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# MEANING STRUCTURE AND SPEECH FUNCTIONS OF MANGANDUNG PABAGAS BORU IN ANGKOLA WEDDING TRADITION

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**Abstract:** This study examines the meaning structure and speech functions of mangandung pabagas boru, an oral lament performed by Angkola brides during wedding ceremonies. While previous research on Batak andung traditions has largely emphasized musical form, ritual sequence, and general cultural description, the semantic organization and communicative functions of mangandung in the context of kinship and gender socialization remain underexplored. Drawing on speech act theory and Peircean semiotics within an ethnographic approach, this research analyzes recorded performances of mangandung pabagas boru alongside in-depth interviews with expert performers and community elders. Data were collected through participant observation, audio recording, and ethnographic interviewing in several Angkola communities. The analysis demonstrates that mangandung simultaneously realizes expressive and directive speech acts: it articulates the bride's grief, affection, and anxiety at separation from her natal family, while also conveying moral instruction and social expectations for her future role as wife, daughter-in-law, and mother. Key lexical items and metaphors—such as holong (deep familial affection), tarpaina (motherly capability), and honas (being under the gaze of many eyes)—encode local wisdom regarding kinship obligations, female virtue, and community surveillance. As an indexical ritual performance, mangandung publicly marks the bride's transition to married status and affirms continuing ties to her natal kin. The study argues that revitalising this tradition is crucial not only for cultural preservation but also for maintaining indigenous systems of moral education embedded in ritual discourse
**Keywords:** *structure of meaning; Mangandung Pabagas Boru; in Angkola.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Andung* is one of the most characteristic oral traditions of expressive lament among Batak communities in North Sumatra (Pane et al., 2023). For Batak Toba, Pakpak Dairi, and Angkola–Mandailing societies, this expressive style is known as andung; in Simalungun it is called sunan-sunan, in Karo bilang-bilang, while in other regions comparable forms also exist under different names (Alamo et al., 2021). Among the Sentani in Papua, for example, the lament tradition remahili is performed through crying, speaking, and bodily movement as a form of prayerful anguish before God, and the Toraja tradition kadong-kadong is similarly performed in funeral rituals to recall the history and virtues of the deceased (Marini & Marweri, 2025). Such lament practices represent a rich domain of speech acts that personify ethnic culture and constitute a crucial site where language, emotion, and social values intersect (Ananda Dwi Rahayu et al., 2025).

Within the Angkola context, mangandung refers to a stylised act of crying accompanied by poetic speech. It represents an inner expression framed in a special andung register, and not everyone is able to perform it (Kovács, 2025). Master performers insist that mangandung requires a particular sensitivity and emotional depth

(Titular, 2025). In Angkola society, mangandung at wedding ceremonies—known as mangandung pabagas boru—has traditionally been a central ritual through which the bride expresses her sorrow at leaving her natal home and her gratitude to her parents and relatives (Nasution et al., 2022). The performance is not merely an outburst of emotion; it is a culturally regulated form of speech that articulates life philosophy, moral instruction, and the collective memory of kinship relations (Rahardi & Rahmat, 2026).

At present, however, the tradition of mangandung in Angkola wedding ceremonies is in serious decline and, in many places, has nearly disappeared (Gultom et al., 2025). Whereas in the past mangandung constituted a core element of the wedding ritual, it is now often replaced by simple, non-poetic advice delivered in everyday language or Indonesian without the performative dimension of anguished lament (Dewi et al., 2025). The specialised andung language is no longer widely understood, especially among younger generations, and the remaining expert practitioners are mostly elderly (Singhal et al., 2025). Consequently, the subtle norms of polite and respectful speech embodied in mangandung are being eroded by everyday and even slang registers, and with this erosion comes the loss of a complex indigenous system of moral education (Akhir et al., 2025).

Previous studies of Batak oral traditions and andung have generally concentrated on musical structure, ritual function, and ethnographic description of social roles (Pane et al., 2023). Important contributions have documented performance settings and have interpreted andung as an expression of grief or a marker of ritual transition. However, relatively little work has systematically analyzed the semantic organisation of mangandung and its speech act functions in the specific context of Angkola wedding ceremonies (Hayati, 2019). In particular, the ways in which mangandung encodes cultural values about kinship, gender roles, and local wisdom through lexical choice, metaphor, and semiotic resources have not been examined in sufficient linguistic detail (Zuhair Ahmad, 2025).

