



## Indonesian Language Learning Based on Local Wisdom: Derivational and Inflectional Morphological Processes

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### Abstract

*This study examines the derivative and morphological inflection processes in the ritual speech of Rambu Solo in the Toraja tribe and how these are applied in learning the Indonesian language through local wisdom. By utilizing qualitative approach, the study explores the pattern of affixations e.g., pa-, si-, ma-, and ta-, and suffixes e.g., -na which are dialects of the Toraja language that express possession, agency, voice, and grammatical ties. The researcher surveyed cultural leaders, school teachers and language scholars by interviewing them and also recording the sacred speeches. The observations show that such morphological structures are not only rich in language but also rich in the cultural significance of the Toraja community because it demonstrates values to the core and social makeup. This research paper also shows how incorporation of these morphological aspect in the Indonesian language learning enhance contextual learning, increase the level of metalinguistic awareness and conducive towards ensuring the survival of indigenous languages. The study fills the core deficiency located in the sphere of language education literature, which tended to ignore including the local linguistic resources into formal studies. Teachers, cultural elders, were some of the participants who did not object to the use of traditional forms of speech as learning aids, but caution had to be taken to ensure that it is done respectfully and correctly. This incorporation is seen as corresponding to the objectives of Independent Learning curriculum because it removes rigid culturally-oriented learning environments.*

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### Introduction

Language is not just a means of communication but also a very useful tool of cultural representation and construction of a form of identity. People in Indonesia live in the country of extreme ethnolinguistic diversity, and the process of local wisdom incorporation in language teaching is a little-researched, but nevertheless, crucial avenue of the maintenance of local cultures, as well as the improvement of Indonesian language studies. The need to relate language learning to the particular cultural contexts is a statement already made numerous times in educational policy but the application of this context and its sensitivity is shallow and

inappropriate in many ways (O'Dowd, 2021; Muthmainnah et al., 2025; Reynen-Woodward et al., 2024; Wee et al., 2024; Miao & Holmes, 2021). Ritual speech system of the Rambu solo a Torajan traditional funeral variant which is highly complex linguistically is used as a fertile arena that can provide rich pedagogical value in the learning of the Indonesian language in terms of its derivational and inflectional morphology which is embedded in the ritual speech distributed via indigenous orations.

Saving and keeping local knowledge in acquiring the language does not only help in sustaining cultures, but also helps in enhancing linguistic consciousness among the learners (Ajani et al., 2024; Nzeaka & Ehondor, 2024; Arslan & Ahmed, 2025). The meeting point between culture and language as it was observed by Hilyati, et al. (2024) acts as the source of significant communication and cognitive development. Speech acts, idioms and morphological forms used locally will guide on how a community sees the world and what it will like to believe (Hidayat, 2016). The example of Toraja, a society with strong ritualized culture and symbolic language, Rambu Solo is one story of the representation of a traditional use of language as the manifestation of complex social networks, metaphysical beliefs, and grammatically organized patterns. Nevertheless, these oral traditions are frequently not reflected in the official curriculum of Indonesian that is biased toward standardized and urban-based forms of language.

A morphological analysis of such a standardized domain as derivational and inflectional forms is essential as far as it is of utmost importance in a variety of ways (Rugaiyah, 2018; Rafique, 2020; Zaniar et al., 2024; Haspelmath, 2024). To start with, morphological awareness plays one of the most notable roles in shaping language competence especially the ability to comprehend word formation and generation of meaning (Ye et al., 2021; Sulistyawati et al., 2021; Asadi et al., 2025). Morphology is not restricted to grammatical roles in most indigenous languages and ritual speeches, but it also carries cultural as well as symbolic content. As in the case of Rambu Solo, affixation and reduplication are common even beyond a grammatical coherence, and they are applied to reflect reverence, hierarchy, and cosmological indicators.

Second, traditional morphological structures should also be implemented in language learning contents along with strengthening its cultural relevance and genuineness of the learning (Sukarno & Riyadini, 2024; Long, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). The students will be able to form a stronger affiliation and identity when they are exposed to real-life linguistic practices of the communities they belong to or live in (Nazar & Seyri, 2023; Chao, 2022; Russell et al., 2021; Fu & Li, 2022). Reiterates that learning should be inclusive and sustainable, making the incorporation of the indigenous knowledge system in education to play a fundamental role. In addition, the local languages and ritual speeches could be marginalized in the present world of globalization as well as quick digital communication (Kasiyarno & Apriyanto, 2025; Sumartana et al., 2025; Llanes-Ortiz, 2023). With the incorporation of these heritages into language learnings, it does not only preserve them, but it also spruces up learning of the Indonesian language in a manner that transcends pluralism and local epistemologies.

