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Types And Functions of Simalungunese Riddles (Hutinta)

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Abstract

This paper aims to describe (1) the type of riddles (*hutinta*) in the Simalungun Batak community, and (2) the function of the *hutinta* for the Simalungun community. *Hutinta* or riddles are traditional puzzles and have its own particular answers. Riddles are made in such a way that are difficult for other to be answered. Sometime the answer is available in advance (Dananjaya, James). This qualitative study use descriptive method. The data collection conducted by literature review and interview. The interview was conducted in two stages, the first stage the informant was interviewed about *hutinta* by recording the informant, and the second stage was translating the *hutinta* script from the Simalungun language into Indonesian. Based on the findings, it was concluded that Simalungun community has two types of *hutinta*, namely oppositional riddles and non-oppositional riddles. Moreover they are categorized into 4 categories based on its characteristic, such as; a) similarities with the human nature, b) animal nature; c) plants nature; and d) similarities to objects. The functions of the *hutinta* are: 1) To train thinking ability, 2) for entertainment or fun; 3) to recognize the surrounding environment, 4) to strengthen the feeling of collective solidarity; and 5) to practice one's speaking ability.

Keywords: *Hutinta*; types and functions; Simalungun

1. Introduction

Every region in Indonesia recognize with traditional games called as puzzles or riddles. The Banjar people called riddles as *cucupatin*, Lampung people called puzzles as *teteduhan*, Madurese called them as *bhak tebbhagha*. In Sundanese the riddles called *tatarucingan* [1], and the Toba Batak people call it *huling huling ansa*. Simalungunese also has the traditional game as riddle called *hutinta*, Simalungun people pronounce *hutinta* with *hutitta* for Simalungun language has regressive assimilation.

Hutinta is traditional games in the form of riddles or puzzles which is well known in the Simalungun community. Today, *hutinta* still practicing in some communities, however it is not familiar in younger generation due to the techy games is the way of living among the younger generation. In fact, most of young generation are never known the existence of Simalungun traditional games, *hutinta*.

Hutinta contains many virtuous cultural values. The content of advices implied in a riddle (*hutinta*) are parental wisdom. Formerly, parents delivered advice, to their children and grandchildren indirectly[2]. They expressed it in the form of riddle or puzzle called *hutinta*.

2. Riddle

Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia [3] defined riddle as (1) questions, etc., in the form of sentences (stories, pictures, etc.) that are vaguely presented, usually for games or for sharpening the mind; (2) things that are difficult to solve (lack of light, secrets, etc.). Goerges and Dundes (in Danandjaja, 1984:33) define a riddle as a traditional oral

expression that contains one or more elements of description and a pair of them can contradict each other and the answer must be guessed.

Riddles have been described in many ways, and their definition depends on their elements, sometimes called “parts”. Let us begin with a working definition that says: “A riddle is a traditional, fix-phrased verbal expression consisting of two parts, an image and an answer, and a seeming contradiction”. For example, “A house full, a yard full, Couldn’t catch a bowl full Smoke” [4]

2.1. The types of riddle

According to Goerges and Dundes [1] riddle or puzzles are divided into two general categories, namely: (1) non-oppositional riddles and (2) oppositional riddles. Puzzles that do not contradict the elements of the description are literal, namely as written (literal) or figuratively (metaphorical). Answers and questions are identical. For example: “What lives in the river?” which is the question of a riddle; and the answer is: “fish”.

Things will be different in figurative non-contradictory riddles; because the referent and the topic of the elements of the description are different. The example 'What are two rows of white horses lined up on a red hill?' is the topic of this kind of puzzle, with 'a row of teeth on the gums' as the reference. In this kind of puzzle, the topim (horse) and referent (tooth) are literally different.

At least, according to Georges and Dundes, there are three different kinds of contradictions in riddles contrary to English oral tradition, namely (1) antithetical contradictives; (2) a privacy contradictive; (3) the contradiction that causes (causal contradictive).