This article addresses that gap by focusing on mangandung pabagas boru as a ritual speech event that constructs meaning through the interplay of semantic structure, speech act function, and performance context. The study is guided by three main research questions: first, what are the predominant speech act types realised in mangandung pabagas boru, and how are they distributed within the performance? (Sari, 2025) Second, how are cultural values—particularly those related to family affection, kinship obligations, and female roles—encoded lexically, metaphorically, and semiotically in mangandung (Isyaku et al., 2025)? Third, how does the performance of mangandung index the bride's social identity and her transition from daughter to wife within the Angkola kinship system (Harahap et al., 2023)?

By integrating speech act theory, semiotic analysis, and ethnographic observation, the article seeks to demonstrate that mangandung pabagas boru is not merely an emotional outpouring but a highly structured form of ritual discourse (Strii & Kishchenko, 2025). As such, it contributes to linguistic anthropology and discourse studies by providing a case study of how oral traditions simultaneously express personal emotion, transmit cultural norms, and index social identities. At the same time, the study offers a basis for efforts to revitalise the tradition as an important repository of local wisdom in contemporary Angkola society (Aurlani & Idaman, 2025).

## METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative ethnolinguistic design, combining methods from ethnography and discourse analysis to investigate the meaning structure and speech functions of mangandung pabagas boru in Angkola wedding ceremonies (Karimah et al., 2025). Qualitative inquiry is appropriate for this topic because it enables a holistic exploration of meanings, values, norms, and local wisdom embedded in ritual language and practice.

Fieldwork was conducted in Angkola communities in and around Padangsidimpuan and neighbouring areas where the mangandung tradition is still practised, although increasingly rarely. Data collection followed ethnographic procedures adapted from Spradley, including the identification and selection of key informants, repeated interviews, systematic participant observation, detailed fieldnote writing, and iterative analysis of emerging cultural domains. Key informants were chosen purposively based on their recognised expertise and involvement in mangandung performances. They included elderly women known as experienced pengandung (lament performers), traditional leaders and cultural figures, as well as family members who had recently organised wedding ceremonies involving mangandung.

The primary data for this study consist of

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recorded mangandung pabagas boru performances by brides during wedding rituals, complemented by in-depth interviews with performers and community members. Performances were audio-recorded with the consent of participants, focusing on relatively complete renditions of mangandung during the crucial moment when the bride takes leave of her parents and close relatives. Interviews, conducted in Angkola and Indonesian, explored participants' interpretations of the meanings, functions, and appropriate performance of mangandung, as well as their views on the decline and possible revitalisation of the tradition. Fieldnotes documented non-verbal aspects of the ritual, including the sequence of events, the presence of ritual objects such as rice, eggs, and betel, the spatial arrangement of participants, and audience reactions.

Recorded mangandung performances were transcribed in the Angkola language with attention to lineation, pauses, and prosodic features relevant to meaning, and were then translated into Indonesian and English. Transcriptions were checked with native speakers to ensure accuracy, especially for archaic or specialised andung vocabulary. The transcripts were segmented into units of analysis, generally clauses or lines corresponding to breath groups or intonation contours. Each unit was examined for its locutionary content and coded for illocutionary force according to speech act categories, particularly expressive and directive types. The coding process was iterative and involved comparison across performances to refine categories and ensure consistency.

In addition to speech act coding, the analysis focused on the identification of key lexical items, metaphors, and recurring rhetorical patterns. Terms such as holong, tarpaina, and honas were analysed in relation to broader semantic fields of kinship, emotion, and moral evaluation. Metaphorical expressions comparing the bride's fate to natural elements, animals, or domestic objects were interpreted using both semantic and ethnographic evidence, including informants' explanations. Paralinguistic features—such as rising and falling intonation, lengthening of vowels, voice breaks, and sobbing—were noted as semiotic resources that iconically and indexically convey emotional states. Ritual objects and gestures, including embracing, bowing, and the presentation of food items, were similarly analysed as signs that contribute to the overall meaning structure of the performance.

