

## An Ecolexicon on *Poul Poul* in Toba Batak Language of Toba Dialect in Aek Kanopan: An Ecolinguistic Study



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**ABSTRACT:** One of the important things that must continue to be explored and maintained is the richness of the ecolexicon of a tradition, culture, and customs. This research is about the Ecolexicon Treasures of *Poul Poul* in Toba Batak language of Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan. The purpose of this study is to explore the wealth of ecolexicon about *Poul Poul* and to explain the social praxis associated with each ecolexicon in Toba dialect of Toba Batak language in Aek Kanopan based on the study of Ecolinguistics. This research uses qualitative method. Data for the *Poul Poul* ecolexicon were obtained through interview techniques and recording techniques. Furthermore, the data analysis uses qualitative description, which means the data is collected, classified, and presented in a table. The results show that there are 14 ecolexicons of *Poul Poul* in Toba Batak language of the Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan; consisting of 8 nouns, 5 verbs, and 1 adjective. In this ecolexicon, there are 2 vocabularies that have shifted, namely grated coconut '*hurhuran*' and poul poul shifted to the term '*topung mata*'. This shift in the ecolexicon is influenced by two aspects of social praxis, namely the sociological dimension, which includes maintaining relationships and simplicity between members of the social community, and the ideological dimension, which includes beliefs. So, the collection of *Poul Poul* ecolexicons in the Toba Batak language of the Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan is very diverse. To ensure that these ecolexicons are not lost in the midst of the rapid development of the civilization of the Toba Batak community, they must be explored again and maintained. Thus, Toba Batak-speaking community living in Aek Kanopan must more actively participate in maintaining and preserving the environment and its ecolexicon so that the next generation not only hears the story but also sees its existence.

**KEYWORDS:** Poul-Poul, Ecolexicon, Ecolinguistics, Toba Batak Language, Aek Kanopan

### I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important elements of human life is language, which is used to communicate and interact with others. Language also functions as a social communication tool, both orally and in writing. In this case, language functions as a tool to convey one's thoughts, feelings, ideas and concepts. Language, according to Keraf (1984:16), consists of symbols, sounds, and noises created by the human speech apparatus and used to communicate between members of society. According to Ferdinand DeSaussure (1988), language is one of the distinguishing characteristics of community groups. This can be seen when each group of people uses a particular language, which makes them different from other groups. Based on this explanation, it is clear that language is one of the tools that if language does not exist and is not used in a social group, they will find it difficult to convey their intentions and goals properly and precisely to others; if this happens, there is only silence and silence that does not produce anything.

Based on what is mentioned above, it is decided that language exists because of humans and the environment. Language grows and is realized in its environment, and is used by humans as a means of communication. It is used to establish unity or reciprocal relationships between individuals living in a social environment. Dealing with the human environment is of course inseparable from what is called 'ecology'. The word ecology comes from the Greek, Oikos meaning 'home' or 'place to live'. Literally, ecology is the study of organisms 'at home'. Furthermore, ecology is defined as the study of organisms or groups of organisms against their environment or the mutual relationship between living organisms and their environment (Odum, 1996). Ecology is a branch of science that is closely related to the environment, while linguistics is the study of language. So, ecological studies relate to humans and the environment.

People and their environment are two interdependent and regularly interacting components, which form a whole to ensure both stay alive (Odum, 1996). Humans and their environments are interrelated systems, both natural and socio-cultural

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environments. Mbetse (2013) distinguishes between language ecology and ecological language. The language environment is the dimension or dimension of space, namely the physical, physical, geographical environment in which all languages and their speakers live. Meanwhile, environmental language is a figure (corpus) of language whose content describes the environment, both micro and macro natural environments. In other words, this language environment includes an understanding of how language functions and develops in a particular community and how external factors can influence language use and development, while environmental language is a language that can be understood as a means of communication between humans involved in the study or work in the fields of ecology, conservation, or environmental science. Social, cultural and natural environmental influences have no bearing on human life. These things shape the way each person thinks about his or her existence in a particular environment. All people are required to understand and develop the environment in which they live. In addition, humans must have the ability to empower their environment and change it for the better. Thus, it can be said that ecology is the entirety of humans and their environment, which is filled with reciprocal relationships between the two. Halliday (2001) explains that language and environment are two things that influence each other. Language changes, both in the field of lexicon and grammar, cannot be separated from changes in the natural and social (cultural) environment of the community. On the one hand, environmental changes have an impact on language changes, and on the other hand, people's behavior towards their environment is influenced by the language they use.

