

# An Eco-linguistic Study on Linguistic Realizations and Metaphors of *Marbija* Ceremony in the Simalungun Ethnic Community in Indonesia

Bernieke Anggita Ristia Damanik<sup>1</sup>, Amrin Saragih<sup>2</sup> & Sri Minda Murni<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Doctoral Student at the Postgraduate School of English Applied Linguistics, Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia & Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, Pematang Siantar, Indonesia

<sup>2,3</sup>Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia.

Email: damanikbernieke.official@gmail.com

Received	Reviewed	Revised	Published
24.11.2023	28.11.2023	20.12.2023	31.12.2023

<https://doi.org/10.61275/ISVSej-2023-10-12-45>

## Abstract

*Marbija* is a ceremony performed by the Simalungun ethnic community since the ancient times to ascertain if someone is telling the truth or not. In it, linguistic realizations and metaphor describe the relationship between people and their environment. This has made the people in Indonesia become aware that this phenomenon is inseparable from the culture that exists within the community itself. This study investigates linguistic realizations and metaphor of pledged and curse/*Marbija* of Simalungunese ethnics as relevant to the Simalungun Philosophy *Habonaron Do Bona*.

It utilizes a descriptive-qualitative approach and employs documentation such as archives and other documents along with structured interviews. Data have been collected from key informants. 18 Totems of pledged and curse/*Marbija* selected on the basis of the use of metaphor in the pledging are analysed.

It found that pledged and curse '*marbija* is a spritual pledge where the Simalungunese keep a balanced conviction of values. Findings show that metaphors in pledged and curse '*Marbija*' are based on the nature of each entity (biological dimension). Nature used as the source is mapped to the target domain referred to as people with all their activities forming a new understanding and an enrichment of vocabulary. *marbija* ensures that the Simalungunese live harmoniously with values.

The connection between the two are recorded in the language which is then understood by the society as a sociological dimension. The meanings from bio-, ideo- and socio-dimensions constructs a strong relation between language and environment.

**Keywords:** Metaphor, Ideological dimension, Sociological dimension, Biological dimension, Ecolinguistics, *marbija*, ecolinguistics

## Introduction

*Marbija* is a ceremony performed by the Simalungun ethnic community since the ancient times to ascertain if someone is telling the truth or not. This involves linguistic realizations and metaphors. The presence of linguistic realizations and metaphors in people's lives is to provide explanations for things that are difficult to explain directly. Indeed, they describe the relationship between people and their environment. Moreover, they also make people become aware of this phenomenon as being inseparable from the culture that exists within the community itself.

Raya is one of the districts in Simalungun. Simalungun Language is one of the ethnic languages in Indonesia. The folklore of the Simalungun community about pledging '*marbija*' is no longer being practiced seriously by the current generation. Traditionally, in the Simalungun community, pledging is an official declaration or utterance to God that is considered sacred accompanied by a determination to do something to strengthen its truth and dare to take risks and suffer if the statement of the promise, the pledge is not true. Moreover, consequences of an oath that is uttered or declared can also take various forms. The interrelationship between language and the environment of the language in this community and the pledge '*marbija*' that being used by the Simalungun ethnic group are thus unique.

Although there have been relevant studies such as Pledging, there has not been a study on natural perspectives as revealed in the social practices related to the Simalungunese so far. Therefore, this study investigates linguistic realizations and metaphors of pledged and curse/*Marbija* of Simalungunese ethnic community as relevant to the Simalungun philosophy *Habonaron Do Bona*. The research follows an eco-linguistics perspective. It explores the latest folklore on the theme of the environment, and ascertains the impact of these verbal modes of pledging/*mang-mang/marbija* on ecological sustainability in Simalungun.

As an eco-linguistics study, its aim is to elucidate the meaning linguistically realized and metaphors of pledged and cursed '*marbija*' represented through experiential functions (SFL) related to natural conservation through eco-linguistic studies. Truth is fundamental to the perspective of eco-linguistics. Thus, it focuses on categorizing the kinds of metaphorical meanings of pledged and curse '*marbija*' related to natural conservation. Its objectives are:

1. To explain the reason for the metaphorical meanings of pledge and curse '*marbija*' related to natural conservation as they are.
2. To describe the interrelationship between ecology (environment) and language.
3. To identify the values of local wisdom found in the notions of *habonaron do bona* known as HdB, which is an ancient custom.

## Theoretical Framework

The usual mechanism used in languages to describe various events is called a metaphor. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), it is a cognitive mechanism in understanding one realm of experience based on the conceptual structure of another systematically related realm of experience. Indeed, a metaphor highlights the features of similarities among different entities. The function of a metaphor is to explain some concepts to be better understood and those concepts are generally concrete.

Formations of metaphors is one aspect of Man's tendency to classify one's experiences. The root of a metaphor lies in the sensory perception of a person, and the relation of Man to the physical world. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors permeate everyday life, not only in language but also on thoughts and actions. Metaphor as an expression of language is found in the conceptual system of Man (1980). In fact, the way Man organizes his mind, absorbs his experiences, or performs his daily actions, is largely metaphorical in dimension.