Ethical considerations were central to the research design. All participants were informed about the aims of the study and the intended use of recordings and transcripts, and their consent was obtained verbally and, where possible, in written form. Pseudonyms are used in this article to protect the privacy of individuals. Given the emotionally charged nature of mangandung, special care was taken to respect participants' feelings and to avoid intrusive recording during moments of intense grief. The study also sought to give something back to the community by sharing results in accessible formats and by supporting local discussions about cultural preservation and intergenerational transmission of the mangandung tradition.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The continuity of the tradition of *mangandung pabagas boru* means an expression of parental affection for their daughters who will step into domestic life. The form of happiness mixed with emotion is illustrated by the expression of sadness of a mother when giving words of advice to her daughter for the last time so that one day the girl or bride can adjust to loving her in-laws and new relatives. The mother feelings are terrified that her child makes a disgrace in the future becausthe disgrace will be a disgrace to her extended family; for that, she advises the groom to be able to teach her child kindness by always being based on religious teachings. For it is no longer possible for a mother if her daughter is married, those good counsels deliver. Of course, before this event starts, it is necessary to prepare pangupa rice, beautiful pasahe robu furnaces, and boru luggage. After all that is presented, the *amang*, *inang*, *ompung, dalihan na tolu, harajaon*, and *hatobangon* elements are obliged to attend and give words of advice to the bride and groom. The timing of this event is carried out after the completion of the *mambutongi* (feeding the bride and groom until they are full), as well as being united in the *mangupa* event, giving encouraging prayers to the bridal couple. The philosophical meanings found in this mangandung tradition include; first, civility in speech found in data (1) and (2); Second, kinship relationship; the closer the kinship relationship, the stronger the sobbing of pengandung towards diandungi which is found in the data (3),(4),(5),(6),(7), Thirdly, stating the departure is found in data (8) with one sacred function which is to express the anguish.

One of the essential things to note in appearance when *mangandung* is the composition of words of literary value, which is how a person tends to translate his feelings by likening them to objects in

the universe, such as compared with plants and animals, such as:

(1) *Songon sopo-sopo ni simangurak,*
*Na payak **so** pola jomputon*
*Na deret so pola ulahan*
*Na manyusup so pola langean*

It means that a feeling of sadness comparing the fate of luck, such as worthless betel pulp, falling will not be taken, left behind, abandoned, and washed away; such is the prejudice that the girl feels because she feels useless towards her parents and family anymore, so she is allowed to marry someone else.

(2) *simarpos-pos di dapur*
*Na malap-alap male-male*
*Manontang na dua tolu*

That is, with a sense of sadness comparing the fate of luck, which she will encounter in the future, like a cat in the kitchen, where people rejoice in enjoying a meal. However, for the cat, it feels foreign, reluctant to mix with fear, dare not defy views, and approach people who enjoy food; such is the feeling of the girl in her new family. Such is the beauty and smoothness of the words andung that translates the feelings of a girl that there is hope that these words will disappear because no one maintains them.

In the activities of the mangandung tradition at the cultural wedding ceremony, the relationship between the food dug, the one he protects, and the closeness of his kinship is clear. In MA, if a daughter gets married, she will usually protect her parents, siblings, and close relatives, whereas in the partuturon, the bride is mangandungi umak. The host is a parent who gives affection and cares from a young age. This mangandung does not necessarily materialize. Because the person who can be mused is a person who has subtle feelings and is sensitive to all the excellent treatment he has ever received from others, thus making him successful and will always be remembered by him until the end of his life. The habits of the youngest children are so spoiled, and they are very cherished. This treatment can see in the data

(3) *umakk....umak...eeee.....*
Mom.....Mom....eee...

*Kehema au da umakk....*
I should go mom.....

*Mangido maaf au da umak...*
I am apologize mom

*Sehat- sehat kamu da umak....uuuuuu.....*
Wish you are fine, mom..uuu..uuu...
'Let me go, mom, forgive, wish you are fine,,,,'

The *umak* call addressed to the one he was carrying was his biological mother. Using the word umak clearly shows the relationship between mother and boru (daughter). Of course, in this relationship, the closeness of blood is powerful, so the inner connection between the two is an inner bond that will later cause a great sense of longing and loss because the inner bond that has been established indeed holds beautiful memories, which are indescribable and replaced by words and materials. In MA, when girls get married, their hopes of being able to be spoiled by their parents. The relationship when becoming a mother and daughter before marriage one day will become a good memory that will later be remembered. The habits that used to be often done at home will change completely when you become a son-in-law and wife. For this reason, in replying to the food, namely his daughter. Parents also welcomed them by hugging their daughters tightly. This hug hints that mom does not want to part with her boru yet. The tighter the hug between the two, the stronger the sobs that sounded. The mother was holding her child as she said.