There are many terms and language varieties related to human relationships with their environment. These terms come from nature or a person's environment and are used to describe the life or social behavior of the people who use them. This raises the interest of language enthusiasts, including lecturers, students, researchers, and academics to explore language and the environment through the study of Ecolinguistics, a branch of macrolinguistics that studies language and the environment, or ecosystem. According to Sapir (in Fill and Muhlhauser, 2001), the study of Ecolinguistics is a study of how the use of vocabulary reflects the physical and social environment of the speakers. In line with that, Haugen (1972) explains that language is in the mind of its speakers, and therefore language only functions when it is used to connect between speakers, and connect speakers with their environment, either the social environment or the natural environment. In contrast to Halliday (2001) who says that language and environment influence each other, namely language changes because of changes in human behavior towards the environment. In other words, it can be said that Ecolinguistics is an interdisciplinary subdiscipline of linguistics about the interaction between language and the natural environment.

The above concept shows that any language people speak can describe their natural and socio-cultural environment. Therefore, Ecolinguistics will help reveal the meaning of the food lexicon, which will then become easier to understand in order to preserve or maintain the existence of the lexicon in a language environment. The three basic components of dissecting Ecolinguistics, according to Haugen (1972), are as follows: (1) ideological: language only exists in the minds of its speakers and will function if they relate to each other naturally as in their social and natural environment; (2) psychological: its relationship with other languages in the minds of bilingual or multilingual speakers; and (3) sociological: its relationship with society in relation to it as a medium of communication. The psychological component is related to: (a) competence, performance, and communication of speakers; (b) the existence of a language in the minds of speakers; (c) how speakers use a language to interpret themselves and their environment (performance); (d) how a language interacts with other languages in the minds of speakers; and (e) how speakers' attitudes towards the language. Meanwhile, the sociological component includes: (a) the state of the language (as it exists in the midst of speakers); (b) how the language is used by speakers; (c) when, where, why the language is used / no longer used by speakers; and (d) how the components of the language in the midst of speakers, the components of language use, and the components of when, where, why the language is used by the speakers are related to the speakers' behavior patterns. The definition of Ecolinguistics above is in line with the opinion of Bunsdgraard and Steffensen (2007) who say that Ecolinguistics is the study of interactions between dimensions. The ideological dimension shows the individual's relationship with his or her collective and cognitive mentality. It includes ideological systems and physical systems in the sense of material, biotic and abiotic elements, such as water and air, and vocabulary and expressions. Each person's cognitive knowledge shows how strong the interactions are that influence the way they think. The sociological dimension, which is the activity of discourse, discussion, and social discussion that shapes ideology. The sociological dimension concerns how we organize relationships with others, for example in the family, between friends, neighbors, or in a larger social environment, such as the political system in a country. In this sense, language is a social form that functions in social life. The biological dimension relates to our biological existence alongside other species such as plants, animals, earth, sea and so on. These interactions form ideologies, concepts that arise as a result of the relationships maintained between people and their environment. Therefore, the above explanation shows the relationship between the social environment which can be in the form of tradition and the language used in the environment. In this study, researchers focused on Toba Batak language.