According to Hai-Yun (2007), there are three communicative functions of metaphors. First, metaphors can be used by people to express something difficult and impossible if they are limited in the use of literal language. Second, metaphors are a neat way of communicating and can convey a lot of information concisely easily. Third, metaphors can paint a richer and more detailed picture of the subjective experience of a person than is expressed by literal

language. Metaphors, when read literally will violate the norms of interpretation because a sentence must be sincere and relevant to the context. The metaphorical stage model is that they are read literally and rejected. In fact, they are also read figuratively. For example, ecological metaphors can be compared to the ecological relationship between animal species and certain plants in and with their environment. In this case, ecology is understood metaphorically.

Metaphors have a close relationship with Nature: the flora and the fauna. The continual interrelationship and the interaction with ecological environment and ecosystem give space or opportunity for them to create metaphorical perspectives which convey not only socio-cultural meanings, but enrich the language as well. Metaphorical perspectives are commonly produced by cross mapping processes from a source domain to a target domain.

The source domain, which is more physical, stands as references and is derived from flora and fauna existing in folklore of pledging/*mang-mang/marbija* as reflected as Simalungun's philosophy *Habonaron do Bona* (truth is the base of everything). The target domain on the other hand is the one which is more abstract conveying the aspects of a person's life, and related to his behavior, manner or attitude as well. The connection between the two domains is established by some aspects of being similar that are connected and are occupied in the neural structure in the brain.

Mbete (2017) says that one of the important topics of eco linguistic studies is the exploration of experience, knowledge, verbal coding in local languages both in lexicons, traditional expressions, and current texts to dissect their power and meaning. Ideas of Mbete (2013) and Stibbe (2015) are similar to that of Kridalaksana (2008) who says that eco-linguistics or language ecology is an investigation of the interaction of language and its environment, as found in ethno-linguistics and socio-linguistics. Thus, eco-linguistics creates a healthy environment, by incorporating local ecological wisdoms into language. Indeed, ecology of language is defined as the study of the relationship between each language and its environment. Associated with the topic, this concept highlights and criticizes folklore with issues of environmental preservation.

## Language

Haugen in Herman (1985) and Purba and Saragih (2022) say that the ecology of language is the 'interactions between any given language and its language ecology, which may be defined as the study of environment'. The term 'language ecology', like 'language family', is a metaphor derived from the study of living beings. The view that one can study languages as one studies the interrelationship of organisms with and within their environments presupposes a number of subsidiary metaphors and assumptions. The ecological metaphor is particularly productive and a great deal more appealing than a systems metaphor. The true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes' (Haugen 1972). Thus, eco-linguistics begins with a metaphor.

Einar Haugen (1972) speaks of the 'interactions between any given language and its environment' which he compares to the ecological relations between certain species of animals and plants in and with their environment. 'Ecology' is understood metaphorically and transferred to 'language (s) in an environment' (Haugen 1972). In fact, 'ecology' is understood in its biological sense; the role of language in the development and aggravation of environmental (and other societal) problems is investigated; linguistic research is advocated as a factor in their possible solution (Halliday, 1992). The act of doing metaphor within an interpersonal ecology established by the on-going and dynamic presence of other people, physical artefacts and socio-cultural constraints is called metaphoricity.

However, metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon, formulated as a language expression that is obviously not used literally and is recognized as a figurative expression. However, it is not the only point to say. Indeed, metaphor is a language expression that is not only a phenomenon of linguistic, but at the same time, it is a socio-cultural, neural and bodily experience as well. In other words, there is a close relationship between language and neural and body of the language users. As what Kovecses (2006), Cruse (2000) and Goatly (1997) say, a metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon. It exists in language merely because it exists in the body

or brain and thought. Further, Kovecses (2006) says that metaphors are realized in socio-cultural reality and metaphors often define cultural models.

As a language device, a metaphor involves two domains. There is a source domain and a target domain. The relationship between the two are caused either by the two domains showing some structural similarity or they are correlated in the member of the language speech community's experience. The source is more physical and the target is more abstract. The type of this correspondence is known as mapping.

### Research Methodology

This research analyses the values of local wisdom in the Simalungun ethnic community in order to help support the preservation of their traditions. Unfortunately, these traditions have never or rarely received attention of research. In fact, they are likely to disappear from the earth without any trace, along with the loss of the traditional community that has possessed the tradition, unless some serious actions are taken. This research intends to help maintain and preserve these traditions that are almost extinct by analysing folklore on verbal modes in the Simalungun ethnic group with an eco-linguistics approach. There, all verbal and visual texts are examined for connectivity so that they become complex components.

This research employs 'systemic functional linguistics' as a theoretical foundation through experiential function and eco-linguistic theory. Other supporting theories include semantic, meta-function, transitivity, metaphor, linguistic realizations, metaphorical eco-linguistics and eco-linguistics parameters. Application of these theories is done by complementing each other. In fact, Eco-linguistic theory is the umbrella theoretical basis of this research.

The study is based on descriptive qualitative design. It is founded on research data in the form of quality of lingual unit in natural conservation '*marbija/pledged and curse*' as a social practices like *busung, Tilik, Hotang na Repat, Piluk-piluk, reconnecting brotherhood, mamukkah pariama, martidah/harvesting etc.* It thus uses a descriptive approach.

This is related to the goal to be achieved in this research, which is to elaborate the natural conservation Simalungun legend namely pledge and curse '*marbija*' from the study of metaphorical eco-linguistics study. It thus uses eco-linguistic design involving three case studies as follows.

