

BROADENING, NARROWING, BIFURCATION, AND SHIFT: SEMANTIC CHANGE MECHANISMS FROM PROTO- AUSTRONESIAN TO MANDAILING LANGUAGE

Evi Novalin Bako¹, Dwi Widayati², Dardanila³

STIE IBMI Medan¹, Universitas Sumatera Utara^{2,3}

evinovalin@stieibmi.ac.id¹, dwiwidayati@usu.ac.id², dardanila@usu.ac.id³

Abstract

This study seeks to identify and analyze semantic shifts in vocabulary from the Proto-Austronesian (PAN) language to the Mandailing language, employing a comparative historical linguistic approach. The principal data sources are a Proto-Austronesian vocabulary list and a collection of basic vocabulary obtained directly from native Mandailing speakers. The selected vocabulary items demonstrate similarities in both form and meaning. Data were collected using in-depth interviews with native Mandailing speakers to gather authentic and contextually relevant vocabulary and semantic data. Additionally, participatory observations were conducted to capture the context of vocabulary usage in everyday life that can affect changes in meaning. Data analysis was conducted through a process of data condensation, followed by the organization and presentation of the findings in descriptive narratives. Subsequently, data interpretation and conclusion drawing were carried out based on patterns and themes that emerged from the presented data. The results of the study revealed four main types of changes in meaning: broadening, narrowing, bifurcation, and shifting. This study contributes to the fields of historical linguistics and semantics, highlighting the importance of understanding meaning changes within the broader context of the linguistic and cultural evolution of the Mandailing people.

Keywords: Semantic change, Proto-Austronesian, Mandailing

Abstract

Penelitian dengan pendekatan linguistik historis komparatif ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis perubahan makna pada kosakata dalam Bahasa PAN ke dalam bahasa Mandailing. Data bersumber dari daftar kosakata PAN dan kosakata dasar yang didapatkan langsung dari penutur asli bahasa Mandailing. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan penutur asli bahasa Mandailing untuk memperoleh data kosakata dan makna yang aktual dan kontekstual dan melakukan observasi partisipatif untuk memahami konteks penggunaan kosakata dalam kehidupan sehari-hari yang dapat memengaruhi perubahan makna. Analisis data dilakukan dengan kondensasi data kemudian disusun dan disajikan dalam bentuk narasi deskriptif lalu dilakukan interpretasi data dan penarikan kesimpulan berdasarkan pola dan tema yang muncul dari data yang telah disajikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat empat jenis perubahan makna utama, yaitu perluasan makna, penyempitan makna, percabangan makna, dan pergeseran makna. Penelitian ini memperkaya kajian linguistik historis dan semantik, serta menegaskan pentingnya pemahaman perubahan makna dalam konteks evolusi bahasa dan budaya masyarakat Mandailing.

Kata kunci: Perubahan makna, Proto-Austronesian, Mandailing

INTRODUCTION

Proto-Austronesian (PAN) is a language of origin that undergoes changes in its derivative languages. A proto-language is a reconstructed form that represents an earlier stage in the history of a language. Austronesian is the name of a family of languages in mainland Southeast Asia. This family is related to other families located on the Southeast Asian plains. The Austronesian language groupings are as follows: Western Austronesian languages are divided into western Indonesian languages—such as Malagasy, Formosan languages, Filipino, Bisaya, Minahasa, Gayo, Batak, Mandailing, Nias, Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Dayak, and Minangkabau—and eastern languages, which include Sula-Bacan, Southern Halmahera-West Irian, and other eastern Indonesian languages (Keraf, 1984).

As one of the local languages in North Sumatra, Mandailing language is part of the Austronesian family. Like other languages in this family, Mandailing language experiences the dynamics of change in terms of phonology, morphology, and semantics. The process of linguistic change occurs diachronically—that is, gradually over a long period of time—so that the meanings of words in modern Mandailing are likely to differ from their original meanings in Proto-Austronesian (hereafter, PAN).

