



The Local Batak Color in the Longa Novel by Nestor Rico Tambunan

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Abstract

This research was conducted to describe the local Batak colors and their functions contained in the novel Longa by Nestor Rico Tambunan. There are two approaches used, namely a theoretical approach using the sociology of literature approach with the theory of culture studies. Then the methodological approach uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The data in this study are the forms of cultural color contained in the words, sentences, and expressions in Longa's novel which are suspected of containing story facts about the characters and traditional Batak cultural background. While the data source used in this study is the novel Longa by Nestor Rico Tambunan. The data collection method uses the heuristic method, and the analysis method uses the hermeneutic method. There are five cultural elements contained in the novel, namely 1) religious systems and religious ceremonies; 2) social systems and organizations; 3) knowledge system; 4) language; and 5) art.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has cultural diversity from various tribes. This causes the tribes in Indonesia to have diversity which results in diverse social identities. This social identity can take the form of language, customs, traditions, belief systems, and others. Therefore, the diversity of social identities that exist in Indonesia causes a diversity of local colors. The diversity of local colors in Indonesia is now present in the creation of literary works which are a reflection of the cultural life of the community. This can be used as a way for the author to introduce readers to the cultural characteristics of a region. In line with Kelly's opinion (in Hurcombe, 2023) that cultural artifacts are a sign, trace and legacy of human experience. This is in line with Williams' opinion (in Alcalá, 2010) that culture is an intermediary for society to continue to be passed on to the next generation so that it does not become extinct.

According to Larasati (2023) states that local color is locality which describes regional characteristics in literary works. Local color built with expressions from certain regional languages can increase the regional style of literary works. Not only that, the use of local colors in literary works can introduce local culture to readers. Wuryani (in Nurjanah, Meliasanti, and Sutri, 2022) explains that literary works are not just texts containing fictional stories to entertain, but provide contents in the form of moral values, character education values, religious values, and social values. culture. The contents of these literary works certainly have benefits for society.

One type of literary work is a novel. Novels are just text such as character development, plot and setting (Jennings, 2014). In line with this opinion, novels tell a lot about social life because the stories in novels usually contain aspects of life in society and novels can also provide moral messages through the conflicts that occur in the story. One of the literary works that has a strong local color is the *Longa* novel by Nestor Rico Tambunan. This novel has a background story about Batak culture which contains social problems and customary rules that must be obeyed. *Longa's* novel began to be

written in 2014, then in 2016 the author published 5 chapters of the novel on his Facebook fanpage. Furthermore, in March 2021 this novel will start to be printed. The selection of the novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan as the research subject was carried out with several considerations. First, this novel tells about the very strong cultural background of Batak. Second, this novel has a lot of insight in it so that it can be used as a source of information for the public. Third, this novel has never been analyzed, so it will be an opportunity to introduce this novel to the public.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses two approaches, namely a theoretical approach with a literary sociology approach with cultural studies theory. Then, the second approach is methodological, namely a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Supriyanto (2021, p.71) literary research data can only be assumed to be in the words, sentence fragments, phrases, clauses, or discourse fragments. So, data in this research are forms of cultural color found in words, sentences and expressions in *Longa's* novel which are thought to contain story facts about the characters and background of Batak traditional culture. Meanwhile, the data source used in this research is the novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan, the second printing of which was published in 2021, published by the Mandiri Mitra Sejahtera Foundation in Jakarta. Heuristic data collection techniques. Heuristic reading is basically the first stage of interpretation. This first stage of reading will produce a series of heterogeneous meanings. According to Ratih (in Qiwarunnisa, Mulyono, and Qomariyah, 2018) argues that after the first reading, the reader must move further to obtain a unified meaning. Apart from that, heuristics can add depth and accuracy to the interpretation so that it helps researchers to produce a more insightful explanation (Buss, 2020). Then, analyze the data hermeneutically. According to Ayuningtyas (2016) that hermeneutic reading is reading that is carried out continuously through reading literary texts back and forth from beginning to end. So you can interpret the

meanings of events and happenings in the novel and discover the cultural values contained in the story.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Cultural Elements in the Novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan

With culture in the world, it is one of human duties to preserve, care for and make it beautiful. In order for culture to remain sustainable, it can be expressed in literary works. According to Koentjaraningrat (in Kistanto, 2015) that there are cultural elements that are interrelated between culture and social life, namely (1) Social systems and organizations; (2) Religious systems and religious ceremonies; (3) Livelihood system; (4) Knowledge (science) system; (5) Technology systems and equipment; (6) Language; and (7) Arts.