- (1) The kinds of metaphorical meaning of pledge and curse '*marbija*' are perceived by the Simalungunese related to natural conservations.
- (2) The meanings realized linguistic realizations and metaphor of pledged and curse '*marbija*' represented through experiential functions (SFL) related to natural conservations through eco-linguistic studies.
- (3) The metaphorical meanings linguistically realized of pledged and curse '*marbija*' related to natural conservation as they are.

In this connection, Vibeke & Bundsgaard (2000) say that eco-linguistics is an umbrella term against all the approaches of language study in combination with the environment (ecology). For that reason, the context in eco-linguistics, is any background knowledge that is assumed shared by a speech community. The context in eco-linguistics includes the following.

- (a) Ideological dimension, ie the existence of ideology or *adicit* of society,
- (b) Sociological dimension, namely the activity of discourse, dialogue, and social discourse to realize the ideology. In this dimension language is a meaningful social practical form, and
- (c) Biological dimension, related to diversity in ecosystems verbally recorded on lexicon in the lingual unit of the universe so that the entities are signified and understood.

Thus, the umbrella term to understand this study is the separation of fields in the linguistic study involving extra lingual aspects. Haley (in Sutrisno, 2006:13) defines that there are nine types: namely; Abstract concept, cosmos, energy, substance, terrestrial, thing, life, animate, and Man.

The research was conducted in Aman Raya village in Pematang Raya. It was done in the form of deciphering the oral utterances transcribed from the recordings and notes of the research. Several key informants who have related knowledge were interviewed. The results of the survey and direct observations in the field as well as interviews. The primary data needed in this research include:

- a. Folklore on Natural Conservation pledged and curse 'marbija' like *busung, tilik, hotang na repat, piluk-piluk, martidah, mamukkah pariama* (harvesting), etc.
- b. Socio-cultural characteristics of the community

Human instrument or the researcher himself acted as the instrument or research tool. This is in line with Moloeng (2007) who says that in qualitative research, the key instrument is the reviewer or the researcher himself. Thus, the researcher must be 'validated' (Herman et al., 2022; Resmi et al., 2023).

This research also employed documentation to generate data. The technique involved noting the parts that are relevant and important to the research problem. Document review was employed to confirm the results of data interpretation (Creswell, 2010; Hulu et al., 2023). This was done by intensive reading of books, dissertations, Pustaka Simalungun in Simalungun museum in Pematangsiantar, Simalungun dictionaries and journals and other documents. The in-depth interview was conducted with the Simalungun Informants who spoke Simalungun language and who knows about pledged and curse 'marbija' in Simalugun ethics.

The data analysis is based on what Sudaryanto (1992) says the equivalent method by applying the process of tracking and of systematically setting transcripts of interviews, field notes and other materials. Data analysis was conducted by applying the model which was proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saladana (2014) which had three concurrent flows of activity: (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification.

Data condensation involved references to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appeared in the full corpus (body) of written-up field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014). The data obtained by the application of documentation and in-depth interview techniques were condensed by the selection of pledge and curse 'marbija' and by focusing the selected data, namely the pledge and curse 'marbija' by using the several categories

A display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action (Miles, Huberman, Saldana, 2014).

1. Data were analyzed using the kinds of metaphorical meaning pledged and curse 'marbija' related to natural conservation by using the theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that the kinds of metaphor underlying most of our fundamental concepts are *orientational metaphors, ontological metaphors, structural metaphors*.
2. Data were analyzed using Systemic Functional Linguistics theory by Halliday 1985. This research is focused on ideational meaning which consists of process, participant and circumstance and then looks at the context of the situation in the data. The data that has been collected was then analyzed through a transitivity system, namely examining the experiential analysis of processes, participants, and circumstance. The data used as samples in this study were 15 pledge and curse 'marbija' totems. The way of working in analyzing data is as follows.

The data analysis technique uses the theory of Miles & Huberman (2014). The steps are as follows. First, the data is collected read and then sorted. The selected data is experience in the field through informants. After that, a table was created according to the transit system. Then, verbs, participants, circumstances and information are entered into the table according to the criteria. After that, in the use of the process, the participants, and the circumstance are described. Lastly, it summarized the results of the description and the experimental representation of pledge and curse 'marbija'.

Data were also analyzed by using the concept of ecology combining environment, conservation, interaction, and systems in language. According to Haley (in Sutrisno, 2006) this consists of nine types namely concept, cosmos, energy, substance, terrestrial, thing, life, animate, and Man, modified by Lindo & Bundsgaard (2000) with metaphor ecology system, biological dimension, sociological dimension and the ideological dimension.

### Findings 1

It is found that pledged and curse '*marbija*' is a spritual pledge where the Simalungunese keep a balanced conviction of values. Initial observations show that metaphors found on pledged and curse '*Marbija*' are formed based on the nature of each entity (biological dimension). Nature used as the source domain is mapped to the target domain referred to people with all their activities forming a new understanding and an enrichment of vocabulary. Moreover, *marbija* found that the Simalungunese live harmonically with value.

