

Cultural Linguistics: The Art of Greetings in Wemale and Alune Tribes of Maluku

Abidin Wakano^{1*}, Ridhwan Latuapo², Eko Wahyunanto Prihono³, Fitria Lapele⁴

¹ State Islamic Institute of Ambon, Indonesia; e-mail: abidinwakano05@gmail.com

² State Islamic Institute of Ambon, Indonesia; e-mail: ridwanlatuapo2018@gmail.com

³ State Islamic Institute of Ambon, Indonesia; e-mail: ekoprihono@iainambon.ac.id

⁴ State Islamic Institute of Ambon, Indonesia; e-mail: fitrialapele@iainambon.ac.id

* Correspondence

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Abstract: This study aims to identify and analyze cultural greetings based on the linguistic structures of the Wemale and Alune tribes in Maluku. This qualitative research employs an ethnographic approach and was conducted across eight sub-districts in Western Seram Regency, Maluku Province. Data collection methods included observation, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Data analysis followed Spradley's model, which comprises four phases: domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis. The study identified 20 traditional greetings from the indigenous peoples in the Western Seram Regency. Ten of these greetings were recommended for official use, and six were selected as the primary cultural greetings based on the linguistic structures of the Wemale and Alune tribes. These greetings are *Ho Salamate*, *Sou Salamate*, *Tabea Salamate*, *Mese*, *Upu Ana*, and *Sopai*. This research contributes to the preservation and revitalization of the Wemale and Alune languages by proposing standardized cultural greetings that reflect the linguistic and cultural heritage of these tribes. The findings also support the integration of these greetings into local education curricula to promote cultural sustainability.

Keywords: Culture; cultural greetings; language structure; Wemale and Alune tribes.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis salam budaya berdasarkan struktur bahasa suku Wemale dan Alune di Maluku. Penelitian kualitatif ini menggunakan pendekatan etnografi dan dilakukan di delapan kecamatan di Kabupaten Seram Bagian Barat, Provinsi Maluku. Metode pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara, dan *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD). Analisis data mengikuti model Spradley yang terdiri dari empat tahap: analisis domain, analisis taksonomi, analisis komponen, dan analisis tema budaya. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi 20 salam tradisional dari masyarakat adat di Kabupaten Seram Bagian Barat. Sepuluh salam di antaranya direkomendasikan untuk digunakan dalam acara resmi, dan enam dipilih sebagai salam budaya utama berdasarkan struktur bahasa suku Wemale dan Alune. Salam tersebut adalah *Ho Salamate*, *Sou Salamate*, *Tabea Salamate*, *Mese*, *Upu Ana*, dan *Sopai*. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pelestarian dan revitalisasi bahasa Wemale dan Alune dengan mengusulkan salam budaya yang distandardisasi yang mencerminkan warisan linguistik dan budaya suku-suku ini. Temuan ini juga mendukung integrasi salam-salam ini ke dalam kurikulum pendidikan lokal untuk mempromosikan keberlanjutan budaya.

Kata Kunci: Budaya; salam budaya; struktur bahasa; suku Wemale dan Alune.

1. Introduction

The level of cultural diversity, especially language is social capital in building a dynamic and transformative multicultural society. Sociologically, the higher the level of diversity, the higher and more complex the problems faced by the community (Wulandari, 2020). Since the beginning of the formation of this country, a joint committee has been built which is contained in the symbol of the Indonesian state, namely *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. This motto becomes one of the main pillars in supporting

a multicultural Indonesia (Nurhayati, Setiyowati, & Nurmalisa, 2021; Pratiwinindya, 2021). In the context of Maluku, awareness to care for the existing diversity has been built through a basic value shared by the Moluccans since time immemorial which is monodualistic, namely *Sivalima*. *Sivalima* considered as one brother as contained in Maluku spirit of "*orang basudara*" (Wakano, 2019).

In the customary law communities in Seram, especially the western part of Seram, there are Wemale and Alune tribes who adhere to the spirit of monodualism (Uhi et al., 2016). Geographically, the Wemale tribe occupies the eastern and southeastern areas of West Seram, while the Alune tribe inhabits the northwest part of West Seram (Bartels, 2017). To be precise, the two tribes, Wemale and Alune, inhabit the region of Western Seram (Cooley, 1987).