Semantic change is a common phenomenon in the history of language. The meaning of a word may broaden, narrow, or shift, and its connotations can also change over time, influenced by various social, cultural, and historical factors. For example, a PAN word such as *tanəm* ‘to plant’ underwent phonological and meaningful evolution when it appears in various derived languages, including Indonesian and other regional languages. The process of change also occurs in Mandailing; however, comprehensive studies on the semantic shifts of words inherited from PAN to Mandailing are still limited.

As a member of the Batak language group, Mandailing shows a rich lexicon that offers fascinating opportunities for exploration from both historical and semantic perspectives. This language not only contains unique linguistic features but also reflects the culture and worldview of the Mandailing people. Therefore, tracing the semantic changes of lexical items from PAN into Mandailing can provide valuable insights into the historical development of the language, as well as the relationship between language and the culture of its speakers.

Language is one of the most complex and fundamental phenomena in human life. In general, language can be defined as a communication system used by certain communities, both in oral and written form and supported by a set of rules governing the combination of its elements. Language as a means of human communication is dynamic because it is highly dependent on the social life of its speakers. Any changes in society, whether socially, economically, or culturally, will have an impact on language, including changes in meaning. Along with changes in human civilisation, communication symbols have also developed, which in turn has led to changes in the meaning of language.

Semantic change in Mandailing is a dynamic and complex phenomenon, which can arise through various mechanisms. These changes not only occur naturally as part of the evolution of the language itself, but are also influenced by interaction and contact with other languages around it. Mandailing is a branch of Batak language that has unique phonological and semantic characteristics. The process of meaning change in this language cannot be separated from the sound changes experienced since the Proto-Austronesian period to modern Mandailing language. In Mandailing society, meaning change can be understood as the result of two main processes,

namely natural internal changes and external changes triggered by language contact. Internal changes include the evolution of meaning that occurs gradually in daily use, such as semantic broadening, semantic narrowing, bifurcation, and shifting, while external changes occur due to interactions with other languages, either through trade, migration, or other socio-cultural processes, which cause the adoption or adjustment of the meaning of certain words to fit the new context.

According to Crowley and Bown (2010: 200-201), semantic change is divided into five categories, namely:

1. Amelioration and Pejoration

Amelioration occurs when the meaning of a word changes to become more positive over time, whereas pejoration is the opposite process, where the meaning changes to become more negative. For example, the word *silly*, which once meant 'blessed', now has a negative connotation. This change indicates a value shift in the speakers' perception of a word.

2. Broadening

Broadening refers to the process where the scope of a word's meaning expands from its original meaning, without losing the original meaning. For example, the word *bird*, which originally only referred to chicks in a nest, is now used to refer to all types of birds in general.

3. Narrowing

Narrowing occurs when the meaning of a word becomes more limited than its previous meaning. For example, the word *meat* in English was used to cover all types of food, but now it only refers to the meat of animals that are consumed.

4. Bifurcation

Bifurcation occurs when a word develops a new meaning that is still related to its original meaning. For example, in the phrase *pitch black*, the word *pitch* actually comes from the name of a pitch-black substance like tar. However, for some speakers, *pitch* is only understood as an intensity enhancer, resulting in forms like *pitch blue* or *pitch yellow*, which indicate two different directions of meaning.

5. Shift

Shift refers to a complete change in the meaning of a word, so that the original meaning is lost and replaced with a new meaning. For example, the English word *silly*, derived from the German word *selig* meaning 'blessed' and related to *Seele* 'soul', has now completely changed to mean 'stupid' in modern usage.

The main objective of this study is to identify and analyse the semantic meaning changes that occur in words that originate from Proto-Austronesian and evolve into Mandailing. This study focuses on meaning transformation that not only reflects the internal evolution of the language itself, but is also influenced by external factors such as language contact and the socio-cultural dynamics of Mandailing society. This study seeks to explore the traces of semantic changes that occur from the proto-form to the manifestation of modern Mandailing language so as to clarify the typical patterns of meaning change and the underlying mechanism. Through systematic analysis of lexical data derived from Proto-Austronesian roots, this study seeks to reveal how the meaning of words has shifted, whether in the form of semantic broadening, semantic narrowing, pejoration, amelioration, or bifurcation of meaning. These processes are part of the natural

dynamics of language development that occur over a long period of time and are influenced by various internal and external factors.

