



Illocutionary Speech Acts in the Tobus Huning Ceremony of the Batak Simalungun Ethnic Group and the Regional Language Lesson Plan

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe and analyze the types of illocutionary speech acts that emerge during the *Tobus Huning* ritual in the Batak Simalungun community. *Tobus Huning* is a sacred rite within the traditional wedding ceremony that holds symbolic meaning as a form of respect and gratitude to parents—particularly the mother—for their sacrifices in raising a child until marriage. This ritual functions not only as a customary formal procedure but also serves as a medium for emotional expression and the intergenerational transmission of cultural values. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through participatory observation of the ritual, audiovisual documentation, and in-depth interviews with traditional leaders, the families of the bride and groom, and local cultural stakeholders. Data analysis was carried out in three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing through an inductive process. The findings indicate the presence of four dominant types of illocutionary acts: (1) Assertives, used to convey information and symbolic interpretations of each ritual stage; (2) Directives, functioning as instructions or requests to ensure the ceremony proceeds according to customary norms; (3) Expressives, articulating emotions such as gratitude, reverence, and heartfelt sentiments among family members; and (4) Commissives, which contain promises and moral commitments made by the bride and groom to their parents and extended families. These findings affirm that speech acts in the *Tobus Huning* ritual not only serve pragmatic functions of communicative intent but also act as an essential medium for preserving cultural identity, transmitting spiritual values, and reinforcing social solidarity within the Batak Simalungun community.

Keywords: illocutionary acts, Tobus Huning, Batak Simalungun, regional language, lesson plan

Tindak Tutur Ilokusi dalam Upacara Tobus Huning Etnik Batak Simalungun dan Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Bahasa Daerah

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis jenis-jenis tindak tutur ilokusi yang muncul dalam prosesi *Tobus Huning* masyarakat Batak Simalungun. *Tobus Huning* merupakan salah satu ritus sakral dalam rangkaian upacara pernikahan adat, yang memuat makna simbolik sebagai bentuk penghormatan dan ungkapan terima kasih kepada orang tua, khususnya ibu, atas pengorbanan dalam membesarkan anak hingga memasuki jenjang pernikahan. Ritual ini tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai formalitas adat, melainkan juga sebagai wahana ekspresi emosional dan transmisi nilai-nilai budaya secara turun-temurun. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi partisipatif terhadap pelaksanaan upacara, dokumentasi audiovisual, serta wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh adat, keluarga pengantin, dan pemerhati budaya lokal. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan yang bersifat induktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya empat jenis tindak tutur ilokusi yang dominan, yaitu: (1) asertif, digunakan untuk menyampaikan informasi dan penafsiran simbolik atas tahapan upacara; (2) direktif, berfungsi sebagai instruksi atau permintaan agar pelaksanaan prosesi berjalan sesuai norma adat; (3) ekspresif, untuk mengartikulasikan perasaan haru, syukur, dan penghormatan antar anggota keluarga; dan (4) komisif, mengandung janji dan komitmen moral yang diungkapkan oleh pengantin kepada orang tua dan kerabat. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa tindak tutur dalam *Tobus Huning* tidak hanya memiliki fungsi pragmatik sebagai penyampaian maksud komunikatif, tetapi juga menjadi sarana penting dalam pelestarian identitas budaya, pewarisan nilai spiritual, dan penguatan solidaritas sosial dalam komunitas Batak Simalungun.

Kata Kunci: tindak tutur ilokusi, Tobus Huning, Batak Simalungun, rencana pelaksanaan pembelajaran, bahasa daerah

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INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a means of communication between individuals, but also functions as an instrument for shaping, maintaining, and representing social realities and cultural value systems within a society (Damanik et al., 2023). Language is not merely a means of communication between individuals, but also functions as an instrument for shaping, maintaining, and representing social realities and cultural value systems within a society. According to Halliday & Hasan (1989), language is part of a social system that encompasses ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. This means that every form of speech conveys not only semantic messages but also reflects the social relations, power structures, and cultural identities that exist within the community of speakers.

In the context of traditional societies, such as the Batak Simalungun ethnic group, language plays a crucial role in various ritual and ceremonial activities that are passed down from one generation to the next. One prominent form of linguistic expression is the Tobus Huning traditional ceremony, a sacred procession performed during traditional weddings as a form of respect for the bride's mother. In this ritual, language is used not only to convey literal messages but also as a medium for conveying symbols and cultural values through distinctive utterances.