A. Religious Systems and Religious Ceremonies

a. Marhori-Hori Dinding

Before getting married, of course there are several things that must be gone through and they cannot be avoided, and the same goes for Batak people. According to Gusar, et al. (2022) explains that marhori-hori dinding comes from the words hori-hori which means groping and dinding which means wall. So, it can be concluded that the marhori-hori dinding is a stage of introduction of the groom's family to the bride's family. This process discusses evidence of the seriousness of the groom's family in marrying the prospective bride.

b. Sinamot

Sinamot can be interpreted as wedding payments or wedding gold used at weddings. The dowry can be in the form of money, objects or wealth. Discussions regarding the size of the dowry were discussed before the wedding took place. Both parties will negotiate to agree on the implementation of the wedding party. According to Pardosi (2008) explains that expensive sinamot payments can have a symbolic meaning as the self-esteem of both parties in the eyes of social

society, where both parties come from families that have authority or self-respect.

c. Maharta Sinamot

According to Hutagalung (2020) explains that marhata sinamot is a Toba Batak tradition before a marriage between a man and a woman so that the woman he is proposing to enters into a male family member. Marhata sinamot is a custom that is carried out to negotiate sinamot or dowry money before the prospective bride and groom get married. In Toba Batak culture, marhata sinamot is very important because it shows that the marriage being carried out has been legalized according to custom.

d. Martumpol

According to Widodo and Siregar (2019) explain that martumpol is defined as engagement. The martumpol process is carried out by exchanging rings, which means that the bride and groom have tied the knot and will soon be married.

e. Marsibuhai-Buhai

According to Hardori, et al. states that marsibuha-buhai comes from the word Buha which means to start or initiate. So, it can be interpreted that marsibuha-buhai is the initial activity carried out at the wedding blessing ceremony and refers to the implementation of a traditional party.

f. Marriaraja

Marriaraja is a meeting event for kings (traditional relatives) to discuss plans for the needs of a traditional party. This event was held by women because the guests at the event were women (Hutagol, 2021).

g. Mangulosi

Mangulosi can be interpreted as pinning ulos cloth as a characteristic carried out in Toba Batak traditional wedding activities. In the mangulosi procession there is something called hula-hula, namely Tulang (uncle) or Old Father (from the woman's family) who is obliged to give ulos to be pinned to the bride and groom. The ulos given in Toba Batak wedding customs are mandatory equipment in Toba Batak traditional weddings (Sirait and Hidayat, 2015).

There are many ulos used in customs Toba Batak weddings, such as ulos pansamot,

ulos holong, mandar hela, ulos bere, ulos to ale-ale, and so on. Ulos given when traditional activities have a similar meaning the same, but what differentiates them is the expression of the giver and recipient. In the novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan, it is told that there are several types of ulos given in wedding customs. The following are the types of ulos found in the novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan.

aa. Ulos Pansamot

Ulos pansamot is included in wedding customs. According to Darmawan (2015) explains that ulos pansamot is interpreted as ulos given by the bride's parents to the groom's parents.

bb. Ulos Sampetua

According to Agustina (2016) explains that Sampetua ulos is a ulos used on people who enters a new house. In Toba Batak society a person who has a new house is the greatest pride for Toba Batak community.

cc. Ulos Ragihotang

According to Lubis and Sandi (2021) explain that ulos Ragihotang is usually given by a girl's parents as a gift wedding gift for the bride and groom. Ulosragihotang is taken from the word hotang (rattan) which means reinforcement. This Ulos is given to people who have married so that their marriage is strong and never split like rattan.

dd. Ulos Harungguan

According to Panjaitan, et al. (2022) explained that harungguan refers to the word marunggu in Batak language which means gathering. It is named so because all the ulos motifs in Batak land are gathered in one ulos. This Ulos harungguan is used during joyful events, namely is likened to a request for blessing for success achieve something.

