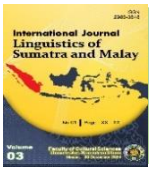
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Toba-Bataknese Interjection *Ale!*: A Natural Semantic Metalanguage Approach

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ABSTRACT

Interjections are words used to express emotions or spontaneous reactions. There are various interjections in the Batak Toba language, but the one discussed in this article is the interjection "*Ale!*". This research aims to understand the meaning of the interjection "*Ale!*" in the Batak Toba language. The data was collected from the short stories book "*Torsa-torsa Ni Halak Batak*", a Batak Toba literary work written by Guru Lukas Hutapea. The approach used in this research is Natural Metalinguistic Semantics with a descriptive qualitative method through observation and note-taking. The data was collected by reading and translating the short story book *Torsa-torsa Ni Halak Batak* and interviewing native speakers of the Batak Toba language. The research results indicate that the interjection *Ale!* can be categorized into two types of interjections: volitive and emotive. The emotive interjection *Ale!* expresses feelings of shame, anger, guilt, sadness, dan regret. The volitive interjection *Ale!* conveys an intention for the conversation partner to perform a specific action. The meanings of the volitive interjection *Ale!* found include the sentiment of seeking attention, want someone to do something, want someone to know something and want non-human object to do something.
Keywords: Interjection, Batak Toba, Natural Semantic Metalanguage, Volitive Interjection, Emotive Interjection

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1. Introduction

Interjections are used to express emotions such as disgust, surprise, and related feelings. Semantically, interjections encompass linguistic markers that convey a speaker's mental state, attitude, or reaction to an ongoing situation (Ameka & Wilkins, 2006). In Indonesian grammar, interjections are defined as words that indicate a speaker's emotions, such as admiration, sadness, astonishment, or disgust (Moeliono et al., 2017). Interjections represent specific meanings, can be used independently, are not mixed with other signs, and do not sound similar to other words with related meanings. They reflect a speaker's spontaneous expression or response (Goddard, 2014a; Ramadhani, 2018; Syaputra & Mulyadi, 2022).

In daily interactions or everyday activities, we convey things either explicitly or implicitly. This is not only applicable to everyday conversations but also in literary works such as short stories, novels, or comics. The idea or concept behind a literary work is presented through words that can be clear or hidden. Each type of word has its specific role, including interjections. Interjections are used to construct and depict communication between characters in a story. In a story, a character's use of interjections can depict the atmosphere, spirit, emotions, and thoughts of the characters interacting within the narrative. (Goddard, 2014b; Maharani, 2023; Widiatmoko & Waslam, 2017)

Interjections in various languages are tied to the culture where the language originated. Not all interjections have equivalent words when translated into different languages (KOX & WULANDARI, 2013). In a previous

study on interjections in the Batak Toba language (Simanjuntak, 2019), the researcher identified 11 interjections in the book Torsa-Torsa Hombung, namely: *ah, ba, bah, bo, beha, booo, dago, e, horas, nda*, and *o*. Some of these interjections are ambiguous in form and can be challenging to understand for non-native speakers. Another study in 2020 delved deeper into the interjection of Bah in the Batak Toba language(Simanihuruk & Mulyadi, 2020). In Simanihuruk's research, *Bah* is said to have a richer meaning. Simanjuntak's study interprets bah as an interjection expressing a sense of astonishment. In contrast, Simanihuruk's research suggests that Bah reflects various emotions such as shock, disappointment, confusion, surprise, and amazement.

Based on the Batak Toba grammar (Van Der Tuuk, 1971), "*ale"* is categorized as an interjection. In that study, "*ale"* is used as an expression to address someone or an interlocutor and as an expression of dejection. In the Toba Batak dictionary (Warneck, 1977), "*ale"* is defined as an interjection that stand alone and could be used before the vocative that expressing amazement. However, the use of interjection of ale in the Batak Toba language, both in everyday communication and literary works, is believed to have a deeper meaning. Therefore, this research discusses the interjection "*Ale*" in the Batak Toba language. The study aims to understand the meaning of the interjection "*Ale!*" in the Batak Toba language. Data was sourced from the book "*Torsa-torsa Ni Halak Batak*," a Batak Toba literary work by Guru Lukas Hutapea. "*Torsa-torsa*" is a collection of short stories depicting life and events in the Batak Toba community, encompassing life lessons within.