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Toba Batak language (next, it is abbreviated as BBT) is one of the languages whose speakers are Batak tribes in North Sumatra and is one of the Austronesian language families. The language itself symbolizes the self-identity of Toba Batak speakers. The BBT is the language used in the speech community, for example in daily conversations, in customary procedures, and as an introduction to sacred religious ceremonies/worship events. The Toba Batak ethnic community spread across North Labuhanbatu Regency uses BBT as a symbol of regional pride. In addition, BBT is also a symbol of regional identity and a means of expressing thoughts and feelings. This underlies that BBT is used in the social interaction of the community. BBT is a language that has its own characteristics and peculiarities that are different from other Batak languages. For example, the Toba Batak ethnicity has a distinctive traditional food that is different from other ethnicities. Traditional food is unique to a particular region and is usually used in every traditional event in that region. The Toba Batak ethnicity has special foods that are not the same as other ethnicities. As one of the ethnic foods typical of Batak Toba found in the city of Aek Kanopan, North Labuhanbatu, Medan.

Aek Kanopan is one of the 13 villages in Kualuh Hulu Sub-district which was later chosen to be the capital of Kualuh Hulu Sub-district. Aek Kanopan is a highland area with an altitude of about 28 meters from the sea and an average air temperature of 32 degrees Celsius. The word 'Aek Kanopan' was first coined by immigrants from North Tapanuli where they called it 'Aek Nahanop' which means a flooded area. The area that was first visited by migrants from North Tapanuli in Aek Kanopan was in the area of Neighborhood VI Aek Kanopan. Labuhanbatu Utara is a Regency located in the North Sumatra region of Indonesia. The capital city is Aek Kanopan, Kualuh Hulu. This district was formed based on Law No. 23 of 2008, which is a division of Labuhanbatu Regency. Aek Kanopan is known for its diverse culture and food characteristics, such as Toba Batak specialties, which are raw cakes called *Poul Poul* or in other areas called *Itak Poul Poul* or *Itak Tombom*.

*Poul Poul* in Indonesian is known as a fist, a food in the form of raw cakes made from rice flour by making a fist using the fingers of the hand. *Poul Poul* is one of the traditional foods of Toba Batak tribe who live in North Labuhanbatu Regency, Aek Kanopan. *Poul Poul* food has long been a specialty of Toba Batak tribe, especially Toba Batak speakers who live in Aek Kanopan. This food is rarely served at traditional wedding and death ceremonies. But there are also those who make it at silatuhrahmi events, moving houses, weddings, and other family events. This traditional food is still used as knowledge gained from the ancestors of the Toba Batak people and continues to be used today. At the present time *Poul Poul* food is used in ceremonies: marriage, death, birth of a child, and entering a new house.

The previous study that relate to this research is done by Kalvintinus Ndruru (2022) by entitle *Khazanah Ekoleksikon Tentang Gowirio Dalam Bahasa Nias Utara Dialek Tengah*. This research aims to explore the treasure of the ecolexicon of Gowirio in the North Nias language of the central dialect, and to describe the social praxis of each existing ecolexicon. This research uses a qualitative research approach with descriptive methods. The data were obtained by conducting interviews to obtain the ecolexicon of Gowirio. The method of data analysis uses qualitative description, namely by collecting all data, then classifying the data, presented in tabular form and then described. Then, the research conducted by Harianti Chan; Hasnah Faizah; Elmustian; and Syafrial with the title *Kajian Ekolinguistik: Makanan Tradisional Sate Kuok sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Kuliner di Kabupaten Kampar*. This research is descriptive qualitative research that aims to describe kuok satay as a culinary icon and cultural identity of Kampar. and cultural identity of Kampar and describe the meaning of codes/symbols in the purchase of kuok satay. The data source in this research is kuok satay located in Kampar Regency. The ecolinguistic approach with a semiotic study that the symbols or codes used by the Kampar community in ordering kuok satay are language used by the community. Kampar people in ordering kuok satay is a language that is used by mutual agreement. This social agreement that regulates so that the form of symbols and the meaning of symbols is formed. This meaning that regulates so that the form of symbols and symbolic meaning of the code is formed.