The connection between the two domains are recorded in the language users' cognition at the biological dimension which is then understood by the society at the sociological dimension. The whole meaning from bio-, ideo- and socio-dimensions constructs a strong relation between language and environment. Since the research analyzes metaphors in totems of pledge, it helps the Simalungunese keep a balanced conviction of values. Therefore, *marbija* which is the root of the Simalungun ethnic philosophy needs to be passed down from generation to generation because the philosophical values contained in *Habonaron Do Bona* remain attached to the Simalungun people.

Linguistically, semiotically and philosophically, *Habonaron do Bona* (HdB) is defined as 'the truth is the basis' (The truth is the basis of everything), which is universal, fundamental and general. Therefore, *Habonaron do Bona* is a source of knowledge and practice. As a source of knowledge, *Habonaron do Bona* (HdB) deals with epistemology, ontology and axiology. Practically, HdB is related to norms, morals, ethics, social aspects and politics as well as household affairs. As a social philosophy, HdB is the mental attitude of the Simalungun people. This mental attitude is a combination of thoughts and emotions shown through social actions. Thoughts, emotions and actions give rise to collective social behavior. Thus, HdB is a personal reference as well as a source of motivation to interpret and understand every social situation.

The urgency and significance of HdB in the 21st century is the ability to carry out social transformation of HdB itself, which is not merely a social philosophy, but must be able to become a virus of success. As a social reality, truth (*habonaron*) is eternal. *Habonaron* remains a goal, and therefore HdB is not temporary. Thus, HdB as a 'grondslag filosofiche' or philosophical basis remains the most fundamental for the mental attitude of the Simalungun people. HdB is still current in the 21st century.

The values of *habonaron do bona* have always been preserved by the Simalungun people from generation to generation with a belief that sooner or later the truth will always triumph over the falsehood. If the Simalungun people behave contrary to the values of HdB then '*pittor bilang*' (honestly says) or '*sapata*' applies. This can be interpreted as a curse or a karmic law by supernatural powers' (God Almighty). Beliefs like this have been passed down for generations so that in ancient times there was rarely theft in the Simalungun villages. In fact HdB values are still believed by the Simalungun people.

### Habonaron do Bona

In Simalungun culture, a very important cultural value system exists, which is known as "*Habonaron do Bona*" (truth is the basis of everything) namely the goals and views of life that are passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, "*Habonaron do Bona*" is a way of life, folkways and the ideology of the Simalungun people, which is a cultural doctrine so that everyone in Simalungun feels, sees and thinks correctly, both for oneself and for the environment. However, it is undeniable that between the ideal culture and the real culture of the Simalungun people today, it seems that there is a "gap". In that sense, '*Habonaron do Bona*' as a reference for life, has been increasingly eroded and almost 'graded' as a result of their disloyalty to this noble custom.

## Eco-linguistics

The word 'ecology' comes from the Greek namely *oikos* which means house or place (Fill and Mühlhäusler, 2001). Therefore, literally, ecological studies are related to all kinds of forms and characteristics of living things and non-living things that exist without exception. According to Herman, Purba and Saragih (2022), ecology is defined as the science of interrelationships between living things and the natural world around them. This definition is simplified by Mackey (1980 in Fill and Mühlhäusler, 2001) who defines ecology as a study of interdependence entities in a system.

Therefore, in any study of ecology, the language of the concept of ecology is used to mix and match the environment, interactions, and systems in a language. The relationship between ecology and language is seen as the interactions between the ecosystems that become part of the human life system (ecology) with language used by people to communicate in their environment (linguistics).

Recently, studies related to the application of the concept of deep ecology linguistics have expanded dramatically. They range from pragmatics, discourse analysis, anthropolinguistics, language teaching, and various other studies discovering the use of ecological parameters, such as 'connectedness', 'diversity', and 'environment'. In the early 1990s, linguists unified language studies with ecology simultaneously in one field of study called 'eco-linguistics'. It was at that moment use of the term 'eco-linguistics' and various eco-linguistic research emerged growing in depth.

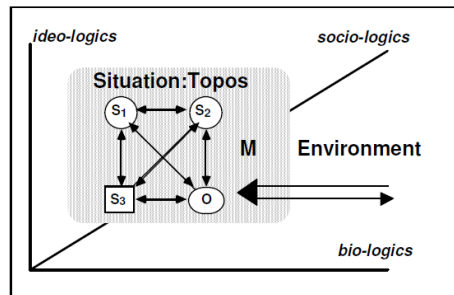
According to Fill (1993, in Lindø and Simonsen, 2000:40) "Ecolinguistics is an umbrella term for [...] all approaches in which the study of languages is in any way combine with ecology". Through this definition in general, Eco-linguistics is defined as a theory which underlies all linguistic research in relation to ecology or the environment. Associated with this, the language environment follows the ideas of related experts of that environment.

**Table 1:** Linguists and the Language Environment

Source: Saragih, 2006

Linguists	Language Environment
Sapir (1912)	Physiological
	Sociological
Haugen (1972)	Psychological
	Sociological
Bang et al (1996)	Ideological
	Sociological
	Biological

From the table, it is clear that language environment initiated by Bang et al. (1996) is able to read overall relationships between language and environment of linguistic phenomena, both from the biological dimension, ideological dimension, as well as the sociological dimension. These three dimensions are under study in eco-linguistics and is called a dialectical theory social praxis which is also known as social praxis. There is thus a three dimensionality of social praxis (Bang et al., 1996 in Bundsgaard and Sune 2000:10). The embodiment of the social theory of praxis consisting of ideological, sociological, and biology can be seen through the following figure.



