

# Minak Pengalun Karo: An Ecolinguistic Study

Insani A Zai<sup>1</sup>, Warisman Sinaga<sup>2</sup>, Jekmen Sinulingga<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas Sumatera Utara

Corresponding Author: Insani A Zai

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## ABSTRACT

This research discusses "*Minak Pengalun Karo: An Ecolinguistic Study*", reviews the oil that has been used for generations in traditional medicine by the Karo people. This study aims to explain the ecolinguistic aspects of Karo's *Minak Pengalun*, including a description of its flora lexicon, ecology, benefits, ingredients, and usage techniques. The theoretical framework applied in this study is the theory of ecolinguistics developed by Aron Meko Mbete. The research method used is descriptive qualitative method. The results revealed 31 lexicons in total, divided into 29 flora lexicons, one fauna lexicon, and one non-flora-fauna lexicon. Furthermore, this explanation is divided into 30 biotic lexicons and one abiotic lexicon. This research also explains the ecolinguistic aspects of the components used in making *Minak Pengalun Karo*, including the benefits of each component that are closely related to the lives of the Karo people, as well as the habitat and ecology of each of these ingredients. The theory of ecolinguistics, as outlined by Aron Meko Mbete, explains the interaction between ecology, language, and the role of humans in the context of Karo *Minak Pengalun* as part of traditional medicinal practices.

**Keywords:** ecolinguistics, lexicon, minak pengalun karu

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a part of culture that is formed from the influence of the environment. The environment refers to the place where the

language is spoken by the people who use the language. Haugaen (Ndruru, 2020: 257) argues that the language contained in the speaker's language plays a role in connecting the speaker to his fellow human beings and to the natural and social environment. The harmony between the three makes the natural environment the main source of human livelihood.

In addition, the environment as a space where humans carry out their daily lives will also play a role in shaping human culture. Areas with different natural environmental conditions will create different cultures. This is influenced by differences in the background of the community so that it will affect the way of thinking and behavior of the adherents. The various forms of culture in society have their own uniqueness, one of which is in the tradition of traditional medicine.

Literally, traditional medicine is care and or treatment with medicine, a method that comes from hereditary skills, experience, and training and education. This is evidenced by the variety of traditional treatments and concoctions believed by people in various regions such as: traditional medicine in the Dayak community, namely star oil, keletik oil in Sundanese society, etc. According to the results of the Basic Health Research of the Ministry of Health (2010) that the prevalence of the Indonesian population over 15 years old that 59.12% have consumed and used traditional medicine spread across various regions in Indonesia, the urgency of

traditional medicine can be seen from global data that the average use of traditional medicine worldwide is 20-28% of the total world population.

One of the ethnic groups known for traditional medicine is the Karo ethnic group. The Karo ethnic group recognizes traditional medicine through media such as *Minak Pengalun* Karo. *Minak Pengalun* Karo is one of the many heritages of the Karo ethnic group. ancestors that have been used for generations by the Karo people as a medicine as well as a potion that can be used as a medicine. treat various diseases, maintain immunity, or improve health. In general, *Minak Pengalun* is made from spices, roots, and green coconut oil. One of the areas that produces *Minak Pengalun* is Dokan Village, located in Merek District, Karo Regency, North Sumatra Province. Dokan Village is a traditional village that is part of a tourist attraction in Karo Regency.

This is motivated by the existence of Dokan Village which is categorized as one of three villages that represent the history of the development and existence of Karo ethnic culture. The research on *Minak Pengalun* Karo used by ethnic Batak Karo in Dokan Village, Merek District, Karo Regency uses the study of ecolinguistics where ecolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language, culture, and the natural environment which has an important role in the preservation of knowledge about traditional medicine and the preservation of the natural environment where traditional medicines are found. These traditional languages contain specialized terminology that refers to medicinal plants, how they are made, and how they are used. In the context of this brief review, the researcher will explain the ecological level and lexicon of *Minak Pengalun* plants, the composition contained in *Minak Pengalun*, information on how to make up to how to use *Minak Pengalun* and a description of the function of

oil or *Minak Pengalun* which is the basis of ecolinguistic studies in an effort to understand the meaning of human interrelations with the environment.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method according to Subagyo (2004: 1) is a way or method, which then the methods are ways related to work efforts in obtaining the expected goals in this effort can achieve the goals or objectives of problem solving the term scientific method shows the meaning if research activities are based on scientific characteristics, namely rational, empirical, and systematic. The aspects of this research method use qualitative descriptive methods. The basic concept of qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meaning that a number of individuals or groups of people ascribe to social or humanitarian problems. The research location is in Dokan Village, Merek District, Karo Regency. The research data sources use primary data sources collected directly from the main source and secondary data sources which are supporting data and supporting data. Furthermore, the data collection method used three methods, namely: interview method, observation, and literature. After the data is obtained, the next step is to analyze the data through the data reduction method, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification.

