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The Social Functions of Ambonese Malay Pantun in Negeri Haruku, Central Maluku Regency

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Abstract

This study discusses the social functions of Ambonese Malay pantun in the community of Negeri Haruku, Central Maluku Regency. Pantun as an oral tradition is not merely a form of verbal expression but also serves as a medium for transmitting cultural values, social ethics, and collective identity within the community. This study aims to describe the social functions of Ambonese Malay pantun in the social and cultural life of the Haruku community. The research employed a qualitative descriptive method with an ethnographic approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and recording of oral traditions from local informants. The results show that Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku functions as entertainment, educational media, social control, communication tool, and cultural preservation medium. Pantun is used in traditional ceremonies, social interactions, and community gatherings as a means of conveying advice, satire, and moral teachings. The study also reveals that pantun reflects the local wisdom and collective values of the Haruku community. Therefore, preserving pantun as an oral tradition is essential to maintain cultural identity and support intergenerational transmission of local knowledge.

Keywords: *Social function, oral tradition, pantun, Ambonese Malay, Haruku*



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INTRODUCTION

Pantun is one of the forms of oral literature that continues to survive in Indonesian society and maintains a close relationship with the culture of its supporting communities. It functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a medium for conveying values, advice, social criticism, and strengthening social relationships within society. Pantun possesses various social functions, including serving as a means of communication, education, entertainment, cultural symbolism, and the transmission of values (Wongsopatty, 2020; Larossa & Iskandar, 2022). In Malay society, pantun constitutes an important part of oral tradition used to convey life experiences, knowledge, and cultural perspectives in a polite and symbolic manner. As a form of oral literature, pantun has developed within Indonesian society as a medium for communicating values, advice, social criticism, and cultural experiences. Within Malay traditions, pantun is understood not merely as an aesthetic expression but also as a form of social communication employed in various contexts of communal life. Gajah and Lubis (2024), explain that pantun forms an essential component of Malay culture because it contains social values, ethics, and the worldview of the community. Furthermore, Yundayani et al. (2023) emphasize that pantun remains a significant Indonesian oral cultural heritage worthy of continued scholarly investigation due to its close relationship with cultural identity.

In the context of Maluku, pantun developed through the use of Ambonese Malay as the community's lingua franca. Ambonese Malay evolved from general Malay and adapted to local linguistic elements (Latupapua, 2017). Warami (2020) explains that Ambonese Malay developed as a communication tool among coastal communities, ports, and inter-island trade networks in Maluku. The use of Ambonese Malay as a language of social interaction has contributed to the continuity of Ambonese Malay pantun traditions up to the present day (Lewier & da Costa, 2024). Ambonese Malay pantun has developed within various aspects of Malukan social life, including among the indigenous community of Negeri Haruku, Central Maluku Regency. Within the social life of Negeri Haruku, pantun is used by the kepala kewang (traditional environmental guardians), village kings, kapitang, kepala soa, saniri negeri, and ordinary community members to convey advice, strengthen social relationships, resolve conflicts, and entertain society. Based on observations and interviews with Eliza Marthen Kissya conducted on March 3, 2025, Ambonese Malay pantun continues to be used in certain social situations as a medium of customary communication and moral instruction. One pantun recited during social conflicts states:

*Inga janji ina ama
Di rantau orang jang baku mara
Beda suku beda agama
Katong samua orang sudara*

This pantun conveys a message about the importance of maintaining brotherhood and resolving conflicts peacefully. In Negeri Haruku society, delivering criticism and advice through pantun is considered more polite and effective because it avoids directly humiliating the person being admonished. This demonstrates that Ambonese Malay pantun functions not only as entertainment but also as a cultural mechanism for maintaining social order within the community. However, developments in communication technology and changes in social interaction patterns have caused a gradual shift in the use of Ambonese Malay pantun. Field observations indicate that pantun is now more commonly used only by customary leaders and in specific situations. Many younger generations rarely employ pantun in daily life and do not fully understand its cultural meanings. This condition suggests the existence of threats to the continuity of Ambonese Malay pantun traditions in Negeri Haruku.