Tobus Huning contains profound spiritual, emotional, and symbolic values. This ceremony serves as a means of collective expression to express gratitude to ancestors, strengthen kinship ties, and affirm moral responsibility within the social structure of the Batak Simalungun community. Throughout its journey, the language forms used are not ordinary communication, but rather utterances rich in meaning and intentionality, which pragmatic studies categorize as illocutionary speech acts.

Speech act theory, developed by John Searle (1979), divides illocutionary speech acts into five main categories: assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative. In the context of

Tobus Huning, the four main types—assertive, directive, expressive, and commissive—are the dominant patterns that represent various communicative intentions, born of social structures and traditional values. For example, assertive speech acts are typically used to convey information about the symbolic meaning of the ceremony; directives are used to give instructions during the procession; expressives are used to express gratitude, emotion, or pride; and commissives contain promises or commitments from the bride and groom to their parents or community.

The study of speech acts in the Tobus Huning ceremony is particularly urgent in the context of education and cultural preservation. As noted by Sumarsono (2007), today's young generation tends to experience alienation from local languages and cultures due to globalization and the dominance of popular culture. This situation raises concerns about the sustainability of oral cultural practices rich in educational and moral values. Therefore, a pragmatic analysis of speech forms in traditional rituals such as Tobus Huning is crucial not only for academic purposes but also as a cultural revitalization strategy.

In education, a local wisdom-based learning approach is one solution for rebuilding the bridge between the younger generation and traditional values. According to Nurgiyantoro (2015), integrating cultural content into language teaching materials will strengthen students' linguistic competence while fostering awareness of ethnic identity and local wisdom. In this regard, traditional speech acts can be used as contextual and character-based teaching materials, for example, in teaching pragmatics, speaking skills, and communication ethics.

Based on the above description, the research questions are formulated. First, what are the types of illocutionary speech acts used in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Simalungun Batak people? Second, what are the pragmatic meanings and cultural values contained in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Batak people? Third, how can we plan the teaching of regional language speech acts



in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Batak people using innovative teaching strategies and materials that are explicitly based on Google Forms?

In line with the above problem formulation, this research has three objectives. First, we identify the types of illocutionary speech acts used in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Batak Simalungun people. Second, we analyze the pragmatic meanings and cultural values contained within them. Third, we describe a learning plan for regional language speech acts that utilizes innovative strategies in specialized teaching materials, based on Google Forms.

This research is expected not only to enrich the body of cultural linguistics studies but also to make a tangible contribution to the development of language education based on local values. Furthermore, this research will contribute to the successful preservation of oral traditions as part of intangible cultural heritage. This research will also be beneficial for any student who wants to understand the types of illocutionary speech acts used in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Batak Simalungun people and to understand their pragmatic meanings.

Relevant articles can be found in various online journals and publications. Some of these articles are presented below:

- 1) Hutabarat, S., Ripai, M., Napitupulu, P. V. A., Harahap, S., Amelia, R., Arif, S., & Siallagan, L. (2024). Strategi Pelestarian Budaya Simalungun melalui Pesta Rondang Bintang. *Journal of Education, Religions Humanities, and Multidisciplinary*, 2(2), 1140-1144.
- 2) Purba, F. A. (2019). Makna Simbolik Tor-To Rsombah dalam Upacara Adat Kematian Sayur Matua pada Masyarakat Suku Batak Simalungun. *Gelar: Jurnal Seni Budaya*, 16(2), 219-229, <https://doi.org/10.33153/GLR.V16I2.2490>
- 3) Sinaga, D. M., & Purba, A. S. (2023). Revitalisasi Pesta Rondang Bintang sebagai Upaya Pelestarian Budaya

Simalungun di Era Modern. *Jurnal Antropologi Indonesia*. 45(2),1 23-145.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of the forms of illocutionary speech acts that emerge during the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Simalungun Batak people. This approach was chosen because it allowed the researcher to explore the cultural meanings implicit in the community's linguistic practices in a contextual and naturalistic manner (Moleong, 2019).

