



The Use of Modality in the Texts Markobar in *Pabagas Boru* Ceremony as Mandailing Oral Tradition

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ABSTRACT

The research's goal was to find out why the markobar texts used the modality in the pabagas boru ritual. Qualitative research methodology was employed. In Padangsidempuan, two Pabagas Boru (wedding) ceremonies provided the data. This research focused on the 14 markobar roles in the Pabagas Boru ritual and two atobangon (markobar experts) in Padangsidempuan. As the research's data, there were 66 sentences with modality that participants provided orally. Halliday's (2004) modality theory was applied to examine the rationale for the usage of modality in the markobar texts during the Pabagas Boru ceremonies. The data were analyzed based on Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). The results showed that there were four reasons of modality use, namely, (1) to portray possibilities that happened in a new family; (2) to express the speakers' opinion and suggestion; (3) to obligate the new couple in creating a better family; and (4) to tell the speakers' willingness toward the new couple.

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1. Introduction

One of Indonesia's largest islands is Sumatra Island. In example, there are 26 regional languages on Sumatra Island (Harwan, 2019). Every tribe has its own traditions that reflect the culture's identity exclusive to that tribe, along with the language employed to carry out those traditions. One of the tribes of North Sumatra is the Mandailing. Mandailing Natal, Padang Lawas, North Padang Lawas, South Tapanuli Padangsidempuan, Labuhanbatu, North Labuhanbatu, South Labuhanbatu, Asahan, and Batubara Regency are the locations of the Mandailing Tribe. The Mandailing Tribe originates from Indonesia's South Tapanuli area. It belongs to the Batak sub-ethnic group that resides close to the province of Bukit Barisan Utara Sumatera. Its civilisation has certain customs that govern life and are transmitted from one generation to the next, forming a way of life with rules or guidelines that every person must abide by, such as oral tradition (Ibrahim, 2019). Oral tradition, according to Lubis (2014), is the verbal transmission of cultural items and customs from one generation to the next. Through the tradition itself, folktales, proverbs, ballads, songs, and chants can be utilised to provide information or provide testimony. Oral tradition is defined by Lord (1995: 1) as anything that is spoken in a community. The recipient hears what the speaker says rather than reading it, and the speaker does not write anything down.

Mangambat, mangandung, mangalehen mangan, mangupa, manjeir, maralok-alok, marbue-bue, marburas, markobar, maronang-onang, marsitogol/jengjeng, marturi, marungut-ungut, and marmayam are among the oral traditions of the Mandailing tribe (Lubis, 2014). The social norms and traits of Mandailing culture are depicted in those oral traditions.

The Mandailing tribe has an oral legacy of markobar. "Speaking" is what the native language, Markobar, signifies. An oral tradition known as Markobar organises and becomes a model for having a language. *Dalihan na Tolu (Mora, Kahanggi/Suhut, and Anak Boru)* social structure, which forms the basis of the Mandailing traditional rituals' process, is also used to demonstrate the politeness of conducting tutur manifestations (Zulkarnain et al., 2021). Additionally, Lubis (2014) noted that Markobar frequently offers advice (marsipaingot). A married couple, for instance, inherits marsipaingot.

The aim of this research was to investigate the reasons of modality use in the texts of markobar in pabagas boru ceremony. Modality analysis in markobar was important to be conducted since markobar tends to persuade the people through giving some advises about life and the values of Mandailing society. It is relevant to the purpose of modality used by the speakers reflecting their ideology which will portray Mandailing society as a whole. Markobar is sacred with all its regulation because a daughter will leave her parent's house and enter to the new family as her husband's family. In addition, this study showed the differences of modality use in previous studies. The modality use was shown in some new forms such as repetition which means an affirmation and it obligated the couple to follow that advice. Therefore, the author was interested in conducting the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Modality

The way a speaker delivers their speech is reflected in their modality. According to Palmer (1986:14), a modality conveys the speaker's attitude or viewpoint. Furthermore, according to Halliday (1994), modality conveys the viewpoints or attitudes of the speakers on a claim or recommendation. The explanation leads one to the conclusion that the modality is the speaker's attitude or point of view in relation to a proposal or recommendation for others. The purpose of modalities in a language is to share ideas and information while sharing experiences according to the speaker's perspective.

Modality is usually expressed with modal auxiliary verbs use (*can, could, may, might, must, ought to, shall, should, will, and would*), adjuncts which are adverbs displaying attitudes (*necessarily, possibly, unfortunately*) or modal adjectives (*unlikely*).