From the two research above, they have similar with this research. The previous research has similarities with this research, both of them using Ecolinguistic studies, but they have differences in the object of research. Thus, the study of Ecolinguistics is very interesting to be researched, especially raising the food treasures of a region.

Based on the explanation above, the fundamental thing in the study of Ecolinguistics is the paradigm put forward by Sapir in Fill and Muhlhauser (2001: 14) about the environment and the social environment. This involves understanding how language reflects and shapes human perceptions of their natural and social environment, especially Toba Batak ethnic social. Therefore, this study aims to examine the treasures of the ecolexicon of *Poul Poul* in Toba Batak language of the Aek Kanopan dialect, and to describe the social praxis dimensions of each ecolexicon in the lifes of Toba Batak people in the city of Aek Kanopan.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, researchers used qualitative research methods by focusing on the ecolexicon of *Poul Poul* food in Toba Batak language produced by native speakers of Toba Batak language from Aek Kanopan. According to Mahsun (2005: 257), qualitative research is an activity that is carried out simultaneously with data analysis activities. As for the definition of qualitative research

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methods according to Sudaryanto (2015: 3), qualitative descriptive research is when activities attempt to describe or describe in words or language about information obtained from a research setting. In other words, qualitative descriptive research aims to describe, explain, describe, explain, and answer in detail the problems being studied by studying a phenomenon carefully.

In collecting data in this study, researchers use interview techniques and recording techniques. This interview technique is used to obtain data about the treasures of *Poul Poul* ecolexicon in Toba Batak language of the Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan. After the data was found from data collection in the form of interviews with Toba Batak informants, the researchers recorded the conversations between speakers and researchers. Furthermore, the data obtained in this study were then analyzed using the data analysis method by classifying all data and presented in tabular form and then described.

### III. DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Ecolectic Treasures of *Poul Poul* in Toba Batak Language Toba Dialect in Aek Kanopan

Based on the perspective of Ecolinguistics, the environment is an important parameter to know. Language is never far from its speakers because the environment in which the language grows affects the development of the lexicon used. Therefore, environmental parameters are language sources that produce varied forms and meanings of lexicon treasures. Therefore, the treasure of ecolexicon about *Poul Poul* in Toba Batak language Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan was found as many as 14 ecolexicons. The formation of the ecolexicon obtained also varies, ranging from names and terms related to and contained directly in *Poul Poul* to things that are directly or indirectly related through the manufacturing process, processing stage, and presentation. The following data found is presented in the table, among others:

**Table: *Poul Poul* Lexicon**

No.	Lexicon	Translation Indonesian	to Grammatical Category			Definition
			N	V	Adj	
1.	<i>Poul Poul</i>	Kue yang dikepal	√			
2.	Rice flour	Nitak	√			
3.	Brown sugar	Gula narara	√			
4.	Salt	Sira	√			
5.	Grated coconut	Harambir hurhur	√			
6.	Young	Poso			√	The ingredients used for <i>Poul Poul</i> cake are grated young coconut.
7.	Plates	Pinggan	√			
8.	Basin	Sambong	√			
9.	Coconut grater	Hurhuran	√			
10.	Mangalaokhon			√		Mixing rice flour together with grated coconut in a basin
11.	Mangaor			√		Stir the rice flour together with the grated coconut.
12.	Tamba					Adding brown sugar or palm sugar and a pinch of salt
13.	Pohul			√		Manually clenching the dough that has been mixed well by grasping the dough until it forms a fist.
14.	Mamele/ Umpele			√		Serving <i>Poul Poul</i> on a plate

**Source:** Data collected by researchers (2023)



Figure 3.1  
*Poul Poul*



Figure 3.2  
*Rice Flour*



Figure 3.3  
*Brown Sugar*



Figure 3.4  
*Coconut*



Figure 3.5  
*Shredded Coconut*



Figure 3.6  
*Salt*



Figure 3.7  
*Grated Coconut*

Based on the description in the table data above, it is explained that there are 8 ecolexicons categorized as nouns, 5 ecolexicons categorized as verbs, and 1 ecolexicon categorized as adjectives contained in Toba Batak language related to *Poul Poul* itself. This indicates that the richness of the lexicon about *Poul Poul* in the Toba Batak language is very diverse and has many functions; and there are also some terms that are almost rarely used in everyday life. Like some of the noun-categorized ecolexicon below which is almost unknown by children among the younger generation; those born in 1998-2012, namely the hurhuran ecolexicon which means coconut grater. A grater made of wood and an iron bar. Its function is to grate coconut.