Such an undertaking can be studied with a unique case study; Rambu Solo ritual. Being performed by the people of Toraja ethnic group located on the island of South Sulawesi, the ceremony of Rambu Solo is rather intricate act of death instead of being a simple cultural performance, as it is full of verbal art, metaphors, and grammatical complexity (Nahuway & Tanamal, 2023). Traditional orators perform during the ceremony speaking the speeches with typical elements: traditional metaphors, archaic words, and well-developed system of affixation much resembled to the Austronesian origins and local innovation. The affix pa- found in most of the Torajan phrases does not only represent the causative forms on standard

Indonesian, but the social roles, as well as ritual functions, therefore, contributing semantic levels beyond surface grammar (Tulaktondok et al., 2024; Endarto, 2024).

In spite of such richness, the learning of Indonesian language continues being heavily text-based and its materials largely do not correspond to the local speech practices. Such excessive focus on the textbook-based learning has been criticized as constraining young people to the one-sidedness of the linguistic ecology of Indonesia (Oates et al., 2021; Pan, 2014). Latest reports have indicated that indigenous-based language learning facilitates a proficiency level of language as well as intercultural awareness. Hence, the study of the derivational and inflectional morphology of the Rambu Solo ritual does not only add to the cause of linguistic knowledge, but also to the field of pedagogical development in Indonesian language teaching.

Moreover, the current research reacts to the national education objectives stated in the curriculum of Indonesia, focusing on the necessity of character education, the cultural appreciation, and contextual study (Nurdin, 2015; Qoyyimah, 2016; Widodo, 2017). These objectives can be met by local linguistic tradition, including the Rambu Solo speeches, which can provide an example of how to use a certain language as the value of aesthetics and power as well as the social structure and the connection with society. Incorporation of ventures of such material in language learning results in attitudinal consequences where students regard language as a living system that is dynamic and cultural in nature as opposed to rule-based mechanical language.

## Methods

The qualitative descriptive methodology of this study would meet its demand due to its applicability to linguistic and cultural complexity of the Rambu Solo speech tradition in the Toraja community. The qualitative perspective is based on the necessity to consider the lived-experiences, the symbolic meaning Ings, and the socio-linguistic roles of the traditional ritual speech. The approach allows understanding the inner nature of derivational and inflectional morphological processes as not only grammatical functions but also transmitters of local wisdom in a profound and contextual manner. Theoretical abstraction is avoided since this approach has a descriptive aspect, that is, the results are not reduced to hypothetical terms, but they resemble the real linguistic behavior within the target group.

The study was done in the region of Tana Toraja in South Sulawesi in Indonesia. This location has been chosen due to local culture of the Toraja people that has the cultural heartland where the local traditional rituals that are enjoyed by the local people extensively remain to be Rambu Solo. The field study was conducted in various villages that were eminent in following their own ceremonies and traditions and this provided the researcher with a very rich source of the oral traditions and the linguistic data. The context offered first-hand experience of ritual procession and allowed the researcher to witness the role of language in a sacred and formal setting especially in the extravagant funeral activities that characterize Rambu Solo'. This location was where one could be immersed in the culture which is a core element of ethnolinguistic investigation.

There were three principal areas of data sources namely oral ritual texts, interview of participants, and supporting documentation. On the one hand, the oral data were gathered through observation and recording of Rambu Solo speeches given by both ritual leaders (to minaa), and ceremonial orators. These speeches are one of the central moments in the given ceremony and they are tied with a lot of morphological categorizations that contains both semantic and practical significance. Moreover, a sample of key informants was provided in terms of interviews with ritual speakers, cultural elders, local linguists, and Indonesian

language teachers performed in the form of a semi-structured interview. Based on the outstanding knowledge and active participation in Toraja cultural and linguistic life, these people were selected. It was important as they provided their insights which were necessary to explain the meanings, functions, and pedagogical implications of morphological forms found in the speeches. Other sources like written transcripts of routines, pre-arranged by the local cultural institutions as well as pertinent oral traditions literature on Toraja were also gathered and reviewed to support the results of the primary data.