2.2 The Reasons of Modality Realization

By choosing modal possibilities, the markobar event's usage of modality in the pabagas boru ceremony may be divided into several categories. It is chosen to express opinions that range from completely favourable to completely negative. Within those absolutes, there is a spectrum of phrases that may be employed to represent varying degrees of duty, necessity, usualcy, and certainty and uncertainty. One way to think about it is in terms of high, medium, and low. Making an informed choice from the variety of modal options might be beneficial. The table that follows provides a general overview of high, medium, and low modality alternatives.

Table 2.1 Modality Expressing with Values

Modality Expressing	High	Medium	Low
Usuality (How frequently something happens or is the case)	• Always, constantly, continually, consistently, permanently • In all cases, in many/the majority of cases	• Frequently, often, intermittently, occasionally • In some cases	• Rarely, seldom • In few/the minority of cases



Modality Expressing	High	Medium	Low
Probability or certainty (that something is the case)	• Certainly, surely, • Absolutely, total, • complete	Probably, likely Quite, rather, fairly May be, may demonstrate, may result in Tent to suggest	• Possibly • Possibility • Could, might • Appear, seem, would appear to suggest
Obligation (the need for things to be a certain way)	• Must, require • Necessitate, necessity, requirement	• Should, ought to, need to	• May, might
Ability (of someone or something to do something)	• Is capable of, is able to	• can	• could
Inclination (of a person to do something)	• want	• wish	• would like to

2.3 Oral Tradition

Both the transmission of a message from the past and present records are implied by oral traditions (Vansina, 1965). Oral tradition, according to Rosenberg (1987), is the passing down of cultural artefacts from one family member to another or others. At the moment of subsequent transmission, those components are heard, retained, and recalled as appropriate. According to Hutomo (1986), oral literature is distinguished by the following: (1) anonymity; (2) traditional and community-specific collective narrative material; (3) specific forms and variations; (4) a connection to trust; and (5) a culture unfamiliar with writing. Furthermore, Sastrowardoyo (1983: 2) asserts that oral literature is distinguished by its external simplicity and lack of pretence.

Oral tradition is defined by Lubis (2014) as the resources created by traditional societies in the form of speech, custom, or practice, such as games, dances, rituals, traditional ceremonies, folklore, and songs. The aforementioned explanation leads to the conclusion that oral tradition is a custom that is practiced verbally without the need of a transcript or other kind of record. As a result, it is passed on through the generations.

Along with local wisdom and knowledge, Ahmadi (quoted in Lubis, 2014) said that research on oral literature is crucial because it serves as a tool for documentation, inventory, and the exploration of cultural values and their unique roles for the supporting community, in addition to reflecting thoughts, knowledge, and expectations (Lutfi, 2010: 42).

2.4 Markobar

The word "*markobar*" in the Mandailing dialect means "speaking." "Markobar is an oral tradition found in North Sumatera as Mandailing tradition, which has many good values," Lubis (2014) said. It serves as a very helpful guide for Mandailing people on how to speak and behave. The purpose of Markobar is to facilitate formal communication. According to philosophy, Markobar offers a superb communication approach and expertise (Lubis, 2014). Hence, markobar is associated with North Sumatera indigenous knowledge that has to be conserved. Local wisdom is knowledge that has been passed down from generation to generation and is based on firsthand experience and initiation, according to Singsomboon (2014).

A traditional practice that organises and exemplifies the use of a language is markobar. In carrying out tutur manifestations based on the Dalihan na Tolu social structure, which forms the basis of the Mandailing traditional rituals' process, it also displays politeness. As a result, social

norms are created as a set of rules controlling the traditional speech and language patterns used in Mandailing rituals (Lubis, 2014). In Mandailing culture context, Markobar is a ceremonial speech spoken during Markobar is a ceremonial speech given at Mandailing traditional rites, such as the sililitun (religious ceremony or a party in a sombre environment) or siriaon (celebratory party), in the context of Mandailing culture. The term "siriaon ceremony" is a custom used to mark a joyous occasion, like a conventional wedding ceremony. In sorrowful circumstances, such as when death is involved, a sililitun ceremony is performed to honour the family.