(4) *malo-malo ho da inang, mabuat roha ni bou-mu*
Be humble in having your mother in law, be sure that you are on your self

From the above clause, it can be seen how the relationship between a mother and her boru. The meaning is quite profound: a mother knows how her children behave. His goodness, even his vices. The thing that a mother is afraid of, her child still carries traits when she is still a girl who can do things as she pleases. Because when this trait is still at the bottom of domestic life, it will hurt the girl's parents. Because her parents will be stamped as parents who cannot educate their daughters. In addition, MA always thinks that the ideal son-in-law is a daughter-in-law with a motherly or "tarpaina" attitude. Where, the daughter-in-law who has maternal instincts and can position herself as a child, daughter-in-law, wife, and society.

*Andung addressed to iboto*

(5) *O.... ibot....,o ibot...,kehema au da ibot...*
O....my brother, o my brother..., I will go my

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brother...

*Tu huta sihadaoan iiiiiiiii.....*
To this far village....iiiii.....

*O... ibot....., o ibot...,*
O... my brother..., o my brother
*Baya ibotoku palua simanarengku.....*

My brother let me go....
*Tu luhat naso huboto kehe au da ibot,*

To the one village there, my brother..
My brother,,, oh my brother,,, let me go there...

The name ibot or iboto is a kinship call to a brother or sister to MA. From this kinship call, it can also be seen that the one sheltered is the bride's brother. It is how sad it is that girls will untie the inner bonds of their siblings. She cried for her iboto because she remembered her childhood together, often hanging out, playing together, and other memories of being able to get together with her parents. Of course, when married, such events are rare. Especially if the bride is far out of town with her husband, reuniting is a dream that may not be possible.

*Mangandung addressed to a close friend (naposo bulung)*

(6) *Oooo, dongan naposo bulung jagit tangan jau solomi.*
Oooo, the young friend received this greeting call from a hand
'my peers, please accept this greeting of mine

*Mangido maaf au dohot mangido izin da dongan na dua tolu*
I apologize for you, the friend who is two or three
'I apologize and permit your friends'

*Muda langka simanjojak munu i, tu aek sibokkioni ulang*
If you walk on your feet, go to the river where you bathe, don't.

*Hamu lupa lolos mamiohon goar ni au namanca da bulungon*
'You guys forgot to say my name.'

*Anso suang do mai leng na jong-jong nomai na di bagas parpidoan i*
'Let us say I am still waiting here, in a usual place

*Ima na songon siala sampagul i, rap tu gincat rap tu toru,*
That is the one that is like a piece of siala, the same upwards, the same to carry,
'Like a piece of siala fruit, evenly distributed top down

*Rap magulang rap madabu*
Same fall, same fall
'Equally Falling and Rolling'

The content of this third andung is aimed at our close friends, namely friends when we were young, to our schoolmates who used to play together. Of course, there are many memories together, and when we are married, the times of playing together are certainly not as free as we are single. It makes us mangandung, mangandung because these times will undoubtedly be greatly missed.

In this tradition, there is also a dalihan na tolu, mora, that serves as a bone on the bride. Indeed, his position is highly respected in the pretext of na tolu.

(7) *Songoni mada bere,*
This is how my son in law

*baen nagiot langka matobang ma ho,*
because of you will have your new family

*Antong sude pangalaho dipatomang ma.*
Here, you need change your habit

*Najolo bisa dope menjeng-menjeng*
In the past, you can be slow

*Dijolo ni simatobangmu, anggo on bere,*
By having your parents, my son in law

*usaho doma pikiron mu, anso adong di ho*
think over your business and developed it to be yours

*ringgas ho bere marusaho, malo-malo ho beremarkoum*
be diligent and clever on your new family, my son in law
'Working hard and cleverly reuniting into the family'

(8) *ima indon boru nagiot kehe langkah matobang,*
this daugher is going to married

*manopotkon tuanak ni namborumu,*
to the son of your father's sister

*Nagiot kehe maho ima tu Siborang*
That will go to Siborang

That is to say: As for our gathering here, to carry out my daughter who is about to step into a new life, together with the son-in-law who has become his mooring, who came with humility to be

willing to accompany him in the domestic life, at this time my daughter, you have decided to go to Siborang...'