Three main methods were deployed in data collection; participant observation, in-depth interviews and document analysis. The aim of participant observation was to enable the researcher to record the performance of ritual speech in its natural context, which means that all the aspects of the speech rich in situational context, non-verbal media and the interaction of the audience became captured. The ceremonies were recorded and field notes were taken by receiving prior permission of the hosts and the speakers. The in-depth interviews were done in Indonesian and Toraja languages, according to the choice of the interviewee. Interviews were feature with open-ended postulates that aimed at obtaining specific answers to the use, structure and meaning of particular morphological forms present in the ritual speech. Meanwhile, alongside with the interviews, document analysis was performed which included the examination of recordings and transcripts of the already past speeches found in the local archives and in the cultural centers enabling the researcher to compare the contemporary use of language with the examples in the past. Data processing was carried out thematically and linguistically, that is, it was aimed at revealing the derivational and inflectional morphological forms of the ritual language. Once can code and categorize morphological elements in a systematic way after the data as the speech and interview information were all transcribed. The derivational morphology was studied in terms of how the affixes as prefixes, suffixes, and reduplication patterns changed the meaning and use of words and mostly converted them into other word classes. Inflectional morphology was studied in the way it conveyed such grammatical information as tense, aspect, number, and possession but did not change the fundamental meaning of the word. Every form found was then explained in the context of how it is used in a religious surrounding to find out its cultural purpose and effectiveness of communication. The comparison between these forms and usual Indonesian with a view to understanding how the traditional speech could be used in the development of the modern language learning was also conducted.

The research adhered a number of validation techniques in order to promise the credibility and reliability of the findings. The triangulation method was taken such as by observations of other sources of data, interviews and documents to cross-verify and validate patterns. The long-term presence in the field would enable the researcher to develop rapport with the participants and develop a more delicate picture of the speech traditions. The member checking was done by providing the key informants with transcriptions and initial interpretations to give substance to the accuracy and the meaning of interpretation. Moreover, a reflective journal was kept throughout the study in order to consider the positionality of the researcher biases. All of these measures are what ensured that the research process-remained intact, and delivered valid findings that were both valid as well as contextual.

## **Results and Discussion**

Interpretation of such morphological structures used in traditional speech is not just important in linguistic studies but also in making the language to be learned in a multicultural country such as Indonesia to be interesting. Toraja of Rambu Solo has the provision of a fascinating linguistic source but the impossibility to find workers to dig gold, its ritual speech with its

impressive derivational and inflectional forms has not yet received the attention of the linguistic scholars it deserves. Although past studies have concentrated on common Indonesian morphology, little has been done to the role of indigenous languages in the instruction of the formal language. The current research would seek to bridge that gap by looking into the morphological aspects of the Rambu Solo speech and determining its applicability to Indonesian language learner. The next part will give the most important findings of the research, both about the structural diversity of Toraja morphological procedures and the prospective use of this knowledge in the educational field.

### **Overview of Indonesian Language Learning Based on Local Wisdom in Rambu Solo' Ritual Speech**

Rambu Solo, is a very distinctive and highly standardized linguistic genre, and yet, both grammatically and culturally symbolic, which belongs to the Torajas. It mainly involves speakers or ritual leaders referred to as to minaa, whose job is ceremonial, and not only linguistic. Their speech is highly founded on traditional words, and metaphorical words as well as complicated morphological formations that are hardly heard in every day Torajan language. These are speeches that are contributing dual functions as both performative speech and also as cultural texts that carry genealogies, social leveling and also have sacred procedures in the afterlife journey. The lyrics of such rituals are a coded version of Toraja oral literature maintained and passed on across generations. Purposeful use of a higher language and archaic formulations is one of the most vivid traits of the Rambu Solo speech; this is supposed to commemorate the dead and emphasize the gravity of the situation. This ritual language is full of solemn and poetic expressions, frequently made by reduplication, metaphor and prolix affixation. These sayings are hardly ever used in any other contexts other than the rituals and can therefore be seen as a language indicator of sacred time and space

Morphologically, e.g., the speeches of Rambu Solo identify the existence of both derivative and inflexible processes that positively lead to coining the new meanings of words and grammatical precision. The common use of parts with derivational affixes like pa-, si- and -an is to create nouns, or make words more intense, as in areas of positions, functions, and status in the ceremony. The expansion of inflectional affixes The -na (example) (third-person possessive) or ma- (actor voice or completed action) helps provide the context of the relation as well as the tense of the action so the utterances remain semantically accurate and culturally suitably produced. In traditional speeches like Rambu Solo', verbs and nouns undergo many form changes. These are very important morphological forms that teacher can incorporate into Indonesian language teaching.

