

## Excessive Adjectives Using the Multiple Affixations *ma-hu* in Toba Batak

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### Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the multiple affixations *ma-hu* in Toba Batak. This study desired verbal data on the multiple affixations as the primary data. Secondary data were also taken based on the writer's knowledge because the writer is a TB native speaker. This study used a qualitative method. The results show that there are four alternating forms of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* attached to root adjectives, they are, (1) if the final sound of the root adjectives are [k], [n], or [ŋ], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-ku], (2) if the final sound of the root adjectives are [m] or [p], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-pu], (3) if the final sound of the root adjectives is [s], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-su], and (4) if the final sound of the root adjectives is [t], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-tu]. The variant form of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is *pa-hu*.

### INTRODUCTION

One of the examples of the intriguing linguistic rules known as the multiple affixations is *denationalise*. In English, for example, it is possible to create complex words by beginning with *-national-* when many affixes are added to the root. Other illustrations are *denationalisation*, *antidenationalisation*, *preantidenationalisation*, etc but not *\*denationalisate*. All languages in the world, or at least regional languages in Indonesia have not yet been covered by the body of research on multiple affixations. Furthermore, researchers are working to determine how to "write" this unwritten, subconscious norm. As a result, the author hopes to advance the research by examining the many affixations found in Toba Batak (henceforth referred to as "TB"), which was chosen due to its endangered state.

Samosir island in Sumatra and the areas east, south, and southwest of Lake Toba are where TB was first spoken (Crystal, 1993; Percival, 1981). TB is a regional language in everyday social interactions in the villages of Samosir Regency, Toba Regency, Humbang Hasundutan Regency, and Tapanuli Utara Regency. Sinaga (2002) asserts that understanding TB means applying Batak's soul and blood. The cultural shift to the national Indonesian language, the decline in intergenerational transmission, and the lack of language documentation and resources have all contributed to TB's struggles for survival (Lubis & Bowo, 2022; Rajagukguk et al., 2022).

Throughout history, it is noted that the first study in Toba Batak was done by Tuuk (1864) entitled *Tobasche Spraakunst* “A Grammar of Toba Batak”. Additionally, there is a notably limited number of studies focusing on multiple affixations in TB. Other research related to TB has addressed specific cultural aspects of the TB community, such as their folktales, songs, or rituals (Ginting et al., 2023; Nadeak, 2023; Rezeki, 2024; Siahaan & Barus, 2022; Sidabutar & Mulyadi, 2023; Sinamo et al., 2021; Sitorus & Lubis, 2023; Simaremare et al., 2023; Tampubolon et al., 2024), but researcher Ambarita stands out as one of the leading scholars in the morphological systems of TB; having examined adjectival affixation, adverbial affixation, adverbial derivation, combinations of the prefix *um-*, the infix *-um-*, the suffix *-an*, clitics, denominal nominals, deverbal nominals, and nominal word formations since 2016.

While numerous studies have conducted contrastive analyses of TB and English (Armando et al., 2023; Siahaan et al., 2024; Sianipar et al., 2022; Sidabutar, 2020), Ambarita has studied adjectives in TB (2017; 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c 2022a, 2022b, 2023a, 2023b, 2024). This current study is particularly important as it aims to enhance the understanding of the research gap concerning a language that holds significant cultural value, such as TB, which faces a shortage of experts. As a regional language in Indonesia, TB must continue to thrive following the mandate outlined in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.

These conditions necessitate the urgent need for more linguistic research contributions to keep rekindling the effort to save the endangered language. The author is interested in the underlying process that leads to the attachments of multiple affixations *ma-hu* to root adjectives in TB. The rule of multiple affixations, determined by the sequence of consonants or adjacent consonants within root adjectives, will be better understood if this research gap is filled.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 1. Adjectives

Adjectives are distinguished from nouns and verbs by different types. Nouns have plural markers, verbs have tenses while adjectives do not have such certain markers even if they function as attributive or predicative (Nababan, 1981: 35). Adjectives are words that modify pronouns or nouns following it (Houghton, 1984: 18).