The statement of stepping towards a new life and deciding to go in the passage above describes the moments when the process of transitioning life in the human life cycle takes place through the phases of life from a person born to then married and ultimately to the phase of death. The stepping means a process of change to advance towards the future with a new life and leave the past, namely childhood and adulthood, or one's own time towards marriage to decide to live together, so that getting married for a daughter is to go with a husband to live together, and leave a parent who has given affection all this time to his daughter. This separation between daughter and parents is a happy thing because it is an honor for parents in MA. These beautifully worded words indirectly indicate that the reflection of a woman is characterized by a sense of *holong* (affection) as a form of moral value that makes it one of the identities of Angkola society. The meaning of the *mangandung* tradition has stayed the same, literally. The tradition of formal marriage events in ma is the teachings of kindness conveyed to the bride and groom as a guide for life in the household. This tradition is a moment of separation or leave and a good opportunity for the bride's family of the bride, because this is the last time parents have been permitted to pass on advice to their daughters. The function of the *mangandung* tradition at this marriage event is as a guideline, behavior, and controller in living a domestic life.

In the tradition of *mangandung pabagas boru* (mating girls) is usually presented as a context, the material element that accompanies the text in a tradition. In addition, the mother of the bride usually provides *manuk jara-jara* (chicken), as well as bamboo segments that have been decorated 30cm long, to be under and carried by the bride. The components can be seen in meaning in the following table.

Table 1. *The meaning components of mangalehen mangan on mangandung tradition*

| No | Components | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Parts | Icon | Index | Sign |
| 1. | *indahan na bottar* | indahan na bottar | Aroma of White Rice | Meaning of White Rice |
| 2. | *pira manuk* | Boiled chicken eggs | Aroma of Boiled chicken eggs | Meaning of Boiled chicken eggs |
| 3. | *Sira* | Picture of Salt | Salt Tast | Meaning of Salt Taste |
| 4. | *Ambeng* | Picture of Goat | Sound of Goat | Meaning of Goat |
| 5. | *Burangir* | Picture of Betel | Betel Taste | Meaning of Betel |

Table 2. *Context structure of Mangandung tradition on culture wedding ceremony of Angkola*

| Paralingustics (suprasegmental) | Kinetic (Cue Motion) | Parts of Materials |
|---|---|---|
| Tone/word pressure that signifies a sad meaning | 1. Looking down<br>2. Embracing hands<br>3. Hugging<br>4. Struggling<br>5. Flaming | • Hen, a small basket filled with rice, 3 chicken eggs, and a spoon made of coconut shells.<br>2. Bridal luggage<br>• Giving of goods from parents<br>• Giving of goods from *amangtua*<br>• Giving of goods from *amanguda*<br>• Gift of goods from bones<br>• Giving of goods from *hatobangon* and *harajaon* |

Based on the discussion stated above, several suggestions will be put forward so that later this research can be used as input for all circles, such as traditional figures, customary institutions, governments, linguistic observers, and practitioners engaged in cultural or customary areas. Changes in people's views on customs influenced shifts in existing customs in Angkola (Pius & Murugan, 2025). This change certainly impacts traditions that are still going on today. One is the tradition of mangandung in the wedding culture ceremony of Angkola (Gultom et al., 2025). The change in decline is due to indigenous peoples who have been contaminated with foreign cultures. The leading causes are the absence of a system of inheritance for the following generations, figures who understand customs are getting more and more steps, increasingly modern mindsets, economic factors for carrying out traditional ceremonies getting higher, and the frequency of traditional practices decreasing (Darisman et al., 2025).

One of the phenomena is a shift that eliminates part by part of the event in the tradition, which will eventually eliminate part of the tradition (Chattopadhyay, 2025). So that a community can abandon the customs of traditions that have previously lasted from one generation to the next, the traditions that have begun to be abandoned in

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their communities in everyday life are indeed a form of concern that requires preventive efforts (Tashya & Mardhotillah, 2025) so that Oral Tradition Studiesthat have been going on will not be wiped out and lost. Because if this happens, of course, it will be difficult to restore it. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a form of preservation efforts by revitalizing the tradition of mangandung in the traditional ma marriage event (Taborat et al., 2025).

Preservation of traditions by reinserting into the present by bringing traditional values as the philosophy of life (way of life) Angkola (Shuhaizam Said et al., 2023). If necessary, the *mangandung* tradition in this Angkola wedding formal event is used as an example to be presented again (Astuti et al., 2023). The most appropriate effort is revitalization through empowering and strengthening the existence of the *mangandung* tradition in order to maintain its form (Ramadhan et al., 2023). So indigenous peoples retain the tradition of *mangandung* in traditional wedding events in Angkola (Padlan Padil Simamora et al., 2024).