The research was conducted in a traditional village in Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra, where the Tobus Huning practice is still actively preserved in the wedding traditions. Informants in this study included traditional leaders (such as datu or traditional kings), family members of the bride and groom, and local cultural observers. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on the consideration that informants have direct knowledge and experience related to the traditional procession and the language used. "Data were collected using three main techniques, which are described below.

First, participant observation, which involves direct observation of the Tobus Huning ceremony, with the researcher actively participating in the procession and recording the speech acts that occur in their original context. To ensure data accuracy, a non-test instrument, namely a participant observation guide, was used.

Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with traditional leaders, family members, and others familiar with the meaning of rituals and the function of language in the ceremony. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for in-depth exploration of the interviewees' responses through the use of the interview guide.

Third, audiovisual documentation. This technique, in the form of video recordings of the ceremonial procession and copies of the spoken texts during the ritual, served as supporting data for the speech act analysis.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively and interactively through four stages. The data collection stages are described below.

First, data reduction. This stage is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data obtained from the field.

Second, data presentation. This stage involves organizing the data into narratives, speech quotations, and speech act classification tables based on John Searle's theory of speech acts.

Third, concluding. This stage is conducted inductively by establishing patterns of meaning, function, and cultural values from the identified speech acts.

Fourth, data validity. This stage ensures the reliability of the data obtained through source triangulation techniques, which involve comparing data from different sources, and instrument triangulation, which consists of comparing data obtained from observation, interviews, and documentation.

In addition, various non-test instruments and member checks with informants ensure that the researcher's interpretation of the data aligns with the intent and meaning intended by cultural actors.

Data analysis is conducted qualitatively and interactively through the following stages:

1. Data Reduction: the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data obtained from the field.
2. Data Presentation: Organizing data into narratives, speech excerpts, and speech act classification tables based on John Searle's theory.
3. Drawing Conclusions: Conducted inductively by establishing patterns of meaning, function, and cultural values from identified speech acts.
4. Data Validity

To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were employed, comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. Furthermore, member checking was conducted with informants to ensure that the

researcher's interpretation of the data aligns with the intent and meaning intended by cultural actors.

RESULTS

1. Illocutionary Speech Acts as Cultural Symbols in the Tobus Huning Ceremony

Language in a traditional context is not only a means of communication, but also a cultural symbol that plays a crucial role in maintaining a society's collective understanding of meaning. In the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Simalungun Batak people, every utterance, gesture, and ritual action forms a complementary whole, building and representing a shared value system.

Tobus Huning is a significant procession in Simalungun wedding customs, marking a woman's transition from being a child to her parents' care and becoming a wife in a new family. This procession is not only a symbolic ritual but also imbued with emotional communication manifested through illocutionary speech acts. Based on Searle's theory (1979), four types of illocutionary speech acts are found in the practice of Tobus Huning: assertive, directive, expressive, and commissive.

1.1 Expressive Illocutions and Emotional Value

This is an example of an utterance in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Simalungun Batak people that contains expressive illocutions and emotional value.

“Malas ma uhurmu ale inang, mangidah boru mon simbur magodang, diatei tupa ma sombah ku hubamu, nadop marmudu-mudu au”

The example above contains expressive speech acts that show the bride's gratitude and appreciation for her mother. These expressions are not only verbal but are reinforced by symbolic actions such as bowing, worshipping, or touching the mother's feet, which emphasize the value of *martondhon* (respect). Expressions like these not only convey emotion but also build a unique spiritual bond between child and parent (Chaer & Agustina, 2010) *“diatei tupa ma sombah ku*



hubamu" ("Before you I say worship") is the ultimate expression of a child's respect for his mother. This is not only a verbal expression, but also a symbolic action reinforced by body movements such as bowing or touching the mother's feet as a sign of devotion. This kind of expressiveness is also seen in additional utterances, such as: "*Ale inang, horas ma di ho, doamu do parhobasan nami*" (O mother, may you be well; your prayers are the strength of our lives.) This utterance not only expresses gratitude but also demonstrates the spiritual relationship between child and parent.

1.2 Commissive Illocutions and Social Commitments

This is an example of an utterance from the Tobus Huning Ceremony of the Simalungun Batak Ethnic Group that contains commissive illocutions and social commitments.

"Ulang pusok uhurmu lo inang, misir ma au ianng manopot harosuku, pargotong na pinilih kin."