The 'hurhuran' coconut grater ecolexicon is no longer found and is no longer used by the Toba Batak community living in Aek Kanopan. This is due to the reduction or loss of existence of the term due to the lack of parents or ancestors of Toba Batak community who preserve the processing of *Poul Poul* using these tools; and some have replaced these objects with modern and



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new tools, no longer derived from the creativity of Toba Batak community itself so that the younger generation does not recognize traditional tools used before modern tools appeared. This is what is important to revive so that the existence of the lexicon associated with *Poul Poul* does not become extinct in the midst of the rapidly developing civilization of the Toba Batak community.

*Poul Poul* is a specialty food from North Sumatra that is different in each region. As in the Tarutung area, this food is known as Itak Tombom. However, some regions use the specialty food as *Poul Poul* or Itak *Poul Poul*. *Poul Poul* is a traditional cake from the North Sumatra region, North Labuhanbatu Regency, Aek Kanopan. Itak *Poul Poul* is taken from Mandailing language, itak means traditional flour-based cake, while poul means head. If it is translated in Indonesian, it means a cake that is clenched. The distinctive feature of this cake lies in its shape. The shape of this traditional Toba Batak food is very unique. The shape resembles the former fingers of an adult fist. This cake is usually served at certain times, for example as a delivery during a wedding party and the birth of a child. However, the naming of the cake is slightly different in the city of Aek Kanopan, which is better known as *Poul Poul*. However, the meaning is almost the same as itak *poul poul*, which means a cake that is clenched using the fingers of the hand.

*Poul Poul* is made from several ingredients, including rice flour, palm sugar or brown sugar, salt and also grated coconut. The ingredients contained in this traditional cake reflect certain philosophical values. The first is rice flour. This white-colored ingredient means that the person who makes or delivers *Poul Poul* at an important moment has a clean heart. The next ingredient is palm sugar. With its sweet taste, the content of palm sugar reflects the harmonious relationship between kinship and family. Then there is grated coconut. This one ingredient is a symbol of usefulness in Toba Batak community. This is because the coconut fruit will bear fruit throughout the year. Then whatever is contained in the coconut fruit, such as the leaves and stems can provide benefits to the community. Thus, it is hoped that fellow humans can benefit each other in living life. The saltiness of salt reflects that in living life, we must be able to face various things or events that we do not expect. This is in line with the taste of dishes that will taste less if they do not contain salt. Not only the ingredients, the method of making *Poul Poul* also has its own philosophical value. The way the cake is made with a fist reflects that it symbolizes unity and strength. That is why Toba Batak community knows the *dalihan na tolu* kinship system because they believe that when we unite, a strength will be realized.

### 3.2 The Sociological Praxis Dimension of the Ecolexicon of *Poul Poul* in the Life of Toba Batak Community

Language is part of social activities that are contained and contain social praxis. Bang and Door (2000) state that social praxis is a concept that refers to all actions, activities, behaviors of the community, both fellow community members (social environment) and the natural environment. Social praxis encompasses three dimensions, namely: (1) ideological dimension; (2) sociological dimension; and (3) biological dimension. However, in this study only two dimensions of social praxis were found, namely the ideological dimension and the sociological dimension.

