

# Utilization Of Digital Music Technology Media In The Creation Of Batak Toba's Song

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**Abstract.** This study aims to offer an alternative working method in the creative process of creating music using the currently developing technological media, of course, more considering the efficiency and effectiveness of work. In this research, specifically taking one example on the creation of Batak song on digital music technology devices. In addition, this research was conducted to try maintain and develop the creative process of the Toba people on North Sumatra in terms of tone and word processing, which is then used as the term "Song."

This study consist of: 1) Trying the process of creating Batak song using digital music technology; 2) Providing ideas regarding the method of packaging Batak song using digital music technology. The research method used is a qualitative approach.

The results of this research are art products in the format of digital audio data processing from Batak song which are the focus of work. This research might become an alternative discourse that supports and drives the creative process in the development of knowledge in the field of North Sumatra music.

**Keywords:** song, Toba, technology media, digital.

## 1. Introduction

Toba's society originate from the area on the edge of Lake Toba, Tapanuli, then spread to various regions in Indonesia. The Toba tribe has a unique variety of culture and language. One of these characteristics is expressed in the creativity of creating songs, usually called Batak music/ song. One form of creativity possessed by the Toba peoples is the ability to create music and songs. In the 1980s there were Batak music groups, including music groups such as D'Mercys and PanBers, solo singers were Liberty Manik and Cornel Simanjuntak.

If we talk in the context of contemporary music, the names Bill Saragih and Ben M Pasaribu are known. So those who lead the music industry today include Vicky Sianipar and Judika Sihotang. This fact shows that the exploration of music creation and composing songs continues to occur in the Toba's community from time to time.

In this article we systematically describe efforts to continue the tradition of creativity in creating Batak songs through a digital technology media approach as an answer to the

challenges of industrial revolution 4.0. Batak song production work that explores the tones and instrumentation of the Toba Batak of North Sumatra based on digital media.

The presence of music software such as *Cubase* or *Studio One* allows composers to create or arrange songs using a computer or laptop. This various software comes with complete recording features and quite varied sound bank choices that is future of Virtual Sound Technology (Vst). Through the features provided, it can open up a wide space for exploration in creating "fresh" and renewable Batak song compositions, without losing its traditional aesthetic elements. Considering that the song creation in this work is tied to ethnicity, a strategy is needed that makes the song directly tied to Toba identity. This also takes into account the human side of creative work in the music that is created.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

The material used in this article uses data collected when conducting searches or research in the field, namely in the form of music and written documentation that can be used as a study reference or reference source to form and strengthen the perspective used to compose writings related to the creation of Batak music. The perception of the Toba people in viewing music as a medium for creativity and expression is also needed to be taken into consideration in choosing word idioms in composing musical texts. This is done in order to maintain the humanity side in the creativity of creating music according to the culture of life of the Toba people.

The research method used is a qualitative research method borrowing the ideas of Norman K. Denzin & Yvona S. Lincoln, who argue that "Qualitative research is an activity that places the observer in the world, consisting of a series of interpretive material practices that make the world visible. This practice turns the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photos, recordings and memos about oneself...", meaning that it is necessary to carry out a series of activities in the field where the Toba people live their lives dynamically. The activities carried out in this research consisted of collecting data to compose writing with the first step being that the researcher made observations to discover various styles and forms of Toba songs/ music. Data was collected through audio and video recordings of Toba songs/ music. Apart from that, interviews with Toba traditional musicians are also needed to enrich the data. The number of informants is not limited as long as it is deemed necessary and relevant to enrich the research data. The equipment needed is a video camera, photos and audio recording tools which are useful for documenting data.

Next, we will borrow the idea of the creation method put forward by Alma Hawkins, who concluded that art creation consists of a series of activities, that namely is exploration, improvisation and formation. Exploration is carried out by searching for as much data in the field as possible to become material for creation. Improvisation is carried out by collecting sounds and carrying out sound integration trials in the laboratory work stage using digital media devices, from here we can produce sound material in terms of text and context that is deemed appropriate to represent Toba-ness in the songs created. The formation stage is carried out through work on composing songs according to the rules of music harmonization. All activities will be carried out in a series of activities in work laboratories and computer/digital music technology media devices.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The process of creating songs at the Toba Song formation stage using digital music technology can be divided into several stages, namely selecting a theme, composing lyrics or text, creating a melody, and composing a musical arrangement style. The following is a detailed explanation of how each stage works.

#### 3.1. Determine the theme

The choice of theme is of course guided by the nobility of local cultural wisdom and the social values of life of the Toba people. This is done so that the resulting song is expected to have an identity that depicts "Toba-ness" of course. For example, themes of family, brotherhood, love, and others.

