

## Cultural Meaning of Pahili Mbuala Customary Ritual Speech in Rindi Village, East Sumba Regency: Ethnolinguistic Study

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### Article Info

#### History Articles

Received:  
October 2019  
Accepted:  
November 2019  
Published:  
April 2020

#### Keywords:

*adat ritual pahili mbuala,  
cultural meaning,  
speech,  
the form of lingual unit*

#### DOI

<https://doi.org/10.15294/seloka.v9i1.35641>

### Abstract

The traditional pahili mbuala ritual utterances used by the performers of the ritual can implicitly represent the culture of the unique Sumba ethnic community. These particularities are full of meanings that can be known through teachings spoken for generations by ritual practitioners. The purpose of this study was to analyze the form of lingual units and the cultural significance of the traditional pahili mbuala ritual speech in Rindi Village, Rindi District, East Sumba Regency. The data in this study are qualitative data using the refer method followed by a competent free engage listening technique (SBLC), record technique, and note-taking technique. Data analysis was carried out through two procedures namely analysis during the process of presenting data and analysis after data collection. The results of the study showed that the form of a lingual unit of traditional pahili mbuala ritual speech in the form of words, phrases, sentences, and discourse can reveal cultural meanings that reflect the thought patterns and views of the Sumba ethnic community on the values and teachings adopted.

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## INTRODUCTION

Language can be categorized as one of the cultural elements in the form of nonmaterial in addition to values, norms, and beliefs (Liliweri, 2009). Thus it can be said that language and culture can be realized overlapping which affects the behavior and way of thinking of a community group. In line with this opinion, Wijana (2010) said, that language is one of the important tools that humans have in developing their culture or civilization. Almost all human activities cannot be separated from activities using language.

The role of language is very dominant in human life because language is not only a part of culture but also a determinant of cultural development. Language occupies a very central position in human life because the language has multiple aspects, especially covering biological, psychological, social, and cultural aspects (Mardikantoro, 2016).

One proof of the diversity of languages is the phenomenon of the use of language as a means of expressing the relationship between humans and the natural surroundings. Language in its use by the speech community is recorded from the sources of speech and correspondence that live around us. Speakers of any language must know, master, and use lingual tools related to their environment, both social and natural. In the perspective of cognitive anthropology, a set of lexicons used are objects, events, and signs of activity that are important in their environment (Casson, 1981).

Thus, language and culture in a group of speakers are interconnected with one another. This is in line with the opinion (Foley in Fallo, 2016) which states that speaking is an action formed by culture.

In general, the Sumba ethnic community, especially those in East Sumba, believe Marapu's beliefs as ancestral heritage, cultural heritage and as part of rituals that are carried out continuously when a death event occurs. The culmination of the entire series of events of the death ritual for adherents of the Marapu faith is the adat ritual of *pahili mbuala*.

The traditional *pahili mbuala* ritual is one of the cultural heritage of the East Sumba community which is believed to be an act of paving the way for spirits towards the 'heaven' *Parai Marapu* (Kapita, 1976). The East Sumba community believes that spiritual life is nobler and more prosperous than physical life, so that someone who has been declared dead and is not ritualized by the ritual, it is believed that his soul cannot reach *Parai Marapu* because he has not obtained permission from the ancestors.

This ritual takes place gradually. Each stage in the adat ritual of *Pahili Mbuala* is something that must be spoken or conveyed by the performers of the ritual to Marapu, the Supreme God, and the spirit of the dead in order to expedite the release process.

The traditional rituals of *pahili mbuala* implicitly have a cultural picture that can reflect the mindset of the ethnic Sumba people who are open to something that certainly does not violate customs and religion. Thus, the study of the traditional rituals of *Pahili Mbuala* because of the spoken expression has a characteristic that is full of meaning.

Relevant research was carried out by Ilic (2004) in a journal article entitled "*Language and Culture Studies-Wonderland Through the Linguistic Looking Glass*". Ilic in his research found a theory of language and cultural relations through the point of view of language and society, the use of language, language and thought, as well as illustrative through the discovery and research of language disciplines themselves such as linguistic anthropology, ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, contrastive rhetoric, applied linguistics, and cognitive linguistics. The strength of Ilic's research is the theoretical content in it. In his research also discussed in detail the theory of language and cultural relation.