**Fig. 1:** The embodiment of the social theory of praxis consisting of ideological, sociological, and biology  
Source: Bang and Door, 1996

According to Bang & Døør (2007), social theory praxis which was later developed by Bundsgard and Sune (2000:11) is associated in form, namely 1) the ideological dimension understood as a form of thought in a society as a result of individual mentality, collective mental, cognitive, ideological systems, and a person's psychic system that is reflected through the language, 2) the sociological dimension describing language as a form of social practice in building, establishing, and maintaining human relations, and 3) dimensions of biology as associated with human connectedness with a diversity of flora, fauna, and other entities found in the environment related speech.

### Pledge and Curse 'Marbija'

*Pledge or bija* is a sacred oath taken before witnesses by holding something to confirm Ones vows, during the ancient times. The one who swore held a plate containing a few grains of pepper, *betel* and *sembilu* on the rice while saying: "*anggo seng sintong bijakkon age ibuat sibijaon on ahu*" (if this oath is not true, let me die taken this thing that confirms the oath (*sibijaon*)", if it is violated it is bad for the sworn; *marbija* utters the sacred oath.) (Simalungun Dictionary, 2015). Here specific terms are use das follows.

*Parbijaan*: the place for the oath ritual.

*Sibijaon*: thing that confirms the oath.

To prove honesty, a "pledge" or in Simalungun language called *marbija* used to be often performed. If someone suspects someone of a crime, then that person used to take an oath by risking something very valuable to him. For example, the soul of his son will become a sacrifice. In this *marbija*, one must be honest because if one swears falsely, it is believed that the oath becomes real. People dare not lie just to cover up a momentary mistake.

To take the pledge, there are various methods. A simple oath is to only mention his *tumbal*. There is also the practice of holding his *tumbal* like holding his son's head which is super imposed in his vow. If nothing can be super-imposed, then it can also be sworn by self-inflicted partly through a very solemn ritual.

For this, a little rice (approximately half a cup) is poured on a plate. Then in the dish, a few pieces (slices) of turmeric is collected. Then the one who swears has to stir the rice mixed with turmeric with *sembilu* (bamboo skin) while saying his oath. Simalungun people are very afraid of taking oaths like this if they really have made a mistake. Besides *marbija/pledged*, in Simalungun, there used to be a way of testing honesty, namely by calling or saying "*si pittor bilang*" to God. It means that *Naibata* will avenge the perpetrator of the crime, if it has been committed. Likewise, if someone receives an inappropriate treatment, the person does not need to rush to retaliation, they are sure that *Naibata* the Most Just will still repay him.

This philosophy "*Habonaron do Bona*" is upheld by leaders such as the kings in Simalungun. The king himself did not act on a whim. The king has a group of assistants (*harajaan council*), who help to hold deliberations in formulating policies. The court also decides on a sanction through a council meeting. The person's opinion is used as a guide to weigh the guilt of a perpetrator of a crime. Thus, the royal council should not do anything arbitrary.



Parents also always instill the life principle of "*Habonaron do Bona*" to their children and grandchildren. In other words, people must be wise in socializing in the community. For the Simalungun community, there is a philosophy that says '*totik mansiathon diri, marombow bani simbuei*', which means being careful (wise) in conducting oneself and serving the public, so that life is always fun for the others. This is what makes the Simalungun people more adaptable (adapt) than the other tribes.

The philosophy of "*Habonaron do Bona*", reflects the principles of life that are widely expressed. In the form of words of advice and life, principles in the form of expressions, proverbs, figures of speech and parables exist. In general, the *Habonaron do Bona* principle instills the value of prudence, living wisely, and planning carefully so that there will be no regrets in the future. These philosophical values are considered very positive in shaping the harmony of life with others. In fact, it guides Man to live in honesty and tranquility.

To pledge, *marbija* means to curse oneself. Everyone who does so wags himself is sentenced if what he states is not true. Taking an oath is a denial but it can also be the other way around. The decree urged by the oath is the decision of a higher power, that is, the gods or spirits, while the magical nature of the thing used as a means of taking the oath, as well as the ordinance taken, states that the curse has been urged to come against the person, if what is stated is a lie.

Pledge and curse '*marbija*', is performed with the help of an object that will act as a vehicle for taking an oath. However, the vehicle or means of the oath is subject to a certain force. The underlying idea is that the one who pledges, the same as that means, will experience something if the pledge is false.

However, in a number of situations, people often avoid taking oaths. For example, a supernatural power urged through the oath will harm the oath of a pregnant woman, and therefore, her husband *puj* will be happier not to swear during his wife's pregnancy. According to *patik dohot uhum*, in the past, there has been a need to "undo" the oath of an accused who was strongly suspected, and the judge himself did not dare to order him to take the oath-not guilty because of the fear that the person would take a perjury.

Similarly, even now, if for some reason an oath is to be taken in the case of a complaint, the same concern can prompt a judge, if necessary, to first hand over the person who should be sworn to his village, to be personally advised and given a warning, so that he is fully aware of the significance of the oath. Then an oath is taken the next day, unless the person in question withdraws for the fear of doing so.