Describes a commissive illocutionary act, namely a child's promise and commitment to live responsibly in the household. This is an expression of moral willingness that is key in the Batak social system, where marriage is part of a collective structure and not simply an individual choice (Simanjuntak, 2022). This phrase signifies the child's readiness to enter a new phase of life with the partner they have chosen. Similar utterances that reinforce the commissive illocutionary act include: "*Uhur hu sihol ope i lambung mu, namin akkula ku maningun dihut bani sidea na domma i totaphon Naibata bakku*" (My heart still longs to be with you, but my soul must follow those God has ordained for me.) This utterance demonstrates an inner conflict between personal desires and social obligations, yet still demonstrates a commitment to taking responsibility for one's life choices.

1.3 Directive Illocutionary Acts and Apologies

This is an example of an utterance in the Tobus Huning Ceremony of the Simalungun Batak Ethnic Group that contains directive illocutionary acts and an apology.

"On ma tobus huning ai inang, husapuhon bai tontonmu inang, maafkon ham ma au, borumon, naija salah ku hubamu."

This is both an expressive and directive illocutionary act. On the one hand, this utterance conveys an emotional apology; on the other, it subtly asks for the mother's blessing and sincerity in letting go of her child. From Austin's (1962) perspective, this is an example of a performative utterance that simultaneously constitutes a social and spiritual act. Other utterances, such as "*Unang marah ho inang, unang holan ho duka, alai rujuk ma doau, sai patogu ho ma doaku*" (Don't be sad, mother. Let me go, but remain the guardian of my prayers) also demonstrate a subtle directive utterance aimed at influencing the mother's feelings so that she accepts the separation with sincerity.

1.4 Assertive Illocutions and Identity Legitimation

This is an example of an utterance from the Tobus Huning Ceremony of the Simalungun Batak Ethnic Group that contains assertive illocutions and identity legitimation.

"Ai domma jolma boru au on, laho marmudahan do uhurhu, marsada do au tu ganup na boi marsakot."

It demonstrates an assertive illocutionary act that informs the transition from a child to an adult woman in terms of social status. This utterance is meaningful in Batak culture because it symbolically declares readiness to assume a new role and serves as a form of self-legitimacy within the traditional order.

2. Language as a Mechanism for the Preservation of Intangible Culture

Language is not merely a symbolic system for conveying thoughts and feelings, but also a primary

tool for the transmission and preservation of intangible cultural heritage. In the context of traditional societies such as the Simalungun Batak, language plays a crucial role as a medium for preserving traditional values passed down through generations through verbal and nonverbal expressions in various ceremonies, including the Tobus Huning ritual. This ceremony is not merely a rite of passage for social status in the human life cycle, but also an arena where linguistic actions imbued with cultural significance take place.

According to Sumarsono (2007), language in oral culture does not stand alone but is an integral part of the social system and collective values that shape society. In this context, every word, gesture, musical rhythm, and response in Tobus Huning is integrated into a complex symbolic structure. Language is present not only in verbal utterances but also in symbolic actions such as offering *hiou* (a sacred offering), prostrating oneself, embracing, and accompanied by traditional songs containing spiritual and emotional meanings. All these elements reinforce language's status as a living mechanism for maintaining collectively inherited meaning systems.

In the Tobus Huning tradition, illocutionary speech acts play a central role in maintaining the integrity of meaningful traditional messages. Illocutionary acts are actions performed through speech, such as making statements, promises, requests, or expressing feelings, as Searle (1979) explains. When a child in this ceremony utters an utterance such as "*doamu do parhobasan nami*" (your prayer is the strength of our life), they are not only conveying information but also performing a social and spiritual act, what Austin (1962) calls a performative speech act. This utterance also becomes an action.

In other words, in Tobus Huning, language functions as an instrument that not only conveys messages but also creates realities. Utterances such as apologies, acknowledgments of responsibility, blessings, and expressions of gratitude not only shape interpersonal communication but also

strengthen the structure of social values that underpin the Batak Simalungun community.

Language also serves as a medium of connection between generations. Through traditional narratives expressed in ritual speech, the younger generation learns about ethical systems, social responsibility, and how to interpret life by local values. In this regard, language acts as a bridge connecting the past, present, and future. Therefore, the loss of traditional linguistic practices such as those in Tobus Huning also means the loss of a portion of a community's collective memory.