Although there have been a number of studies related to sound and meaning changes from Proto-Austronesian to various regional languages, including Mandailing, previous studies have mostly focused on aspects of phonological or sound changes and lexical kinship between Batak and PAN languages in general. These studies do not specifically examine semantic meaning changes in depth in the Mandailing lexicon, especially in the context of socio-cultural influences and language contact. In addition, studies that explicitly link types of meaning changes (such as amelioration, pejoration, bifurcation, broadening, and narrowing) with the dynamics of Mandailing society are still very limited.

A number of previous studies have made important contributions to the study of changes in PAN language and its derivative languages, including Mandailing. A study by Siregar, Ernanda, and Afria (2022) investigated sound changes from Proto Austronesian (PAN) to several Batak languages, namely Karo, Toba, Pakpak, Simalungun, Mandailing, and Angkola – using a historical-comparative approach, with a primary focus on phonological aspects rather than semantics. Meanwhile, a study conducted by Sukma, Widayati, Dardanila, and Lubis (2024), discusses changes in meaning from the PAN language to the Pasir Pengaraian dialect of Riau Malay. Their study identified several types of meaning change, such as pejoration, amelioration, broadening, narrowing, and bifurcation, though their focus was not on the Mandailing language or phonology but specifically on semantic shifts. In addition, Daulay and Mulyadi (2020) describe the semantic structure of the psychology verb in Mandailing, but do not specifically discuss changes in meaning from PAN roots. Research by Jayana and Dardanila (2020) highlights linear and innovative inherited meaning changes in the Gayo language, with causes of change including linguistic, associative, and cultural factors, but does not specifically discuss the Mandailing language. Finally, a study conducted by Sibuea et al. (2024) examined meaning relations such as synonymy, antonymy, and polysemy in Mandailing language, but did not specifically trace meaning changes from PAN. Thus, this study fills this gap by comprehensively examining the semantic meaning changes from PAN roots to Mandailing and analyzing the internal and external factors that influence the process, thereby providing new contributions to the understanding of meaning change patterns and the mechanisms at work in the evolution of the Mandailing lexicon.

METHODOLOGY

This research falls within the domain of Historical Comparative Linguistics, focusing on analyzing semantic changes from the PAN language to its derivative languages over a period of time. The method used is descriptive qualitative, which aims to describe in detail the meaning shifts that occur from PAN language into Mandailing language. Mandailing language was chosen because it is one of the regional languages in North Sumatra which is part of the Austronesian family and is still actively used by its speaking community.

The main data in this study comes from the reconstructed Proto-Austronesian vocabulary list compiled by Wurm and Wilson (1975). In the analysis process, cognate word pairs were used, i.e. words in PAN and Mandailing that show similarities in basic form and meaning. These cognate pairs are then analyzed to identify the types of meaning changes that occur, such as narrowing, expanding, shifting, or even a total change in meaning.

Furthermore, the analyzed cognate data was confirmed to native Mandailing speakers to gain an understanding of the actual context of use in daily life. Six informants were selected based on several criteria, including good physical and mental health, a thorough understanding of Mandailing culture and language, and residence in an environment where Mandailing is predominantly spoken, ensuring that the data collected accurately reflect authentic language use. This study is expected to provide insight into the dynamics of meaning change in Mandailing as part of the Austronesian language heritage, while also enriching the field of historical linguistics and semantic studies within the context of Indonesia's regional languages.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are four main types of meaning changes in Mandailing found in this study: meaning broadening, meaning narrowing, meaning branching, and meaning shifting.

