, only those that have the expertise that can be understood and controlled. In short, belief is always associated with myths according to the authenticity of the language. *Tabas* (incantation) can be defined as wording of a poetic element that is supposed to contain supernatural powers (KBBI 2001). *Tabas* (incantation) is usually pronounced by a *datu* (*dukun*) for a specific purpose. *Tabas* is believed to possess certain powers as a means of delivering requests to the Creator and has certain benefits and purposes as well.

6.4 Martabas and Natural Resources Utilization

As a traditional medicine in ethnic Simalungun incantation (*tabas*) contains elements of language that are not similar to everyday language since this is a medium of sustainability in ethnic Simalungun. When the *martabas* process takes place a shaman (*datu*) also needs other media or material objects such as betel nut, kaffir lime, incense, cigarettes and so forth.

Furthermore, a shaman (*datu*) must give an offering to the spirit which, he believes, can help him to cure a patient's illness. The offering is a sign that a shaman (*datu*) respects and needs the help of the spirit. Usually, a shaman prepared offerings in the form of *dayok na binatur*, that is, a rooster which was cooked and prepared according to tradition. The rooster should be either red or white. The red one symbolizes the fierceness or bravery and before war such meat was often eaten by warlords in the past and the white one showed holiness and cleanliness. The process of carrying out the offering is carried out during the full month (*bulan baggal*) usually appearing on the 15th day of moon appearance in the Simalungun calendar so, it does not mean a shaman provide offerings every month (in public calendar). If, a shaman (*datu*) wants to make an offering, he should get instructions which are usually present or come through dreams or other signs.

7 CONCLUSIONS

From the results, it is concluded that in the *martabas* which is considered as folk belief, the process, values, and local wisdom represent the embodied

significant experiences which are considered important as the vehicles of expressions which are directly addressed to God and such experiences are theologically influenced by the spirits in the unseen (abstract) world. While the culturally influenced process, values, and local wisdom shall mark the participants who are involved in the process and strange in their ways of doing, a direct look at their underlying frameworks finds that they spiritually connect with the unseen world that is intrinsic to their experiences. Understanding the *martabas*'s process, values, and local wisdom can contribute, in the globe, to the expansion of Simalungun's local genius which is perhaps unreasonable anymore in the modern life although the *martabas* remains to exist up to now.

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