h. Umpasa

Umpasa for the Toba Batak people is a vehicle for expressing thoughts, attitudes and cultural values (Baiduri and Wuriyani, 2023). In every event, umpasa can appear in various events in people's lives which include joy and sorrow. Umpasa can be called oral literature from the Batak people in the form of a poem consisting of three to four lines or even more.

i. Mebat

Mebat is one of the traditional Batak wedding events. The mebat is done approximately a few days after the wedding. The bride and groom and the groom's family come to the bride's parents' house. At the bride's house, her extended family had already gathered.

j. Mandok Hata

Mandok Hata is one of a series of Batak customs that occurs on certain occasions. Mandok hata is in the form of giving advice or words, usually each family is obliged to say a few words, for example starting from the furthest family or friends.

k. Sarimatua

The sarimatua death ceremony is a traditional death ceremony carried out as a final tribute to a husband or wife who has been blessed with grandchildren from their children, even if some of the children are not married. The process of carrying out this death ceremony can be carried out in Martonggo Raja, at home, in the yard, in a place of worship, or at a cemetery using regional musical instruments.

1. Upa-Upa

Upa-upa is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation. Mangupa-Upa Momentum occurs when someone needs prayers and advice from parents and ancestors. This tradition is a form of gratitude for what has happened. Apart from that, it is a form of prayer request to God.

m. Mangain

The mangain tradition is carried out to raise a child and give a surname to someone who does not have a Batak surname. Apart from strengthening the clan, mangain aims to strengthen community interaction so that family ties are not broken.

2. Social Systems and Organizations

a. Kings, parents and traditional figures

Kings, elders and traditional figures are important people, usually involved in traditional events.

b. Partuturan

Partuturan is highly prioritized in Batak cultural values. According to Putri (2020) partuturan can be interpreted as a kinship system, social interaction in greeting the Batak tribe. The practice of partuturan is based on the outline of the philosophy, namely Dalihan Na Tolu.

3. Knowledge System

a. Sangsang

Sangsang is a typical dish of the Toba Batak tribe, North Sumatra. This dish is made from pork, dog meat or buffalo meat which is chopped into small pieces. Then it is seasoned with spices and cooked with the blood of the slaughtered animal. This spice preparation can also be served without animal blood.

b. Gomak noodles

Gomak noodles are a typical Toba Batak dish, North Sumatra. It is called gomak because initially this noodle was served gomak or which means grab or squeeze in the Toba Batak language. The noodles will be cooked or held with bare hands before serving.

c. Godok-godok fruit

Godok-godok fruit is a typical dish of Jambi, Sumatra Island. This dish is made from bananas which are crushed by pounding and then mixed with wheat flour, sugar, salt and baking soda. After that, all the dough is formed into balls and fried until golden.

d. Mangalua in Batak tradition is an elopement (informal marriage) which is a form of custom, meaning that the couple is not allowed to hold any traditional ceremonies. This happens when a man and a woman of his choice want to marry together by running away.

e. Arsik

Arsik is a typical Batak dish that comes from carp. This dish means fish cooked until dry. The word arsik comes from the cooking method, namely mangarsik, which means the fish dish is doused or drizzled during the cooking process.

f. Manuk Napinadar or Chicken Napinadar

Manuk Napinadar or Chicken Napinadar is a typical Batak dish which is usually served at certain traditional parties, usually served when someone experiences joy such as the birth of a

child, a wedding, and when someone is leaving to migrate. The characteristic of this dish is that it has a spicy taste due to the use of andaliman spices.

4. Language

The author of the Longa novel, Nestor Rico Tambunan, is an Indonesian writer who comes from Medan. Therefore, the novel he wrote uses the Batak language as a symbol of his pride and identity in the Batak region, his homeland. Apart from that, the novels he wrote using the Batak language can be used as a means of connecting within the family and society. So that when communicating, family relationships become stronger, and you feel close to one another. Apart from that, novels in regional languages can be used as a means to support and introduce languages, especially regional languages.