According to Lubis (2014), Markobar is beautiful in its own right. This markobar event may be viewed as extremely dull and a waste of time by those who are unfamiliar with Mandailing customs, the variety of Mandailing languages, and the social and familial relationships of the Mandailing people. This is especially true when certain topics are covered in detail. But in the Mandailing tradition, it is how long (love) is applied. It is necessary to mark every member of the family who is regarded as an important relative. It won't be necessary for those who don't understand, but those who do will be deeply offended if he isn't given the chance to speak during the customary negotiations or put in the customary density. It may even lead to internal conflict in a relationship.

Based on the result of the interview with Daulay (2021) as atobangon in Padangsidempuan, in the wedding ceremony, particularly pabagas boru event, markobar has some participants such as, suhut, mora, kahanggi, hobar suhut/pareban, anak boru, pisang raut, atobangon, and arajaon.

2.5 Markobar in Pabagas Boru Ceremony

In the Mandailing wedding ceremony, which takes place in the bride's parent's home, markobar in pabagas boru is the most significant activity. This event takes place in the afternoon before the bride departs from her parents' home and heads to her husband's parents' home. It is revered in the process of *adat*.

3. Method

Qualitative research was employed in the study. 14 spots in the markobar during the Pabagas Boru ritual served as the study's data source (Lubis, 2014). These include the following: Alim Ulama, government, Pandongani Raja, Raja (Oppui ngen Bagas Godang), Anak Boru, Pisang Raut, Mora dongan Satahi, Atobangon di bagasan huta, urak kaya, suhut, kahanggi, and Hombar suhut/Kahanggi Pareban. There were fourteen participants in all who spoke in Markobar.

In the pabagas boru rituals, 66 sentences were found to possess modality in markobar. Additionally, the study's tools included a video camera, an observation sheet, and interview guidelines. Only modality realised by modal auxiliaries, lexical verbs, adjectival phrases, nominal phrases, and adverbial phrases were included in the data that was chosen. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014:31) then employed the data analysis approach, which included data collecting, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification.

4. Results and Discussion

The data identified in this research showed that the participants of *markobar* of *pabagas boru* ceremony used two categories of modality which were modalization and modulation showed in the Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 The Reasons of Modality Realization in the Texts of *Markobar* in *Pabagas Boru* Ceremony

Categories of Modality	Modalization		Modulation	
	Probability	Usuality	Obligation	Iclination
Meaning	to portray possibilities	to express the speaker's	to obligate the new couple in making	to tell the speakers' willingness toward the new



Categories of Modality	Modalization		Modulation	
	Probability	Usuality	Obligation	Inclination
	happened in a new family	judgment toward <i>markobar</i> of <i>pabagas boru</i> ceremony	their family be better	couple

In modalization, there were two kinds of meaning used by the speakers (participants) namely probability and usuality. The speakers used both probability and usuality to express their opinion and suggestion in *markobar* of *pabagas boru* which mostly addressed to the new couple in *pabagas boru* ceremony. The speakers used probability meaning to portray possibilities happened in a new family. Thus, the new couple could imagine what would be faced in the future. For example:

Data 19

Kahanggi : “Sehingga **dapot** menuntun kehidupan rumah tangga yang lebih baik”
(so it can guide you for better family.)

Data 19 above showed that, *kahanggi* tried to portray possibilities happened in new family by saying the effect of guidance delivered for better family.

Meanwhile, the speaker used *usuality* meaning to express the speaker’s judgment toward *markobar* of *pabagas boru* ceremony itself. It was expressed by saying “*selalu* (*always*)” relating to the frequency of statements during *markobar* of *pabagas boru*. For example.

Data 45

Alim ulama : “Na tarsadia be hata sian hami abenna madung **selalu** disampeon
dalihan natolu dot atobango nakkin, cukup sekian ma hata ngen
ami”
(we don’t have many words because what we want to say has
already always stated by *dalihan natolu* and *atobangan*, that’s all
from us.)

Selalu (*always*) used by *alim ulama* showed what he stated already always stated by the previous speakers including *dalihan natolu* and *atobangan*.

In modulation, the speakers used obligation and inclination. The reasons why the speakers realized obligation in their speech were to obligate the new couple in making their family be better. For example.

Data 6

Suhut : “**malo malo** ho mamasukkon dirimi di sadun ulang ko lupa inang doot
mamulai bismillah dohot sumbayang inang i do sude nakkin ajaran ni
ustad tai ajaran ni agamanta”
(You must adapt there. Don’t forget to start your activities with Bismillah and pray
because it’s our obligation in our religion.)
The use of *malo malo* (*must*) emphasized the obligation of a wife in her new family to
create a better family.

