

Form and Function of Wemale Oral Literature in the Traditional Ceremony of King's Inauguration in the Negeri Karlutu Warasiswa

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the form and function of wemale oral literature in the traditional ceremony of inauguration of the king in the land of Negeri Karlutu Warasiwa, North West Seram District, Central Maluku Regency. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach that prioritizes the research process and understanding based on a methodology that investigates a social phenomenon. The techniques used in data collection are observation techniques, recording techniques, interview techniques and recording techniques. There are three data analysis techniques, namely data reduction, data presentation, word interpretation and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that there is oral literature used in the traditional inauguration of the king which is the language of the people and folk songs passed down from generation to generation in the traditional ceremony of the inauguration of the king which are conveyed using the regional language, namely Wemale language. The oral literature employed in the traditional ceremonial for the king's inauguration comprises the vernacular of the populace and folk melodies.

Keywords: *Form and Function; Oral Literature; Traditional Ceremony*



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INTRODUCTION

Oral literature constitutes a segment of the oral heritage transmitted across generations via spoken language. Oral literature is a form of literary expression conveyed verbally, which is prone to alterations throughout generations, affecting both grammatical structure and narrative details (Wongsopatty, 2020). Oral literature elucidates the socio-cultural condition, encompassing depictions of the social and cultural milieu, along with the community's belief systems (Baihaqi, 2017; Firmanda, Effendy, & Priyadi, 2018). With the evolution of time and the prevalence of globalization, acquiring information has become exceedingly facile through breakthroughs in information technology, particularly the internet. In such circumstances, oral literature is similarly influenced by globalization.

Endraswara (2009) delineates various attributes of oral literature, including: (1) the literary work is a manifestation of traditional society characterized by rudimentary cognition and was predominantly conceived prior to the advent of written expression, (2) the literary work reflects a distinct culture with an anonymous author whose original identity has been obscured, (3) the produced literary works typically narrate imaginative tales, and (4) the language employed in the literary work frequently adopts a persuasive tone accompanied by parables.

According to Hutomo (1991), the functions of oral literature are: (1) as a system of projection, serving as a medium for reflecting imagination; (2) as a validation of culture; (3) as a means of enforcing norms; (4) as an educational tool; (5) to offer a socially sanctioned path for individuals to attain superiority; (6) to provide a socially sanctioned avenue for criticism of others; and (7) as a means of protesting societal injustice. Soekanto (2009) classifies the genres of folklore encompassed in oral literature as follows: 1) Vernacular language including dialects, epithets, traditional ranks, and noble titles; 2) Traditional expressions encompassing proverbs, sayings, and pameot; 3) Conventional inquiries such as riddles; 4) Folk poetry including pantun, gurindam, and syair; 5) Folk prose narratives comprising myths, legends, and folktales; 6) Folk songs.

Oral literature is prevalent among the inhabitants of Karlutu Warasiwa State, meticulously preserved across generations. The traditional inauguration ritual for the monarch of the Karlutu Warasiwa state in the North West Seram District, Central Maluku Regency, features types of oral literature, specifically folk language and folk songs. Oral literature originates and evolves within the group that employs the folk language, specifically Wemale. Oral literature in the Karlutu Warasiwa state constitutes a cultural element integral to the social fabric; specifically, it serves as a national cultural asset at the traditional rite for the king's inauguration. Oral literature forms, specifically folk language and folk songs, constitute a regional cultural heritage that must be preserved and safeguarded for the benefit of the Karlutu Warasiwa community, particularly the younger generation. The younger generation is the inheritor of this culture.

The author selected the community of Karlutu Warasiwa as the research site due of the residents' initial usage of the Wemale language for daily communication. Nonetheless, the Wemale language is no longer employed in quotidian communication, since the community predominantly utilizes the Ambon Malay language instead of Wemale. The presence of oral literature in the life of the inhabitants of Karlutu Warasiwa transcends simply pleasure, serving a far greater purpose. Oral literature encompasses cultural beliefs that govern the lifestyle of its bearers. The inhabitants of the Karlutu Warasiwa state are an indigenous population, aligned with their monarchical system of governance. Moreover, the group continues to uphold customs and ancient practices, exemplified by the preservation of their language, the Wemale language.