Riddle can be classified as an antithetical contradictive type if only one of the pair of contradicting elements of the picture is true. Furthermore, this antithetical contradictive riddle can be of two kinds. The first kind of element of the second pair of elements of the painting denies the second element of the pair of elements of the painting that denies the first.

The second kind of riddle that is antithetical contradictive is that the second element of the pair of elements depicted does not have to deny (deny) the first element, but is a reinforcement, although in a contradictory form. A new puzzle can be classified as a contradictive puzzle which is *private contradictive opposition*, when the second element of a pair of depicting elements denies a sign (attribute) of the first natural or logical element.

Archer Taylor [1] proposed riddle classification s based on the nature of which is described into several parts including:

- (1) Imitating the human’s nature
- (2) Imitating the animal’s nature
- (3) Imitating plants nature
- (4) Imitating the objects

2.2. Functions of the Riddles

In addition, Alan Dundes in Danandjaya argues that the puzzles have several functions, isuch as:

- (1) To train thinking ability
- (2) For entertainment or fun
- (3) To recognize the surrounding environment
- (4) To strengthen the feeling of collective solidarity
- (5) Practice one's speaking ability

3. Method

This study uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Moelong [5] argues that the qualitative approach is conduct by describing the object of the study sistematically and collect the data on the field before analysing the problem.

4. Result and Discussion

The data from the recordings taken from several informants obtained the results of the analysis based on the types of *hutintas*. For Simalungunese, there are two types of *hutintas*, namely *hutintas* that are not contradictory (non-oppositional riddles) and *hutintas* that are contradictory (oppositional riddles).

4.1. Types of *hutinta*: non-oppositional riddles

Examples:

- (1) *Marsisik sedo ihan marpayung sedo raja (Balosni: anas)*
He is scaly, not a fish, He is shady, not a King (Answer: pineapple)
- (2) *Isarad-sarad bituhani (Balosni: jarum)*
'Dragging his belly (Answer: needle)
- (3) *Bai bibirni pinggolni (Balosni: Balanga)*
The ears on the lips (Answer: pot)
- (4) *Gantung eneng-eneng (Balosni: namur)*
Hanging teary (Answer: dew on leave)
- (5) *Mamosah ia bani tapak-tapak ni tangan (Balosni: manggis)*
Hatch it on your palm (Answer: mangosteen)
- (6) *Itangkap seng ra dapot (Balosni: halinoh)*
Cannot be caught (Answer: shadows)
- (7) *Anggo pajumpah marsi summahan lo sidea (Balosni: porkis)*
If they meet each other kiss them (Answer: ants)
- (8) *Salpu mangan roh siganjang jambulan (Balosni: sasapu)*
After meals, the long hair appear (Answer: broom)
- (9) *Iboan-boan rumahni (Balosni keong)*
Never leaving his home. (Answer: conch)
- (10) *Martanduk Naheini, (Balosni: dayok)*
Horned feet. (Answer: rooster)
- (11) *Itagil lang ra rotap (Balosni: bah)*
Uncuttable (Answer: water).

4.2. Types of *hutinta*: Oppositional riddle

Examples:

- (1) *Sangah etek marabit dob ganjang salang-salang (Balosni: buluh)*
I got dressed in my young and naked as I grew up (Answer: bamboo)
- (2) *Laho hu juma Dompok huta ia Laho hu huta Dompok juma ia (Balosni: bitis)*
Move forward facing the backward (Answer: human calves)
- (3) *Laho hu toruh marsijurus Laho hu atas manlumpat (Balosni: surui)*
Going down is sliding, going up is jumping (Answer: comb)
- (4) *Indungni iabing-abing Anakni mansari panganon (Balosni: ultop)*
The mother is on the lap of the child looking for food (Answer: blowpipe)
- (5) *Ipisat pusogni Mirlak matani (Balosni: senter)*
Pressed the navel, see the sparkling eye (Answer: flashlight)
- (6) *Bai uluni toisni (Balosni: udang)*
The dirt is on the head (Answer: shrimp)
- (7) *Laho hu bah mombur rom hum bah merung (Balosni: sabun)*
After shower she get skinny (Answer: soap)
- (8) *Bodari marsidahopan arian marsipokpokan (Balosni: mata)*
Side by side in the night, hit each other in the day (Answer: eyes)