Previous studies on pantun have been conducted by Hawari and Adek (2022), who examined the structure and social functions of pantun in wedding ceremonies in Kanagarian Air Bangis; Febriani and Zulfhadhli (2022), who studied the structure and social functions of pantun in wedding ceremonies among the Dusun Sekar Mengkuang community; and Sri and Lahir (2022), who investigated the social functions of pantun in the tundang performing arts of the Malay community in Mempawah Regency. These studies generally focused on the functions of pantun within specific ceremonial contexts. Meanwhile, studies on Ambonese Malay pantun in Maluku that specifically address its social functions within indigenous communities remain relatively limited.

Unlike previous studies, this research focuses on the social functions of Ambonese Malay pantun in the indigenous community of Negeri Haruku as a living cultural practice embedded in various social activities. This study examines pantun not only as an oral literary text but also as a medium of cultural communication related to social relations, conflict resolution, social education, and cultural preservation within indigenous society. Based on these considerations, this study aims to reveal the social functions of

Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku, Central Maluku Regency, and to explain its role as a medium of cultural communication in indigenous community life.

METODE

This study employed a qualitative approach with an ethnographic method to describe the social functions of Ambonese Malay pantun in the life of the Negeri Haruku community, Central Maluku Regency. A qualitative approach was selected because the research focused on oral utterances, cultural practices, and social meanings embedded within the community. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words derived from observed individuals and behaviors. Meanwhile, the ethnographic method was employed because the study examined not only pantun texts but also their social contexts, performers, and relationships with the cultural system of Negeri Haruku society. Mahendra *et al.* (2024) explain that ethnography concerns the observation and interpretation of the culture of a social group. Therefore, ethnography was utilized to understand Ambonese Malay pantun as a living cultural practice within the indigenous society of Negeri Haruku.

The research was conducted in Negeri Haruku, Haruku Island District, Central Maluku Regency. The data consisted of Ambonese Malay pantun utterances containing social functions in the social life of the Haruku community. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and audio recordings of pantun recitations. The data sources included customary leaders and community members who actively use Ambonese Malay pantun, namely the kepala kewang, village king, kapitang, landowners, kepala soa, saniri negeri, members of the kewang kecil community, and ordinary residents. Informants were selected based on several criteria: being native residents of Negeri Haruku, aged between 10 and 70 years, and possessing knowledge and understanding of Ambonese Malay pantun traditions. The primary informants included Eliza Marthen Kissya as the kepala kewang of Negeri Haruku, Yappy Ferdinandus as village king, Matheus Mantouw as kapitang, Theo Hendatu as landowner, as well as several members of the saniri negeri and kewang kecil community.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and recordings. Observation was conducted to examine the use of pantun in the social life of the community. In-depth interviews were carried out to obtain information concerning the forms, functions, and contexts of Ambonese Malay pantun. Recording techniques were employed to document pantun utterances in order to preserve data authenticity and facilitate transcription and analysis. According to Endraswara (2013), oral folklore research requires direct documentation of oral performances to preserve their cultural context and social meanings. The primary instrument of this study was the researcher, who played an active role in the processes of data collection and analysis. Supporting instruments included field notes, interview guides, and recording devices. Data analysis employed Spradley's ethnographic analysis model, which includes domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis. Qomaruddin (2024) explains that Spradley's analytical model is used to understand cultural meaning relationships within a community through the gradual categorization and interpretation of cultural data. Data validity was tested through methodological and theoretical triangulation by comparing findings from observations, interviews, and recordings and relating them to folklore and oral literature theories. Danandjaja (1997) explains that triangulation is essential in folklore studies to ensure the validity of oral data obtained from society. Therefore, triangulation was conducted to obtain more objective data appropriate to the cultural context of the Negeri Haruku community.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ambonese Malay Pantun as a Cultural Practice in Negeri Haruku

Based on the findings of this study, a total of 34 Ambonese Malay pantun were identified as still actively used in the social life of the people of Negeri Haruku, Haruku Island District, Central Maluku Regency. The data were obtained through observations, interviews, and recordings involving customary leaders and the kepala kewang. The study identified 34 Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku, Haruku Island District, Central Maluku Regency. The complete collection of Ambonese Malay pantun along with their Indonesian translations is presented in Table 1 below:

DR-1	<i>Kalo dudu di atas tana</i> <i>Awas jangan tatusu paku</i> <i>Banya kue di mana-mana</i> <i>Tapi seng sama babengka Harkuu</i>	If you sit upon the ground Be careful not to step on nails Many kinds of cakes can be found everywhere Yet none compare to Haruku's babengka
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DR-2	<i>Ruma</i> dihantam angin kencang <i>Pata tiang</i> pata <i>hangkotu</i> <i>Kalo</i> ingin bersenang-senang Datang saja di penginapan Totu	That house was struck by strong winds Its pillars and <i>hangkotu</i> were damaged If you wish to enjoy yourself Please come to Totu Inn
DR-3	<i>Kalo</i> pakai sepatu puma Ketemu orang haruslah santun <i>Kalo ale su</i> tiba di <i>ruma</i> <i>Jang</i> lupa Om Eli <i>pung</i> pantun	If later you wish to go to the market Always be courteous when meeting people Once you arrive in Makassar Never forget Uncle Eli's pantun
DR-4	Mama <i>pung</i> hati sangat gelisah <i>Kalo</i> utang <i>mau</i> ditagih <i>Beso</i> dan lusa <i>katong</i> berpisah Di lain waktu bertemu lagi	Mother's heart feels deeply uneasy When debts are about to be collected Tomorrow and the day after we must part Yet we shall meet again on another occasion
DR-5	Hari ini kutanam markisa <i>Beso</i> dan lusa kutanam kaladi Memang sekarang harus berpisah Tapi ku yakin bertemu lagi	Today I plant passion fruit Tomorrow and the next day I plant cassava For now, we indeed must part But I believe we shall meet again someday
DR-6	Sangat <i>rame</i> kota Jakarta <i>Kalo bajalang</i> hati-hati Walaupun terpisah jauh di mata Tapi selalu ada di hati	Jakarta is a bustling city One must be careful when walking about Though separated by great distances You are always kept within my heart
DR-7	<i>Ale mara beta mara</i> <i>Katong</i> dua orang <i>sudara</i> <i>Kalo mara jang</i> cari perkara Mari <i>dudu</i> lalu <i>bicara</i>	When you are angry, I am angry too For we are both brothers and sisters When anger arises, do not create conflict Instead, let us sit down and talk together
DR-8	<i>Kalo</i> berangkat ke Denpasar Perjalanannya sangatlah sulit Walau <i>su</i> jadi orang besar <i>Jang</i> jadi kacang lupa kulit	If you travel to Denpasar The journey may be very difficult Even after becoming a respected person Never forget your roots
DR-9	<i>Beta</i> tinggal di tepi jurang Kampung <i>beta</i> di kota Tual Biar <i>hidop deng kurang-kurang</i> <i>Tana</i> adat jangan dijual	I live on the edge of a cliff My hometown is in the city of Tual Though life may be full of hardships Customary land must never be sold
DR-10	<i>Kalo mau</i> memakai kain Pakailah kain milik sendiri <i>Lebe bae</i> dibenci orang lain Daripada dibenci <i>sudara</i> sendiri	If you wish to wear a cloth Wear one that belongs to you It is better to be disliked by others Than to be hated by your own family
DR-11	<i>Kalo</i> berlayar ke Pulau Kasa <i>Pata tiang</i> pata kemudi <i>Kalo</i> kamu sudah dewasa Janji Mama jangan berjudi	If you sail to Kasa Island The mast and rudder may break apart Once you have become an adult Remember Mother's advice: never gamble
DR-12	<i>Tanam</i> pisang di bawah meja Meja itu <i>tabalah</i> dua Haruslah rajin ke gereja Itulah janji orang tua	Planting a banana tree beneath the table The table split into two pieces One must diligently attend church Such is the advice of our parents
DR-13	Di Haruku <i>banya kalapa</i> Negeri yang indah di tepi kali <i>Biar</i> orang <i>mau</i> bilang apa Kumpul <i>sudara</i> sanang paskali	There are many coconut trees in Haruku A beautiful land by the riverside No matter what others may say Gathering with family brings great joy
DR-14	Dari Liang <i>pikol pangkuku</i> <i>Kaeng</i> berang gantong di tali <i>Katong samua ana</i> Haruku Putus <i>gandong</i> itu pamali	From Liang carrying bamboo poles A red cloth hangs upon the line We are all the children of Haruku Breaking brotherly ties is forbidden
DR-15	<i>Kalo</i> ada nasi di panci <i>Taru</i> aking di <i>para-para</i> <i>Inga-inga</i> Mama <i>pung</i> janji <i>Kalo makang inga sudara</i> <i>Katong</i> ini orang <i>susa</i>	If there is rice inside the pot Place it upon the drying rack Never forget Mother's advice When you eat, do not forget your relatives We are people of humble means