Yule (1996) states that language not only conveys meaning but also carries out concrete social actions. This is evident in the practice of Tobus Huning, where traditional speech establishes one's social status, strengthens family ties, and reinforces cultural norms. Language is the primary medium in the process of enculturation, namely the instilling of values and ways of life in the new generation. In this context, every traditional speech in Tobus Huning is not merely a form of verbal expression but also a concrete and socially binding cultural action.

Furthermore, language in Tobus Huning also functions as a distinguishing symbol of cultural identity. Amidst globalization and cultural homogenization, these oral traditions serve as markers that distinguish the Batak Simalungun people from other ethnic groups. Therefore, preserving the form and function of language in Tobus Huning means preserving Indonesia's cultural diversity, which is part of the world's rich heritage.

Within the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage framework, language, traditional ceremonies, and oral traditions are categorized as elements that need to be protected, preserved, and transmitted to future generations. Therefore, research into speech acts in Tobus Huning is not merely academic but also has a strategic cultural preservation dimension.



3. Implications for Education and Cultural Documentation

The implications of this research are significant in the context of education and local cultural preservation, particularly in the development of local wisdom-based curricula. Regional language education not only aims to train language skills but also serves as a means to instill moral values, ethics, and cultural identity in students. As Nurgiyantoro (2015) notes, integrating local cultural elements into learning will strengthen character formation and foster multicultural awareness.

Speech acts in Tobus Huning can be used as contextual material in teaching pragmatics in regional languages and Indonesian. Teachers can use examples of traditional speech in the learning process to help students understand the function of language in real-world social contexts. For example, students can be asked to identify types of speech acts in traditional text excerpts, analyze the cultural meanings behind them, and reflect on their relevance to everyday life.

Furthermore, tradition-based learning, such as that found in Tobus Huning, can also increase students' emotional engagement because they learn through stories and real-life experiences from their communities. This encourages meaningful learning that is inseparable from the context of students' lives. With this approach, schools become not just places to memorize language theory but also spaces for active and contextual cultural inheritance.

Furthermore, the process of cultural documentation is crucial to ensuring that practices like Tobus Huning remain alive amidst the challenges of modernization. This documentation can be done through various methods, such as:

- a. Video recording: recording the entire ceremonial procession along with the accompanying narrative and traditional speech.
- b. Transcription and transliteration: rewriting traditional speech texts into written form, either in the local language or in translation.

- c. Linguistic analysis: identifying the linguistic structure, semantic meaning, and pragmatic function of each traditional speech.
- d. Development of digital teaching materials: transforming the documentation into modules, e-books, or interactive media that can be used in learning.

Cummings (2005) states that a pragmatic linguistic approach can be a scientific foundation for documenting minority languages and oral traditions, as it helps explain how language is used in social and cultural contexts. In other words, documentation not only records the form of language but also the cultural life surrounding it. This documentation is not only crucial for researchers but also useful for indigenous communities themselves, who may lose access to their heritage due to social change. With digital archives and teaching materials based on local culture, communities can easily re-access their ancestral values and instill them in the younger generation.

In a policy context, the results of this study can serve as a reference for educational institutions, local governments, and cultural institutions in designing school- and community-based cultural preservation programs. Strengthening local content in the national curriculum, providing culture-based teacher training, and empowering indigenous communities in education are strategic steps that can be taken to ensure the sustainability of oral traditions such as Tobus Huning.

The integration of indigenous languages and cultural practices into the education system also significantly contributes to strengthening Indonesia's national identity, which is based on diversity. As stipulated in Law No. 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture, the preservation of oral traditions and regional languages is an integral part of culture-based national development.

By examining the comprehensive function of language in Tobus Huning as a symbol, preservation mechanism, and educational tool, it

can be concluded that traditional languages have great potential to be developed as cultural and educational resources. Speech acts in conventional ceremonies are not only the subject of linguistic research but also part of a strategy for character education, strengthening local identity, and preserving national values.