People caught in *frangente delicto* or caught committing crimes, thieves, murderers, or seducers are usually arrested as a prelude to the examination. Relatively heavy criminals are shackled, or in more severe cases directly dragged to the milestone of slaughter, after which the experience of the upper can begin. In these situations, there is no pledge and curse '*marbija*'.

## Findings 2

Metaphors found from 18 totems consists of several categories, they are being cosmos, energy, substance, terrestrial, object, living and animate. Metaphors representing each category is used as the source domain and the target domain recorded in the cognition of the speech community based on sociological, ideological and biological dimensions. In this discussion, not all metaphors are used as the realm of sources.

The metaphor found in the oath totem in the social practices of the Simalungun community is formed from sensory experiences dealing with the biological properties of figurative symbols or figurative entities used in the formation of oath metaphors with the circumstances or events experienced by the Simalungun community. Relationship of biological properties of figurative symbols (source realm) of metaphor with everything related with people and all their activities (realm target) is built based on observations. However, the cognitive speech community see the existence commonalities between the source domains and target realm. It forms an understanding at the level of the ideological dimension which is then used as an internal parameter related to social life at the level of sociological dimension.

Data were analyzed using the kinds of metaphorical meaning of pledge and curse '*marbija*' related to natural conservation by using the theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that three kinds of metaphors underlying most of our fundamental concepts exist: orientational metaphors, ontological metaphors and structural metaphors.

From the 18 totems of pledged and curse '*marbija*' the ontological metaphors, orientational metaphors and structural metaphors were found. Orientational metaphors are seen from the Data 1 (Busung/Belly bulge). Ontological metaphors are seen from the Data 3 (Piluk-Piluk), Data 4,5,6 (*Tilik*), Data 10 (Pledged four or five clans can't change until death/*bulawan*), Data 11 (Finding a suitable name for a newborn baby/*mangkhubi dakdanak na baru tubu*), Data 13 (Confirming Surname), Data 15 (Planting upland rice in the fields (*Martidah*), Data 17 (Reconnecting brotherhood/*manrotap hotang*), Data 18 (*manlakkah manlahoi silahoan* /Dispatched to do a job overseas). While on the other hands the structural metaphors are seen from data 7 (*Hotang na Repat*), Data 8 (Expressing Desires), Data 9 (Group's Pledged), Data 12 (Ghost unwanted name/ *goran na so pot begu*), Data 14 (Express heart's desires (*Padashon sir ni uhur*) and Data 16 (Harvesting/*mamukkah pariama*).

**Table 2:** The Distribution Kinds of Conceptual Metaphor of the pledge and curse '*marbija*'

No	Pledge and Curse	Kinds of Conceptual Metaphor		
		Oriental Metaphor	Ontological Metaphor	Structural Metaphor
1.	Belly Bulge ' <i>Busung</i> ' Data 1 Data 2	V V		
2.	Piluk-piluk Data 3		V	
3.	Tilik Data 4 Data 5 Data 6		V V V	
4.	Hotang na repat Data 7			V
5.	Desires Data 8			V
6.	Group's Pledge Data 9			V
7.	Pledged four or five clans can't change until death/ <i>bulawan</i> Data 10		V	
8.	Finding a suitable name for a newborn baby/ <i>Mangkhubi dakdanak na baru tubu</i> Data 11		V	
9.	Ghosts' unwanted name/ <i>goran na so pot begu</i> Data 12			V
10.	Confirming Surname ' <i>menabalkan marga</i> ' Data 13		V	
11.	Expressing desires/ <i>Padashon sura-sura ni uhur</i> Data 14			V
12.	Planting upland rice in the fields/ <i>martidah</i> Data 15		V	
13.	Harvesting/ <i>Mamukkah Pariama</i>			V

No	Pledge and Curse	Kinds of Conceptual Metaphor		
		Oriental Metaphor	Ontological Metaphor	Structural Metaphor
	Data 16			
14.	Reconnecting brotherhood Data 17		V	
15.	Dispatched to do a job/ <i>manlakkah</i> <i>manlahoi silahoan</i> Data 18		V	

This study classifies of the ideational meaning of totems of pledge and curse '*marbija*' based on process types to find out the dominant process.

**Table 3:** The Frequency Distribution of Transitivity

No	Types of Transitivity	$\Sigma F$	F (%)
1.	Process	47	27,01%
2.	particioants	60	34,49%
3.	Circumstances	67	38,50%

## Discussion

It is noted that the metaphor found in the pledge and curse '*marbija*' totem in the social practices of the Simalungun community is formed from sensory experience dealing with the biological properties of figurative symbols or figurative entities used in the formation of oath metaphors with the circumstances or events experienced by the Simalungun community.

The relationship of biological properties of figurative symbols (source realm) of metaphor with everything related with the people and all their activities (realm target) is built based on the observations of cognitive speech community who see the existence commonalities between the source domains and target realm.

Indeed, it forms an understanding at the level of the ideological dimension which is then used as an internal parameter relation to social life at the level sociological dimension. To eliminate the responses and the mindset of some people who think that the customs of simalungun culture are still animism, the noble value of simalungun cultural customs in *habonaron do bona* are highlighted.