#### 3.2. Write lyrics or text

After determining the theme, the next step is to write the lyrics or text. Text here means anything in the form of letters-words-sentences-numbers or a combination there of which is considered to embody the ideas and messages in the song being composed. The theme that has been chosen is then expressed through the arrangement of words or sentences. In order to fulfill aspects of beauty and suitability, the preparation of the song text certainly pays attention to the choice of diction and rhyme. In order to feel closer to the Toba people as well as to become the identity of the Toba traditional song itself, the song lyrics were composed in the Toba language. In order to feel closer to the Toba people and at the same time to become the identity of the Toba traditional song itself, the song text was composed in Toba language. The following is an example of the text of a song entitled *Among Inong*. In general, the meaning contained in this song is a child's great gratitude to his parents for their services in raising and educating him so far.

*Ho Inong Ho Among  
Mauliatema di holong ni roha  
Hapitoran mi di hami geleng mon  
Ditumpak Tuhani ma hamu saleleng na  
Ale Inang pangitubu  
Amang parsinuan  
Balga ni holong ni roha tu au  
Dang nang adong marhahurangan saotik pe  
Sian na me'net  
Sahat tu na magodang  
Gomos do ho lao mangkaholongi au  
Lojami dohot gogo mi sude na i  
Humokop hami on*

### 3.3. Creating Melodies

The next stage is creating a melody. The melody in this song is composed based on lyrics or text which have been successfully arranged in such a way based on the needs and desires of the composer, and have taken into account all aspects that are binding directly or indirectly. The melody was composed using a diatonic scale approach, considering that the influence of ecclesiastical music and church choirs dominates the auditory experience of the Toba community in general.

### 3.4. Compiling Music Arrangements

When compiling a musical arrangement, you must of course pay attention to the choice of musical instruments used. Considering that the main point of this article is digital music technology, all the musical instruments used, both Western and traditional musical instruments, all use sound choices from digital virtual instruments (vst) installed in the Cubase 10.5 software.

Following are some of the virtual instruments used in compiling song arrangements.



Figure 1. Vst Acoustic Piano

This feature provides audio data for acoustic piano instruments, the range of notes and octaves can be adjusted based on needs. This feature also provides distinctive audio according to current developments during the period when the piano instrument was developed. Using this feature, it is possible to work on the sequencer without having to present the piano musical instrument directly, simply by clicking on the feature using a mouse or keyboard on a computer device, or using a portable keyboard controller.



Figure 2. Vst Guitar Bass

This feature provides audio facilities for electric bass guitar music instruments, equipped with sound effects to meet needs according to sound quality when carrying out work on composing notes. This feature allows work to produce the sound of an electric bass musical instrument without having to present the musical instrument directly, simply by clicking on the feature with the mouse cursor or keyboard on a computer device or portable keyboard controller.



Picture 3. Vst Guitar

This feature provides audio facilities for guitar music instruments (acoustic, electric), also equipped with several types of sound effects that can be used according to the work needs of composing music. This feature can also be used by using a mouse or keyboard on a computer device or keyboard controller.



Picture 4. Vst Drum

This feature provides audio facilities for musical instruments, drum sets and percussion accessories, also equipped with devices that make it possible to change the quality of the percussion sound according to what is desired in sound composing work. This feature allows work without having to present a drum set or other percussion equipment, simply by using a mouse or keyboard on a computer device or portable keyboard controller.

Looking at the features of the sound bank facility above, of course it is very possible to become a working medium for creating music efficiently without having to present musical instruments directly along with recording device settings (uses a lot of energy and space). The use of VST is considered to be an offer that is quite capable of meeting work efficiency needs in the Batak song creation process, because it is able to provide sound to carry out the creation work process without having to provide musical instrument players, or in other words there will be fewer people working but are able to provide various complex instrument sounds. Seeing this, people who work in digital media are certainly not just operators. However, you are required to have sharp "feeling" and sufficient musical knowledge, as well as understanding the need for music that is tied to a theme that ties directly or indirectly to the song being worked on. It is also hoped that this can support the humanist side that is close or inherent in the lives of the Toba people.

\*The results of the Toba Batak song creation work can be accessed via the following link: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hd1CVBqF7IILo\\_WEhMJZH9TcJXAQpbye/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hd1CVBqF7IILo_WEhMJZH9TcJXAQpbye/view?usp=drive_link)

#### 4. Conclusion

This article offers a method that can be used to approach the work of creating Batak songs by utilizing digital technological media, namely music work software in the form of a VST sound bank. Through this article, it is also hoped that creativity must of course be complemented by elements of humanity in every work product. So the creation process can be carried out through the stages described above. So it is hoped that the work process of creating Batak songs contains elements of creativity and a "feeling" of the humanity of the "Toba people" that binds the work product produced.

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