Seven affixes can be attached to adjectives in TB, *i.e.*, prefix [*um-*], infix [*-um-*], suffix [*-an*], four multiple affixations, *i.e.*, [*marsi-i*], [*ha-assa*], [*ma-hu*], and [*sa-...full adjective reduplication...-na*] (Ambarita, 2018: 81). The results of attaching affixes to adjectives in TB are inflectional because the presence of the affixes does not change the word class of the base (Ambarita, 2016: 18). According to Nida (1949: 102) the analysis of any language, phonological, and distributional data is relevant in establishing the limits of morphological unit.

According to Percival (1981: 74-75) adjectives consist either of a base alone or of a base and an affix. Adjectives in TB can be formed by attaching affixations that generate prefixed adjectives, infixed adjectives, suffixed adjectives, and confixed adjectives. Affixes that can be attached to adjectives are prefix *um-*, infix *-um-*, suffix *-an*, and multiple affixations *marsi-i*, *ha-assa*, *ma-hu*, *sa-...adjective reduplication...-na* (Sitorus, 1986: 149).

According to Nababan (1981) the category of adjective degree in TB falls in two classes *i.e.*, (1) the comparative (*um-* or *-an*) *e.g.*, *balga* 'big' → *ub-balga* or *balga-an* 'bigger'. The symbol → ‘becomes’ in the next parts is used for clarity and ease of exposition here. The next example is *roa* 'ugly' → *rumoa* or *roa-an* 'uglier', (2) the excessive (*pa-hu*) *e.g.*, *balga* → *pa-balga-hu* 'too big'; *dao* 'far' → *pa-dao-hu* 'too far'.

According to the writer, Nababan’s statement is less valid. The writer found that adjective degree in Toba Batak appears in five degrees, *i.e.*, (1) the comparative degree with (i) prefix *um-*: *undanggan* [uddengan] ‘better’, (ii) infix *-um-*: *dumanggan* [dumengan] ‘best’, (iii) suffix *-an*

*denggan* [denɣanan] ‘better’, (d) confix *um-an*: *undenggan* [udɣenan] ‘better’ etc; (2) the superlative degree with *na* + comparative degree: *na undenggan* [na uɣenan] ‘best’, etc; (3) the similar degree with multiple affixations *ha-assa*: *hadengganassa* [hadɣanassa] ‘on the quality of good’ etc; (4) the distinctive degree with multiple affixations *marsi-i*: *marsidenggan* [marsidɣan] ‘not as good as’ etc, and (5) the excessive degree with the multiple affixations *ma-hu*: *madengganhu* [madɣanaku] ‘too good’ or with the multiple affixations *pa-hu*: *padengganhu* [padɣanaku] ‘too good’ .

## 2. Affixation

Affixes are defined as bound morphemes that do not have meanings unless they are attached to free form or bound form (Katamba, 1993: 44). Affixations are the processes of attaching bound morphemes to free morphemes or root words to form new words. Affixations are the most common and productive way of forming words. Affixation generates complex and new words. According to Parera (1988: 18) affixation processes occur if bound morphemes are attached to free morphemes. Affixes are said to be bound forms because they cannot stand alone in direct utterances and grammatically, affixes are always attached to forms that already have meanings, either root words or complex forms. Affixes can be added to the initial, middle, or final position of words.

Enhancing vocabulary practically is by being familiar with recognizing productive prefixes or suffixes rather than memorizing every single word separately (Nodjoomi, 2017: 164). There are some issues needed to be considered in attaching affixes to root words, they are, the change of forms, the change of meanings, and the change of syntactic category. Generally, affixation processes require phonological features that relate to sounds and semantic features and also with meanings. However, the basic issue in affixation processes is whether or not there are changes in the syntactic categories of the neologism (Lieber, 2009: 35).