DISCUSSION

Speech acts in the context of the Tobus Huning ceremony are not merely verbal statements, but rather symbolic representations of the cultural, spiritual, and social values that the Batak Simalungun people hold dear. In this ritual, speech is an integral part of the social and emotional transition experienced by a child, especially a girl, as she enters a new phase of life as a wife. Tobus Huning is a form of respect for the mother, where language functions as a medium for conveying emotions, commitment, and legitimizing a new social status. The utterances delivered in this procession imply illocutionary intent, namely the specific social purpose or function contained within the utterance, such as promising, requesting, expressing gratitude, or stating a fact.

Through John Searle's speech act theory (1979), four dominant illocutionary types were identified in Tobus Huning, namely: Assertive, used to convey information or social reality. For example, the bride and groom express their readiness to live a new life., Directive: Contains requests or hopes, such as asking for blessings from the mother or family., Expressive: Expresses feelings, such as emotion, gratitude, or sadness at separation. And Commissive: Contains promises or moral commitments, such as promises to be responsible as a wife or new family member.

Language in the Tobus Huning ritual serves not only as a means of communication but also as a means of preserving intangible cultural heritage values. According to the explanation of available communication media tools and technologies (Marconi et al., 2018), language can serve as a mechanism for transmitting ancestral values, social ethics, and customary norms to the younger

generation. In Tobus Huning, language is present multidimensionally: as verbal utterances (speech), as symbolic actions (gestures, offerings), and as emotional expressions that build social cohesion. Utterances such as "doamu do parhobasan nami" not only convey literal meaning but also shape social action through performative speech acts (Austin, 1962).

Language in this ritual has the following functions: Transformative, as it can change a child's social status to that of a wife; Spiritual, as it serves as a medium for prayer, blessings, and respect for ancestors; Identificative, as it reflects the cultural identity of the Batak Simalungun people; and Intergenerational, as it is used in the transmission of values through oral expression. According to Yule (1996), language serves as a tool for social action, strengthening societal structures and maintaining social cohesion. Therefore, linguistic practices such as Tobus Huning are crucial for preserving collective memory and cultural identity amidst global homogenization.

This research has significant implications for developing a curriculum grounded in local wisdom (Andriyani & Razak, 2022). The customary speech acts in Tobus Huning can be integrated into language learning, particularly in the following aspects: Pragmatics: Students can learn the illocutionary functions and social context of speech; Speaking and Listening: Developing sensitivity to communication ethics and local values; and Character and Morals: Fostering respect for parents, social responsibility, and spirituality. This contextual learning model, grounded in local culture, fosters both emotional and intellectual student engagement. Students not only learn language structure but also understand the noble values of their community. This aligns with Nurgiyantoro's (2015) argument that learning literature and language rooted in local culture fosters character development.

Furthermore, audiovisual and textual documentation of the Tobus Huning ritual is crucial for cultural preservation and the development of digital learning media. Several documentation



strategies can be implemented, including video recordings and transcriptions of speech, the development of custom-based teaching modules, and teacher training in utilizing local traditions as teaching materials. Cummings (2005) emphasized that a linguistic pragmatic approach is highly effective in documenting minority languages because it captures the social aspects of language use, not just its form.

Within the framework of culture-based national development, as stipulated in Law No. 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture, preserving regional languages and oral traditions such as Tobus Huning is a strategic effort. Indigenous languages are not only symbols of communication but also repositories of local values, identity, and wisdom. Therefore, the results of this study can serve as a reference in formulating local content policies in schools, developing local cultural teaching materials and textbooks, implementing language and tradition revitalization programs by local governments, and empowering indigenous communities in cultural education and documentation. Thus, customary speech acts such as those in Tobus Huning are a crucial cultural resource, both as an object of scientific study and as an instrument for national character education.

CONCLUSION

The illocutionary acts in the Tobus Huning ceremony of the Simalungun Batak people serve not only as a means of communication but also as a representation of cultural, spiritual, and social values that have been passed down through generations. The customary utterances not only convey literal meaning but are also performative, creating culturally binding social actions. Furthermore, Tobus Huning demonstrates the crucial role of language in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Language serves as a primary mechanism for the transmission of values between generations and a symbol of collective identity amidst the currents of globalization.

Implications

The implications for education are far-reaching, particularly in developing a curriculum based on local wisdom that strengthens students' character and multicultural awareness. Therefore, customary speech acts such as those in Tobus Huning need to be documented and integrated into learning to maintain the sustainability of regional languages while strengthening Indonesia's national cultural identity.

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