Cultural Relations Among Speakers of South Halmahera Languages

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Abstract—This study aimed to examine the cultural relationships between languages in Buli, East Makian, Gane, Gebe, Maba, Patani, and Sawai in South Halmahera, Indonesia. It portrayed the cultural relationships between the people from the regions speaking the South Halmahera languages. Furthermore, the cultural inventory was created and explained using qualitative and the 'wörter und sachen' methods. The findings showed a cultural tie between South Halmahera speakers living close to the language heartland. Those living away from their origin are related to different languages and cultures. The connections have resulted in lexical borrowings, syntactical alterations, as well as language and cultural divergences that cause language diversities.

Index Terms—language diversity, South Halmahera languages, cultural relation

I. INTRODUCTION

The Sapir-Whorf (Whorfian) hypothesis, which portrays how language relates to culture, is underpinned by linguistic relativity and determinism concepts. Linguistic relativism describes how different language speakers perceive and think about the world, affirming that language affects awareness. In contrast, linguistic determinism holds that language impacts people's perceptions and thoughts about the world. Language structure could considerably impact or control someone's worldview (Kramsch, 1998; Afiah et al., 2022). In addition, science development also has a significant impact on society by changing major someone's worldview including how people live and believe (Suhadi et al., 2022).

Language and culture have a dialectical, interactive, and inseparable relationship and do not overstate one another (Anggrawan et al., 2019). This relationship has received different comments from many scholars. Concerning the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, Anttila (1972) stated that language and culture are unseparated, where language describes the actions embodying cultural values. Language affects ideas, culture, and ideology (Arafah et al., 2020). Moreover, language affects culture and thought processes (Mills, 2000), while its form and usage are affected by culture (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019; Ismail et al., 2020). However, Kramsch (1998) stated that language conveys, embodies, and symbolizes cultural identity and reality, resolving their multifaceted and complex relationship.

Language is the primary means to transmit cultural knowledge from one generation to another (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019, Arafah et al., 2021). Although it is one of the most important ways to undergo a social life, it is meaningful when governed by culture. The words used in verbal communication correlate with people's situational environment and culture (Kramsch, 1998; Fadillah et al., 2022). On the other hand, culture is a representation of social occurrences in daily life. It caused the author to be more imaginative when composing a literary work about the prevalent issues in society at large (Siwi et al., 2022). This means that culture and language learning should first contend as a complex phenomenon (Kavakli, 2021; Asriyanti et al., 2022). Language unites and controls people as a powerful expression of culture, serving as the principal cultural medium (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). Therefore, language and culture are

interdependent from a historical-comparative linguistics perspective.

This study aimed to explain the cultural liaison among the South Halmahera language speakers. The people from East Makian, Gane, Gebe, Buli, Maba, Patani, and Sawai were included because they presumably descend from the same ancestor.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Culture

Culture sometimes refers to a certain ethnic group or a society's music, arts, food, dress, rituals, traditions, and legacy, meaning it should serve particular ends (Johnson, 2013; Kaharuddin et al., 2022). Also, culture commonly refers to various social life aspects. The capacities used to define culture include knowledge, art, morals, law, and others acquired by man in social living (Magli, 2001; Mutmainnah et al., 2022). According to Steers et al. (2013);

1. Culture is shared by all group members and determines their hipness. This means that cultural preferences are not universal or personal but belong to a group or an individual.
2. People learn culture from a group or community through conventional social conduct, such as elders, teachers, officials, experiences, and society. Additionally, cultural values and behavior may be learned through social interaction at school and in the family.
3. Culture tells things accepted in the community and affects the social living. Therefore, it affects normative conduct or people's beliefs concerning what is expected of them.

B. Fishman and Kramsch's Ideas About Language and Culture

Fishman (1996) and Kramsch (1998) examined the link between language and culture, with comparable sounds and concepts regarding the interaction. According to Fishman (1996), language is a component, indicator, and symbol of culture. Similarly, Kramsch (1998) stated that language reflects, encapsulates, and represents culture.

Fishman (1996) stated that language is an inescapable aspect of culture. This means that people must speak the language of a society whose culture they grasp. Therefore, social studies should consider language important when dealing with a particular culture due to its inseparability (Yulianti et al., 2022).

Fishman stated that language is a byproduct of its cultural role. The study notified how to think and organize the experience in related cultures, alluding to the popular Whorfian hypothesis.