## 3. Multiple Affixations

What is going to explore in this study are how the ways in which complex words are formed by creating bases which contain inflectional morphemes. Let us take the Latinate root *-dict-* meaning ‘speak’ or ‘say’ which is found in *diction*, *dictate*, *dictatorial*, *contradict*, *benediction*, etc. Starting with *-dict-*, we can form complex words such as *contradictory* and *contradictoriness* by attaching several affixes to the root, *i.e.*, we can have multiple affixations (Katamba, 1993: 52). This process can take place in a number of rounds with the output created by one round of affixation serving as the input to a later round. In Indonesian, for example, the word *mempersoalkan* ‘take something or someone into a problem’ has three multiple affixations consisting of two prefixes *i.e.*, prefixes *mem-* and prefixes *per-*, and one suffix *-kan*. Another example is the word *memperkirakan* ‘take something or someone to be believed’ consists of the integration of two multiple affixations *i.e.*, prefix *mem-* and suffix *-kan*.

Multiple affixations is a combination of two affixes or more attached to root words. This affix has a particular form and particular grammatical meaning, appearing coincidentally to the root word of which the processes are from different entities. Alonso’s research (2011: 272-274) focused on multiple affixations in forming nouns in ancient English that has particular distribution and particular handicaps. On the other hand, multiple affixations cannot be covered by a single meaning category because it depends on the number of multiple affixations used to represent two or more semantic categories (Manova, 2011: 163). Due to affixation, enhancing vocabulary practically is by being familiar with recognizing productive prefixes or suffixes rather than memorizing every single word separately.

#### 4. Assimilation as a Morphological Process

The term *morphology* was first introduced by a pioneer of Praha named Trubetzkoy (1890-1938). The term is a short form of *morphophonology* that is a part that analyzes the phonological structure of morphemes (Suhardi, 2005: 206). In traditional terms morphophonemic is the change of morphemes in morphological processes either affixation, reduplication, or compoundings (Chaer, 2007: 195-196).

One sound changes to another because of the limit between morphemes. The root and the derivative words must be identified in the sound change (Ino, 2009). Morphophonemic as the study of structure and morpheme is a potential combination among morphemes in a certain language because of the variation of phonemic processes faced by the combination of morphemes (Malmikjer, 1995: 320).

Morphophonemic focuses the discussions on language phenomena that cover phonological and morphological issues (Katamba, 1993: 34). Therefore, the changes that occur because of the affixation processes in word formation are the change of nasal sound, vowels, phoneme addition, and phoneme deletion because of the different phonemes (Chomsky and Halle 1968: 184-185).

This statement is relevant to Schane's (1992: 50); when morphemes are combined to form a word, different segmental morphemes are in order and sometimes change. Besides, morphological processes are the ways of forming words by combining morphemes with other morpheme through affixations, reduplication, compoundings, acronyms, or conversion. (Samsuri, 1982: 190).

One type of morphological processes is an assimilation as a part of sound change in languages. According to Crowley (1992: 38) there are some sound changes in world languages, *i.e.*, assimilation, dissimilation, lenition, fortition, apocope, syncope, haplology, epenthesis, prothesis, metathesis, phoneme addition, phoneme addition, unpacking, etc.

With regard to the changes that the assimilated sounds undergo, we can distinguish assimilation of the place of articulation, assimilation of the manner of articulation, and assimilation of the voice (Ramelan, 1988: 162-163). Example of assimilation of the place of articulation: [in-] is replaced by [im-] before words beginning with a bilabial stop like *possible*. There is a change from [n] into [m] which involves a change in a place of articulation, *i.e.*, an alveolar nasal becomes a bilabial nasal.

Example of an assimilation of the manner of articulation: the morpheme [in-] becomes [il-] before words beginning with lateral consonants like *legal*. In this case there is a change from a nasal consonant [n] into a lateral consonant. An assimilation of the voice involves a change in the voicing of the assimilated like the plural suffix [z] is added to a noun ending in a voiceless consonant, it is changed into the voiceless fricative [s].