The Wemale language is employed in traditional rites, including the crowning of the monarch in the Karlutu Warasiwa kingdom, located in the North West Seram District of Central Maluku Regency. The appointment of a king involves oral literature, specifically the language of the people or the Wemale language. The Wemale language serves as the primary language for native speakers of the Wemale tribe; nevertheless, throughout time. The Wemale language is no longer the primary language of the present generation. The Wemale language comprises two dialects: Northern Wemale and Southern Wemale. The inhabitants of Karlutu Warasiwa State utilize the Southern Wemale dialect. The term "Wemale" signifies "infidel" as the Wemale tribe was unaware of religion in ancient times.

The king's appointment in Karlutu Warasiwa occurs through an administrative designation by the Regent of Central Maluku in Masohi, accompanied by a traditional ceremonial appointment in Karlutu Warasiwa. The traditional leader and elders from the original clan houses, along with the entire community,

will await the king-elect's arrival at the land's front gate following his administrative appointment. Prior to entering the territory, the prospective king was welcomed by the customary elders who expressed a hope and request in the Wemale language (*Salamate upulatu, salamate loike usu mayamane ke sepuma mahele mayamane ye holo-holo*), signifying "Welcome King, welcome to enter this land and let us collaboratively enhance it."

The research problem is formulated as follows: What are the forms and roles of Wemale oral literature in the Traditional King's Inauguration Ceremony in Karlutu Warasiwa Village, North West Seram District, Central Maluku Regency? This research can enhance understanding, specifically with oral literature in the traditional coronation ceremony of the king.

Oral literature mirrors the circumstances, conditions, and traditions of the associated community (Amir, 2013). The evolution of oral literature throughout society reflects the dynamic efforts of its custodians to preserve ancient cultural values. Haryanta and Sujatmiko (2012) confirms that oral literature arises from the oral culture of traditional communities, and its substance can be equated with written literature in modern countries. Oral literature, including pantun, folk songs, and folktales. Oral literature is a genre of literature transmitted verbally and handed down through generations by means of spoken communication. Zaidan asserts that oral literature, besides being transmitted verbally, can also be propagated through written forms in contemporary society, encompassing pantun, folk melodies, and folk tales. The inclusion and preservation of oral literature in written form is attributed to the fact that the majority of the cultural community consists of elderly individuals, while only a small segment of the population actively engages with or practices the culture in their everyday life.

Endraswara (2009) delineates various attributes of oral literature, including the following: (1) Literary works originate from traditional societies characterized by simplistic and conventional thought, created prior to their development of written language; (2) These works represent a distinct culture, authored by individuals whose identities remain anonymous; (3) The produced literary works typically convey imaginative narratives; (4) The language utilized in these works frequently adopts a persuasive tone, often incorporating parables. In conclusion, oral literature comprises a compilation of literary works or oral texts that are conveyed verbally, encompassing cultural, historical, social, or literary elements that are produced and transmitted across generations based on their aesthetic merit.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach that emphasizes the research process and comprehension through a methodology that examines a social phenomenon. This study's research data encompasses all forms and functions of oral literature pertinent to Wemale oral traditions during the customary inauguration ritual of the monarch in Karlutu Warasiwa Village, Pasanea District, Central Maluku Regency. The research data sources comprise the traditional elders of Karlutu Warasiwa Village. The informants in this study were selected according to multiple criteria to ensure data validity. The participants in this study are as follows: Zefanya Seluholo, 65 years old, community leader, retired; Mihel Samale, 82 years old, traditional chief, retired; Marthen Polatu, 48 years old, Saniri Chairman, farmer; Andarias Siwalete, 65 years old, traditional chief, retired; Christian Latutuaparaya, 50 years old, Negeri King, farmer. The employed data analysis technique is the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (2007), which delineates the components of qualitative data analysis as: data reduction, presentation, interpretation, and verification/conclusion drawing. This data analysis method is a set of research methods or techniques that are an extension of the human mind because their function is not to collect data, but rather to find relationships between data that the data itself would never express (Faruk, 2012). This study employs the data validity technique of triangulation, as defined by Endaswara (2009), which entails the author reiterating or categorizing data from many sources, including data triangulation that seeks more data for comparative analysis. This refers to the individual or respondent solicited for additional information regarding the acquired data. Triangulation in the methodological context refers to the iterative process of examining data to ensure its validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information and data provided by the informants indicate that oral literature in the traditional rite of the king's inauguration is preserved and is connected to the community's lives.