Research conducted by Mangkey, et al (2010) entitled "Minahasa Culture: An Ethnolinguistic Study of the Construction of Local Cultural Values Facing Global Competition". This research reveals the cultural identity of a nation, as well as tribes and community groups which are always the basic

problems in the era of globalization, so that the integration and existence of life are balanced, then through a variety of life experiences, knowledge, and new technologies there is a process of cultural acculturation. Humans as "autonomous free subjects" are doubted to maintain the survival of the earth which is increasingly threatened; on the contrary, even original and primitive systems of ideas and cultural values will lead one to understand the world as a whole and in-depth.

Banks (2015) wrote an article in the journal entitled "Achieving 'Unmerkedness' in Organizational Discourse: A Praxis Perspective on Ethnolinguistic Identity". In this study, it was concluded that a more praxis-oriented perspective on ethnolinguistic identity can enrich understanding of the three concepts embedded in terms of ethnicity, language, and identity. The data and data sources obtained by Banks are the discourse on large hotel worksites and the approach used by Banks, namely ethnomethodology with the concept of 'unclear' linguistics as heuristic innovation to explore the dynamics of ethnolinguistic minorities in work settings.

Research conducted by Mardikantoro (2016) entitled "Lingual Unity Uncovering Local Wisdom in Environmental Conservation". In this study, it was found the use of forms and functions of the lingual unit as an expression of local wisdom in preserving the environment in the Javanese speech community in Central Java. The theory used in this research is structural linguistic, sociolinguistic, and ethnolinguistic theory. The data used in his research is qualitative data which is captured using the method of referencing. Data analysis was carried out through two procedures namely analysis during the data collection process and analysis after data collection. Mardikantoro's research results, as follows: a) forms of lingual units expressing local wisdom include words, phrases, sentences, and discourse; b) the functions of the lingual unit expressing local wisdom (1) giving names, (2) commanding/advising, (3) offering prayers, and (4) teaching in the form of worshippers.

Research conducted by Baehaqie (2017) entitled "The Meaning of Semiotic Food Names in the Tingkeban Salary Offering in Pelem Hamlet, Wonogiri Regency". In this study, the semiotic meaning of food names in the mitoni or tingkeban offering is described. The results of the study are as follows: (1) There are nine food names in tingkeban offerings, namely: Pitu cone, bathok feather cone, playon cone, sega rogoh, sega gendhong, sega joking, procot jenang, baro-baro jenang, and klapa gadhing. These names can be classified into four categories, namely cone, sega, jenang, and snacks; and (2) the lexicon of food names offering tingkeban salvation is reflected in the offerings' thoughts that contain a noble moral message, namely the existence of safety expectations in a pregnancy that has reached the age of seven months.

Research conducted by Fallo (2016) entitled "Indigenous Natoni Ritual Speech of the Ethnic Community of Timor in Welcoming Guests to Schools". In this research, it is described and explained the form of linguistic speech of the indigenous Natoni ritual of the Timorese ethnic community, the linguistic function of the natoni ritual of indigenous Timorese, and the cultural significance of the natoni rituals of indigenous Timorese. The approach used in this research is the cultural-linguistic theory approach. The collection techniques used are listening and interview techniques. Data analysis was performed using an interactive model. The results of the study found various forms of linguistics that are word forms, phrase forms, sentence forms, discourse forms; linguistic functions include informational functions, expressive functions, directive functions, aesthetic functions, fatigue functions; and the meaning of linguistic culture contained in the natoni rituals of the indigenous Timorese people in welcoming guests at the school. Penelitian yang dilakukan oleh Iku (2019) berjudul "Khazanah Lingua Kepadian Masyarakat Tutar Manggarai: Studi Ekolinguistik".