#### 5. Inflectional and Derivational Affixes

Inflectional affixes are frequently considered very productive in forming words (Anderson, 1982: 585). In inflected languages, every inflected word has morphosyntactic features in sentences (Stump, 2001: 1). In English, for example, the form *writes* in *She writes a letter* has verbal adjustment features towards subject, tense, and intended condition by suffix *-s*. It means that the attachment of the suffix *-s* to *write* does not change its syntactic category as a verb. The attachment of suffix *-s* in *writes* shows verbal third person singular, *-s* in *books* shows plural inflection, and *-ed* in *helped* shows past inflection.

Based on the three examples above, the syntactic category of *writes* is a verb, *books* is a noun, and *helped* is a verb. The attachment of *-s* to *writes* does not change its syntactic category as a verb, *the book* becomes *books* does not change its syntactic category as a noun. The same thing occurs to *help* and *helped*, Before and after the attachment of *-s* its syntactic category is a verb.

The word *inflectional* is generated from *inflection i.e.*, a construction of which has the same distribution as its root word (Samsuri, 1982: 198). Derivational affixes are non-inflectional processes of root words to form new words (Kridalaksana, 1993: 40). In English, for example, the presence of *-ness* to adjectives means something not only syntactically, but also semantically because the meaning of neologism will change after *-ness* is attached to adjectives (Lieber, 2004: 158). A derivation is a word formation that changes syntactic categories. (Samsuri, 1982: 198). It can also be said that derivational is the process of attaching affixes to root words that bring about the syntactic category of a new word that is different from the root word's syntactic category (Anderson, 1982: 585, Bauer, 1983, Bauer 2008).

## 6. Grammatical and Lexical Meanings

Grammatical meaning refers to meaning distributed by the relation between language elements in bigger units. *i.e.*, the relation between words with other words in phrases or clauses (Kridalaksana, 1993: 132). In other words, grammatical meaning is a new word meaning formed after attaching affixes to root words of which the root words face grammaticalization. In English, for example, the grammatical meaning of the suffix *-er* in *bigger* is 'comparative adjective'.

Apart from grammatical meaning, affixed words also change word meaning lexically. The change of this lexical meaning is determined by the attached affixes to root words. Lexical meaning is the meaning of language elements as the symbol of things, events, and other entities owned by the language itself apart from its usage or context (Kridalaksana, 1993: 133). We will speculate how the word affects the meaning of sentences wholly, and before we listen to other parts of the sentence, we have understood the meaning of the word that we have thought (Li, 2017: 1193). In English, for example, the lexical meaning of *bigger* is 'something is larger in size, height, weight, number, power, or capacity than some something else'.

## METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive method dealing with a quantifiable mode by doing an in-depth descriptive analysis to reveal the multiple affixations in TB. The data were collected by applying the documentary technique. Many exciting and valuable projects in the field have been concerned with information obtained by examining records or documents (Ary, 1979: 304). Bearing Sudaryanto's (1986) words in mind about how the condition and uniqueness of a language can be best known through the reality of the field. The language in question is studied in a natural context (Djajasudarma, 1993), where the language pattern can be examined without the intervention of an experiment (Seliger, 1989).

This study desired verbal data on the multiple affixations in TB as the primary data source. Referring to Muhadjir (1989), the researcher ensured that the data collected were not artificial or manipulated. Semi-structured interviews were carried out individually with 6 participants. The verbal or oral data as primary data was recorded directly from TB speakers in real situations. This study also obtained secondary data from the writer's knowledge because the writer is a TB native speaker.

## FINDINGS

Based on the data analysis and discussion, there are four alternating forms of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* attached to root adjectives with the following requirements:

1. If the final sounds of the root adjectives are [k], [n], or [ŋ], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-ku].
2. If the final sounds of the root adjectives are [m] or [p], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-pu].
3. If the final sound of the root adjectives is [s], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating

form [ma-su].

4. If the final sound of the root adjectives is [t], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-tu].

### 1. The Alternating Form [ma-ku]

The multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-ku] if the final sounds of the root adjectives are [k], [n], or [ŋ] as discussed in the following parts.