- (9) *Ganjangan hundul marimbang jongjong (Balosni: baliang)*
He is taller while sitting (Answer: dog)
- (10) *Maningon seda rumahni Ase tubuh ia (Balosni: anak ni dayok na baru mamosah)*
First destroy his house, then he was born (Answer: newly hatched chicks)
- (11) *Dob tartawa madudur iponni (Balosni: hudung-hudung ni galuh)*
After laughing his teeth fall out (Answer: banana heart)
- (12) *Hu toruh do madabuh, hu atas itorihi (Balosni: sopou na tiris)*
When she is falling down, they are looking for upside (Answer: leaking roof)
- (13) *Anggo inonoi roh daohni (Balosni: pinggol)*
When you look for her nearer, she is further (Answer: ear)
- (14) *Nadohor lang tartangkap Nadaoh boi itangkap (Balosni: pargolongan)*
The far is reachable instead of the near one (Answer: wrist)
- (15) *Masuk ni horas hu darat melus (Balosni: Mangan tobu)*
Hard incoming, withered in leaving. (Answer: eating sugar cane)

4.3. Hutinta categories in Simalungun community

4.3.1. Imitating the human nature

This type of *hutinta* has a similarities element with the humans nature. Things that are described related to the job position and nature of the example:

- (1) *Laho hu juma Dompok huta iaLaho hu huta Dompok juma ia (Balosni: bitis)*
Go forward facing the backward (Answer: human calves)
- (2) *Bodari marsidahopan arian marsipokpokan (Balosni: mata)*
Side by side in the night, hit each other in the day (Answer: eyes)
- (3) *Anggo inonoi roh daohni (Balosni: pinggol)*
When you look for her nearer, she is further (Answer: ear)
- (4) *Nadohor lang tartangkap Nadaoh boi itangkap (Balosni: pargolongan)*
The far is reachable instead of the near one (Answer: wrist)
- (5) *Itangkap seng ra dapot (Balosni: halinoh)*
Cannot be caught (Answer: shadows)

4.3.2. Imitating animal nature

This type of *hutinta* has a similarities element with the animals nature. Things that are described related to animals nature are seen in these *hutinta*:

- (1) *Anggo pajumpah marsi summahan lo sidea (Balosni: porkis)*
Kissing each other when met (Answer: ants)
- (2) *Iboan-boan rumahni (Balosni keong)*
Never leaving his home. (Answer: conch)
- (3) *Martanduk Naheini, (Balosni: dayok)*
Horned feet. (Answer: rooster)
- (4) *Bai uluni toisni (Balosni: udang)*
The dirt is on the head (Answer: shrimp)
- (5) *Ganjangan hundul marimbang jongjong (Balosni: baliang)*
He is taller while sitting (Answer: dog)
- (6) *Maningon seda rumahni Ase tubuh ia (Balosni: anak ni dayok na baru mamosah)*
First destroy his house, then he was born (Answer: newly hatched chicks)

4.3.3. Imitating plants nature

This type of *hutinta* has a similarities element with the plants nature. Things that are described related to plants nature are seen in these *hutinta*:

- (1) *Marsisik sedo ihan marpayung sedo raja (Balosni: anas)*

- He is scaly, not a fish, He is shady, not a King (Answer: pineapple)
- (2) *Mamosah ia bani tapak-tapak ni tangan (Balosni: manggis)*
Hatch it on your palm (Answer: mangosteen)
- (3) *Sanggih etek marabit dob ganjang salang-salang (Balosni: buluh)*
I got dressed in my young and naked as I grew up (Answer: bamboo)
- (4) *Dob tartawa madudur iponni (Balosni: hidung-hidung ni galuh)*
After laughing his teeth fall out (Answer: banana heart)
- (5) *Masuk ni horas hu darat melus. (Balosni: Mangan tobu)*
Hard incoming, withered in leaving. (Answer: eating sugar cane)