Another noteworthy characteristic is the symbolic use of language through metaphor and parallelism, often referred to as "*sura-sura*" or poetic couplets. These pairs of phrases serve both an aesthetic and mnemonic function, reinforcing meanings and helping the speaker remember complex oral texts. For instance, a speaker use expressions like "*karampa' dibalun batu, karendekan ditutuk langi*" (hardness is wrapped in stone, grief is pounded into the sky), which symbolically encapsulate the endurance of the family and the celestial transition of the soul. Every word in Rambu Solo' carries hidden meaning. The younger generation must learn not just the meaning, but the emotion and respect embedded within it. Additionally, the rhythm and delivery of the speech are as important as the content. The *two minaa* often employs a solemn, measured cadence, with specific intonation and pauses that mark transitions between narrative elements or sections of ritual instruction. This prosodic pattern reinforces the sacred nature of the utterance and helps distinguish it from mundane forms of communication. The

tone of speech in Rambu Solo' is very distinct, slow, and full of emotional weight. These are not just words, but prayers and gestures of respect.

Furthermore, the structure of the speeches adheres to ritual sequencing and formulaic patterns, often opening with invocations to ancestors and closing with blessings or transitional phrases for the soul of the deceased. These structural markers serve both theological and mnemonic purposes and guide the listeners through the stages of the ritual. The repetition of certain formulaic expressions also supports the ritual's educational function for younger Torajans, many of whom learn the cultural values and moral philosophies through listening. Young people who listen to these traditional speeches indirectly learn about social structure, family obligations, and Torajan values.

### **Derivational Morphological Processes in Rambu Solo' Speech**

#### ***Affixation (based on indicators from J.S. Sande, 1997)***

Data (1) Badong Text: Napomaqtan penawanna

Translation: Satisfying his/her desire

The word *nawan* originates from a verb meaning 'to desire' or 'to long for'. The derived form *penawanna* is formed through the confix *pe-...-an* and the suffix *-na*. According to Construction Morphology, this form follows the pattern [V] → [N] *pe-X-an-na*, which converts the verb into an abstract noun. Semantically, *penawanna* means 'fulfillment' or 'desire', indicating a shift from an action to a conceptual meaning. Based on Sande (1997), this form satisfies the three derivational indicators: (1) affixation is present, (2) word class changes from verb to noun, and (3) a new meaning emerges that cannot be directly deduced from the root. Therefore, it is a valid lexical derivation.

Data (2) Badong Text: Pa illo-illo dadinna

Translation: The one who made his birth shine

The root word *illo* means 'to shine'. The derived form *pa illo-illo* is created through the prefix *pa-* and the reduplication *illo-illo*. According to Construction Morphology, it follows the pattern [V] → [N] *pa-X-X*, transforming the verb into an agentive noun indicating a person or thing that causes an action. Semantically, *pa illo-illo* refers to 'the one who makes it shine', often symbolizing a sacred or noble birth. Following Sande (1997), this is a legitimate derivational form due to the presence of affixation and a semantic shift.

Data (3) Badong Text: Karampanan

Translation: Strength/fortitude

The root *karampa* means 'strong'. The derived form *karampanan* is constructed by adding the suffix *-an*. This follows the transformation pattern [Adj] → [N] *X-an*, converting the adjective into an abstract noun. *Karampanan* signifies strength or endurance, especially in a ritual context. According to Construction Morphology and Sande (1997), this form qualifies as a derivation due to affixation, category change, and new semantic content.

Data (4) Badong Text: Paindoan

Translation: A figure who takes on a maternal role

The root word *indo* means 'mother'. The derived word *paindoan* is formed through the prefix *pa-* and the suffix *-an*, following the pattern [N] → [N] *pa-X-an*, creating a noun that denotes a role or function. *Paindoan* refers to someone who symbolically assumes a maternal role in

the Torajan social structure. According to Sande (1997), this is a valid derivation due to consistent affixation and semantic development.

Data (5) Badong Text: Sipabalungan

Translation: Someone who shares kinship/blood ties

The root *balung* means 'bone', metaphorically used to denote kinship. *Sipabalungan* is formed using the prefix *si-* and relational extension. In Construction Morphology, this follows the pattern [N] → [N] *si-X*, indicating collective or mutual relationships. Its meaning expands toward social bonding in ritual contexts. Based on Sande (1997), this is a valid derivational form representing collective functions.

Data (6) Badong Text: Umbangun

Translation: To build (a traditional house)

The root *bangun* means 'to build'. The derived form *umbangun* is created through the confix *um-...-un*. This structure follows the Torajan confix pattern [V] → [V] *um-X-un*, indicating a subject performing a sacred action of construction. As per Sande (1997), this is a derivational form representing sacred agency.