#### 1.1 The Root Adjectives End with the Sound [k]

If the final sound of the root adjectives is [k], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-ku] in its phonetic writing as the alternating form. The sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [k]. The sound [k] is similar to its neighboring sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* in terms of points of articulation. For example, the sound changes from [h] into [k] in *ma-etek-hu* → [ma-etek-ku], *ma-bagak-hu* → [ma-bagak-ku], *ma-danak-hu* → [ma-danak-ku]. The process of changing one sound into another sound *i.e.*, sound [h] to [k] in the examples as the result of attaching the multiple affixations *ma-hu* to root adjectives is called progressive assimilation rather than regressive assimilation. In the examples above, the sounds [h] and [k] are called morpho-phonemic alternation or allomorphs, predictable in terms of the environment.

An assimilation is a process in which one sound is replaced by another as the result of combining one morpheme with another. An assimilation denotes a process by which sounds are made similar. Assimilation is only one type of morpho-phonemic alternation. It is, in fact, quite common for sounds to change because of the influence of the environment. Phonological requirements in a language can alter the shape that individual sound takes in different words. More data are presented below.

etek	[etek]	‘small’	+ ma-hu → maetekhu	[maetekku]	‘too small’
bagak	[bagak]	‘beautiful’	+ ma-hu → mabagakhu	[mabagakku]	‘too beautiful’
			+ ma-hu → madanakhu		‘too youthful’
danak	[danak]	‘youthful’	+ ma-hu → mahodokhu	[madanakku]	‘too sultry’

Based on the data above, the word 'small' as the meaning of the base adjective *etek* [etek] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-etek-hu* [ma-etek-ku] 'too small'. The word 'beautiful' as the meaning of the base adjective *bagak* [bagak] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-bagak-hu* [ma-bagak-ku] 'too beautiful'. The word 'youthful' as the meaning of the base adjective *danak* [danak] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-danak-hu* [ma-danak-ku] 'too youthful'. The word 'sultry' as the meaning of the base adjective *hodok* [hodok] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hodok-hu* [ma-hodok-ku] 'too sultry'.

#### 1.2 The Root Adjectives End with the Sound [n]

If the final sound of the root adjectives is [n], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [k], therefore, *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-ku] in its phonetic writing as the alternating form. The sound [n] as the final sound of the root adjectives is assimilated with the sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* resulting in sounds [k] and [k]. For example, the sound changes from [n-h] into [k-k] in *ma-ugan-hu* → [ma-ugak-ku], *ma-bajan-hu* → [ma-bajak-ku], *ma-denggan-hu* → [ma-dengak-ku] is because of assimilation of manner of articulation. Assimilation of manner of articulation takes place because it involves a change in manner of articulating the consonants. Sounds changes or morpho-phonemic alternation occurs because of the influence of the environment as presented below.

ugan	[ugan]	'fertile'	+ ma-hu →	mauganhu	[maugakku]	'too fertile'
bajan	[bajan]	'ugly'	+ ma-hu →	mabajanhu	[mabajakku]	'too ugly'
denggan	[denggan]	'good'	+ ma-hu →	dengganhu	[denggakku]	'too good'
						'too fast'

The word 'fertile' as the meaning of the base adjective *ugan* [ugan] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-ugan-hu* [ma-ugap-pu] 'too fertile'. The word 'ugly' as the meaning of the base adjective *bajan* [bajan] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-bajan-hu* [ma-bajak-ku] 'too ugly'. The word 'good' as the meaning of the base adjective *denggan* [denggan] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-denggan-hu* [ma-dengak-ku] 'too good'. The word 'fast' as the meaning of the base adjective *hapogan* [hapogan] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hapogan-hu* [ma-hapogak-ku] 'too fast'.

