

Principles of Dalihan Na Tolu in Mandok Hata as Speaking Skills in Bataknese Culture

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Abstract. Speaking skills tend to be based on the national curriculum which often does not take into account local wisdom and socio-cultural contexts. This article aims to analyze speaking skills using the principles of *dalihan natolu* with a focus on *mandok hata* as one of the speaking skills. This research uses qualitative methods with primary data collection techniques through interviews and secondary data through literature studies. The results of the research show that mandok hata using the principle of *dalihan natolu* in the Batak tribe can improve speaking skills.

Keywords: dalihan natolu principle, mandok hata, speaking skills.

1 Introduction

Humans in everyday life are always faced with speaking activities. Wherever we are, we are always required to be able to speak. By speaking, someone tries to express their thoughts and feelings to other people verbally. Considering how productive speaking activities are, Soenardi (1996) emphasized that speaking skills are part of active-productive language skills. Generally, it can be said that in current school learning, there are still many students still lack of speaking skills. Many students face problems in expressing their ideas in front of their friends, or simply telling stories in front of the class or having regular discussions. They seem to have a reluctant attitude. Sometimes even speaking skills become annoying for them. Interpersonal communication competence plays a crucial part in the educational interaction space, as it directly impacts the behaviour of students who require a straightforward communication flow[1].

Solving these problems, efforts are needed in the form of developing active, innovative and creative learning that is student-centered. Teachers always think about how to make students active in learning process. Without adequate planning may not improve students' speaking skills and grades [2]. Students need to be given the opportunity to experience, try, and implement or practice what they learn to obtain better results. Curriculum 2013, namely the center in the teaching and learning process is the student as a learner or often referred to as the student center, while the teacher is only used as a motivator. As stated by Tarigan [3], the state of speaking teaching, in line with the state of Indonesian language teaching, is not satisfactory yet. Students' speaking skills in a broad sense are inadequate. The reality in discussions, seminars or lectures shows that most of the participants are silent and do not speak much. Argumentation skills are still difficult to get.

The findings revealed that the factors related to students, teachers, classroom and course materials significantly affect students' speaking skills[4]. Some factors that make students rarely practice, there is a lack of continuity between one language skill and the other three language skills, and teachers still lack motivation for students and perhaps teachers are less skilled in teaching speaking skills. This is what drives us to provide special actions in learning through a communicative-integrative approach that combines all language skills, but in this research the author focuses on one skill, namely speaking skills.

The formation of speaking skills is carried out in formal environments and also family environments, in family environments for example providing opportunities for children to talk with other family members. In a democratic family, each family member has the right to talk to other family members. By providing this opportunity, children will learn to speak well, politely, straightforwardly and politely. Apart from that, when speaking, you need to pay attention to family members of different ages or positions in the family. In its implementation, the role of parents has a crucial position because parents must be able to set a good example of how to speak to family members.

Families generally pass on good values in accordance with their culture or beliefs and pass them on to the next generation, including education in speaking skills based on the local wisdom of *dalihan natolu*, namely *mandok hata*. Speaking skills (*mandok hata*) based on the principle of *dalihan natolu* is an educational approach to speaking skills that takes into account local values in society. This approach (*dalihan natolu*) respects local values, traditions and culture, which are appropriate to the local context. *Dalihan Na Tolu* consistently enhances humanity in harmony and it keeps warm in touch with the social profile. *Angkola* language has unique variations in the structure, coda sound, accent, and intonation to avoid saying subject as respect and the symbol of politeness. *Dalihan Na Tolu* creates and maintains norms in brotherhood and togetherness as an ingrained belief [5]. Harmony is mainly created from *Dalihan Na Tolu's* local ties which regulates people's lifestyles, both in acting, behaving and in interacting with others [3]. In this case, the principle of *dalihan natolu* in *mandok hata* can be considered as a form of practicing good speaking skills by considering other people's points of view.

To see the comparison and urgency of this research, we refer to a number of previous studies that are relevant in the context of the *mandok hata* event as a speaking skill in Batak culture. Some of this research includes the identification of sarcasm language styles in the *mandok hata* new year celebration, as well as the analysis of deixis in the *mandok hata* at the Saur Matua death ceremony. The first research was Ulya Muharrami's research[6] entitled *Sarcasm Identification of Batak Toba Culture in the mandok hata New Year Celebration*. This research focuses on variations in language styles in the *mandok hata* New Year celebration using language styles by observing four videos. The context in this research is the *mandok hata* new year celebration, with an emphasis on language style and understanding the true meaning of an utterance according to the speaker's intentions. The next research is research by Friska Simaremare and Meisuri [7] entitled *Deixis on Mandok Hata in Saur Matua Death Ceremony*. The focus of this research is discussing deixis in *mandok hata* at the Saur Matua death ceremony with a descriptive qualitative design using the Saur Matua VCD as a data source.