In this research, the function and meaning of the lingua unit of character form which is characterized and ideo-socio-biological are

described and explained. Data in this qualitative study were collected using ethnographic methods, references, and abilities while analyzing data using the Mills and Huberman interactive model assisted by the distribution method. The results of this study indicate that: the kepus language forms found in the pre-planting, planting, and post-planting stages, namely ecolexicon and ecotacana; function and meaning implied in the form of a lingual rice field environment, ideological meaning: the hope of rice growing well, the hope of rice plants free from pests and disasters, the hope of abundant plants, the hope of survival while working in the fields, and the hope of prosperity; sociological functions and meanings: relations with gods, relations with ancestors, relations with guardians of the land, relations with others, and relations with communal land; and biological function and meaning.

Research conducted by Nenoliu (2019) titled "Shifting of Dawan Language in the Amanuban Community in a Family Context". In this study the form and factors of Dawan's language shift were explained in the Amanuban community in South Central Timor Regency. Data was collected using the SLC technique (see competent involvement) and continued using the recording method. Data analysis was carried out in several stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data regret, and drawing conclusions. The result of this research is that the Dawan people experienced a change in the Amanuban community through words, phrases, and sentences. Factors underlying the Dawan language shift, namely through (a) age, (b) mixed marriage, (c) work, and (d) mobility population. Based on the results above, the Dawan language shift that occurs in the Amanuban community, especially in the family can be seen from the form of language (there are words, phrases, and sentences). The main factor causing Dawan's language shift is the education factor which enhances other languages.

Language as part of culture, tends to be inseparable from other cultural elements (Koentjaraningrat in Baehaqie, 2017).

Meaning is a link between elements of language (Djajasudarma 1993). The meaning of language is expressed by linguistic elements (morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, and sentences), the meaning of language is limited and colored by the culture that becomes its container (Nababan, 1984). Thus, meaning is present due to its relationship with the form of lingual units (elements of language), thus bringing up the lingual and cultural meanings.

The lingual unit of traditional *pahili mbuala* ritual speech contains linguistic expressions which show that the condition of the Sumba ethnic community always begs and asks for the blessing of the ancestors before acting or doing something. Things like this are a reflection as well as the teachings of the ancestors of the Sumba ethnic community, especially in Rindi Village since ancient times until now.

The problem revealed in this study is related to the form of the lingual unit and the cultural significance of the *pahili mbuala* traditional ritual speech in Rindi Village, East Sumba Regency. The purpose of this study is to analyze the form of lingual units and the cultural significance of the *pahili mbuala* traditional ritual utterances in Rindi Village, East Sumba Regency.

## METHODS

There are two kinds of approaches used in this research, namely theoretical approaches and methodological approaches. The theoretical approach used is the ethnolinguistic approach, while the methodological approach used is a qualitative descriptive approach. Data was collected using the refer method. There are two types of techniques in the listening method, namely basic techniques and advanced techniques. The basic technique in the form of tapping / tapping technique is the researcher taps all the utterances spoken by the informant at the time of the study. The advanced technique in the form of a free and involved conversation is capable (Sudaryanto, 2015).

The data that has been obtained is then tested for validity using triangulation techniques. Data analysis in this study was divided into two

stages, namely analysis during the data collection process and analysis after data collection. Presentation of the results of data analysis using informal methods. This means that the presentation of data is done by using ordinary words or descriptions without formal symbols.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The form of lingual unit of traditional *pahili mbualaritual* speech in the Sumba ethnic community in Rindi Village includes words, phrases, sentences, and discourse, each form of lingual unit containing cultural meaning that can reflect the viewpoints of life and behavior of the local community.

### Lingual Unit in the form of word

The word is a grammatical unit that is uttered, is repetitive, and potentially the utterance can stand alone (Arifin and Junaiyah, 2008). The following is the form of words that have cultural significance in the traditional ritual utterances of *pahili mbuala*.