The *Rambu Solo* ' ritual speeches of the Toraja people reveal a rich application of derivational morphological processes that are intricately tied to cultural functions and ceremonial roles. Derivational morphology, in this context, does not simply serve the purpose of creating new word forms; it carries profound cultural significance. Through the attachment of prefixes, suffixes, and reduplication patterns, ritual speakers create lexemes that convey roles, statuses, symbolic actions, and traditional responsibilities, all of which are integral to the meaning and structure of the ritual discourse.

One of the most frequently encountered derivational forms in the ritual speeches is the use of the prefix “pa-”, which typically denotes agency or the role of someone performing a particular function. In words like *paindoan* (derived from *indo* meaning "mother"), the affix *pa-* transforms a noun into one that describes someone who takes on the maternal role or exhibits maternal traits in the ceremonial context. This can be interpreted both literally and symbolically, as many participants take on such roles within the extended kinship system of Toraja society. When we use the word ‘paindoan’ in the ceremony, it refers to someone who performs the role of a mother not just the biological mother, but someone who has the nurturing responsibility in the traditional context.

The prefix “si-” is another derivational marker that appeared frequently in the corpus of ritual texts. It often denotes collectivity, mutuality, or relational function among individuals within the community. the term *sipabalungan* is used to refer to people who share blood ties or communal responsibilities in the ritual, formed from the root *balung* (bone, symbolizing kinship) with the prefix *si-* to indicate shared relation. This morphological construction reflects the interconnectedness among participants and reinforces the communal ethos of Torajan society. Words like ‘sipabalungan’ do not only indicate blood relations, but also shared obligations in the ceremony. This language teaches individuals about their identity within society.

Another important derivational process is the use of suffixes such as “-an”, which function to nominalize verbs or adjectives and often indicate the result of an action or a concrete manifestation of a concept. For instance, *karampanan* (from the root *karampa*, meaning strength or firmness) is used to signify “a display of strength” or “an act of endurance,” especially in the face of grief. This suffixation transforms abstract qualities into ritualistically

relevant nouns, embedding philosophical values into linguistic forms. In the Toraja ceremonial language, many verbs or adjectives are turned into nouns with the suffix ‘-an’. This is similar to Indonesian. It could be an interesting resource for learning morphology.

Reduplication also plays a significant role as a derivational device. Unlike its more familiar function in Indonesian for pluralization or emphasis, in *Rambu Solo*, reduplication is often used to produce stylistic and poetic effects, or to mark symbolic repetition within the speech. Words like *dendeng-dendeng* (symbolizing traditional songs of mourning) and *tindo-tindo* (representing gestures or rituals performed repeatedly) illustrate how reduplication is employed to elevate the formality and rhythm of the speech. Reduplication in ritual speech makes the words sound more poetic and sacred. It adds beauty and respect for the deceased.

The interplay of these derivational elements not only enriches the linguistic texture of *Rambu Solo* but also encodes essential values and roles. These morphological processes reflect the ritual structure, moral obligations, and societal norms upheld by the Toraja community. The derivational forms in the speeches serve as linguistic tools for articulating identity, duty, kinship, and collective memory elements that are central to the cultural logic of the ritual. From an educational standpoint, these findings have significant implications. Teaching derivational morphology using local linguistic examples such as those from *Rambu Solo* not only helps learners grasp morphological concepts but also fosters cultural appreciation and contextual understanding.

## **Inflectional Morphological Processes in Rambu Solo’ Speech**

### ***Nominal Inflection***

Data (7) Badong Text: Karambunna to matua

Translation: The deceased's coffin

The word *karambu* means 'coffin'. The inflected form *karambunna* is obtained by adding the third-person possessive suffix *-na*. This follows the nominal inflection pattern [N] → [N] + *-na*. Its primary function is to indicate possession in a familial or ceremonial context. It is an inflectional form as it does not change the word category and only adds grammatical meaning.

Data (8) Badong Text: Tominaa

Translation: Ritual elder/speaker

The root *tomina* receives the suffix *-a*, which functions as an honorific. It denotes social status and respect within the Torajan structure. This is a nominal inflection related to sociolinguistic meaning rather than lexical derivation.

### ***Verbal Inflection***

Data (9) Badong Text: Matongkon

Translation: To sit ceremonially

From the root *tongkon* ('to sit'), the form *matongkon* is created using the prefix *ma-* as a marker of actor voice or intentional subject. This inflectional pattern does not alter the word class but indicates action orientation. It is a verbal inflection.

Data (10) Badong Text: Tasedo

Translation: Passed away (passive)

Derived from *sedo* ('to sleep/die'), this word is inflected with the prefix *ta-* to express passive or unintentional action. It belongs to verbal inflection that adjusts the nuance of the verb.