#### 3.2.1 Ideological Dimension

In terms of ideological dimensions, there are several expressions in Toba Batak language that are often used and even become a separate belief for Toba Batak community, especially in the Aek Kanopan area when they want to make the name of a newborn child 'mambaen goar ni ananta' and occupy/enter a new house 'mangompoi jabu imbaru' The expressions include:

(1) *Onmada hita marpungu dibagason hajat ni puna jabuon. Pambaen goar ni ananta. Saut, mari ma hita mangan Poul Poul on sauduran.*

'Inilah kita berkumpul di rumah yang memiliki niat/hajat, yaitu membuat nama anaknya. Jadi, marilah kita bersama-sama memakan kue *Poul Poul* ini'

'Here we are gathered at the house of the one who has the intention, which is to make the name of his child. So, let us eat this *Poul Poul* cake together'

(2) *Onmada Poul Poul na dibaen parjabuon. Sai sehat ma hamu na sude nian di bagason. Anggiat Ganjang Umur Hipas Tongtong Dohot Mura Rajuman. Mari ma hita mangan poul poul on sauduran.*

'Inilah kue *Poul Poul* yang sudah dibuat oleh yang punya rumah. Sehat-sehatlah kamu semua di rumah ini. Semoga panjang umur sehat badan serta murah rejeki'

'This is the *Poul Poul* cake that has been made by the owner of the house. I wish you all good health in this house. May you live a long and healthy life and have good fortune'

As for the ecolexicon used and contains high ideology, namely, mambaen "making"; mangompoi "entering". The use of this ecolexicon has a high meaning when about to make/name a newborn child and enter a new house by serving *Poul Poul* to Toba Batak community who are gathered in a place. The expression is spoken by parents who are considered to have advice because based on the belief in eating *Poul Poul* if not followed, the wishes / intentions of those who have a house are not granted or even do not have a lot of fortune. Therefore, *Poul Poul* has a very sacred meaning, especially its use for naming newborn children and entering new homes.

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### 3.2.2 Sociological Dimension

In addition to the ideological dimension, the ecolexicon about *Poul Poul* is also widely used in the social activities of Toba Batak community living in Aek Kanopan in general. The usage can be seen in the following expression:

(3) *Mangido maaf ma hami, molo adong hata na sala dohot umpele sipanganon Poul Poul on.*

'Kami meminta maaf, jikalau ada kata yang salah serta dalam penyajian makanan *Poul Poul* ini.

'We apologize, if there are any wrong words and in the presentation of this *Poul Poul* food.

In sentence (3) above, it shows the social praxis of the sociological dimension of society that shows simplicity. In the life of Toba Batak community, *Poul Poul* is considered one of the foods of people who are as they are; simple; not capable or inadequate even though what is actually served is not like that. It could be served in the form of very luxurious and valuable food in the form of meat, chicken or the like. Maintaining the kinship in question is just an expression, not fully having the desire to eat *Poul Poul* at the place of the person in question but just an expression intended to apologize if there was a mistake in serving the *Poul Poul*.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

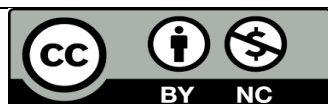
Based on the description of the research results above, it can be concluded that the *Poul Poul* ecolexicon in Toba Batak language of Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan is very diverse. Nouns, verbs, and adjectives are included in the grammatical category of this ecolexicon, some of which are no longer found and used, so it needs to be preserved and grown again in the lives of Toba Batak people, especially Toba Batak people who live in Aek Kanopan. In the treasures of *Poul Poul* ecolexicon of Toba Batak language of the Toba dialect in Aek Kanopan: An Ecolinguistic Study, there is a shift in the use of the grated coconut lexicon 'hurhuran'. In addition, the poul poul lexicon began to experience a shift in vocabulary to the term 'hatung mata'. This is due to changes in community ideology and changes in the social environment. Furthermore, there are two aspects of social praxis that influence the treasures of *Poul Poul* ecolexicon in Toba Batak community, namely social praxis which includes sociological dimensions, and ideology has an interrelation with language. Language influences and at the same time is influenced by social praxis. The first is the ideological dimension, which includes the beliefs attached to *Poul Poul* planting process. The second is the sociological dimension, which includes simple ways of living and maintaining social relations.

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