4.3.4. Imitating the objects

This type of *hutinta* has a similarities element with the objects. Those are described related to objects are seen in these *hutinta*:

- (1) *Isarad-sarad bituhani (Balosni: jarum)*
Dragging his belly (answer: needle)
- (2) *Bai bibirni pinggolni (Balosni: Balanga)*
The ears on the lips (Answer: pot)
- (3) *Salpu mangan roh siganjang jambulan (Balosni: sasapu)*
After meals, the long hair appear (answer: broom)
- (4) *Itagil lang ra rotap (Balosni: bah)*
Uncuttable (Answer: water).
- (5) *Ipisat pusogni Mirlak matani (Balosni: senter)*
Pressed the navel, see the sparkling eye (Answer: flashlight)
- (6) *Laho hu bah mombur rom hum bah merung (Balosni: sabun)*
After shower she get skinny (Answer: soap)

4.4. Functions of Hutinta for Simalungun Community

There are several functions of the *hutinta* for Simalungun community.

- (1) *To train thinking ability,*
Hutinta serves as the reasoning utterance and is used to make someone think critically and involving the logic to find the answer.
- (2) *For entertainment and fun*
Hutinta also functions as medium of entertainment or fun. Before the mass communication medium such as television media and gadgets introduce to Simalungun society people gathered in the yard and played *hutinta* until late at night to cheer up one each other. *Hutinta* served as entertainment and fun to fill the spare time with joking.
- (3) *To figure out the surrounding environment.*
The content of *Hutinta* are comes from the object around the society, such as animals, plants and objects. Therefore, playing *hutinta* invites players to recognize more about what objects in surrounding environment. For Example:
- *Mamosah ia bani tapak-tapak ni tangan (Balosni: manggis)*
Hatch it on your palm (Answer: mangosteen)
 - *Martanduk Naheini, (Balosni: dayok)*
Horned feet. (Answer: rooster)
- (4) *To strengthen the feeling of collective solidarity*
Hutinta became a medium to greet each other among the community. *Hutinta* is a game that generally involves a fight between two opposing parties. There must be at least two people or parties to paly *hutinta*. In ancient times, before the children went to sleep, the *hutinta* would become a means of communication within the family member to share the good time and occasion. The togetherness of family member was not obviously in playing *hutinta*, but also in daily activities such as studying and working. The playing environment is one of

the places that plays a significant role in increasing solidarity among people who are members to a certain group.

(5) *To practice the speaking ability*

Finally, the function of *hutinta* is to train one's speaking ability, particularly for young ones. Throughout *hutinta* game, the riddler usually organize the words well. He/she also train the listener and encourage them to think and find the answers. On this occasion, the young people practising their vocabulary and recognize the new ones from others.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

Throughout this paper, twenty-six *hutintas* are presented with their meaning. Those *hutinta* are divided into two types, namely optional riddles and non-oppositional riddles. *Hutintas* also categorized into 4 categories, namely the imitation of humans nature, animals nature, plants nature and objects similarity. The last category is often found in the Simalungun *hutinta* that implies that natural surroundings are the basic forms of *hutinta* contents.

Hutinta in the Simalungun community serves to train thinking ability, for entertainment and fun, and to recognize the surrounding environment.

The game of *Hutinta* (riddle) has been largely forgotten by the millennial generation, therefore inventory and documentation are needed for preservation. *Hutinta* is one of the elements oral traditions of Simalungunese that may enrich the treasures of national culture. The greater concern of local government is needed to preserve the game of *hutinta* by organizing events and competitions to play *hutinta* among elementary to high school students.

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