Folk Song. Folk songs are utilized throughout the invitation phase, as illustrated in the table below. Folk songs are performed at the welcoming ritual and may accompany the *cakalele* dance. The song conveys a message: a leader must have the capability to address every societal issue that arises.

Table 1. Folk Songs

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Latue silasa rorane lasa rorane</i>	The leaders cut bamboo
<i>Latue silasa rorane lasa rorane</i>	The leaders cut bamboo
<i>Rorane manisa, sauwe mu manisa yo</i>	Bamboo is even, problems are even
<i>Rorane manisa, sauwe mu manisa yo</i>	Bamboo is even, problems are even

People's Language. The predominant language utilized in the traditional ritual is Wemale. The vernacular is employed in the king's inauguration procedure, particularly during the welcoming and ceremonial oath phases, as illustrated in the subsequent table.

Table 2. People's Language

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Salamate upulatu, salamate loike usu</i>	Welcome, sovereign; enter this
<i>mayamane ke sepuma mahele</i>	nation, and let us collaboratively
<i>mayamane ye holo-holo</i>	enhance its prosperity.
<i>Usu lo wei wa tua adate hi hono adate</i>	Come in so the traditional chief can
<i>su wea mina</i>	perform the traditional oath.

The aforementioned data constitutes a greeting from the traditional elder to the new leader, articulated in the Wemale language to convey the community's aspirations and expectations for the king to govern and enhance the nation. Table 2 above constitutes a directive for the new king to enter a chamber (meeting hall) to undertake a conventional oath. The aforementioned data constitutes a Pasawari, which represents counsel imparted by the elders of the tradition to the prospective king. Pasawari is a supplication for ancestors, nature, and the creator. In addition to serving as a prayer, Pasawari functions as a medium for communication with ancestors. The objective of this counsel is to enable the future crown prince to effectively govern the realm of Karlutu Warasiwa.

The Function of Wemale Oral Literature in the Traditional Ceremony of King's Inauguration. Oral writing has multiple tasks during a king's inauguration, including the praise of the sovereign and the provision of social criticism.

Function as a Confirmation of Customary Law Institutions. Customary institutions continue to operate as mechanisms for problem resolution, provided that the institutions employed and the solutions offered are endorsed by the indigenous people and lead to comprehensive resolutions. In the regions that continue to uphold customary law, governance will be under the authority of a king. A king's role during his reign includes resolving conflicts related to customary law within the nation. A function of spoken literature during a king's coronation is illustrated in the subsequent table.

Table 3. Spoken Literature

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Latue silasa rorane lasa rorane</i>	The leaders cut bamboo
<i>Latue silasa rorane lasa rorane</i>	The leaders cut bamboo
<i>Rorane manisa, sauwe mu manisa yo</i>	Bamboo is even, problems are even
<i>Rorane manisa, sauwe mu manisa yo</i>	Bamboo is even, problems are even

The purpose of the song accompanying the *cakalele* dance is to communicate to the leaders, particularly the future king, that a leader must effectively address challenges during their reign, whether they are internal or international, and must engage with the leaders of other nations to resolve these issues.

Function as a System of Societal Projection. Its role as a projection is to act as an instrument for mirroring the collective's objectives. The citizens of the Karlutu Warasiwa state aspire for their future king to fulfill his duties and responsibilities effectively.

Table 4. System of Societal Projection Language

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Salamate upulatu, salamate loike usu mayamane ke sepuma mahele mayamane ye holo-holo</i>	Welcome, sovereign; enter this nation and collaborate with us to enhance its prosperity.
<i>Analue holo holo le sihanaute hale auwanapua wa uweya. Kursi remse sa yalemue ke yaletue le e ma selu enitamataya sepusi urue eniyamane holo holo</i>	Heed this carefully; it is a communication from your forebears to you. The chair you occupy belongs to you, yet it is imperative to scrutinize society and this nation meticulously.