1.1. Interjection

According to the "Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia" (2015: 542), an interjection is "an exclamation that conveys a feeling". Kridalaksana (2015: 93) stated, "interjections are words used to express the emotion of the speaker, with its relevant intonation". According to Chaer (2011: 193), interjections are words used to express inner feelings, such as due to surprise, being moved, admiration, anger, or sadness.

Interjections possess specific characteristics (BS, 1986):

a. They can function independently as incomplete phrases or sentences.
b. Interjections don't have a fixed position within a sentence structure.
c. They can depict various emotions or feelings depending on the context of the sentence.
d. Interjections are among the oldest words and have a universal nature.

Typically, interjections are more commonly found in everyday language or dialogue in written texts. As a result, they tend to be less formal. In the context of formal writing that isn't conversational, the use of interjections is quite rare (Moeliono et al., 2017). This might be because interjections often don't follow the standard phonological rules of the language, such as consisting only of the velar fricative sound like "ugh", or having unconventional structures like "psst" or "mmm" (Goddard, 2014b). Interestingly, interjections usually precede their main sentences and, from a syntactic viewpoint, aren't related to other words in the same utterance (Macaryus et al., 2019).

From a semantic perspective, interjections are categorized into three categories (Wierzbicka, 1992):

a. Volitive interjections, defined by the sentiment 'I want something' but devoid of the 'I feel something' component.
b. Emotive interjections, characterized by the element of 'I feel something'. The emotions divided into ten emotions: surprise, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, shame/shyness, interest, joy, and guilt.
c. cognitive interjections, which carry the essence of 'I think something' or 'I know something' but lack both the emotive element of 'I feel something' and the volitive sentiment of 'I want something'.

1.2. Natural Semantic Metalanguage

Natural Semantic Metafunction (NSM) is a semantic analysis theory which posits that a sign can only be analyzed by its own sign. Its primitive meaning is classified by paraphrasing it using everyday language, not technical terms. By utilizing "semantic primes", the nuances of meaning in interjections can be expressed without depending on language-specific terms. Various interjections across different languages have been described using the NSM technique. NSM does not only consist of a lexicon but also a syntax. "Semantic primes" are believed to have universal combinatorial properties that appear in nearly all languages(Goddard, 2014b). Mulyadi and Siregar support this theory, and Wharton suggests that interjections convey attitudinal information related to the speaker's emotional or mental state (Siregar & Mulyadi, 2006; Wharton, 2003). Interjections play a crucial role in social life, influencing societal values, norms, and cultural scripts(Kockelman, 2003). Generally, interjections are used to express, not describe, a speaker's emotion or

mental state(Goddard, 2014a). They exist in all human languages and are significant in daily interactions (Simanihuruk & Mulyadi, 2020). Wierzbicka suggests using the NSM theory to uncover the meanings of interjections and predict their usage in context, a notion backed by several other linguists (Mao, 2016; Wierzbicka, 1992).

2. Method

During the data collection phase, the observation method was employed, which involves gathering data by observing the use of the Batak Toba language in the short stories book "Torsa-torsa Ni Halak Batak". The observation method should also be accompanied by the note-taking technique, which means the researcher records data deemed appropriate for analysis, followed by data classification (Sudaryanto, 2015). At this stage, the focus is on finding interjection data for "*Ale!*" in the book "Torsa-torsa Ni Halak Batak". The data was collected by reading and translating the short story book Torsa-torsa Ni Halak Batak and interviewing native speakers of the Batak Toba language. Then, the collected data, upon identification, is classified according to its form and meaning group.

3. Result and Discussion

From the data collected, it appeared that interjection *Ale!* can be classified into two categories. They are emotive interjection and volitive interjection.

3.1. Volitive Interjection

Ale! as volitive interjection used to address someone with various intention or motives. Volitive interjections are aimed directly at the interlocutor to carry out a certain action.

a. I want someone to do something

The volitive interjection here, directed the interlocutor to carry out a certain action.

(1) *Ale amang! Ndang hatingkian pambahen ni Debata, …*(pg 15)
[Oh, my child! We can never predict what God will give...]

In the dialogue, interjection *Ale!* is used to address someone. Amang is the son of the speaker. He was calling out for his son, in order to listen to his advices.