Broadening

Broadening occurs when a word acquires additional meaning from its original meaning. Some examples are as follows:

PAN: *sira(q)* → Mandailing: *sira*

- (1a) *Inda bahat kecetna, langsung do tu sira ni hata.*
'Not much to say, straight to the point'

The original meaning of PAN *sira(q)* is 'salt', a crystalline solid substance commonly used as a seasoning or food preservative. In Mandailing, the word *sira* still retains this literal meaning as salt. However, the meaning of this word has expanded semantically. The word *sira* in Mandailing is also used figuratively or metaphorically to denote the "core" or "essential meaning" of an utterance or statement, as in the expression *sira ni hata* 'the salt of words', meaning the main content or essence of the speech. In this case there is an expansion of the meaning of the word *sira* in Mandailing, from the concrete meaning of 'salt' (physical substance) to the abstract meaning of 'core', "main meaning", or "essence" in the context of discourse. This shows a shift from denotative lexical meaning to connotative meaning that is figurative or symbolic.

Thus, the meaning of *sira* in Mandailing language undergoes semantic expansion from a physical object to a more abstract and conceptual form of meaning expression, namely as a symbol of something important or the essence of something.

PAN: *dagij* → Mandailing: *dagij*

- (1b) *Sadaging do hita sude, ulang marbadai.*
'We are all brothers, don't fight.'

The original meaning of PAN *dagij* is "meat", which is the soft part of an animal or human body that covers the bones and is usually eaten. In Mandailing, the word *dagij* still retains its original meaning as "meat" in a biological context, i.e. the part of the body that can be consumed or becomes part of the body structure (such as muscle).

In Mandailing language, "sadaging" comes from the prefix "sa-" meaning one or one, and the word "meat" meaning muscle or soft parts of an animal or human body that are usually eaten. However, there is an expansion of semantic meaning in this word. In Mandailing, 'dagij' has been used in social and kinship contexts. The word 'meat' not only refers to a physical substance,

but also has a strong metaphorical extension related to blood ties or descent. The word " *sadagiŋ*" which literally means a piece of meat has evolved into an emotional and social kinship relationship, especially one based on blood ties so that the word " *sadagiŋ*" means "blood brother" or "close relative".

This expansion shows a shift from a concrete lexical meaning ("flesh") to an abstract and symbolic meaning ("blood relation", "blood brother"). Thus, the meaning of '*dagiŋ*' in Mandailing language reflects the community's socio-cultural concept of linking the biological elements of the body with the values of kinship and brotherhood.

PAN: *bulan* → Mandailing: *bulan*

- (1c) *Madung bulan aha de sannari?*
'What month is it now?'

The original meaning of PAN *bulan* is "moon" as a celestial body that orbits the earth and appears to shine at night because it reflects the light of the sun. In Mandailing, this meaning is still maintained literally to refer to the astronomical object. However, there is an expansion of the semantic meaning of the word *bulan* in Mandailing. The word is not only used to refer to celestial objects, but it has also developed into a unit of time in the calendar system (for example: January, fasting month). This is a form of temporal metonymy, where the name of an object is used to represent the time span associated with it. In addition, in some contexts, the word *bulan* (in this case, the word "bulan" in Indonesian and Mandailing has the same meaning denotatively) is also used to refer to the condition of the female body (such as the term "datang bulan" in many Indonesian regional languages), although it does not always appear explicitly in Mandailing, but culturally and regionally this association is recognized.

Thus, the expansion of the meaning of the moon in Mandailing shows a development from a physical-astronomical meaning to a temporal (unit of time) and sometimes biological (related to the menstrual cycle) meaning, reflecting the dynamics of the concept of time and body in people's daily lives.

PAN: *matahari* (*warih*) → Mandailing: *mataniari*

- (1d) *Anakku do mataniari ni idupku.*
'My son is the sun of my life'

The original meaning of *matahari* (in PAN reconstruction: *warih*) is a celestial body that emits light and heat, the main source of illumination and life on earth. In Mandailing, the modern form is *mataniari*, which retains the physical meaning as a celestial body. However, in semantic development, *mataniari* underwent an expansion of meaning to become symbolic. The word not only designates a celestial body, but is also used as a metaphor to describe something or someone who is a source of light, hope and meaning in life. For example, in the phrase '*Anakku do mataniari ni idupku*', the child is considered the centre of emotional and spiritual life, just as the sun is the centre of the solar system and the source of life.