## *Adjectival Inflection*

Data (11) Badong Text: *Lindo sara'ka'*

Translation: Sacredly beautiful

The word *lindo* means 'beautiful'. In this phrase, it is modified by *sara'ka'*, which means 'sacred/high'. This form reflects intensification or symbolic enhancement of the adjective. Although not affix-based, this construction qualifies as an adjectival inflection through semantic collocation.

Inflectional morphological processes in *Rambu Solo'* speech serve crucial grammatical functions, allowing speakers to mark relationships such as possession, aspect, voice, and politeness, without altering the base meaning or category of the words used. These processes are integral to maintaining linguistic clarity and ritual precision during the performance of ceremonial duties. Unlike derivational morphology, which transforms the lexical category or semantic scope of a word, inflectional morphology in *Rambu Solo'* primarily adapts a word to fit its grammatical context within the ritual utterance. This process upholds both grammatical integrity and cultural propriety.

One of the most frequently observed inflectional markers is the suffix "-na", which signifies third-person possession. For example, in the expression *karambunna to matua* (the deceased's coffin), *-na* indicates ownership or relational context. The suffix is used throughout ritual speeches to specify belongings, body parts, or symbolic items of the deceased, thereby affirming familial and social relationships in ceremonial language. If '-na' is not used, the meaning can become ambiguous. In rituals, it is important to be clear about ownership, as this reflects respect for the deceased and their family.

Additionally, the prefixes "ma-" and "ta-" play an important role in indicating voice, aspect, and verb orientation. These inflectional affixes help denote whether an action is actively performed, passively experienced, or already completed. The verb *matongkon* (to sit ceremonially) includes the *ma-* prefix, which marks the actor voice and indicates that the subject performs the action with deliberate intent. Similarly, in the word *tasedo* (was laid down/deceased), the prefix *ta-* introduces a passive or unintentional nuance, indicating that the action was experienced or happened to the subject. Prefixes like 'ma-' or 'ta-' are important because they indicate who performs or experiences the action. This helps maintain the clarity of sentence structure in ritual speeches.

Furthermore, the use of honorific suffixes and vocatives in inflectional forms also plays a significant sociolinguistic role. In terms such as *tominaa* (ritual speaker or elder), the suffix *-a* is used to convey respect, status, and formality. This usage ensures that certain roles and responsibilities are linguistically encoded with honor. Failing to use such suffixes would be considered a breach of ceremonial etiquette. In ceremonies like *Rambu Solo'*, calling someone properly is very important. 'Tominaa' is not just a title, but a recognition of their social status and spiritual role.

Inflectional morphology is also present in the use of temporal markers, such as subtle variations in verb form that indicate whether an action is completed, ongoing, or anticipated. While these are not always explicitly marked through affixation in the Toraja language, they are conveyed through context-dependent inflections and auxiliary phrases. For example, actions related to the handling of the corpse or movement of ritual objects are often inflected to clarify sequence and respect the cosmological timing of the ceremony. Certain verb forms are used to help

people understand whether something has already been done or will be done. This is important to ensure the ceremony proceeds in the right traditional sequence.

The findings also show that inflectional morphology in *Rambu Solo*' speech is deeply integrated with Torajan cosmology and social organization. The use of inflected forms is not merely grammatical but symbolic, emphasizing relationships among participants, ancestors, and the deceased. These forms reflect an awareness of communal roles and transitions such as from life to death, or from family member to ancestor which must be acknowledged through linguistically appropriate forms.

From a pedagogical perspective, these inflectional patterns offer powerful tools for enhancing Indonesian language education. For instance, the possessive *-na* in Torajan can be used to explain the equivalent in Indonesian. Similarly, verb affixes like *ma-* and *ta-* can be contrasted with *me-*, *di-*, and *ter-* in Indonesian, providing students with a culturally rooted way of learning grammar. By connecting inflections in the Toraja language to Indonesian morphology lessons, students can learn more meaningfully and understand the local context.

### **Integration of Morphological Findings into Indonesian Language Learning**

The integration of derivational and inflectional morphological findings from *Rambu Solo*' ritual speech into Indonesian language learning offers a culturally responsive and context-rich pedagogical approach. By leveraging local linguistic features rooted in Toraja traditions, teachers can enrich learners' morphological understanding while simultaneously fostering cultural awareness and local identity. This approach is particularly valuable in regions such as South Sulawesi, where local languages and traditions remain a living part of community life and should be preserved through formal education.