The analysis of mangandung pabagas boru performances reveals that the tradition constitutes a complex interplay of expressive and directive speech acts, supported by rich semiotic resources and embedded in a dense web of kinship relations (Juni Us'ariasih et al., 2024). At the most immediate level, mangandung expresses the bride's sorrow at leaving her natal family and her fear of failing to meet expectations in her new role. This expressive function is evident in repeated address terms such as umak (mother), iboto (sibling), and kinship labels for relatives and friends, often accompanied by prolonged vowels, sobbing, and breaks in voice (Parisi et al., 2024). For example, a bride's repeated cry "umakk… umak…" followed by pleas for forgiveness and wishes for her mother's health expresses deep attachment and anticipatory loss. The emotive intensity is amplified by vocal tremors and physical gestures such as tightly embracing the mother, which iconically represent the internal state of distress and simultaneously index the closeness of the mother–daughter bond (Silverstein et al., 2025).

Beyond expressing emotion, mangandung is densely populated with directive speech acts that encode moral advice and behavioural expectations. These directives may be framed as admonitions from the mother to the daughter, urging humility, diligence, and respect toward in-laws, or as self-address from the bride, reminding herself of the need to adapt and behave properly in her new household (Ni Luh Kade Yuliani Giri, 2026). Phrases urging the bride to be modest, to avoid causing disgrace to her natal family, and to manage domestic responsibilities carefully are typical. Through these directives, mangandung functions as a vehicle of moral instruction, transmitting local wisdom concerning ideal female conduct. The performance thus serves not only as an emotional farewell but also as a ritualised lesson in gendered virtues (Annabil et al., 2026).

The semantic analysis of key lexical items reinforces this interpretation. The term holong encapsulates a dense field of meaning related to deep familial affection, loyalty, and the enduring nature of kinship ties. When holong is invoked in mangandung, it signals not simply affection but a moral obligation to maintain emotional and practical ties with the natal family even after marriage. The term tarpaina refers to a motherly disposition, encompassing qualities such as care, patience, and the ability to manage household and kin relations. In mangandung, the expectation that the bride will become tarpaina indicates a gendered ideal in which the new wife must embody maternal virtues even before becoming a mother herself (Picard, 2024). Meanwhile, the concept of honas, associated with "many eyes" watching, symbolises community surveillance and social evaluation. To be under honas is to live in constant awareness that one's behaviour reflects on one's family, reinforcing the moral weight of the directives uttered in the performance (KACHAK, 2024).

Metaphorical expressions in mangandung further illuminate Angkola conceptions of fate, value, and vulnerability. In some lines, the bride's position is likened to betel pulp that falls and is not picked up, or to a cat in the kitchen that feels out of place among people enjoying a feast (Kovalets, 2022). These images convey deep insecurity and the sense that, upon marriage, the bride may be overlooked, undervalued, or constrained in her new environment (Tabor, 2025). At the same time, other metaphors, such as the siala fruit distributed evenly, suggest ideals of mutual sharing and reciprocity among peers and kin. The metaphoric repertoire thus reflects both anxiety about separation and a normative vision of harmonious relations grounded in mutual care and fairness (Munung et al., 2022).

From a semiotic perspective, mangandung also relies on non-verbal signs and ritual objects to construct meaning. Weeping and vocal trembling are iconic signs that resemble and thereby represent inner grief. The timing of mangandung—

performed at the critical point when the bride formally leaves her natal home—indexes a life transition from daughter to wife, thereby linking the performance to broader cycles of life passage. Ritual objects such as white rice, boiled chicken eggs, salt, goat meat, and betel are arranged and presented alongside the performance; each carries symbolic meanings associated with sustenance, fertility, purity, endurance, and social bonding. According to community interpretations, the aroma and taste of these items signify the hope that the bride's future life will be as fragrant, nourishing, and enduring as the food offered during the ceremony (Zumairo et al., 2024). These material components work together with the verbal text to form a semiotic ensemble that communicates the seriousness and sacredness of the occasion (Dwijaya & Permana, 2024).