Word	Tulisan Fonetis	Gloss
mata	[mata]	'mata'
tanarara	[tanarara]	'bukit'
kelika	[kelika]	'semahan'
kualak	[kualak]	'bakul kecil'
palindi	[palindi]	'pengampu'

The words *mata*, *tanarara*, *kalumbu*, *kelika*, and *kualak* are basic forms of the noun category belonging to a single morpheme morpheme consisting of one morpheme, while the word *palindi* belongs to the polymorphemic word consisting of two or more morphemes which have undergone a pre-affixing monomorphemic process consisting of one morpheme, while the word *palindi* belongs to the polymorphemic word consisting of two or more morphemes which have undergone a prephalazation morphemic process consisting of one morpheme, while the word *palindi* belongs to the polymorphemic word consisting of two or more morphemes which have undergone prephalazation in the form of a single prefix. - noun category. The eye is an expression addressed to the Supreme God as

almighty seeing everything that happens on earth. The ethnic community of Sumba only refers to the highest God as an image that reflects the form, nature, and actions of the Supreme God himself. According to one *ama bokulu*, the speech was used only when the traditional ritual took place, this was because the ethnic Sumba community, especially those who still adhered to the Marapu belief, believed that the mention of the name of God should not be spoken carelessly because it was considered sacred. *Tanarara* is a hill in a small village on the island of Sumba. The cultural meaning of the word *tanarara* is that the ethnic Sumba community believes *tanarara* as one of the places that must be traveled and stopped by spirits. Just as life is full of twists but must be passed in order to reach the summit, so also after life becomes a spirit he must pass a winding journey to reach the top of the hill in order to meet the Marapu who inhabit the place. *Kelika* is a place for offerings or offerings that are used as a means in various traditional rituals. The cultural meaning of *kelika* is that the ethnic Sumba community considers *kelika* as an intermediary medium used by the community to request and ask for blessing on the success and protection of Marapu and the Supreme God. *Kualak* is a container made of woven palm leaf shaped like a basket with a small size. The cultural meaning of *kelika* is the Sumba ethnic community interpreting *kelika* as one of the small places used to place offerings such as rice and slaughter meat that has been cooked to offer to Marapu and ancestral spirits, the aim is as a provision for the journey of the dead's soul. *Palindi* is a word spoken by *bokulu* to spirits with the intention that he knows that when traveling long distances, he will meet with a person who has the task of ruling the country. Cultural meaning is that the Sumba ethnic community believes in *Palindi* as a crossing bridge which is interpreted as a symbol of safety that can lift or guide the soul of the dead to *Prai Marapu*.

### Lingual Unit in the form of phrase

Common phrases are also called compound words that fill one of the syntactic functions in a sentence (Ramlan in

Mardikantoro, 2016). The following forms of phrases that have cultural significance in the speech of traditional rituals of *pahili mbuala*.

Phrase	Tulisan fonetis	Gloss
pamaringu uma	[pamariŋu uma]	'pendinginan rumah'
uma	[uma]	'rumah tak
ndapataungu	<sup>ɲ</sup> dapatauŋu]	berpanghuni'
wuya rara	[wuya rara]	'buaya merah'

The *pamaringu uma* and *uma ndapataungu* phrases are classified in the form of attributive phrases that are endocentric because both the core and their alterations occupy one of the word classes, while the *wuya rara* phrases are classified as idiomatic phrases because the result of their formation gives rise to or has a new meaning or not actual meaning (connotation meaning). . *Pamaringu uma* is an activity carried out to remove all things used during traditional rituals take place. The cultural meaning of *pamaringu uma* is that the ethnic Sumba community believes that *pamaringu uma* is a form of cleansing of everything inside and outside the home. According to the Sumba people, during the event of the death of the house in the heat and need to be cooled. The goal is to drive away evil spirits from the house and village that really disturb the local community. It is also a symbolic form of severing the relationship between the spirits of the dead and the local community. *Uma ndapataungu* is a small place of worship that is not inhabited by humans. The cultural meaning of *uma ndapataungu* is an ethnic Sumba community believing *uma ndapataungu* as a place of worship inhabited by *Marapu Ratu* named *Umbu Endalu*. According to the belief of the local community, the shrine is inhabited by magic so that no one is allowed to live in that place. *Ruya Rara* is an ornament or decoration carved into one of the cold-blooded reptiles, crocodiles. The cultural meaning of *wuya rara* in the traditional *pahili mbuala* ritual speech is that *wuya raradi* is considered a symbol of magic, greatness and influence of a king, because according to the local community *wuya rara* has a strong instinct and is feared by the people of Sumba, just like a Sumbanese king who is

respected by his people . This is included in the form of local wisdom found in the cultural traditions of the Sumba people from generation to generation.