DR-16	Mau cari <i>karja dapa</i> di mana Kuingat nasibku <i>beso</i> dan lusa <i>Lebe bae</i> mencangkul <i>tana</i>	Where can work truly be found? I think about my fate tomorrow and beyond Better to till the soil of the land
DR-17	Buat kebun di tepi jurang Mari tanam buah naga Biar <i>hidop deng kurang-kurang</i> Warisan leluhur tetap di jaga	Making a garden by the edge of the cliff Let us plant dragon fruit together Though life may be filled with hardship Our ancestral heritage must still be preserved
DR-18	<i>Mangapa</i> tidak makan talas <i>Lebe</i> enak <i>baras</i> raskin <i>Kalo ale</i> tetap malas Keluarga <i>ale</i> tetap miskin	Why not eat taro instead Though subsidized rice may taste better If you remain unwilling to work hard Your family will remain in poverty
DR-19	<i>Kalo</i> ke hutan bawalah <i>parang</i> Jangan ambil <i>parang</i> yang <i>pata</i> <i>Ana-ana</i> jaman sakarang <i>Lia</i> orang tua <i>deng sabalah</i> mata	If you go into the forest, bring a machete Do not carry one that is already broken Children of the present generation No longer show respect to their elders
DR-20	<i>Beta</i> tinggal di Tomohon Asal <i>beta</i> dari Toraja Jangan karena <i>cengkeh</i> seponhon Lapor <i>sudara</i> menghadap raja	I live in Tomohon Yet I come from Toraja Do not, because of a single clove tree, Report your own kin before the king
DR-21	Cerita ini kedengarannya lucu Cerita rakyat dari Talaut <i>Kalo cinta ana deng cucu</i> Stop bom ikan di laut	This story may sound amusing A folktale originating from Talaut If you truly love your children and grandchildren Stop using fish bombs in the sea
DR-22	<i>Beta</i> ini orang kaya <i>Beta</i> tinggal di Tomohon <i>Kalo tau</i> itu berbahaya <i>Mangapa ale</i> menebang pohon	I am a wealthy man I live in Tomohon If you know that it is dangerous Why do you still cut down the trees?
DR-23	Ada orang menyerang kami Kami datang membawa tembakau <i>Kalo taku</i> dihantam tsunami Jangan <i>ale</i> menebang bakau	Someone came to attack us We arrived carrying tobacco If you fear the coming of tsunamis Then you must not cut down the mangroves
DR-24	Mari mendaki gunung Binaiya Bersama temanku bernama Daut <i>Kalo tau</i> itu berbahaya <i>Mangapa</i> buang sampah di laut	Let us climb Mount Binaiya Together with my friend named Daut If you know that it is dangerous Why do you throw garbage into the sea?
DR-25	Bulan <i>trang</i> di waktu malam Ku panggil cucuku bernama Kesia Sering terjadi bencana alam Karena ulah umat manusia	The moon shines brightly in the night sky I call my granddaughter, whose name is Kesia Natural disasters occur so often Because of human actions and behavior
DR-26	<i>Sakarang</i> hari sudahlah malam Singgah <i>dolo</i> di Sanana Manfaatkan sumber daya alam Secara arif dan bijaksana	Tonight, the day has turned to dusk Let us rest awhile in Sanana Make use of natural resources With wisdom and responsibility
DR-27	<i>Beta</i> ini nama Eliza <i>Beta</i> tinggal di Aman-Hatu <i>Banya</i> Pulau terpisah-pisah Tapi Maluku tetap satu	My name is Eliza I reside in Aman Hatu Though many islands lie far apart Maluku shall always remain one
DR-28	<i>Samua</i> orang sudah mengakui Besarnya manfaat kayu gaharu Nama aslinya Negeri <i>Haru-ukui</i> Artinya ujung pohon waru	Everyone has acknowledged The great benefits of agarwood The original name was Negeri Haru-ukui Meaning the tip of the waru tree
DR-29	Ban kempis harus di pompa Pompa saja berulang-ulang <i>Kalo</i> dengar buka <i>sasi lomp</i> Pertanda <i>Haruku panggel</i> pulang	A flat tire must be pumped again Pump it over and over once more When you hear the opening of <i>sasi lomp</i> It is the sign that Haruku calls you home
DR-30	Sidang <i>kewang</i> di Amanhatu Kepala <i>kewang</i> Kissya dan Ririmasse Tiga Pulau menjadi satu Itulah Pulau-Pulau Lease	A <i>kewang</i> gathering takes place in Amanhatu Led by Kissya and Ririmasse as <i>kepala kewang</i> The three islands unite as one Together they are known as the Lease Islands