### 1.3 The Root Adjectives End with the Sound [ŋ]

If the final sound of the root adjectives is [ŋ], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-ku] in its phonetic writing as the morpho-phonemic alternation or allomorphs. The sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [k]. For example, in the complex words *ma-asing-hu* → [ma-asik-ku], *ma-murhing-hu* → [ma-murhik-ku], *ma-sintong-hu* → [ma-sittok-ku] the sound changes from [ŋ-h] into [k-k]. The process of the sound change is due to assimilation of manner of articulation. It takes place because the process involves a change in manner of articulating the consonants. The sound [ŋ] as the final sound of the root adjectives is assimilated with the sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu*. The assimilation of the two sounds generates sound [ŋ] changes into [k] and sound [h] changes into [k].

asing	[asiŋ]	'strange'	+ ma-hu →	maasinghu	[maasikku]	'too strange'
dodong	[dodoŋ]	'stupid'	+ ma-hu →	madodonghu	[madodokku]	'too stupid'
hallong	[halloŋ]	'stammer'	+ ma-hu →	mahallonghu	[mahallokku]	'too stammer'

Based on the data above, the word 'strange' as the meaning of the base adjective *asing* [asiŋ] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-asing-hu* [ma-asik-ku] 'too strange'. The word 'stupid' as the meaning of the base adjective *dodong* [dodoŋ] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-dodong-hu* [ma-dodok-ku] 'too stupid'. The word 'stammer' as the meaning of the base adjective *hallong* [halloŋ] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hallong-hu* [ma-hallok-ku] 'too stammer'. The word 'angry' as the meaning of the base adjective *jabung* [jabuŋ] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-jabung-hu* [ma-jabuk-ku] 'too angry'.

## 2. The Alternating Form [ma-pu]

The multiple affixations *ma-hu* has the alternating form [ma-pu] if the final sounds of the root adjectives are [m] or [p] as discussed in the following parts.

### 2.1 The Root Adjectives End with the Sound [m]

If the final sound of the root adjectives is [m], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-pu] in its phonetic writing as the alternating form. For example, the sound changes from [m-h] into [p-p] in *ma-ansim-hu* → [ma-assip-pu], *ma-hohom-hu* → [ma-hohop-pu], *ma-pidom-hu* → [ma-

pidop-pu] is resulted in by assimilation of manner of articulation. The sound [m] as the final sound of the root adjectives is assimilated with the sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* as displayed as follows:

ansim	[assim]	‘salty’	+ ma-hu →	maansimhu	[maassippu]	‘too salty’
borombom	[borobbom]	‘obese’	+ ma-hu →	maborombomhu	[maborobboppu]	‘too obese’
hohom	[hohom]	‘calm’	+ ma-hu →	mahohomhu	[mahohoppu]	‘too calm’
						‘too patient’

The word ‘salty’ as the meaning of the base adjective *ansim* [assim] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-ansim-hu* [ma-assip-pu] ‘too salty’. The word ‘obese’ as the meaning of the base adjective *borombom* [borobbom] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-borombom-hu* [ma-borobbop-pu] ‘too obese’. The word ‘calm’ as the meaning of the base adjective *hohom* [hohom] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hohom-hu* [ma-hohop-pu] ‘too calm’. The word ‘patient’ as the meaning of the base adjective *nemnem* [nemnem] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-nemnem-hu* [ma-nemnep-pu] ‘too patient’.

## 2.2 The Root Adjectives End with the Sound [p]

Some examples of the root adjectives end with the sound [p] are *ma-andap-hu* → [ma-addap-pu], *ma-hisap-hu* → [ma-hisap-pu], *ma-majop-hu* → [ma-majop-pu]. In the examples, the sound [h] of multiple affixations *ma-hu* changes into [p]. Therefore, the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-pu] in its phonetic writing as the alternating form. The process of changing one sound into another sound *i.e.*, sound [h] to [p] as the result of attaching the multiple affixations *ma-hu* to root adjectives is called regressive assimilation. In the examples, the sounds [p] and [h] are called morpho-phonemic alternation or allomorphs as presented below.

andap	[addap]	‘clear’	+ ma-hu →	maandaphu	[maaddappu]	‘too clear’
hisap	[hisap]	‘greedy’	+ ma-hu →	mahisaphu	[mahisappu]	‘too greedy’
majop	[majop]	‘proper’	+ ma-hu →	mamajophu	[mamajoppu]	‘too proper’
rohoph	[rohoph]	‘near’	+ ma-hu →	marohophu	[marohoppu]	‘too near’

The word ‘clear’ as the meaning of the base adjective *andap* [addap] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-andap-hu* [ma-addap-pu] ‘too clear’. The word ‘greedy’ as the meaning of the base adjective *hisap* [hisap] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hisap-hu* [ma-hisap-pu] ‘too greedy’. The word ‘proper’ as the meaning of the base adjective *majop* [majop] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-majop-hu* [ma-majop-pu] ‘too proper’. The word ‘near’ as the meaning of the base adjective *rohoph* [rohoph] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-rohoph-hu* [ma-rohoph-pu] ‘too near’.