One of the key advantages of this integration is that students can grasp abstract linguistic concepts such as prefixation, suffixation, voice, and possession through familiar and culturally meaningful examples. For instance, the use of the prefix *pa-* in Toraja language to indicate agency (*paindoan*) can be linked to its equivalent in Indonesian, such as singer (from singing), which uses *pe-* to form agent nouns. This comparative analysis helps students see morphological processes not as isolated academic knowledge but as tools that are present in their daily linguistic and cultural experience. When students are taught morphology with examples from the Toraja language, such as in *Rambu Solo*', they understand more easily because the context is close to their own lives.

Incorporating inflectional morphology such as the possessive suffix *-an* and verb prefixes like *ma-* and *ta-* can also clarify how grammatical relationships are structured in both the Toraja language and Indonesian. Educators can use these examples to introduce concepts such as subject-verb agreement, passive and active voice, and possession. This comparative strategy allows students to draw parallels between their heritage language and the national language, promoting both linguistic proficiency and bilingual awareness. This approach makes learning more contextual and instills a sense of pride in students toward their mother tongue.

In practical classroom settings, this integration can take the form of morphological analysis exercises, oral storytelling using traditional terms, and comparative morphology charts between Torajan and Indonesian words. Teachers can guide students to identify derivational and inflectional affixes in both languages, encouraging critical thinking and linguistic exploration. For example, students can be tasked with analyzing the similarities between *karampanan* (Toraja) and *strength* (Indonesian), both of which are nominalized from roots meaning "strong." Such exercises reinforce morphological comprehension while rooting the lesson in local culture.

Moreover, the integration of *Rambu Solo*' speech patterns in learning materials promotes the preservation of endangered linguistic forms. In an era of rapid linguistic homogenization, educational institutions have a unique responsibility to safeguard local languages by embedding them in curricula. By using ritual speech as a morphological teaching resource, educators not only support language acquisition but also contribute to cultural preservation and intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge. If children learn Indonesian through examples from traditions like *Rambu Solo*', they not only become good in the language but also do not forget their cultural roots.

Such integration, however, has to have a purposeful curriculum design and teacher preparation. The proper amount of knowledge in Indonesian and Torajan morphology should be presented to the teachers so that the comparisons and discussions could be made properly. The development of the teaching modules which will be equally academically and culturally sensitive can then be advanced through cooperation with the local cultural experts and linguists. The community voices and knowledge keeper in the learning process can serve to bridge this gap between the school experience and the cultural experience.

This assimilation is also based on the overall goals of Independent Learning curriculum in Indonesia where they emphasize on flexibility, cultural diversity and learning contexts. Teaching language in Indonesia; Independent Learning in categorizing the teaching of language to include the morphological analysis in *Rambu Solo* endorses an inclusive nature in regards to the national competence concerning local identity. Students are not the only forces behind this convergence as the national educational aims of inclusion and linguistic equity lurk behind. This paper has outlined derivational and inflectional morphological procedures in the ritual language of *Rambu Solo* of Toraja community and adaptation into the Indonesian language learning. The implications of the findings to the area of linguistics in general, and language education in particular, cannot be overestimated because the findings either bridge critical knowledge gaps in the existing literature, or contribute to filling the gaps caused by descriptions of local languages and indigenous knowledge systems being underrepresented in formal language pedagogy.

The majority of the previous works on the Indonesian morphology have paid attention to the standardized or formal linguistic data based on written information extracted in a book of text or media (Saddhono et al., 2023). Although occurring underpinning structural studies, these often cannot capture the dense morphological system of local languages and oral traditions. This work will help to fill that gap by providing the empirical evidence on the functioning of derivational and inflectional processes in the speech of *Rambu Solo*- whose example is not considered in the context of language education very often. It confirms that not only morphological operations like prefixations (pa-, si-, ma-), suffixations (-na, -an), and reduplications are grammatically relevant, but that they have cultural overloads and are symbolically significant.

Besides, the incorporation of these morphological findings into teaching the Indonesian language answers the demand towards culturally responsive pedagogy in Indonesia (Sutiono et al., 2025; Syafruddin et al., 2025; Muliastuti et al., 2023). The Merdeka Learn programming created by the Ministry of Education stimulates the local knowledge and adapting learning models as a way of encouraging students to engage more and develop their identity (Werners et al., 2021). Nonetheless, there is limited practice in teaching languages with the help of this policy. The research gives a definite pattern of how the linguistic forms of the indigenous language can be applied to the morphology classes-connecting the grammatical specifics of

Toraja language with similarities in the Indonesian one helping the students to both advance understanding and get better acquainted with the cultures, in turn.