Language is a symbol to mobilize people to protect and develop their cultures. It has a reciprocity relationship with culture in which they represent one another (Hasjim et al., 2020). In this case, culture contains values and norms embodied in people's thoughts. People use language to utter ideas and express themselves as individuals, communities, or nations (Krasniqi, 2019; Hasyim et al., 2020).

C. Language and Culture

Kramsch (1998), in the book Socially and Culturally Oriented, stated that language reflects cultural reality. Words refer to prevalent experiences and express communicable evidence, thoughts, or occasions. They also convey the speakers' attitudes, motivations, beliefs, and perspectives and show the cultural reality (Arafah et al., 2020; Kaharuddin et al., 2020). Similarly, Fishman (1996) stated that language is a cultural indicator, though it may imply grammatical aspects of language. According to Kramsch, cultural reality implies something more common than Fishman's holistic and essentialist concept of culture.

Kramsch's idea that language encapsulates cultural reality means that becoming a community or social group member creates experiences where a language is a communication tool. Meaning and message are conveyed by the language used for communication, such as charting by phone, sending messages by e-mail or letter, reading, and interpreting a chart. These communication modes use language as a medium for interactions. The language form, such as the spoken, written, or visual medium, conveys a sense understandable to the users familiar with the speakers' tone of voice, accent, style, gestures, and facial expressions (Purwaningsih et al., 2020). According to Kramsch (1998), language embodies cultural reality, meaning that linguistic practice contributes to creating and sharing meaning.

Kramsch also stated that cultural reality is represented by language as a sign system with cultural value. Since language contains a cultural value, it is used by speakers to identify themselves and others (Kramsch, 1998). This supports Fishman's idea that language symbolizes culture, though the scientists differed in their concerns. Fishman was more interested in the macro sociolinguistic and political aspects, while Kramsch focused on micro-linguistic interaction.

D. Cultural Reconstruction

Historical linguistics is applied in cultural reconstruction because cultural and historical information is frequently required to understand change. In this instance, words become the key to understanding culture by mediating the language and culture to encode and decode meaning. However, analysis is required to reconstruct culture using historical linguistics to avoid borrowing words. Anttila (1972) interrelated culture and its reconstruction through language. The study showed that language is useable in specific cultural and historical contexts to represent the cultural aspects. Therefore, historical linguistics has been studied for years because language is inextricably linked to the

language speakers' culture (Crowley, 1987). People's culture could also be studied by observing their language.

The evidence of proto-lexicon internal linguistics is used to reconstruct culture. Although studies relied on linguistic facts, they conveyed the aspect of culture or anthropology and not linguistics. Fox (1995, p. 322) stated that words could be constructed in proto-language with a specific meaning. However, language speakers are accustomed to the concept at hand. This makes it possible to determine the characteristics of the language users, including religion, law, and social activities.

Proto-culture and civilization are reconstructed by proto-language. According to Comrie (2009), information about proto-culture, archaeology, history, folklore, and institution is needed to boost the linguistic evidence. Therefore, cultural reconstruction using words is insufficient and requires grasping the exact cultural context (Antilla, 1972).

III. METHOD

Non-numerical data were collected and analyzed qualitatively to show the cultural relationship among speakers of South Halmahera languages (Abidin & Kaharuddin, 2021). The relationship was analyzed using the qualitative method of 'wörter und sachen' (German word and thing) developed by Hugo Schuchardt and Rudolf Meringer (1908). The idea confirms that words are inextricably linked to references. This implies that the words added in a language must be morphologically vivid (Burkette, 2015; Sunardi et al., 2018). According to Campbell 2004, the *wörter und sachen* method investigates the cultural inventory of the proto-languages of Indo-European (Burkette, 2015). The culture of more widespread cognates is older than the less widespread cognates. In line with this, Campbell and Mixco stated that the longer a word has been in a language, the longer it is considered to be in that language. Furthermore, the words with no discernible morphological analysis are older in the language than those with a clear analysis (Campbell & Mixco, 2007).

Campbell and Mixco stated that linguistic information is more appropriate to conclude the historical, cultural, societal, and environmental aspects of the people that used the language in prehistoric times. This method examines the culture of a proto-reconstructed language's lexicon to identify the speakers. A rebuilt proto form shows the cultural connection more accurately and is limited to a few words from the 'Sulawesi Umbrella' wordlist related to plants and animals, such as nutrition and energy sources.

IV. DISCUSSION

Food helps humans survive and live healthily, assisting in daily living, religion, and socioeconomics (Ma, 2015).