This expansion reflects a process of metaphorisation in which the physical meaning is elevated to an abstract meaning, implying a symbolic function in the cultural and emotional context of the Mandailing people. Thus, there is a shift in meaning from denotative (celestial objects) to connotative (symbols of hope, life, and emotional value). This shows the richness of Mandailing language expression in absorbing and developing meaning from Austronesian lexical heritage.

Narrowing

Narrowing of meaning occurs when the meaning of a word becomes more limited than its original meaning.

PAN: *anak* → Mandailing: *anak*

- (2a) *Adong lima halak anak nia.*
‘There are five of his/her sons’

The original meaning of the word *anak* in Proto-Austronesian (PAN) includes the general meaning of offspring of both humans and animals. In various languages of the Austronesian family, *anak* can refer to "human child", "baby animal", and even "plant buds". However, in Mandailing, the word *anak* has narrowed its meaning semantically. This word is more often used predominantly to refer to human children, especially boys, in daily speech practices. While to refer to animal children, special constructions are used such as *anak ni horbo* (calf), *anak ni manuk* (chick), and so on.

This change is a form of narrowing, which is when the meaning of a word becomes more specific or limited than its original meaning. From originally encompassing children of various living creatures, the meaning of child in Mandailing is specialized to indicate human child, especially in social or family contexts. This narrowing shows a change in conceptual function in word usage, where the originally generic meaning is adjusted to the cultural and social use of Mandailing speakers.

PAN: *bulu* ‘body hair, animal hair, plant hair’ → Mandailing: *bulu*

- (2b) *Marserak bulu ni manuk.*
‘Scattering the chicken feathers’

The original meaning of the word *bulu* in Proto-Austronesian (PAN) is “body hair or fine hair”, which includes hair on humans, animals and even plants (such as corn hair or hair on corn husks). In other words, the meaning is generic and encompasses all types of fine hair-like structures. In Mandailing, the word *bulu* has narrowed its meaning. It is no longer used to refer to human hair (called *obuk*), but more specifically to animal hair, especially poultry feathers such as chickens and birds. This can be seen in sentences such as *marserak bulu ni manuk* (scattering the chicken feathers), where feathers are used exclusively for poultry body parts.

This change is a form of semantic narrowing, which is when the original meaning that was broad and included many types of objects becomes more specific and limited to one particular category of living things (i.e. animals, especially poultry). This narrowing reflects a cognitive and cultural process in which terms that were once inclusive are then used more selectively, according to the needs of communication and the adjustment of meaning in the local context of Mandailing people.

PAN: *rumah* ‘buildings where humans/animals live, a place of return’ → Mandailing: *rumah* (bagas)

- (2c) *Na godangan bagas nia.*
‘Her/his house is so big’

In Proto-Austronesian (PAN), the word *rumah* has a broad and multifunctional meaning. Basically, it refers to a building where humans live, but it also develops into figurative and symbolic meanings, for example: house of worship, traditional house, hospital, household, or even

as a place of return. In Mandailing, the equivalent of a *rumah* is *bagas*. However, the word *bagas* experiences semantic narrowing. In its usage, *bagas* only refers to house where humans physically live, and is not used to refer to houses in other senses. For example, specific terms such as *gareja* (church) and *masojid* (mosque) are used to refer to places of worship; *bagas godang* is used for traditional houses; while terms such as household are translated idiomatically, not with the word *bagas*.

Thus, there is a change in meaning from its original general and flexible form to referentially limited in Mandailing. This change shows the existence of lexical specialization, where terms that are general in the early stages evolve into terms that only include one type of concrete meaning, according to the cultural context and communication needs of the speaking community.