## III. RESULT & DISCUSSION

### 1. Ingredients contained in *Minak Pengalun* Karo

*Minak Pengalun* Karo is essentially an oil created by the Karo people through the combination of various natural spices with certain techniques and methods. If identified, there are 31 types of spices used in making *Minak Pengalun* Karo, especially those produced by Mr. M. Ginting in Dokan Village, Merek District, Karo Regency. The

following is a table of ingredients found in *Minak Pengalun Karo*:

**Table 1** Ingredients for Making *Minak Pengalun Karo*

Ingredients	Parts Used				
	Leaf	Root	Stem	Fruit	Flower
<i>Belo</i>	✓				
<i>besi-besi</i>					✓
<i>Binara</i>	✓				
<i>Binahong</i>	✓				
<i>bulung kacihe</i>	✓				
<i>bulung kapal-kapal</i>	✓				
<i>bulung lancing</i>	✓				
<i>bulung pandan</i>	✓				
<i>bulung sundur langit</i>	✓				
<i>Dringo</i>		✓			
<i>gegaten harimau</i>	✓				
<i>kempawa</i>			✓		
<i>kuning gersing</i>		✓			
<i>bahing</i>		✓			
<i>kaciwer</i>		✓			
<i>lasuna</i>		✓			
<i>lada mbiring</i>				✓	
<i>pia</i>		✓			
<i>minak gapura</i>	✓				
<i>minak sere</i>	✓	✓			
<i>minak tualah</i>				✓	
<i>regi-regi</i>	✓				
<i>rimo acem</i>				✓	
<i>rimo mungkur</i>	✓			✓	
<i>sira</i>					
<i>tabeh-tabeh kuda</i>					
<i>urat alang-alang</i>		✓			
<i>urat buluh</i>		✓			
<i>urat paula</i>		✓			
<i>urat riman</i>		✓			
<i>urat waren gegeh</i>		✓			

**2. FloraLexicon contained in *Minak Pengalun Karo***

Based on the data that has been categorized, the Batak Karo community utilizes 31 types

of flora and fauna as traditional medicinal ingredients in making *Minak Pengalun Karo*. A complete list of the names of these ingredients can be found in table 2 below:

**Table 2** Flora Lexicon in *Minak Pengalun Karo* Based on Linguistic

Flora Lexicon	Indonesian Name	Latin Name	Linguistic Categories	Biotic	Abiotic
			Semantic		
<i>belo</i>	sirih	<i>piper betle linn</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>besi-besi</i>	kencana ungu	<i>ruellia tuberosa l</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>binara</i>	mugwort	<i>artemisia vulgaris</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>binahong</i>	binahong	<i>anredera cordifolia</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>bulung kacihe</i>	daun kacihe	<i>prunus acuminata hook</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>bulung kapal-kapal</i>	daun kapal-kapal	<i>aeschynanthus albidus</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>bulung lancing</i>	daun terong teter	<i>solanum erianthum</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>bulung pandan</i>	daun pandan	<i>pandanus amaryllifolius</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>bulung sundur langit</i>	daun tunjuk langit	<i>helminthostachys zeylanica</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>dringo</i>	jeringau	<i>acorus calamus</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>gegaten harimau</i>	gagatan harimau	<i>paroboea sp</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>kempawa</i>	pinang	<i>areca catechu</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>kuning gersing</i>	kunyit	<i>curcuma longa</i>	animate	biotic	-

<i>bahing</i>	jahe	<i>zingiber officinale</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>kaciwer</i>	kencur	<i>kaempferia galanga linn</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>lasuna</i>	bawang putih	<i>allium sativum</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>lada mbiring</i>	merica	<i>piper nigrum</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>pia</i>	bawang merah	<i>allium cepa l wild</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>minak gapura</i>	minyak gandapura	<i>gaultheria oil</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>minak sere</i>	minyak serai	<i>citronella oil</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>minak tualah</i>	minyak kelapa hijau	<i>cocos nucifera oil</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>regi-regi</i>	kadaka	<i>asplenium nidus</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>rimo acem</i>	jeruk nipis	<i>citrus aurantifolia</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>rimo mungkur</i>	jeruk purut	<i>citrus hystrix</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>sira</i>	garam	<i>natrium klorida</i>	inanimate	biotic	abiotic
<i>tabeh-tabeh kuda</i>	lemak kuda	<i>equus caballus</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>urat alang-alang</i>	ilalang	<i>imperata cylindrica</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>urat buluh</i>	akar bambu	<i>bambusa sp</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>urat paula</i>	akar enau	<i>arenga pinnata merr</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>urat riman</i>	akar riman	<i>caryota sp</i>	animate	biotic	-
<i>urat waren gegeh</i>	akar bunga raya	<i>hibicus rosa-sinensi</i>	animate	biotic	-