Function of Respecting Leaders. Society has the obligation to respect leaders by adhering to the relevant regulations. A method to demonstrate respect for leaders is illustrated in the subsequent table. The elders and the community see the selected king as an effective leader, as evidenced by his everyday conduct; conversely, upon his selection, the community will accord him respect.

Table 5. Respecting Leaders Language

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Yami hale Soa Latutuaparaya, Soa Launatelu, Soa Latukarlutu, Soa Rumawatine sepuma ma ucapkan Sou salamate e Latupeluke hale Soa Latutruparaya. Yami matinaya Matitiwaya ke Matiluwe kursi se wauweya ketue suweye.</i>	We, from Soa Latutuaparaya, Soa Launatelu, Soa Latukarlutu, and Soa Rumawatine, extend our respects to the young king of Soa Latutuparaya. We are already acquainted with you and have prepared this chair for your use.

The Function of Social Criticism. The role of oral literary critique in the traditional ceremony of a king's enthronement is exemplified by the songs performed in the Wemale language, as illustrated in the subsequent table.

Table 6. Social Criticism Language

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Latue silasa rorane lasa rorane</i>	The leaders cut bamboo
<i>Latue silasa rorane lasa rorane</i>	The leaders cut bamboo
<i>Rorane manisa, sauwe mu manisa yo</i>	Bamboo is even, problems are even
<i>Rorane manisa, sauwe mu manisa yo</i>	Bamboo is even, problems are even.

In the aforementioned song, it serves not just as a traditional institution but also as a medium for critique inside the Karlutu Warasiwa community. Every society desires national security, and when issues emerge, a leader must effectively address them, particularly within the Karlutu Warasiwa group. This function communicates the royal decree issued to the king, enabling him to effectively fulfill his responsibilities as a leader.

Advisory Function. The data below indicates that number 5 encompasses ancestral guidance that remains relevant today for individuals aspiring to leadership in the Karlutu Warasiwa country.

Table 7. Advisory Function Language

Wemale Language	Indonesia Language
<i>Asaka ayamane holo-holo eyaa enitamataya</i>	As a king, you must protect the country well together with the people.

Pasawari is the counsel imparted by tribal elders to the prospective king, articulated in the Wemale language, to ensure he embodies the aspirations of the ancestors, who desire a monarch capable of advancing the nation. Subsequent to the presentation of the Pasawari by the monarch and his retinue, they were asked to enter the antiquated residence. Food was prepared and presented on traditional dishes crafted from banana leaves. The provisions comprised tubers, betel leaves (*amu*), areca nuts (*pua*), lime (*losa*), tobacco (*takapu*), cigarettes (*manaheti*), and a beverage akin to *sageru*, generally referred to as *sageru*. In the dining area, traditional figures, clans from the household, and the accompanying family were dining and drinking beside the future king. Upon completing their lunch, the future King and the others engaged in a collective prayer before advancing to the fourth stage, which involved a religious oath at the Church, the concluding stage. The future King and his retinue proceeded to the church collectively. Upon fulfilling the religious pledge, the prospective King returned to the state office for the concluding ceremony, which featured remarks from both the former and current Kings, succeeded by a communal repast. The research findings indicate that the oral literature employed in the traditional king's inauguration process consists of the vernacular and folk songs, which have been utilized for generations during the ceremony, conveyed in the local language, Wemale.

CONCLUSION

The oral literature employed in the traditional ceremonial for the king's inauguration comprises the vernacular of the populace and folk melodies. The coronation of the monarch in the Wemale language is an enduring ancestral tradition still observed today. The language spoken in the land of Karlutu Warasiwa is Wemale, which is also the requisite language employed in traditional rites, including the coronation of the king. The role of the Wemale language in traditional ceremonies is to affirm customary institutions, act as a medium of social expression, celebrate leaders, deliver social critique, and dispense counsel. The Wemale language is deemed sacred as it is primarily utilized by elders during traditional rites, with each senior designated to communicate in Wemale according to their specific functions. The author recommends additional research on the oral literature employed in traditional ceremonies and urges the local government to prioritize the preservation of Wemale oral literature utilized in the king's coronation and other cultural rituals.

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