There are three main objectives of natural resource conservation. First, it is about maintaining the course of ecological processes and living systems in an area. Second, it involves maintaining the genetic diversity and flora-fauna in a conservation area. Third, it insists on ensuring the sustainable the use of living things and ecosystems in the conservation areas.

If people do not carry out conservation of Nature, then various endangered species of plants and wild animals will soon be wiped out. Other species are also threatened with extinction. If this happens, humans will suffer tremendous losses because the extinction cannot be recovered.

In this connection, the metaphorical meanings found in this study vary. Cognitive processes in forming a metaphorical expression, namely by conceptualizing the experiences perceived by the body, properties, traits, functions and forces between the source realm and the target realm describe the events experienced and felt by the simalungun society. The nature of people and Nature, and culture, is a reference for the terrible Nature and mysteries that must be conquered. By examining the transitivity process of pledge and curse '*marbija*', one can explain how the field of the situation is being constructed, and have a clear idea how transitivity patterns reflect the nature of it.

The reasons for the metaphorical meanings of pledge and curse *marbija* are related to natural conservation as they are. The pledged and curse '*marbija*' in Simalungun ethnic group has nine categories. Therefore, it is suggested that further research on pledged and curse

'*marbija*' is conducted. From nine categories of Haley's theory, the research found only six categories of Human Perceptual System in pledged and curse '*marbija*' suitable of the *Habonaron do Bona* Philosophy of Simalungun ethnic community. They include abstract, energy, substance, terrestrial, thing, and Man as concepts.

However, metaphorical aspects found from the 18 totems consist of several categories. They are the cosmos, energy, substance, terrestrial, object, living and animate. The metaphors representing each category is used as the source domain and the target domain recorded in the cognition of the speech community based on sociological, ideological and biological dimensions.

The metaphor found in the pledge and curse '*marbija*' totem in the social practices of the Simalungun community is formed from sensory experiences dealing with the biological properties of figurative symbols or figurative entities used in the formation of oath metaphors with the circumstances or events experienced by community said Simalungun. Relationship of biological properties of figurative symbols (source realm) of metaphor with everything related with humans and all their activities (realm target) is built based on observation cognitive speech community who see the existence commonalities between the source domains and target realm.

It forms an understanding at the level of the ideological dimension which is then used as an internal parameter in relation to social life at the level of sociological dimension.

The metaphorical meanings found in this study vary. Cognitive processes in forming a metaphorical expression, namely by conceptualizing the experiences perceived by the body, properties, traits, functions and forces between the source realm and the target realm to describe the events experienced and felt by the simalungun society. The nature of humans and nature, namely culture, is a reference for the terrible nature, mysteries that must be conquered, surrendered or seek harmony with Nature.

It concludes that the meaning of metaphorical expression in the pledged and curse '*marbija*' is nature and its contents have truth, so it is necessary to maintain sincerity by living in harmony with Nature, the noble value of simalungun cultural customs in *Habonaron Do Bona*. The pledge and curse '*marbija*' are commonly feared because it contains risks/dangers and of the lack of understanding toward the Simalungun culture. By maintaining the values of the Simalungun culture, they can live harmoniously with Nature. Therefore, the Simalungun young people should learn the beauty and richness of the culture of their ancestors.

As shown, *Habonaron do bona* is a noble value, a philosophy of life, a yardstick for carrying out social interactions in their social system, so that it will be able to counteract intolerance and national disintegration. *Habonaron do Bona* is a guide in acting internally and becomes a filter in acting externally, as there is advice from '*totik masiatkon diri, marombou bani simbuei*' which means carefully adjusting oneself, and serving the community. In oral tradition, there is a saying: *habonaron do bona, hajukkaton do sapata*, which means that the truth is the basis and evil is cursed. People who do good and right must get the victory. *Habonaron do bona* is supernatural. and as a supernatural power, it defends what is right or '*bonar*', defending people who are oppressed by unjust. Pledged and curse '*marbija*' shows on *habonaron do bona*.

## Conclusion

This research analyzed metaphors in totems of pledge, in order to help the Simalungunese keep a balanced conviction of values. Therefore, *marbija* which is the root of the Simalungun ethnic philosophy needs to be passed down from generation to generation because the philosophical values contained in *Habonaron Do Bona* remain attached to the Simalungun people.

The relationship between the environment and language in the form of metaphor has been explored comprehensively in this research, by using theories, methods, and techniques relevant to eco-linguistic studies. Nevertheless, this research still has a lot to uncover. This study only analyzed the metaphor of the oath according to the philosophy of *Habonaron Do Bona*. It is suggested that further research should span the entire social practice of pledging in the Simalungun ethnic community.