Based on the table of materials from *Minak Pengalun* above, a total of 31 lexicons were identified. These 31 lexicons are then grouped into two main categories, namely linguistic categories and ecological categories. In the first category, namely linguistics with semantic aspects of the concept of Animate things or the concept of animate and inanimate, 30 lexicons were found to have a living or animate meaning, namely *belo, iron-iron, binara, binahong, bulung kacihe, bulung kapa-kapal, bulung lancing, bulung pandan, bulung sundur langit, dringo, gegaten tiger, kempawa, kuning gersing, bahing, kaciwer, lasuna, lada mbiring, pia, minak gapura, minak sere, minak tualah, regi-regi, rimo acem, rimo mungkur, tabeh-tabeh kuda, urat alang-alang, urat bamboo, urat paula, urat riman, urat waren gegeh*, while one lexicon is classified as lifeless or inanimate objects, namely *sira*. Furthermore, in the second category based on its ecology, 29 flora lexicons were identified as belonging to the biotic environment, while one fauna lexicon is also part of the biotic environment, namely *tabeh-tabeh kuda* and there is also one lexicon included in the abiotic environment, namely *sira*. This grouping includes the physical and social environment, related to geographical aspects, namely the place or environment where the ethnic Batak Karo community lives that utilizes plants (flora) and one fauna lexicon as traditional medicine ingredients for

making *Minak Pengalun* Karo. The lexicons which are ingredients for making *Minak Pengalun* Karo are entirely dominated by plants (flora) found in the living environment of the ethnic Batak Karo community.

#### **Ecolinguistic Studies Aron Meko Mbet**

The study of ecolinguistics simply examines language and its environment and juxtaposes ecology with linguistics. Biological and non-biological diversity that interacts and influences is the concept of ecological ecosystems, including human ecology and the ecology of the language used. Mbet sees that there are problems with the existence of local languages and local diversity values. In the perspective of ecolinguistics, that is a description of human knowledge and experience. In the perspective of the Karo people, *Minak Pengalun* is an inherent part of the community that uses traditional medicine as an alternative. Similarly, *Minak Pengalun* Karo is a representation of the wealth and natural resources of the Karo people, especially those found in Dokan Village. The language of the environment used is the accumulation of knowledge, experience, the results of interactions and interrelationships which show a diversity of 30 animate and one inanimate. Thirty-one components are then organized or encoded verbally by the Karo people in the form of words and speech using local languages. In addition, tiger gegaten can

also be categorized as a material that is difficult to find, considering that this plant only grows in the forest and is limited in nature. Nevertheless, many people use other substitute plants to replace this material such as castor leaves. There are also two ingredients that have not undergone language changes and continue to use Indonesian, such as pandanus leaves / *bulung pandan* and binahong / *binahong*.

### 3. How to make, use and utilize *Minak Pengalun Karo*

#### A. How *Karo Pengalun Minak* is Made

Based on the results of interviews with informants, researchers found several stages in making this Karo oil, starting from collecting ingredients in the form of thirty-one Karo spices.



Dok. Insani A Zai (2023)

Figure 1. Preparation for Making *Minak Pengalun*

Then the material is then chopped using a knife to get a small size. After the cutting process is complete, spices such as *yellow gersing*, *bahing*, *kaciwer*, *mbiring pepper*, *lasuna*, *kempawa*, *pia* are then ground or crushed using a millstone so that the extracts and juices from the ingredients come out. After the fire is lit, put *the minak tualah* and *minak gapura* into the cauldron until the oil is warm.

After the oil is warm, then the ingredients that have been pounded are added until they turn slightly yellow. About 5-7 minutes after the ingredients are slightly yellowed, mix other ingredients such as *belo*, *iron-iron*, *binara*, *binahong*, *bulung kacihe*, *lancing*, *sundur*

*langit*, *gegaten tiger*, *regi-regi* into the cauldron. A few minutes after the ingredients are mixed, put back into the cauldron spices such as *urat alang*, *urat buluh*, *urat paula*, *urat riman*, *urat waren gegeh*.