Previous research has contributed to understanding *mandok hata* in various contexts of life in the Batak Toba community. While not directly focused on speaking skills, these studies provide insight into the principles of *mandok hata*, namely understanding meaning, and related linguistic aspects in the context of Toba Batak culture. To broaden the understanding of *mandok*

hata as a speaking skill in Batak culture, this research focuses on integrating the values of dalihan natolu in mandok hata as a speaking skill.

2 Research Methods

This research uses qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach to understand and interpret the meaning of phenomena, events and their relationship with ordinary people in certain situations [8]. This research uses qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach to understand and interpret the meaning of phenomena, events and their relationships with several people in certain situations[9]. The subject of this research is L. Panggabean (59 years old) who is an academic and Batak figure, Immanuel D.B. Silitonga (35 years), Kaleb E. Simanungkalit (32 years), Lestari Sianturi (39 years), Debora Uli Lubis (24 years) where the research subject selection technique using the snowball sampling model. The snowball sampling technique is carried out by selecting informants from individuals and the number becomes large until the results sought are actually found[10].

Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews and observation. An interview is a question and answer process between an interviewer and an informant to obtain the data, information and opinions regarding the topic being studied. The type of interview used in this research is an unstructured planned interview, where an interview guide has been created but does not use a standard format or sequence. This aims to enable informants to provide explanations or opinions that flow according to the situation. Apart from interviews, researchers also used non-participant observers as an effort to obtain documentation and observe the behavior around the informants when carrying out the mandok hata event. Triangulation of sources and methods was carried out to ensure the credibility of the data obtained from informants.

The data analysis technique used in this research is the flow model developed by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña [11]. This model consists of three main activities, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is the process of selecting, extracting and transforming initial data that emerges from field notes, with the aim of simplifying the data. The data reduction process takes place continuously throughout the research. Next, data presentation is carried out by developing a structured description of information to draw conclusions from the reduced data. Conclusion drawing is carried out to draw conclusions from the results of the analysis and verify the meaning of each phenomenon found in the field, note the regularities and configurations that may exist, and identify the causal flow of the observed phenomena and relevant proportions. In this research, data analysis techniques were also carried out using source triangulation and method triangulation to strengthen the validity of the data obtained from informants.

3 Result and Analysis

Batak is an original ethnic group from North Sumatra, Indonesia. The Batak tribe consists of several sub-ethnicities, namely Batak Toba, Mandailing, Karo, Simalungun, and Pakpak. Batak tribe has a very diverse cultural wealth, including art, customs and beliefs. Batak language is the language used by the Batak tribe and consists of several different dialects. The Toba Batak dialect is the most widely spoken and is considered the official language of the Batak tribe. Batak, which is one of the ethnic groups, certainly has local wisdom, just like other regions of

Indonesia. Local wisdom in the Batak community has a very important role in fulfilling life's needs and the process of life itself. Local wisdom refers to the knowledge, practices and values developed by local communities in facing challenges and meeting their needs in the environment where they live which has been passed down over time and passed down from generation to generation, one of which is mandok hata.

The mandok hata contains the principles of democratic education, including active involvement and participation, understanding of rights and obligations, criticism and reflection, practical communication, ability to work together and mutual cooperation, and social awareness. [12]. How could it not be? Batak people have the right to speak in various traditional ceremonies. The mandok hata tradition is regarded as a successful reconciliation method for repairing relationships after a conflict [12]. The mandok hata event in Batak Toba basically must comply with the principles of dalihan natolu, namely manat mardongan tubu, somba marhula-hula and elek marboru.

The hula-hula are a group of people/clans on the wife's side who have a position in the dalihan natolu and are considered the highest position. Therefore, the phrase somba marhula-hula was born, which means you must respect or respect your wife's family in order to achieve prosperity. The implementation of speaking skills is that when talking to older people or the wife's side, you must be more polite with better speech. Dongan tubu is a clan group that has an equal position, namely clan friends or relatives. Therefore, the phrase manat mardongan tubu arise, which means maintaining brotherhood to avoid conflicts, and you must keep polite in speaking. Boru is a clan group that is in the last position, namely the sisters of one's own side, the husband's clan and the sisters of the father's side. That is why the elek marboru phrase arose, which means loving the boru[13]. Perhaps many people think that the concept of dalihan natolu excuses provides classification and discredits one party. However, it must be remembered that the stove must not have legs that are not the same height. Everything must be aligned so that it can support something on it. Therefore, between hula-hula, dongan tubu and boru have the same rights and obligations. In this case, a person will not be appreciated and respected when he does not love and respect others. Like wise with Boru, he will not be loved if he does not appreciate and respect other people. Therefore, dalihan natolu is one of the real speaking skill practices in Batak culture, especially to practice speaking politely and politely in speaking [14].

Dalihan natolu is a traditional social and cultural system of the Bataknese which has the principle of teaching the values of mutual respect and mutual care in speaking, both among community members in a group or clan. Apart from that, the concept of dalihan natolu means that family or community members must be skilled in speaking, especially when there is a traditional event, every person appointed to speak must be ready to give a speech or mandok hata or in Indonesian to speak to convey their hearts, thoughts and feelings, so this habit will create speaking skills in Toba Batak culture.