PAN: *tali* ‘all kinds of ropes, strings, straps’ → Mandailing: *tali*

- (2d) *Tali ni jomuran i putus.*
 ‘The clothesline broke’

In Proto-Austronesian (PAN), the word *tali* has a broad meaning that includes various types of ropes, strings, or any binding tool, be it rope, shoelaces, musical instrument strings, and so on. In Mandailing, the word *tali* has a narrowing meaning. This word is more often used only to refer to ropes made of natural fibers or ropes for tying everyday items, while musical instrument strings or other special types of rope are given special terms or other descriptions. This change shows a narrowing of meaning, where the word *tali*, which was once common, is now used more specifically, reflecting the adjustment of the term to suit the social and cultural context of the Mandailing people.

PAN: *air* ‘fluids in general’ → Mandailing: *ae?*

- (2e) *umak maloppa ae?*
 ‘Mother boils water’

In Proto-Austronesian, the word *air* can refer to various types of liquids such as drinking water, milk, or other liquids. In Mandailing, the word *ae?* has narrowed its meaning to be more specific for ordinary water, such as drinking water, river water, and water commonly used in everyday life. For other liquids such as *tuak* (a fermented drink made from palm sap), the word *ae?* is not used. This change shows a narrowing of meaning, where the word *air* only refers to liquids that are neutral and common in the lives of the Mandailing people.

Bifurcation

Bifurcation occurs when one word develops into two related but distinct meanings.

PAN: *mata* ‘vision tool’ → Mandailing: *mata* ‘vision tool’/ *mata ni aek* ‘water sources’

- (3a) *Madung rabun mata ni uma.*
 ‘Mother's eyes are already dim’
- (3b) *Mata ni aek sian gunung.*
 ‘The water source is from the mountains.’

In Proto-Austronesian (PAN), *mata* refers specifically to the organ of sight, namely the organ of the body used for seeing. This meaning is anatomical and physiological, and concrete.

However, in the Mandailing language, the word *mata* is not only maintains its original meaning as a visual organ, but also experiences semantic branching. This word is used in a metaphorical or analogical form to refer to the source of something, especially a water source, as in the phrase *mata ni aek* ('water source').

This change shows how the meaning of a word can extend from the function of the human body (sight) to the concept of source or origin, based on the similarity of function—that is, *mata* as “the origin of sight” is analogous to a spring as “the origin of water”. Thus, a metaphorization process occurs that produces branch meanings from the same lexical form. This shows the semantic dynamics in the Mandailing language, where a word can develop through functional and conceptual associations, adapting to the needs of expression and the local culture of its people.

PAN: *tali* 'binder' → Mandailing: *tali* 'binder'/ family ties. 'kinship ties'

(3c) *Tali ni parompa i putus.*
'The sling broke'

(3d) *Gogo do ikatan tali keluarga i, inda bisa marsarak.*
'Family ties are strong, they cannot be separated.'

In Proto-Austronesian (PAN), *tali* means a binder, namely a physical object in the form of a rope that functions to bind something in a real and concrete way. This meaning is denotative and directly related to physical objects. In the Mandailing language, the word *tali* maintains its original meaning as a binding object, but also experiences semantic branching into the social and cultural realms. The term *tali keluarga* is used as a metaphor that describes the bonds of kinship or social relations between family members or communities

The use of *tali* in this social context shows a process of metaphorization, where the physical function of *tali* as a binder is literally analogized as a binder of social relations and strong and unbreakable family ties. This meaning is important in Mandailing customs and culture, which greatly emphasize the values of solidarity and family ties. Thus, there is a branching of meaning from a physical object to an abstract concept that refers to social relations and kinship values.

PAN: *tulan* 'parts of the body skeleton' → Mandailing: *tulan* 'bone'/ *tulan* 'uncle'

(3e) *Matippul tangan nia harani madabu sian kareta.*
'His bones were broken because he fell off a motorbike.'