5. Arts

a. Uning-uningan

Uning-uningan music is a typical Batak art. According to Sinaga (2020) explains that uning-uningan music was previously a musical instrument played solo by men to express the feelings or desires that were in their hearts, whether happy or sad.

b. Taganing

Taganing is a traditional musical instrument originating from Batak. This musical instrument is a five-pitched drum with one side and is played by hammering or hitting it using sticks called mallets.

c. Hasapi

Hasapi is a traditional Batak Toba musical instrument which is played by plucking, a type of lute which is included in the chordophone group (stringed musical instruments) and has two strings, the shape is almost the same as a guitar. The characteristic of the hasapi musical instrument is that the sound hole is located at the back, not facing the face like a guitar (Herza & Rizal, 2019)

d. Manortor

Manortor is a dance, here it means dancing the tor-tor dance in a traditional activity. Manortor is carried out as a form of happiness,

joy, and respect for God, kings, and ancestors. Manortor is also considered an important tool in implementing customs (Purba, 2000).

d. The song is entitled *Poda Ni Daniang* or which means mother's advice.

The song is sung by Charles Simbolon and tells the story of a mother. A mother who will of course always pray for her children wherever they are, a mother who patiently understands and is able to care for her children from childhood to adulthood.

e. The song *Ro Pe Au Inang Mandulo Ho*

The song tells the story of a child who migrates and leaves his mother. However, the child will not forget his mother and will always remember her even though he is separated by distance.

f. The song is entitled *Atik*.

The song was sung by Rita Butar-Butar who is a legendary pop singer in Indonesia and a pop singer from Batak land.

g. The song is entitled *Ga Be Ma Ho Boru*

This song was composed by Tagor Tampubolon. This song means that a pair of men and women who are in love are starting to end their youth because they are about to enter marriage. They received a blessing at church, two people now became one. Everyone also prayed for their marriage and that things would always be good with their parents because after marriage they would be separated.

6. The Function of Local Colors in the Novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan

a. Introducing

The local color contained in a literary work, especially a novel, can function as a way for the writer to introduce a region. The *Longa* novel written by Nestor Rico Tambunan aims to introduce Batak to readers. Both in terms of religious systems and religious ceremonies, social systems and organizations, knowledge systems, language and arts. The author stated these things to introduce Batak so that readers know more about what is in Batak without having to visit Batak directly. The things introduced can add information and knowledge to the reader.

b. Strengthen

Literary works in the form of a novel entitled *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan are often included by writers regarding Batak culture. This can be used as reinforcement for readers when looking for information about Batak culture. The author not only mentions what cultures exist, but also explains the culture. Not only in the story, but also in the footnotes to the novel. Apart from culture, there are also local settings related to Batak which are explained by the author.

c. Preserve

Literary works written by authors involving elements of regional culture certainly have the function of preserving regional culture so that it remains sustainable and does not become extinct.

CONCLUSION

Of the seven cultural elements, only five elements are found in the novel *Longa* by Nestor Rico Tambunan, namely 1) religious systems and religious ceremonies. In the first element there are thirteen religious systems and religious ceremonies described by Nestor Rico Tambunan. The thirteen data include marhori-hori dinding, sinamot, maharta sinamot, martumpol, marsibuha-buhai, marriaraja, mangulosi, umpasa, mebat, mandok hatta, sarimatua traditional cemetery, upa-upa, mangain; 2) social system and organization, in the second element we find a social organization system in the form of huta kings, elders, and traditional leaders, and partuturan; 3) knowledge system, in the third element four elements of knowledge are found, namely sangsang, gomak noodles, godok-godok fruit, mangalua, arsik, and napinadar; 4) language, the fourth aspect is the use of regional languages written by Nestor Rico Tambunan in his novel. The use of the Batak language is often found to communicate with fellow figures who come from the same area; and 5) art, in the last aspect art is found in the form of musical instruments and Batak regional songs. The musical instruments found in the novel are uning-uningan, taganing, and hasapi. Meanwhile, the songs in the novel are songs entitled *Podo Ni*

Daniang, Ro Pe Au Inang Mandulo Ho, Atik, and Gabe Ma Ho Boru.

Local colors contained in the novel Longa by Nestor Rico Tambunan have three functions, namely, to introduce, strengthen and preserve. The author explains the culture, language and other things that are characteristic of Batak to provide information to readers so that readers also gain new understanding and knowledge about the local Batak color.

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