## References

- Bang, J. Chr., Døør, J., Alexander, R.J., Fill, A. & Verhagen, F.C. (eds.). (1996) *Language and Ecology—Ecolinguistics. Problems, Theories and Methods. Essays for the AILA '96 Symposium*, Research Group for Ecology, Language and Ideology, Odense University, Odense.
- Bang, J. Chr. and Døør, J. (2007) *Language, Ecology and Society—A Dialectical Approach*. Edited by Sune Vork Steffensen and Joshua Nash, Continuum, London.
- Bundsgaaard, J. & Sune, S. (2000) “The Dialectics of Ecological Morphology” in Lindø, Anna Vibeke and Jeppe Bundsgaaard. (2000). *Dialectical Ecolinguistics. Three Essays for the Symposium 30 Years of Language and Ecology in Graz December 2000*. Odense: University of Odense.
- Creswell, J. W. (2010) *Research design: pendekatan kualitatif, kuantitatif, dan mixed*. Yogyakarta: PT Pustaka Pelajar
- Cruse, D. A. (2000) *Meaning in Language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Døør, Jørgen dan Jørgen Chr Bang. (1995) “Language, Ecology, and Truth- Dialogue and Dialectics”, <http://www.jcbang.dk/main/ecolinguistics/Six.pdf>.
- Fill, A. and Mühlhäusler, P. (2001) *The Ecolinguistics Reader: Language, Ecology, and Environment*. London: Continuum.
- Goatly, A. (1997) *The Language of Metaphors*. London and New York: Routledge
- Hai-Yun, L. (2007) *Metaphor in Expressing Emotions*. [accessed on 20 April 2008]. Retrieved from: <http://w..w.linguist.org.cn/doc/su2000712/su2000708.pdf>.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1992) *How Do You Mean? In M. Davies, & L. Ravelli (Eds.), Advances in Systemic Linguistics: Recent Theory and Practice (pp. 20-35)*. London: Pinter Publishers.
- Haugen, E. (1972) *The Ecology of Language*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press
- Herman, H., Purba, R. & Saragih, A. (2022) Lexical Items of Flora and Fauna in Local Languages: An Ecolinguistics Study. *Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research, 1(1)*, 24-28, DOI: 10.56854/jsshr.v1i1.49
- Herman, H., Saputra, N., Ngongo, M. & Fatmawati, E. (2022) Delivering A Good Speech by Identifying the Interpersonal Meaning Found in Joe Biden’s Victory Speech: A Case on Systemic Functional Linguistics. *Journal of Intercultural Communication, 22(3)*, 2022, PP: 65-73. <https://doi.org/10.36923/jicc.v22i3.77>
- Hulu, P. G. D., Herman, H., Sinaga, Y. K., Syathroh, I. L., Sari, H. N., Saputra, N. & Purba, R. (2023) Teaching English to Local Vernacular Students in Indonesia: Effects of Using Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) on Writing Skills. *ISVS e-journal, 10(9)*, 187-197. Retrieved from: [https://isvshome.com/pdf/ISVS\\_10-9/ISVSej\\_10.9.13\\_Herman.pdf](https://isvshome.com/pdf/ISVS_10-9/ISVSej_10.9.13_Herman.pdf)
- Kovecses, Z. (2006). *Language, Mind, And Culture: A Practical Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kridalaksana, H. (2008) *Kamus Linguistik*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*. London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (2003) *Metaphors We Live By*. Zweite Ausgabe. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lindø, A.V. & Simonsen, S. S. (2000) “The Dialectics and Varieties of Agency the Ecology of Subject, Person, and Agent” dalam: Lindø, Anna Vibeke dan Jeppe, Bundsgaaard, *Dialectical Ecolinguistics. Three Essays for the Symposium 30 Years of Language and Ecology in Graz December 2000*. Odense: University of Odense.
- Mbete, A. M. (2017) Pembelajaran Bahasa Berbasis Lingkungan: Perspektif Ekolinguistik. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa, 1(2)*, 352-364. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.1.2.40.352-364>
- Mbete, A. M. (2013) *A Brief Guide to Write an Ecolinguistic Research Proposal*. Denpasar: Vidia

- Miles, M.B, Huberman, A.M & Saldana, J. (2014) *Qualitative Data Analysis, A Methods Sourcebook, Edition 3*. USA: Sage Publications. Terjemahan Tjetjep Rohindi Rohidi, UI-Press.
- Moleong, L. J. (2007) *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Resmi, R., Rahman, A., Sobirov, B., Rumbardi, R., Al-Awawdeh, N., Widoyo, H., Herman, H., & Saputra, N. (2023). Incorporating Teachers' Views on Different Techniques for Teaching Foreign Languages in the Classroom. *World Journal of English Language*, 13(8), 210-221. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n8p210>
- Saragih, A. (2006) *Bahasa Dalam Konteks Sosial. Pendekatan Linguistik Fungsional Sistemik terhadap Tata Bahasa dan Wacana*. Medan: Program Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Medan.
- Sinamo, D. S., Herman, H. & Marpaung, T. I. (2023) Teaching reading comprehension on narrative text by using short story: A case on teaching method. *Journal of Education, Linguistics, Literature, and Art*, 1(1), 31–43. Retrieved from <https://iesrjournal.com/index.php/ella/article/view/17>
- Stibbe, A. (2015) *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By*. Routledge. ISBN 978-0415837811
- Sudaryanto. (1992) *Metode Linguistik: Ke Arah Memahami Metode Linguistik*. Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana University Press.
- Sutrisno, Nur Fatmawati. (2006) *A Semantics Study of Metaphorical Language Used in The Josh Groban: Closer Album*. Unpublished Research Paper. Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.
- Vibeke, L. A. & Bundsgaard, J. (Eds) (2000) *Dialectical Ecolinguistics. Three Essays for The Symposium 30 Years of Language and Ecology in December 2000*. Odense: University of Odense. Research Group for Ecology, Language & Ideology. Nordisk Institute.