The teaching carried out by parents to guide and make children capable of speaking in public is carried out from an early age when they are in high school. When the child is at an early age, parents will teach and guide him with words such as saying thank you and apologizing during the mandok hata so that the hope is that the child will be able to speak in public on his own and usually wait for his progress at the mandok hata event next year.

The event of mandok hata will also be held at the beginning of the year service on the 1st time at the church before or after the service which is usually represented by members of the congregation who have migrated, members of the congregation, elders and church administrators. This event has similarities to the mandok hata event in the family, but the difference is that it is only represented by a few people who form the structure of the church considering the large number of congregants. For other religions, for example, in this case the

Angkola and Mandailing Bataks, who are predominantly Muslim, also carry out mandok hata, but not only at the turn of the year.

Apart from the mandok hata event at the turn of the year, efforts are made by the Batak people to get used to speaking in public officially through affirming sisi. Confirmation of sisi is one part of the confession of faith in Christianity, especially in Protestant churches. Confirmation of sisi in the Batak language is called malua which generally means maturity in faith and the point at which a person becomes a witness of God, accepts God within himself and enters His banquet. When confirming this sisi, the person who have received confirmation will be asked to give a speech or mandok hata attitude regarding readiness to become mature in faith. In fact, it is commonly for Bataknese to hold thanksgivings for the confirmation of their sisi performed by their children. It is during this thanksgiving event that the child will perform mandok hata in front of invited guests in readiness for acceptance and confirmation of faith.

Based on the explanation above, several principles of speaking skills that emerged from the mandok hata tradition are as follows.

3.1 Active Involvement And Participation

In the mandok hata event, all individuals including children and adults are actively involved in speaking and expressing opinions. This active involvement shows equal participation in speaking regardless of age and gender. Even Debora Uli Lubis (24 years old), Kaleb E. Simanungkalit (32 years old) have been given the opportunity to speak at family events in mandok hata events since they were not yet in school. Their parents' role is to teach them even a few words which are always appreciated every year. This is in line with L. Panggabean [15] who stated that children are taught from childhood to only say happy new year during the mandok hata event. L. Panggabean always encourages his children and gives toddlers the option to lead prayers or express opinions when it is their turn to speak at the mandok hata event. L. Panggabean said that even though children's words are still simple, this is a way to train them to participate and speak in public from an early age, so that through this activity someone gets used to and is skilled at speaking.

3.2 Practical communication

Practical communication at the mandok hata event is intended to convey messages or opinions clearly, concisely and easily understood by all event participants. In the context of the mandok hata event, practical communication is important to ensure that each individual can participate smoothly and effectively. In mandok hata, practical communication is used to enable each individual, including children and adults, to express their opinions clearly and firmly. Messages or opinions are conveyed briefly and focused so that they can be easily understood by all family members. Apart from that, through the mandok hata event, family members gain a clear understanding. This practical communication will also build individual confidence and communication skills because they convey opinions regularly (every year or several activities) so that participants can develop better communication skills. The mandok hata event is a forum for asking for suggestions and objective evaluation, as well as a place for family gatherings and an opportunity to take a break from all activities, especially for those who have migrated. Debates and discussions in Batak culture train argumentation and cooperation skills to achieve better understanding and find the best solutions.

3.3 Social awareness

Social awareness refers to an individual's understanding and recognition of the social conditions around him, including the needs and rights of individuals or groups. The meaning of social awareness involves understanding the roles and responsibilities of individuals in maintaining and advancing collective welfare. In the mandok hata event, social awareness has a significant positive impact. Some positive impacts are increased solidarity and togetherness. This results in stronger family ties and increases the sense of togetherness in facing challenges and life changes such as increasing the number of family members or even vice versa. The development of empathy also emerges from the mandok hata event. They can be more sensitive to the feelings, needs and experiences of other people, thereby enabling the creation of an inclusive and caring environment for family members. The mandok hata event is a valuable moment for learning and sharing knowledge, experience and skills between the older and younger generations. This results in a productive exchange of ideas, increases understanding of cultural values, and strengthens communication and reflection skills for all family members.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that the mandok hata event has the potential to improve and develop speaking skills based on local wisdom which can be applied in various regions in Indonesia, although with different names. Mandok hata with the principle of *dalihan natolu* is an important local wisdom for improving speaking skills and is part of efforts to preserve the culture of the Toba Batak community.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that the event of mandok hata will improve and develop speaking skills based on local wisdom which can be applied in various regions in Indonesia, although the terms of use may be different. Mandok hata with the principle of *dalihan natolu* is an important local wisdom for improving speaking skills and is part of efforts to preserve the culture of the Toba Batak community.

4 Conclusion

Based on the concept of the *dalihan natolu* principle, namely *mandok hata*, in speaking skills, it can be concluded that speaking skills that integrate local wisdom values and traditions can help improve and develop a person's speaking skills. Through local wisdom-based speaking skills, people can learn how to communicate or speak well and politely using language that is straight forward and easy to understand.

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