### Lingual Unit in the form of Sentences

Alwi, et al (2003) state that the term sentence contains elements that have at least a subject and a predicate, but have been given final intonation or punctuation. The following is the form of sentences that have cultural significance in the traditional ritual utterances of *pahili mbuala*.

Sentences	Tulisan fonetis	Gloss
jiaduya mbaru na nyuta pahili mbuala	[jiaduya <sup>m</sup> baru na ŋuta pahili <sup>m</sup> buala]	'pagi ini kami akan lepas arwah'
ambu mata harra mbungaru	[a <sup>m</sup> bu mata harra <sup>m</sup> bungaru]	'jangan pergi terburu-buru'
kaupa taramata na pabeli danja la kaba ndapahingi wai ndakalalung	[kaupa taramata na pabeli da <sup>ɲ</sup> a la kaba <sup>ɲ</sup> dapahingi wai <sup>ɲ</sup> dakalalung]	'tengadahlah dan berbaliklah ke tempat tempurung yang tidak pernah miring air yang tidak pernah dangkal'
jiaduya nu ama bokulu hiku kuku du nyaka Ridji Karuambang lai Ndiana Kaduanda na hiri na ngiri na ngamba la uma bokulu la kaheli happa runna i ananggiala la mau nai palarang humamu	[jiaduya nu hiku lua <sup>ɲ</sup> da kuku lima du <sup>ɲ</sup> guŋaka nu lai Ridji Karu <sup>m</sup> baŋ lai Ndiana Kadu <sup>ɲ</sup> da na hiri na hiri na <sup>ɲ</sup> a <sup>m</sup> ba la uma lama bokUtu la kaheli happa runna i ana <sup>ɲ</sup> giala la mau nai palaran humamu]	'kami berharap kepada arwah bangsawan (Ridji Karuambang dan Ndiana Kaduanda) yang berdiam di sekitar kampung untuk dapat menyejukan rumah adat yang ditinggalkan oleh arwah'

The sentence *jiaduya mbaru na nyuta pahili mbuala* is a declarative sentence stating the notification to the Supreme God, *Marapu*, as well as relatives of the spirits of the dead that *ama bokulu* will carry out the *pahili mbuala* ritual. The cultural meaning contained in the sentence is that the Sumba ethnic community believes this ritual as a form of paving the way for the spirits to the *Marapu Parai*, because if this ritual is not performed then the spirit feels that it has been ignored so that things like this will wreak havoc for the villagers.

The *ambu ambra harra mbungaru* sentence is an imperative sentence in the form of a prohibition against Marapu not to leave the ritual site in a hurry. The cultural meaning contained in the sentence is that the Sumba ethnic community believes that the presence of Marapu is highly expected during traditional rituals because it will have a good impact, so that all the ritual processes from beginning to end can proceed as expected without any obstruction. Thus, when he learned of Marapu's presence, the priest gave a ban on Marapu not to leave the ritual site.

The sentence *kaupa taramata na pabeli danja la kaba ndapahingi wai ndakalalung* is an imperative sentence stating an order to the spirit of the dead. The cultural meaning of the sentence is that the ethnic Sumba community believes in life after death, meaning after death and becoming a spirit, in Prai Marapu the spirit will be returned and alive and shaped like a fetus in the womb, that's when a new life will be lived by a spirit.

The sentence *jiaduya nu bokulu hiku nail du nyaka Ridji Karuambang lai Ndiana Kaduanda na hiri na ngiri na ngamba la uma bokulu la kaheli happa runna i ananggihala la want nai palarang humamumer* is an optional sentence that expresses the hopes or desires of an ama bokulu. The cultural meaning of the sentence is that the Sumba ethnic community believes that the hopes or wishes expressed by ama bokulu in various traditional rituals have an important role and influence on the survival of the local community, because these ama bokulu are used as intermediaries between humans and Marapu in conveying their wishes or hopes when traditional or religious rituals take place.