DR-31	<i>I kang cakalang dari Galala Kalo dijual sangatlah laku Kalo dengar cengkeh dan pala Itu hasil dari Maluku</i>	Skipjack tuna comes from Galala When sold, it is always in great demand Whenever cloves and nutmeg are mentioned Those treasures are known to come from Maluku
DR-32	<i>Beta ini ana Negeri Hila Katong samua sudah nanaku Saureka-reka deng bambu gila Tarian asli dari Maluku</i>	I am a child of Negeri Hila As we all already know <i>Saureka-reka</i> and <i>bambu gila</i> Are traditional dances of Maluku
DR-33	<i>Kami mohon berikan dukungan Bagi kewang di Maluku Mau belajar tentang lingkungan Datang saja di Haruku</i>	We humbly ask for your support For the <i>kewang</i> communities across Maluku If you wish to learn about the environment Please come and visit Haruku
DR-34	<i>Kalo mau menanam nangka Tanam saja di dalam tana Beta juga seng pernah sangka Sasi terkenal di mana-mana</i>	If you wish to plant a jackfruit tree Plant it firmly in the soil I, too, never would have imagined That <i>sasi</i> would become famous everywhere

Structurally, Ambonese Malay pantun in Haruku, as with Ambonese Malay pantun in general, have undergone deviations from the conventional structure of Malay pantun characterized by an a-b-a-b rhyme scheme. Although Ambonese Malay pantun in Haruku still retain the a-b-a-b pattern, they have developed broader rhyme variations, including a-a-a-b, a-b-a-c, a-b-c-d, a-b-c-b, and a-a-b-a.

Furthermore, based on the data categorization, four principal social functions of Ambonese Malay pantun were identified, namely entertainment, educational, social control, and cultural preservation functions. Of the total data collected, there were 6 entertainment pantun, 11 educational pantun, 9 social control pantun, and 8 cultural preservation pantun. The findings indicate that Ambonese Malay pantun in Haruku are understood not merely as a form of oral literature, but also as part of the cultural communication system of the indigenous community. Pantun are employed in various social contexts, including welcoming guests, *kewang* activities, customary assemblies, conflict resolution, the delivery of advice, as well as environmental and cultural preservation activities. The use of pantun in community life demonstrates that oral traditions continue to occupy an important position in maintaining social relations and social order within the community.

The History of Ambonese Malay Pantun in Negeri Haruku

Based on interviews with Eliza Marthen Kissya, the kepala *kewang* of Negeri Haruku, the development of Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku is closely related to efforts to protect the environment, strengthen kinship relations, and preserve customary values within the community. Eliza began actively composing pantun after becoming involved in indigenous community movements and activities of the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara / AMAN) in 1999. According to him, indigenous struggles do not necessarily have to be conducted through violence but can instead be pursued through changes in mindset and public awareness using cultural approaches. In an interview conducted on October 23, 2025, Eliza explained that the people of Maluku possess a strong affinity with traditions of singing, *kapata*, and *seloka*, making pantun an easily accepted medium within society. Pantun, which was adapted from Malay traditions, was subsequently used to convey customary messages, social education, and environmental preservation in a more relaxed and enjoyable manner. Initially, these pantun were recited only to children and grandchildren, but they later developed and became widely known both within Haruku society and beyond Maluku. These findings indicate that Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku did not emerge solely as entertainment but also as a medium of cultural struggle functioning to preserve social relationships and environmental awareness within indigenous society. In this context, pantun constitutes a form of oral folklore functioning as an educational tool and a mechanism of social control, as proposed by Danandjaja (1997).