(3f) *Ro tulang tu bagas.*
'Uncle came home'

In Proto-Austronesian (PAN), *tulan* have a denotative meaning as part of the body's framework, namely the hard structure that makes up the human or animal skeleton. In Mandailing, the word *tulan* maintains its original meaning to refer to body parts. However, the word *tulan* also experiences semantic branching into a kinship term meaning 'uncle'. This branching of meaning is a form of metaphorization and semantic shift, where family members (uncles) are associated with terms for body parts, reflecting the closeness of blood relations and important positions in the family structure. This is common in Austronesian languages that use the term body as a metaphor for close relatives. Thus, the word *tulan* branches its meaning from a physical part of the body to a term for an important kinship relationship in Mandailing culture.

Shift

Semantic shift is a change in the meaning of a word from its original meaning to a new meaning, often no longer directly related to its etymological meaning. In the Mandailing language, several words derived from the proto-Austronesian (PAN) form have undergone changes in meaning. Here are some examples:

PAN **busu?* ‘rotten’ → *bucu?* ‘smells bad because of its trait (behavior)’

- (4a) *Goyak au maligin sifat bucu? mi.*
‘I don't like seeing your rotten character’

The word *busu?* in Proto-Austronesian (PAN) literally means ‘rotten’, which is something that gives off an unpleasant odor or has rotted. In Mandailing, this word has undergone a semantic shift to *bucu?*, which refers to a person's bad, unpleasant, or morally reprehensible nature or behavior. This change is an example of a shift from concrete to abstract (metaphorical) meaning, where bad smell as a physical property is transferred to the realm of human behavior, depicting bad character or attitudes that are socially and emotionally ‘unpleasant’. Thus, *bucu?* in Mandailing functions as a term to criticize bad character, indicating a shift in meaning from physical to psychological.

PAN : *qasap* ‘smoke’ → *timbus* ‘smoke that billows or covers’

- (4b) *Timbus do ruma ni amang on, tarida do au.*
‘My father's house was filled with smoke, I couldn't see.’

The word *qasap* in Proto-Austronesian (PAN) means ‘smoke’ in general, which is the result of combustion in the form of gas or steam. In Mandailing, this meaning shifts to *timbus*, which not only refers to smoke, but specifically thick, billowing smoke that covers the view. This shift shows the specification of meaning, from a general concept to a more specific one, as well as an emphasis on the visual impact of the smoke. Thus, *timbus* in Mandailing contains nuances of the intensity and effects of smoke on the surrounding environment.

PAN : *aka* ‘akar’ → *urat* ‘akar tanaman dan serat tubuh’

- (4c) *Urat ni pohon on, nadenggan do di tanah maropat.*
‘The roots of the tree, penetrate the ground deeply’

The word *aka* in PAN means ‘root’ in the botanical context. In Mandailing, this concept is expressed by the word *urat*, which has undergone an expansion of meaning: in addition to referring to plant roots, it is also used to refer to vessels or fibers in the human body. This change is an example of an expansion of meaning, from one domain (botany) to another (anatomy), which still maintains the basic concept of ‘connecting fibers’. *Urat* thus reflects a conceptual metaphor between the structure of a tree and the human body.

PAN : *baŋa?* ‘many’ → *godan* ‘many; big’

- (4d) *Godan do parsiapan ni acara on.*
‘There was a lot of preparation for this event.’

The word *baŋa?* in PAN means ‘many’, relating to large numbers. In the Mandailing language, this meaning is represented by *godan*, which has an expanded meaning not only to quantity (amount), but also to size (big). This shift shows the integration of two meanings: quantity and physical quality, both of which are considered interconnected in people's perception.

The word *godan* in the Mandailing context can also imply grandeur or fame, depending on the context of its use.

PAN *bonar* ‘true’ → *botul* ‘true; really’

- (4e) *Botul do na didokkon ia i, au pe mambege na*
 ‘It’s true what he said, I heard it too.’