Then, to tell the speakers’ willingness toward the new couple was used inclination. This categories of modality emphasized what husband and wife must act toward religion, family, and social. In order that a husband and wife could live happily. For example.

Data 62

Groom : “**Mudah-mudahan** tulang marsasehatan ma ita sudena.”
(Hopefully, all of us are healthy, Tulang.)

Data above showed if the speaker (groom) expressed his willingness to be healthy either for his new family or his mother and father in law.

Furthermore, the reasons of modality realization in the texts of *markobar* in *pabagas boru* ceremony explained above could be identified based on its modality realization showed in the table 4.2.

Table 4.2 The Reasons of Modality Realization in the Texts of *Markobar* in *Pabagas Boru* Ceremony

No	Categories of Modality	Modals	Reasons of Modality Realization
1	Modalization Probability	<i>boti ma</i> (likely)	to portray possibilities happened
		<i>tarsoni</i> (perhaps)	
		<i>tar boti ma</i> (likely)	
		<i>songoni</i> (likely)	
		<i>tarsongoni</i> (think)	
		<i>anggo</i> (maybe)	to portray possibilities to end the speech
		<i>mudahan</i> (maybe)	
		<i>soni ma</i> (maybe)	
		<i>i ma</i> (assume)	to portray possibilities in realizing the advices
		<i>ninna</i> (assume)	
2	Modalization Usuality	<i>nakkon pala ragu</i> (believe)	to express the speaker's judgment toward <i>markobar</i> in <i>pabagas boru</i> ceremony
		<i>selalu</i> (always)	
3	Modulation Obligation	<i>dapot</i> (can)	to obligate the new couple in making their family be better
		<i>malo</i> (can)	
		<i>aso lek</i> (can)	
		<i>malo malo</i> (must)	
		<i>akkon</i> (must)	
		<i>hope tong</i> (must)	
		<i>pade-pade</i> (have to)	
4	Modulation Inclination	<i>mudah mudahan</i> (hopefully)	to tell the speakers' willingness toward the advices provided

Table 4.2 shows that in modalization probability, there are three reasons of modality realization such as, (1) to portray possibilities happened; (2) to portray possibilities to end the speech; and (3) to portray possibilities in realizing the advices which generally it portrays possibilities happened in a new family explained above. It could be identified based on modality realization used such as, *boti ma* (likely), *tarsoni* (perhaps), *tar boti ma* (likely), *songoni* (likely), *tarsongoni* (think), *anggo* (maybe), *mudahan* (maybe), *soni ma* (maybe), *i ma* (assume), *ninna* (assume), and *nakkon pala ragu* (believe). Modalization usuality realized by *selalu* (always) is to express the speaker's judgment toward *markobar* in *pabagas boru* ceremony. Modulation obligation realized by *dapot* (can), *malo* (can), *aso lek* (can), *malo malo* (must), *akkon* (must), *hope tong* (must), and *pade-pade* (have to) is to obligate the new couple in making their family be better. Then, modulation inclination realized by *mudah mudahan* (hopefully) is to tell the speakers' willingness toward the advices provided.

Thus, modality categories used in *markobar* of *pabagas boru* ceremony, the speakers used modalization (probability and usuality) to express their opinion and suggestion in *markobar* in *pabagas boru* which mostly addressed to the new couple in *pabagas boru* ceremony. The speakers used probability meaning to portray possibilities happened in a new family. Thus, the new couple could imagine what would be faced in the future. Meanwhile, the speaker used *usuality* meaning to express the speaker's judgment toward *markobar* in *pabagas boru* ceremony itself. It was expressed by saying "*selalu* (always)" relating to the frequency of statements during *markobar* in *pabagas boru*. Furthermore, the speakers used modulation (obligation and inclination) to obligate the new couple in making their family be better and to tell the speakers' willingness toward the new couple. Thus, this category of modality emphasized what husband and wife must act toward religion, family, and social. In order that a husband and wife could live happily.

Therefore, based on the findings in this research it could be concluded that the modality used was relevant with the speakers' goal in *markobar* in *pabagas boru* namely to advise and portray how a new family lived as well as how Mandailing society lives well. It is such a life guidance in Mandailing culture portraying in *markobar* in *pabagas boru* as Mandailing oral tradition.

5. Conclusion

In the pabagas boru ceremony, the modality is used for the following reasons: (1) to illustrate what might have happened in a new family; (2) to convey the opinions and suggestions of the speakers; (3) to obligate the new couple to create a better family; and (4) to convey the speakers' willingness to work with the new couple.

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