Kinship relations are made explicit through address forms and through the structure of the performance, in which different segments of mangandung may be directed to different relatives: mother, siblings, peers, and sometimes prospective in-laws. Each segment highlights a distinct facet of the bride's relational world: the intimate and nurturing bond with the mother, the shared memories and playfulness with siblings and peers, and the respectful but anxious anticipation of the new relationship with in-laws. The intensity of sobbing and the height of vocal pitch often increase in proportion to the closeness of the relationship being addressed, showing how emotional expression is calibrated according to kinship distance. In the case of the mother, the bathetic combination of heartfelt thanks, apology, and anguished farewell underscores the depth of the bond and the moral weight of separation (Pedersen et al., 2025).

These patterns suggest that mangandung pabagas boru performs at least three interlinked functions. First, it fulfils an emotional function by providing a culturally sanctioned space for the bride and her family to express grief at separation in a highly stylised form. Second, it fulfils a pedagogical function by embedding directives, advice, and moral teachings within the performance, thereby transmitting local wisdom regarding gender roles, kinship obligations, and proper conduct. Third, it fulfils a social-indexical function by publicly marking the bride's transition to married status while affirming her continuing attachment to her natal family and their collective honour (Pius & Murugan, 2025). Each function is realised through a combination of speech acts, lexical choices, metaphors, and semiotic resources, and each is legible to participants because it draws on shared cultural knowledge and values (Simamora et al., 2025).

At the same time, interview data and field observations indicate that the mangandung tradition is increasingly threatened by broader social changes. Younger generations often lack proficiency in the andung register and are more comfortable in colloquial Angkola or Indonesian, which leads to simplified or entirely absent mangandung performances at weddings. Economic considerations, changing notions of modernity, and the influence of popular culture have contributed to a preference for entertainment such as singing and recorded music over traditional ritual speech. The decline of expert performers and the absence of systematic transmission mechanisms further exacerbate this erosion. As a result, the complex speech act and semiotic system embodied in mangandung risks being replaced by less nuanced forms of advice and celebration, and with it, a distinctive mode of cultural pedagogy may be lost (Pateda et al., 2025).

Taken together, the findings show that mangandung pabagas boru is a paradigmatic example of how oral ritual discourse in a local language can simultaneously articulate emotion, encode moral values, and index social relations (Aurlani & Idaman, 2025). It challenges any simplistic view that laments are merely expressions of personal grief, demonstrating instead that they operate as sophisticated communicative practices embedded in kinship structures and cultural philosophies of life

## CONCLUSION

The tradition of mangandung pabagas boru in Angkola wedding ceremonies constitutes a significant cultural asset that integrates emotional expression, moral instruction, and social identity into a single ritual performance. Through an ethnolinguistic analysis informed by speech act theory, semiotics, and ethnography of speaking, this study has shown that mangandung is dominated by expressive and directive speech acts that are intricately woven into a broader system of symbolic and indexical signs. The bride's lament articulates deep holong for her parents, siblings, and peers, acknowledges the pain of separation, and simultaneously receives and reiterates advice concerning humility, diligence, and responsibility in her forthcoming life as wife and daughter-in-law. Key concepts such as tarpaina and honas reveal the gendered and communal dimensions of these expectations, emphasising the

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bride's responsibility not only to her nuclear household but also to the reputation and cohesion of the wider kin group. The analysis further demonstrates that mangandung pabagas boru functions as an embodied pedagogical practice, in which values and norms are not merely spoken but performed through voice, gesture, and the presence of ritual objects. This practice situates the bride's individual life transition within the collective framework of dalihan na tolu, thereby reaffirming kinship ties even as physical separation occurs. In this sense, mangandung is both a farewell and a re-articulation of enduring bonds, ensuring that the bride's departure does not signify a break in relational obligations but rather their reconfiguration in a new social setting. However, the tradition faces serious challenges from linguistic shift, changing cultural tastes, and the declining number of skilled practitioners. If current trends continue, mangandung pabagas boru may vanish from actual practice, surviving only in written documentation and the memories of older generations. This would represent not only the loss of a poetic art form but also the disappearance of an indigenous mode of moral education and identity formation. Consequently, efforts to revitalise the tradition are urgently needed, including documentation of existing performances, intergenerational transmission through community-based workshops, and the integration of mangandung into cultural and educational programmes. By highlighting the complex meaning structure and speech functions of mangandung pabagas boru, this study contributes to broader discussions in linguistic anthropology and discourse studies about the role of ritual language in sustaining local wisdom and social cohesion. It underscores the importance of attending to the fine-grained details of oral traditions, not only as objects of heritage but also as dynamic practices that continue to shape how communities understand themselves and their place in a rapidly changing world.v.

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