## 3. The Alternating Form [ma-su]

If the final sound of the root adjectives is [s], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-su]. The sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is assimilated to [s]. For example, the sound changes from [h] into [s] in *ma-ias-hu* → [ma-ias-su], *ma-banggas-hu* → [mabangassu], *ma-derngas-su* → [ma-derngas-su] because the sounds [h] and [s] are similar in that both are fricatives. Such process is called regressive assimilation. More data are presented below.

ias	[ias]	‘clean’	+ ma-hu →	maiashu	[maiassu]	‘too clean’
banggas	[banggas]	‘powerful’	+ ma-hu →	mabanggashu	[mabangassu]	‘too powerful’

derngas	[derŋas]	‘naughty’	+ ma-hu →	maderngashu	[maderŋassu]	‘too naughty’
hiras	[hiras]	‘stiff’	+ ma-hu →	mahirashu	[mahirassu]	‘too stiff’

Based on the data above, the word ‘clean’ as the meaning of the base adjective *ias* [ias] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-ias-hu* [ma-ias-su] ‘too clean’. The word ‘powerful’ as the meaning of the base adjective *banggas* [baŋgas] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-banggas-hu* [ma-baŋgas-su] ‘too powerful’. The word ‘naughty’ as the meaning of the base adjective *derngas* [derŋas] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-derngas-hu* [ma-derŋas-su] ‘too naughty’. The word ‘stiff’ as the meaning of the base adjective *hiras* [hiras] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hiras-hu* [ma-hiras-su] ‘too stiff’.

#### 4. The Root Adjectives End with the Sound [t]

If the final sound of the root adjectives is [t], the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is pronounced [ma-tu]. The data below show that the sound [h] changes into [t] because of attaching the multiple affixations *ma-hu* to root adjectives end with sound [t]. The word formation results in the sound [h] of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* changes into sound [t] because of the assimilation process.

abut	[abut]	‘turbid’	+ ma-hu →	maabuthu	[maabuttu]	‘too turbid’
bernit	[bernit]	‘sick’	+ ma-hu →	mabernithu	[mabernittu]	‘too sick’
dalmet	[dalmet]	‘soft’	+ ma-hu →	madalmethu	[madalmettu]	‘too soft’

Based on the data above, the word ‘turbid’ as the meaning of the base adjective *abut* [abut] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-abut-hu* [ma-abut-tu] ‘too turbid’. The word ‘sick’ as the meaning of the base adjective *bernit* [bernit] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-bernit-hu* [ma-bernit-tu] ‘too sick’. The word ‘soft’ as the meaning of the base adjective *hansit* [hassit] is later used fully to indicate the lexical meaning of the excessive adjective *ma-hansit-hu* [ma-hassit-tu] ‘too soft’.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of this study, four alternating forms of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* are revealed because of the assimilation, i.e. [ma-ku], [ma-pu], [ma-su], and [ma-tu]. This idea agrees with Nida’s (1949: 21), Inkelas’s (2011: 68), and Ramelan’s (1988: 161). They argue that assimilation is a process in which one phoneme is replaced by another as the result of combining one morpheme with another where assimilation denotes a process by which phonemes are made similar.

The attachments of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* to the root adjectives in TB are inflectional processes. The word formations using the multiple affixations *ma-hu* do not change both the syntactic category and the meanings of the already existing meanings of the root adjectives. The meanings of the root adjectives are totally transferred become the meanings of the complex words. The multiple affixations *ma-hu* as one the excessive markers in TB refines and gives extra grammatical information about the root adjectives. It creates a different form of the same word inflectionally. Therefore, the multiple affixations *ma-hu* has no grammatical function because its attachments to root adjectives do not change the parts of speech.