Dok. Insani A Zai (2023)

Figure 2: Stirring process of *Minak Pengalun* ingredients

Stir the ingredients constantly with a steady fire temperature, for almost 3 hours. After stirring continuously and the ingredients change color, the mixture of ingredients will emit a fragrant and distinctive aroma. After the process is done, the last mixture is *tabeh-tabeh kuda* to make the oil not freeze easily. Then mix *sere* oil and *pandan* leaves to give a strong aroma and give a soft effect later on the skin. The ingredients are again stirred continuously until there is a separation between the pure oil at the top and the remaining ingredients (dirty oil) at the bottom.



Dok. Insani A Zai(2023)

Figure 3. *Minak Pengalun* Dredging Process

The pure oil at the top is then scraped off and transferred to a clean container. The pure oil is then referred to as *Minak Pengalun Karo*. The oil is transferred to a container which is then cooled. After the oil has cooled, it is ready to be packed or transferred to a small

bottle using a funnel with a size of 100-500 ml.

### **B. How to use *Minak Pengalun Karo***

*Minak Pengalun Karo* is an oil commonly used by the Karo people as a treatment for several types of diseases. Before applying *Minak Pengalun*, it is advisable for the sufferer to diagnose the ailment by conducting a physical examination through touching, pressing, and sequencing the affected area. If the diagnosis indicates a bruise or tendon problem, the treatment involves massaging, pulling, and sequencing the affected area down to the base of the joint. In this process, the sequencing technique uses more pressure on the thumb. To increase the effectiveness and benefits of *Minak Pengalun*, patients can add other herbs such as betel leaves, ginger, and so on. In general, the technique of using *Minak Pengalun Karo* is as follows:

1. Take *Minak Pengalun* from the packaging/bottle
2. Drop a sufficient amount of *Minak Pengalun Karo* into the palm of the hand
3. Apply the oil on the palm of the hand to the affected part of the body thoroughly; and
4. After the oil is evenly distributed on the affected body part, gently massage the affected body part.

In addition, there are other methods that can be applied to heal internal wounds, namely by consuming them. The way to consume it is:

1. Take some warm water in a glass;
2. Then drop 2-3 drops of *Minak Pengalun* into the glass;
3. Next, stir until evenly distributed and then ready to drink.

### **C. Benefits of Using *Minak Pengalun Karo***

Based on the results of interviews with sources who make *Minak Pengalun Karo* in Dokan Village, *Minak Pengalun Karo* is believed to be a traditional massage oil that

provides many benefits in the treatment of various diseases of the human body, especially the external or external parts. The Karo people use *Minak Pengalun Karo* as an external medicine that is applied or smeared directly on the area of the body that experiences pain or pain and even used as an internal medicine that is consumed by drinking. Some of the benefits of *Minak Pengalun Karo* include:

1. Healing broken bones and sprains or sprains (*tertiher*) are used by applying or rubbing on the affected body part and gently massaging the affected area.
2. Curing toothache by applying around the jaw.
3. Cure heatiness, cough and flu by drinking.
4. Cures gout by drinking and applying to the part of the body that feels sore or painful.
5. It is believed to strengthen bones and improve blood circulation, especially for babies.
6. Lowers fever by applying to the whole body.

### **Ecology of *Minak Pengalun Karo***

The ingredients in making *Minak Pengalun Karo* are certainly inseparable from its ecology which plays an important role for the Karo people, especially in Dokan Village. This is because these ingredients are part or composition that must be owned in every manufacture of *Minak Pengalun Karo*. Karo people obtain these herbal ingredients from various sources or places, depending on how the ecology and the way to obtain them. In this discussion, the author categorizes ecology into four closeness, namely closeness; very close, close, far and very far. In the very close category, in this case the view that the ingredients for making *Minak Pengalun Karo* can be found easily and can be cultivated in many places.

Usually, this material can be found and obtained in the yard or yard. In the near

category, the view is that these materials can be obtained easily but can be found or cultivated in certain conditions of place, area and environment. Usually this material can be found and cultivated in community-owned farming areas. Furthermore, the distant category considers that these materials are difficult to find but can still be found by the community. Usually this material can be found on the edge of forests and swamps. Finally, the very far category is described as

materials that are difficult to find and can be categorized as rare materials. This category is identified as the most difficult material to find because it is far from the life environment of the Karo people. These materials are usually found in the middle of the forest or in the interior of the forest. Based on the explanation above, the closeness of *Minak Pengalun* Karo materials is classified as follows:

**Tabel 3 Material Ecology of Karo's Pengalun Minak**

Ingredient	Very Close	Close	Far	Very Far
<i>belo</i> sirih <i>piper betle linn</i>		✓		
<i>besi-besi</i> kencana ungu <i>ruellia tuberosa l</i>	✓			
<i>binara</i> mugwort <i>artemisia vulgaris</i>		✓		
<i>binahong</i> binahong <i>anredera cordifolia</i>		✓		
<i>bulung kacihe</i> daun kacihe <i>prunus acuminata hook</i>		✓		
<i>bulung kapal-kapal</i> daun kapal-kapal <i>aeschynanthus albidus</i>	✓			
<i>bulung lancsing</i> daun terong teter <i>solanum erianthum</i>		✓		
<i>bulung pandan</i> daun pandan <i>pandanus amaryllifolius</i>	✓			
<i>bulung sundur langit</i> daun tunjuk langit <i>helminthostachys zeylanica</i>			✓	
<i>dringo</i> jeringau <i>acorus calamus</i>		✓		
<i>gegaten harimau</i> gagatan harimau <i>paroboea sp</i>				✓
<i>kempawa</i> pinang <i>areca catechu</i>		✓		
<i>kuning gersing</i> kunyit <i>curcuma longa</i>	✓			
<i>bahing</i> jahe <i>zingiber officinale</i>	✓			
<i>kaciwer</i> kencur <i>kaempferia galanga linn</i>	✓			
<i>lasuna</i> bawang putih <i>allium sativum</i>		✓		
<i>lada mbiring</i>		✓		

merica <i>piper nigrum</i>				
<i>pia</i> bawang merah <i>allium cepa l wild</i>		✓		
<i>minak gapura</i> minyak gandapura <i>gaultheria oil</i>			✓	
<i>minak sere</i> minyak serai <i>citronella oil</i>	✓			
<i>minak tualah</i> minyak kelapa hijau <i>cocos nucifera oil</i>		✓		
<i>regi-regi</i> kadaka <i>asplenium nidus</i>			✓	
<i>rimo acem</i> jeruk nipis <i>citrus aurantifolia</i>	✓			
<i>rimo mungkur</i> jeruk purut <i>citrus hystrix</i>		✓		
<i>sira</i> garam <i>natrium klorida</i>				
<i>tabeh-tabeh kuda</i> lemak kuda <i>equus caballus</i>				✓
<i>urat alang-alang</i> ilalang <i>imperata cylindrica</i>		✓		
<i>urat buluh</i> akar bambu <i>bambusa sp</i>		✓		
<i>urat paula</i> akar enau <i>arenga pinnata merr</i>		✓		
<i>urat riman</i> akar riman <i>caryota sp</i>	✓			
<i>urat waren gegeh</i> akar bunga raya <i>hibicus rosa-sinensi</i>	✓			

### III. CONCLUSION

*Minak Pengalun* Karo is a typical oil from the ethnic Batak Karo that has a number of benefits for human health. The ingredients of *Minak Pengalun* are varied because in the content contained in this oil there are 31 types of ingredients that are utilized both roots, leaves, fruits, stems, flowers, animal fats. In the linguistic category there are 31 lexicons in the composition of *Minak Pengalun* Karo ingredients, the lexicons are identified into the category of living and non-living things. There are 29 plant lexicons, one animal lexicon, and one non-plant and non-animal lexicon. In the ecological category, there are 29 living flora lexicons, one living fauna

lexicon, and one non-living lexicon. All 31 lexicons directly refer to plants (flora) and animals (fauna) in the Karo Batak community environment.

The lexicon of materials contained in *Minak Pengalun* Karo requires ecological discourses that are both constructive and conservative in order to achieve a correlative relationship to language survival and change, especially in the three aspects of language, humans and ecology. The natural wealth found in Karo land with the condition of the area located in the highlands results in plants that can grow lushly. Where the ancestors of the ethnic Batak Karo utilized their natural wealth both flora and fauna in the area to be utilized. as an



ingredient in a wide range of traditional Karo medicine.

*Minak Pengalun* Karo can be classified as an anti-bacterial, fungal and inflammatory drug on the skin, relieves insect bites, helps dry wounds, and helps heal broken bones. The process of making *Minak Pengalun* Karo requires a long time to extract oil from each material collected so that the resulting oil is of high quality. The ingredients in making *Minak Pengalun* Karo are certainly inseparable from its ecology which plays an important role for the Karo people, especially in Dokan Village. This is because these ingredients are part or composition that must be owned in every manufacture of *Minak Pengalun* Karo. Karo people obtain these herbal ingredients from various sources or places, depending on how the ecology and the way to obtain them. This is then categorized based on the proximity of the lexicon to the life of the Karo people (ecology) which is divided into four categories namely very close, close, far and very far depending on the effort in obtaining it.

**Declaration by Authors**

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