The word *bonar* in PAN means ‘true’ or ‘precise’. In Mandailing, this word changes to *botul*, with the expansion of meaning as an affirmation or intensification, which can mean ‘really true’ or ‘exactly’. This change reflects a pragmatic phenomenon in language, where the literal meaning is expanded to fulfill a rhetorical or expressive function in speech. Thus, *botul* not only explains the truth, but also emphasizes the speaker’s belief or certainty.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals four main types of meaning changes in the development of the Mandailing language from its PAN roots, namely broadening, narrowing, branching, and shifting of meaning. The findings show that broadening of meaning occurs when the meaning of a word expands to become more abstract and symbolic, such as the word ‘sira’ which develops from ‘salt’ to ‘core’ or ‘essence’. Narrowing of meaning is seen in words such as ‘anak’ and ‘bulu’ whose meanings become more specific according to the Mandailing cultural context. Branching of meaning, such as in the word ‘mata’ which branches into ‘visual aid’ and ‘water source’, shows the metaphorical mechanism and conceptual association in language. Shifting of meaning, for example in the word ‘bucu?’ which changes from ‘rotten’ to ‘human behavior’, reflects the flexibility and dynamics of language adaptation to cultural developments.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the change of meaning in Mandailing language is a complex process influenced by the interaction of internal linguistic factors and external socio-cultural factors. These findings provide an important contribution in understanding the patterns and mechanisms of semantic meaning change in Indonesian regional languages, especially in the context of the evolution of Mandailing language which is rich in cultural values and social history. Thus, this study broadens the insights of historical linguistics and semantics, and strengthens the understanding of the close relationship between language, culture, and identity of the Mandailing people.

NOTE

We would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for the very helpful comments on the earlier draft of this paper.

REFERENCES

- Blust, R. A. (2013). *The Austronesian Languages*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
<https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/10191>
- Crowley, T. (1983). *Introduction to Historical Linguistics*. Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea Press.
- Crowley, T., & Bower, C. (2010). *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics*. Edisi ke-4. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Daulay, P., & Mulyadi. (2020). Struktur semantis verba psikologi bahasa Mandailing. *Linguistika*, 27(2), 174–185.
- Effendi, R. (2013). Warisan kosakata bahasa Proto-Austronesia dalam bahasa Banjar. *Jurnal Sosial Humaniora Asia (AJSSH)*, 2(2), 358–379.
- Jayana & Dardanila. (2020). *Perubahan makna bahasa Proto Austronesia ke bahasa Gayo: Kajian Linguistik historis komparatif* (Skripsi Sarjana, Universitas Sumatera Utara). Repositori USU.
- Keraf, G. (1991). Tata Bahasa Rujukan Bahasa Indonesia. Jakarta: Grasindo.
- Keraf, G. (1984). *Diksi dan Gaya Bahasa*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Sibuea, P., Ayumi, F., Az-zahra, S., Nur, S., & Fitria, R. (2024). Analisis relasi makna dalam bahasa Mandailing. *Jurnal Nakula: Pusat Ilmu Pendidikan, Bahasa dan Ilmu Sosial*, 2(5), 123–132.
- Siregar, E. D., Ernanda, & Afria, R. (2022). Perubahan bunyi Bahasa Proto Austronesia (PAN) pada Bahasa Karo, Bahasa Toba, Bahasa Pakpak, Bahasa Simalungun, Bahasa Mandailing dan Bahasa Angkola: Kajian linguistik historis komparatif dan fonologi. *Kalistra: Kajian Linguistik dan Sastra*, 1(2), 116–130.
- Sukma, W., Widayati, D., Dardanila, & Lubis, T. (2024). Perubahan bunyi Bahasa Proto Austronesia ke dalam Bahasa Melayu Riau dialek Pasir Pengaraian. *Deskripsi Bahasa*, 7(2), 99–121.
- Wurm, S. A., & Wilson, B. (1975). *Daftar rekonstruksi English Finder dalam Bahasa Austronesia (Pasca Brandstetter)*. Canberra: Departemen Linguistik, Sekolah Riset Studi Pasifik, Universitas Nasional Australia.