In certain regions in *Tano Batak* ‘Batak Land’, a variant of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* is *pa-hu* as presented below:

root adjective	gloss	<i>ma-hu</i>	gloss	<i>pa-hu</i>	gloss
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[addap]	clear	[ma-addap-pu]	too clear	[pa-addap-pu]	too clear
[hisap]	greedy	[ma-hisap-pu]	too greedy	[pa-hisap-pu]	too greedy
[majop]	proper	[ma-majop-pu]	too proper	[pa-majop-pu]	too proper
[rohop]	near	[ma-rohop-pu]	too near	[pa-rohop-pu]	too near
[serep]	modest	[ma-serep-pu]	too modest	[pa-serep-pu]	too modest
[tahop]	sudden	[ma-tahop-pu]	too sudden	[pa-tahop-pu]	too sudden

The grammatical meanings of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* in the complex words denote excessive adjectives. The affix signifies excessive meaning than indicated by the root adjectives. The lexical meanings of the complex words depend on the base meanings of the adjectives to which the *ma-hu* is attached. The multiple affixations *ma-hu* creates variant forms of adjectives to conform to different functional roles in linguistics phenomena in TB.

As discussed in the findings above when sounds in TB appear next to each other, they have the possibility to affect each other's form. This statement is relevant with Bauer's statement (2008: 14). In English, for example, the negative morpheme [in-] → [im-] in *impossible* whereas [in-] retains (in-) in words like *incongruous*, *insufficient*, *indecent*, and *inaudible*. The negative morpheme may change its form depending on the first sound of the following morpheme, e.g.:

- (1) [in-] → [im-] in *impossible*
- (2) [in-] retains [in-] in *incongruous*, *insufficient*, *indecent*, and *inaudible*

The morpheme [in-] has the alternating forms [im-] and [in-] in different but predictable environments because the alveolar nasal of [in-] changes into a bilabial nasal [m] before a morpheme beginning with a bilabial stop, e.g., [p] in *possible*. It changes into a velar nasal before a morpheme beginning with a velar stop [k] as *incongruous*. It is clear from the examples above that there is a change from one phoneme, i.e. [n] into another phoneme i.e. [m] before [p] in *possible* and [ŋ] before [k] *incongruous*, to make the phoneme [n] more similar to the neighboring sound:

- (3) [m] is similar to [p] in that both are bilabial
- (4) [ŋ] is similar to [k] in that both are velar

It is, in fact, quite common for phonemes as well as morphemes to change because of the influence of the environment. In the examples quoted above, the morpheme [in-] changes into [im-] or [in-] depending on the sound which immediately follows. The forms [im-] and [in-] are called morpho-phonemic alternations or allomorphs of the same morpheme, predictable in terms of the environment, while [in-] is considered the base of the morpheme.

## CONCLUSION

This study contributes novel insights on alternating forms of the multiple affixations in TB. That is to say that this study gives significant contribution on the morphological exploration of the multiple affixations *ma-hu*. Key findings also include the fact that there are four allomorphs of the multiple affixations *ma-hu*, i.e., [ma-ku], [ma-pu], [ma-su], and [ma-tu]. In some places, there is a form *pa-hu* as a variation of the multiple affixations *ma-hu*.

The grammatical functions are not found because the attachments of the multiple affixations *ma-hu* to root adjectives do not change the syntactic category. The grammatical meanings, however, express excessive adjectives. Whereas, the lexical meanings of the complex words depend on the meanings of the already existing words.

This study highlights the importance of documenting unwritten rules of the multiple

affixations *ma-hu* in TB as a regional language becomes written grammar rules because written documents of TB are extremely limited. However, the results are still encouraging and this study recommends future studies of regional languages to replicate this model or the approach. Future insights should aim to benefit linguistic treasures of regional languages in particular and universal grammar in general.

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