Ambonese Malay Pantun in Negeri Haruku as a System of Cultural Communication

Based on observations and interviews, Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku is not commonly found in routine daily activities. Pantun is generally delivered by customary leaders such as the kepala *kewang*, village king, *kapitang*, kepala *soa*, and *saniri negeri*. Ambonese Malay pantun in Haruku carries moral authority and is regarded as representing the customary voice of the community. Consequently, it is frequently conveyed by individuals possessing recognized sociocultural authority and prestige in order to resolve social issues within the community. Indirectly, pantun plays a vital role as a cultural element

contributing to the enforcement of social norms within society. In social practice, pantun functions as a medium of symbolic communication. Criticism and social admonitions are not conveyed directly but rather through figurative language and metaphor in order to prevent the targeted individual from feeling humiliated. For example, data DR-21 contains the following pantun:

*Mari mendaki gunung Binaiya
Bersama temanku bernama Daut
Kalo tau itu berbahaya
Mangapa buang sampah di laut?*

Thematically, the pantun highlights and criticizes the community's habit of disposing of waste in the sea. The criticism is expressed subtly in the form of a question, thereby avoiding open conflict. According to Eliza Kissiya, the people of Negeri Haruku possess strong and firm personalities. Therefore, a gentler approach is required to avoid direct confrontation. Eliza further stated that pantun is considered more effective in maintaining social relationships and communal harmony than the direct enforcement of customary and social regulations through repressive measures. These findings demonstrate that Ambonese Malay pantun functions as a system of cultural communication closely tied to customary norms and social ethics. Pantun not only conveys specific messages but also serves as a collectively accepted cultural mechanism used to maintain social order within Negeri Haruku society.

The Functions of Ambonese Malay Pantun in Negeri Haruku

Based on taxonomic mapping and analysis of the collected pantun data, four major functions of Ambonese Malay pantun were identified, as discussed below: Entertainment Function. The entertainment function was identified in data DR-01 to DR-06, comprising six pantun. Entertainment pantun are commonly used when welcoming guests or during farewell events for visitors in Negeri Haruku. These pantun are intended to create a relaxed, friendly, and enjoyable atmosphere. One example is as follows:

*Kalo dudu di atas tana
Awajangan tatusu paku
Banya kue di mana-mana
Tapi seng sama babengka Haruku*

This pantun introduces babengka Haruku as a traditional culinary specialty of the Haruku community. Babengka is made from rice flour, coconut milk, and palm sugar. It is commonly served during special occasions in family, customary, governmental, and church contexts. In its communicative context, the pantun functions as a form of welcoming guests by emphasizing hospitality and familiarity while simultaneously introducing local cultural identity. Other entertainment pantun were found in data DR-04 and DR-05, which are recited when guests are about to return home. These pantun emphasize that separation should not be regarded with sadness because opportunities for reunion remain possible. Thus, the entertainment function of pantun not only creates a pleasant atmosphere but also strengthens social relationships between the community and visiting guests. Educational Function. The educational function was identified in data DR-07 to DR-14 and DO-01 to DO-03. Educational pantun are used to convey advice and teach life values to society and younger generations. One example is as follows:

*Ale mara beta mara
Katong dua orang sudara
Kalo mara jang cari perkara
Mari dudu lalu bicara*

This pantun conveys the importance of resolving conflicts peacefully through dialogue and deliberation. In Negeri Haruku society, this pantun is commonly used during disputes among relatives or community members, thereby promoting values of brotherhood and peace within both family and community life. In addition, educational pantun are used to cultivate customary awareness and maintain kinship relations, as illustrated in data DR-09:

*Beta tinggal di tepi jurang
Kampung beta di Kota Tual
Biar hidop deng kurang-kurang
Tana adat jangan dijual*

This pantun emphasizes the importance of preserving customary land as ancestral heritage despite economic hardships. In this context, pantun serves as a medium of cultural education that teaches the community to preserve its identity and customary values. The educational functions embedded in these Ambonese Malay pantun demonstrate that oral traditions continue to serve as media for transmitting social and cultural values within Negeri Haruku society. These findings further confirm Danandjaja's (1997) view that folklore, including pantun, functions as a means of public education. Social Control Function. The social control function was identified in data DR-15 to DR-23. This type of pantun is used to criticize behaviors considered inconsistent with social norms and customary regulations. Such criticism is delivered symbolically and indirectly so that the targeted individuals continue to feel respected. One example is as follows:

*Mangapa tidak makan talas
Lebe enak baras raskin
Kalo ale tetap malas
Keluarga ale tetap miskin*

This pantun reminds listeners that laziness can lead to poverty not only for individuals but also for their entire families. The criticism is delivered through simple expressions and humor familiar to the community, allowing the message to be accepted without provoking conflict. Furthermore, pantun functioning as instruments of social control are also used to remind society to protect the environment and maintain kinship relations. Data DR-17 presents the following example:

*Beta tinggal di Tomohon
Asal beta dari Toraja
Jangan karena cengkeh seponon
Lapor saudara menghadap raja*

This pantun admonishes community members not to exaggerate minor issues to the extent that they damage familial relationships. Within the customary society of Haruku, resolving disputes through kinship and familial approaches is considered more important than escalating conflicts to broader authorities. Therefore, Ambonese Malay pantun functions as a tool of social control that assists society in maintaining social order and harmony without resorting to verbal violence or open conflict. Cultural Preservation Function. The cultural preservation function was identified in data DR-24 to DR-31. This category of pantun is associated with cultural identity, customary traditions, environmental awareness, and the historical heritage of Maluku society. These pantun are generally delivered by the kewang kecil community as part of the process of transmitting cultural knowledge to younger generations. The kewang kecil community is a local group consisting of adolescents and young people established by Eliza Kissiya. They carry out environmental preservation missions through pantun traditions, environmental education, and concrete environmental conservation activities, such as cleaning coastal areas and river estuaries, preventing the destruction of wildlife nests, and promoting environmental cleanliness in domestic settings. One example of cultural preservation pantun is as follows:

*Ban kempis harus dipompa
Pompa saja berulang-ulang
Kalo dengar buka sasi lomp
Pertanda Haruku panggil pulang*

This pantun demonstrates the close relationship between the Haruku community and the sasi lomp tradition as a customary system for natural resource management. The sasi tradition is understood not merely as customary regulation but also as a symbol of Haruku cultural identity. Another example is found in data DR-31:

*Kalo mau menanam Nangka
tanam saja di dalam tana
Beta juga seng pernah sangka
Sasi terkenal di mana-mana*

This pantun illustrates that the sasi lompas tradition has become widely recognized and serves as a cultural symbol of Maluku society. Pantun is therefore used both to introduce and preserve community cultural values among younger generations and external audiences.

CONCLUSION

Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku, Central Maluku Regency, occupies an important position in the social life of the indigenous community, functioning not merely as oral literature or verbal entertainment but also as a medium of cultural communication containing social, moral, and customary values. Based on the findings of this study, 34 Ambonese Malay pantun were identified and classified into four principal social functions: entertainment, education, social control, and cultural preservation. These functions demonstrate that Ambonese Malay pantun continues to play a role in maintaining social relationships, conveying advice, regulating community behavior, and preserving the cultural identity of the Negeri Haruku community. This study also reveals that Ambonese Malay pantun is closely related to the customary structure and social system of the community. Pantun is generally employed by customary leaders such as the kepala kewang, village king, kapitang, kepala soa, and saniri negeri in various social contexts, including welcoming guests, resolving conflicts, conducting kewang activities, and delivering advice to the community. In these contexts, pantun functions as a medium of symbolic communication that enables society to express criticism and admonition subtly without provoking open conflict. Thus, pantun forms part of the cultural mechanism for maintaining social order and harmony within indigenous society. In addition, this study found that Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku embodies cultural values such as brotherhood, respect for customary traditions, peaceful conflict resolution, and environmental awareness through the sasitradition. Consequently, pantun functions not only as a product of oral literature but also as a medium for transmitting cultural knowledge and the collective identity of the Negeri Haruku community.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the research focuses solely on the social functions of Ambonese Malay pantun in Negeri Haruku and therefore does not encompass variations of Ambonese Malay pantun found in other regions of Maluku. Second, the study emphasizes social functions and does not extensively discuss linguistic structures, stylistic features, or the performative aspects of pantun within community speech practices. Third, time limitations prevented the researcher from directly observing all forms of pantun usage within customary contexts. Based on these limitations, future studies may be expanded toward broader areas of inquiry, such as analyses of the linguistic structure of Ambonese Malay pantun, ethnopragmatic studies, oral literature performance studies, or ecolinguistic studies concerning the relationship between indigenous communities and the environment. Comparative studies across different regions of Maluku may also be conducted to examine differences in the social functions and characteristics of Ambonese Malay pantun in diverse cultural contexts. Furthermore, research concerning strategies for revitalizing Ambonese Malay pantun among younger generations is essential as part of broader efforts to preserve oral traditions and local culture in Maluku.

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