The next important input of the current research is in the area of language revitalization and preservation. Whereas in the past linguistic documentation of Toraja has been carried out with an anthropological or descriptive perspective (Satyam & Kumar, 2024), the results of such efforts are not always oriented towards a didactic purpose. This paper makes such knowledge pedagogical and active by integrating the speech patterns of Rambu Solo in languages modules, thus, helping preserve the local language patterns in a world where language is becoming increasingly homogeneous. Since language shift remains one of the factors undermining local languages in Indonesia (Pepinsky et al., 2024), tying the educational materials to indigenous speech forms can enhance the linguistic diversity and community identity.

In this study it has been questioned that the traditional speech cannot be adopted in schools due to its complexity or sacredness. The interviews with ritual orators and local teachers proved to find themselves on the same side of the debate, namely, an opinion that the speech of Rambu Solo also belongs to the classroom as long as it is treated with due respect and precision. Such results are contrary to other previous beliefs in the literature saying that such speech acts cannot be accessed or used by the young learners (Faturrochman et al., 2021). Indeed, as the present study has demonstrated the students are more inclined to work at morphological structures when these structures are presented to them as their part of their heritage and not as the set of abstract rules of grammar.

This research is also original and reliable because the data obtained through interviews are used in it. Educators, culture senior citizens, and language specialists presented a unanimous approach concerning the need to inculcate the traditional models into the contemporary teaching. Their contribution confirms the theoretical construct, which sustains specifically cultural immersive teaching, as it is consistent with the results of recent research on indigenous learning (Christopoulos et al., 2024). Explaining affixation process with the help of words *paindoan* or *karampanan* is compatible with constructivist methods of language acquisition in which learners rely on familiar contexts to construct new knowledge.

Besides, the research addresses the demand of morphological comparison approaches in bilingualism, which has rather been underdeveloped in the educational practice in Indonesia. The study presents a cross-linguistic template to analyze the Morphology of the Torajan and Indonesian languages, which can help one develop metalinguistic awareness, which is essential to enable language learners to acquire language (Tanduk, 2023). The approach to such analysis has ancient history of application in situations related to multilingual setting (Di Carlo et al., 2021), yet it is hardly implemented in multicultural Indonesian educational institutions classrooms.

## Conclusion

The study addresses a bigger possibility than mere morphology of language. It exposes a structural aberration that has existed in the way Indonesian languages education is constructed, in which the indigenous systems of speech, such as the Rambu Solo ritual of the Toraja language, have been relegated on the and of knowledge validation. The results do not just recover affixes or track inflectional movements. These reveal a more substantial pool of codified cultural rationalizations, moral associations and epistemic ways of knowing that have not hitherto welcomed into institutionally regulated circles of learning.

An interpretation of Rambu Solo limited to a specific source of its power, that is mechanisms of grammar, is to overlook the compelling social, symbolic and didactic pull at avoidance. The

-na of possession and all the morphological constructions, indeed, serve Beyond the definition of potential: even the agentive pa- serves more than to clear up the functions. It intercedes in ancestral memory, codifies status, aids bindings of kin and transitions between the sacred and the secular. These are not idealistic attributes. They are the parenthesis of the worldview, generational responsibility, and metaphysical transparency. By eliminating these kinds of linguistic systems from classrooms, education has not been made simpler but rather impoverished. More than an academic intervention, what this study can provide is through practical research. It is a retroversion. The inclusion of ritual language in the teaching of Indonesian language is not a cultural move. It is a methodological rule. It is a reaction to an education system too concentrated by urban-based, text-centred, and monolingual narrowing. It sacrifices a pedagogy of uniformity with a pedagogy of grounded complexity. Once the students get to know that morphology is not only there in books but also in the throats of people who are older than they are, they will start to perceive language as something that changes with its own life and not as a closed item of study.

Here is not a pedagogical innovation which is not already contained in the traditions of the people who live it. What is left is institutional will to accept it. The reluctance with which ritual language is discussed as too holy, too multisectional or too peripheral to teach accounted more to curricular insecurity than to the nature of the speech. This study removes that unconfidence. It proves the point that traditional forms do work in the field of education when they are treated with the utmost of care and respect, and they do not lose their sacredness. In this perspective Rambu Solo is not a relic to get documented. It is an example that needs to be followed. It shows that the mental distinction between grammar, identity, morality, and aesthetics in linguistic systems can be bridged, and at the same time, multiplicity does not interfere with language teaching but rather becomes its richest opportunity. The path of the future is obvious. To make national education inclusive, intelligent and transformative, it should base future on the epistemologies, which it has been neglecting long ago. This paper will make that argument. The following actions are the prerogatives of the institutions which are ready to listen.

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