A. Food Provides Carbohydrates

Carbohydrate in food

Sago, PSH *yof, is a flavor made of sago palm, the main carbohydrate-supplying staple food considered ethnic. Examples of ethnic foods made of sago include say or 'pupi, salamin or baku niwi, and sin(y)ole. Since they are also traditional foods, some people consider them unique based on culture, socio-demography, area of origin, and social status (Bermudez, 2016; Andi & Arafah, 2017). Producing sago requires at least two men, commonly seen in South Halmahera.

Banana (PMP *punti PSH *tl) and cassava (PSH *kasbi) are the secondary carbohydrate sources for the South Halmahera speakers. Women cook for their families and help men plant bananas and cassavas in open lands or dry gardens because the job is less strenuous. Men make fences to protect gardens from wild animals, such as pigs. Table 1 shows how bananas and cassavas are served to families among the South Halmahera people.

TABLE 1
BANANA AND CASSAVA CONSUMPTION BY THE SOUTH HALMAHERA LANGUAGE SPEAKERS

Banana/Cassava	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
tɛlɛ/kasbi foyno niwi (boiled with coconut squeezed)	X	X	X
tɛlɛ/kasbi ngani (boiled)	X	X	X
tɛlɛ/kasbi sinanga (fried)	X		
tɛlɛ/kasbi song (baked)		X	

Rice is the tertiary carbohydrate source with three cognate sets, including *amasik* in the East Makian and Gene, *pie in* Buli, Maba, and Patani, and *fas* in Irarutu, Gebe, and Sawai. The three words are innovated because they are not reflected in the higher PAN and PMP proto. People only know 'rice,' while *amasik*, *pie*, and *fas* refer to cooked, unhulled, and hulled rice, as well as rice seeds. Therefore, South Halmahera language speakers lack agricultural tradition and knowledge of rice plantations.

B. Food Provides Protein

South Halmahera speakers' most important protein sources are fish, scallops, oysters, eggs, chicken, and meat. According to Ma (2015), many societies produce, select, purchase, and process food. Other activities include milking, poultry and livestock breeding, sowing, and harvesting. Women provide food for husbands, children, and other families.

They also participate in market trading and decide on the type, quantity, and quality of the food to purchase (Ma, 2015; Kaharuddin, 2022).

Responsibilities for a family living are shared between the wife and husband. Women go fishing for family consumption to fulfill the need for protein, while men sell the fish in the market to meet financial requirements.

C. Food as a Source of Vitamins and Other Minerals

People need vitamins and minerals contained in vegetables and fruits to live healthily. The communities' traditional vegetable is *sayor garo* (sago), made from cassava leaves, banana bud, papaya leaves, and inflorescence. Eggplants are prepared as vegetables in various ways, including frying, boiling, and baking. Also, they are consumed by making raw vegetables with a spicy sauce called *dabu-dabu*.

D. Chewing Betel and Areca Nut

As a traditional habit, the people in South Halmahera chew betel and areca nut depicted by words such as *areca (betel) nut* found in PMP *buaq* PSH *mila,* betel in PMP *buaq* PSH *gis; and *lime* in PAN *qapuR* PSH *yafi. The word PSH *mila are found in Gebe and Sawai 'mala', *Patani and Maba'mila',* Buli 'palu', East Makian 'galol,' while PSH *gis are found in Gebe and Buli '*yafi*', Patani '*yafa*', and East Makian ' *yahi*'.

E. Strengthening the Teeth by Chewing Betel and Areca Nut

The elder men and women of the South Halmahera language chew betel and areca nuts, believing it strengthens their teeth. The betel and areca nut is chewed with a small amount of lime to turn red.

1. *Chewing betel and areca nut as traditional medicine and healing*

The native speakers of the South Halmahera language chew the betel and areca nut with ginger PSH *yy to cure people's illnesses. The items are chewed together and spittled onto the ailing body part. Sick people drink a boiled mixture of a specific tree leaf (PSH *wlu) and bark (*kaino) to relieve internal pain. The concoction is only provided by people with knowledge from their ancestors. *gis, *mala, *yafi, and traditional cigarettes are also provided on a white plate in traditional healing. They are used to heal people suspected of being possessed by an evil spirit and magical spells linked to ritual conversations with ancestors, epic dances, and other formal situations.

2. *Chewing betel and areca nuts as a social activity*

Gis, mala, and yafi are chewed at social gatherings by guests to demonstrate solidarity, hospitability, and friendliness. Betel and areca nuts are also considered a bridge in a marital proposal, especially in Buli, Maba, Patani, and Sawai communities. The man leaves a case of betel and areca nut, and the marital proposal is accepted when the woman does not return the case of betel and areca nut within the agreed time.