### Lingual Unit in the form of Discourse

Discourse is a complete language unit so that in grammatical hierarchy it is the highest and largest grammatical unit meaning that the discourse is formed from sentences that meet grammatical requirements and other requirements of discourse (Chaer, 2012). The following is the form of discourse that has cultural significance in the traditional ritual utterances of *pahili mbuala*.

Discourse	Tulisan fonetis	Gloss
<i>nama bokulu wua mata la nama mballaru kahilu, jiaduya mbaru na nyimi pahili mbuala lundung purrumi na lakung la pinu tanarara la hupu ai mayiala, da piting na pahappa kuta la paingu i batangai na hapilinda pakaworingu pandoiing manandang dama hamangu na kala wihi la liamba lima</i>	[tay la huŋa lodu, a <sup>m</sup> bu mata harra <sup>m</sup> buŋaru a <sup>m</sup> bu eti harra ba <sup>n</sup> daŋu, nama bokUlu wua mata nama <sup>m</sup> ballaru kahilu, jiaduya <sup>m</sup> baru na ŋimi pahilI <sup>m</sup> buala, la lunduŋ purrUmi na lakunj la pinu tanarara la hupu a <sup>i</sup> mayiala da pitij na pahappa kuta la paiŋu i bata <sup>n</sup> gai na hapilI <sup>n</sup> da pakaworInju pa <sup>n</sup> doInj mana <sup>n</sup> daŋ dama hamaŋu na kala wihi lia <sup>m</sup> ba lima]	'kepada Yang Besar Bola Matanya dan Yang Lebar Telinganya tiba saatnya kami lepas arwah untuk diantar sesuai jalan ke ujung bukit dan ujung pohon mayela, ambillah sirih pinang yang diikat ini sebagai wujud persembahan yang tulus kepada telah Yang Melebur dengan Bulat dan Yang Membuat dengan Indah serta kepada Yang Menyangga dengan Kaki dan Yang Mendekap dengan Tangan'

*nama bokulu wua mata la nama mballaru kahilu, jiaduya mbaru na nyimi pahili mbuala lundung purrumi na lakung la pinu tanarara la hupu ai mayiala, da piting na pahappa kuta la paingu i batangai na hapilinda pakaworingu pandoiing manandang dama hamangu na kala wihi la liamba lima* 'Your Majesty to the size of the eyeballs and the width of the ears, it's time for us to escape the spirit to be escorted according to the path to the end of the hill and the end of the Mayela tree, take the betel tied as a form of sincere offerings to those who have fused with the round and who made it beautifully and to the propping with the Feet and the Closer with the Hands' are lingual units expressed in the form of discourse on prayer. The discourse in the form of prayers is said as a form of expression of gratitude addressed to the Supreme God and Marapu as the Creator in charge of all nature that is able to see and hear every deed and complaint that is said and as a support and guide for them when they are wrong in stepping or doing something. The cultural meaning in the expression of prayer is

that it reflects the life of the ethnic Sumba community who strongly adheres to and upholds the religious values held by them. Therefore, before holding a ritual they first pray to convey their wishes to the Supreme God through Marapu. This has been instilled from birth until they grow up to always prioritize and serve the Supreme God and Marapu in everyday life.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis in this study, it can be concluded that the *pahili mbuala* traditional ritual utterances in Rindi Village, East Sumba Regency have lingual unit forms in the form of words (monomorfemis and polymorfemis), phrases (endocentric attributive and idiomatic), sentences (declarative, imperative, and optative), and discourse (prayer). Lingual units in the form of words, phrases, sentences, and discourse expressed in adat rituals of *Pahili Mbuala* also have cultural meanings that can reflect the view points of life and mindset of the Sumba ethnic community who always uphold the prevailing customs, always obey and respect the Sang The owner lives, and shares and values one another.

Suggestion that can be delivered is the active role of the Sumba ethnic community is very necessary to maintain and preserve the traditional rituals of Pahili Mbuala because it is a cultural heritage that must be passed down from generation to generation, because if not so along with the rapid development of the times, over time the ritual will become extinct even not recognized by future generations.

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