(2) *Angguk beha do i. Ale! Ise do bamu na gaori*? (pg 17)
[What is that wailing? Oi! Who are you causing this commotion?]

(3) *Bege, Ale! Ndang sada singa hajolmaon di panompa ni Debata, sai timbangi di roham, rap sigurbak ulu do ho dohot hahanta doli i, Holan timus ni halak dodianggoi hamu, ndada na manuan haurahon*!
[Listen here! It's not just one person who was created strong by God, both of you, brother and sister, are equally lazy. The only thing you enjoy is the smoke from someone else's cooking..]

In the dialogue, interjection *Ale!* is used to communicate to the interlocuter in order to listen to what the speaker wants to say.

(4) *Marhobas ma ho, ale boru ni rajanami*!
[Pack your things, oh our royal child!!]

In the dialogue, interjection *Ale!* is used to address someone politely. Even though, the addressee (boru = girl) actually not a princess, yet in Batak Toba culture the term of "boru ni raja nami" refer to a polite, dearie and respective term in addressing a girl.

b. I want someone to know something

(1) Ale lae, peak do nuaeng dijolonta ursa na tabodil i.
[Oh Lae, the deer we shot earlier is now lying in front of us..]

In the dialogue, interjection *Ale!* is used to address someone. Lae is the brother in law of the speaker. He was calling out for his brother in law in order for him to listen and pay attention to the speaker.

c. I want this non-human object to do something

(1) *Marsik ma ho, ale laut*!
[Dry up, oh sea!]

In the dialogue, interjection *Ale!* is used to address something (sea). The speaker tries to speak to the sea, wanting the sea to dry up.

(2) *Asa tangi, bege i, ale Ompung Debata! Sai patuduhon rna di ahue dalan hangoluan* !"
[Let it be heard, hear me, oh God! Show me the path of life!]

In the dialogue, interjection *Ale!* is used to address God. The speaker wants God to listen to him and give him guidance.

3.2. Emotive Interjection

Based on the research results, emotive interjections of *Ale!* were found express various emotions.

a. *Ale!* = shame
"llangki, ale amang, dibahen hamu na sai godang siulaon di huta on, so dung hurangan ingkau hamu di bagas on, tung gabe dipaurak hamu hami marhite sian parulaonmuna on!"
[Oh, how embarrassed I am, Amang, because of what you've done. There's already so much work to do in this village. It's not as if we're lacking food at home, yet you've brought shame upon us with your actions!]

The *Ale!* interjection express a great shame, since the interlocutor do something shameless according to the speaker.

b. *Ale!* = anger
"*Maup sadari on ma ho, ale anak ni asu*!" … (pg 17)
[You're going to die today, Dog (little bastard)!]

The *Ale!* interjection express anger. *Ale!* was used and combined to become the swear words.

c. *Ale!* = Guilt
Sapot ni nipingkon, ale inang! Mate laengku hubodil, hurimpu ursa!
[My fate is so cursed, oh mother! I shot my brother-in-law, thinking he was a deer!!]

The *Ale!* interjection express guilt and regret.

d. *Ale!* = sadness
(1) *Hahuaon mai, ale amang! Naung i do ari ni laemi, ….* (pg 18)
[What else can we do, oh child? Maybe that was just their fate…]
(2) *Ngalutna i, ale Ornpung Debata, porniahapankon*!
[So deeply sad, oh God, is what I feel.!]

The *Ale!* interjection express sadness and weeping.

e. *Ale!* = regret
Bagingki, ale inang! Tung salpu hatangki tu boru ni raja i.
[Fate, oh my wife! I've spoken too harshly to my wife.]

The *Ale!* interjection express guilt and regret. The speaker have done or told something that make his wife angry with him.

4. Conclusion

From the findings above, it can be seen that the interjection "*Ale!*" is divided into two categories: volitive interjections and emotive interjections. The volitive interjections identified convey three meanings: a person's desire to have someone do something, to have someone knowing something, and to have non-human objects

performing actions. Meanwhile, the emotive interjections express emotions such as shame, anger, guilt, sadness, and regret, all of which are negative feelings.

These findings provide fresh insights, particularly for Bataknese and Indonesians, regarding the meaning of the interjection "*Ale!*" Hence, it would be beneficial for subsequent studies on this subject to explore additional interpretations of "*Ale!*" from different perspectives and research methods, aiming to uncover its diverse roles in actual communication.

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