F. Monkey

The word "monkey" does not appear in PAN or PMP, but it appears in Proto Hesperonesian-Formosan (PHF) *luCu and Proto Hesperonesian (PHN) *ayu. In South Halmahera, the two cognates of the word monkey are *mia* found in Sawai, Maba, East Makian, and Buli, and *nok* in Gane, Patani, and Gebe. The South Halmahera language speakers are presumably divided into two groups but do not use the borrowed *mia* and *nok* words. Therefore, there is no proto for the word monkey, though *mia* is assumed to be the oldest because of its common use in Maba, Buli, Sawai, and East Makian.

It is difficult to define the boundary of culture in modern and heterogeneous societies, including the cultural relationships between societies. This is because numerous variables contribute to cultural shape and creation. However, among those numerous variables is language, assumed to be the most sensitive indicator of the relationship between people and social groups (Kramsch, 1998; Takwa et al., 2022).

Cognates such as *kasbi, *in, *tl, *mila, *gis, *nini, and *luf are widespread, considered older, and have become cultural items. It is assumed that such cognates are identified as older words and cultural items. Similarly, yof, *tεlε, and *koke are considered cultural items because they are more common than other cognates. Three cognate sets of the word rice divide the South Halmahera language speakers into three groups. The group using *fas* is Irarutu, Sawai, and Gebe, *pie* is used by Buli, Maba, and Patani, while *amasik* is used by Buli, Maba, and Patani. The cognates represent cooked, unhulled, and hulled rice and seeds. Therefore, the word rice is not a core culture of the speakers and is not a staple or ethnic dish. This makes the people know much of 'rice,' with borrowed words such as *fas, pie, a*masik,* and *mia*, and *nok* referring to 'monkey' only found on Bacan Island. In contrast, *gane (nok-nok)* and *Patani (nok)* originated from Bacan, proving the cultural relationships among the South Halmahera language speakers. Crowley (1987, pp. 276-284) stated that people's culture could be learned by discerning their language. However, additional information is required to supplement the linguistic evidence dues to its insufficiency in depicting culture. Information from archaeology, history, folklore, institutions, and other sources is also required.

Ethnic food is considered unique by certain people because it is defined by culture, sociodemography, area of origin, and social status. It determines the cultural relationship among speakers of the South Halmahera language (Bermudez, 2016). Examples of ethnic foods expressing the people's cultural relationships are *yof* (baked sago), *suy* this may family, race, or religion. In the *'wrter und sachen'* technique, the names of the foods are older due to their morphologically undetectability. 'Baku niwi' in Gane and 'Cokaiba' in Gamrange are analyzeable in morphological aspects as 'baku niwi',

baku=sago, niwi=coconut, and 'cokaiba', coka=evil, iba: mask. The words imply their newness in the communities and are unrepresentative of the language speakers' culture.

Three groups use different terms to refer to 'sago palm.' The people in the eastern South Halmahera in Patani and Gebe use '*yof*,' those in the northern part in Maba and Buli use '*pipi* or '*pupi*,' while the natives of the southern part in Gane and East Makian use '*baku.*'

The spread of the words *'terong, 'pisang, dan,* and *lalat*,' meaning eggplant, banana, and flies, respectively, caused the South Halmahera language to be divided into two groups. The family of the word ' *terong* ' is 'kok(i/e)' used in Maba, Buli, Patani, and Gebe, and 'palola' used in Sawai, Gane, and Makian Timur. Similarly, the word *'pisang*' divides the South Halmahera language into 'tɛlɛ', *'loka*', and *'fuda*'. The people in Maba, Buli, Patani, and Gebe use 'tɛlɛ' to refer to *'pisang*' (banana), while the natives of Sawai, Gane, and East Makian use *'loka*'. Additionally, the people in Irarutu use *'fuda,*' while those in Patani and Maba use the word *'lɔŋ'* to refer to '*fly*'. People living in Buli and Gebe use *'laŋ,*' Sawai and East Makian natives use *'plɛn'* and *'plaŋ'* respectively, while Gane uses *'bubal.'*

V. CONCLUSION

This study used the Wörter und Sachen technique to analyze the plant and animal names used by the South Halmahera speakers. The analysis indicated that the speakers are related in culture, particularly those living near the language homeland. Furthermore, the geographical distance separating the people from their native languages enables them to appertain regularly and intensively with other languages and cultures. This may intervene in their original lexical language, resulting in language and cultural differences, implying that culture affects language.

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