These two tribes previously inhabited an area in the mountain called Nunusaku. Regarding it, Topatimasang stated:

Ask everyone in Central Maluku, especially in the Lease Islands group (Ambon, Haruku, Saparua, and Nusa Laut) about the origin of all their customary laws. Then they will respectfully respond to Seram as '*Nusa Ina*' (the mother and genesis island). Then, ask all the native Seram people where they came from, then they will solemnly mention a place called '*Nunusaku*' (Topatimasang, 2016).

The statement above describes that the Wemale and Alune tribes come from Nunusaku. They then spread and occupied various areas on Seram Island. Historically Wemale and Alune tribes have indeed had an important position and have played a strategic role in language dissemination, culture, and migration. The positions and roles are certainly not something that just appears as a result without a cause. However, behind that position and role, there is an inner mentality and characteristics that identify as the result of their cultural construction and their life. That is the monodualism of "*Pasiwa* and *Patalima*", where relationship ties grow and develop in a philosophical configuration "*Orang Basudara*" (Uhi, Soeprapto, & Syamsuddin, 2016; Wakano, 2019).

Wemale ethnic culture has changed a lot in recent decades as consumerism undermines traditional values. Nowadays, Wemale language is still used as a means of oral communication in the lives of the speaking community (Tuasa, Pattiasina, & Lelapary, 2020). Native Wemale speakers are located in parts of Central Maluku Regency and Western Seram Regency. Although still actively spoken by its speakers, Wemale possibly will be categorized as an endangered regional language. The average Wemale resident aged 30 years and under no longer speaks Wemale actively. This further weakened the position of the Wemale language which was one of the cultural riches of the Moluccan. In addition, the kinship of Wemale and Alune languages in terms of comparative historical studies showed that the language was related because it was found in adjacent areas and according to historical stories, both speakers of these languages come from the same tribe where both were the languages of the first tribe to inhabit the island of Seram (Sanjoko & Erniati, 2020).

The results of cultural construction from time to time continue to fade and experience gradations recently. Not a few factors can be ranked as the cause of cultural fading. Broadly speaking, this fading is due to two factors, those are external and internal factors. Externally, the reality of colonialism (Lestaluhu, 1988) and the enactment of the Village Government Law No. 5/1979 are two examples of the most vulgar and destructive causes (Wahyuni, 2022). Meanwhile, internally, it is caused by the contra-cultural educational environment (family, school, and community) and conflicts of interest nuanced with pragmatism and opportunism (Mahfud et al., 2012). Furthermore, Harvey (2021) stated that climate change could have a negative impact on cultural heritage, leading to the loss of traditional practices and ways of life. This assertion aligns with the concept of external factors impacting cultural construction. This fading phenomenon seems very real in people's daily lives, both in the villages and especially in the cities. In short, people's daily lives are very far from cultural nuances.

This fact clearly cannot be allowed to continue and a solution must be found as soon as possible. To re-open, grow, and develop cultural spaces naturally and sustainably, strategic steps are needed to start businesses. Therefore, the researchers and the Center for Regional Research and Development of Western Seram Regency explore, identify, formulate, and recommend cultural greetings based on the Wemale and Alune tribes' languages. It is pure as efforts to revitalize culture: civilizing, developing,

and strengthening culture. Thus, the cultural identity of SBB society can return to "earthly" and become inspiration, motivation, and spirit.

This research aimed to identify culturally distinctive forms of greeting based on the language structure of the Wemale and Alune tribes. It was qualitative research with an ethnographic approach conducted in one year. During this period, the researchers stayed and socialized with indigenous peoples for ten to fifteen days for each indigenous territory. The total participants in this study were 39 including traditional elders, the king's father, *Saniri* (elements of regional government administration), religious leaders, and society leaders. Each participant gave written consent to provide the necessary information in this research. The research areas were in eight sub-districts of SBB, including West Seram, Taniwel, Huamual, Huamual Belakang, Manipa Islands, Kairatu, Amalatu, and Elpaputih. Those locations were selected based on the existence of language, customary law, and characteristics of the Wemale and Alune tribes.

The data collection techniques used were observation, interviews, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and documentation, while the data analysis technique refers to the Spradley model (Spradley, 1997). Spradley's four stages included domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis. The domain analysis stage was a process carried out to get an overview of the Cultural Greetings of Wemale and Alune Tribes. Furthermore, at the stage of taxonomic analysis, identification, and exploration were carried out to determine the form of the Cultural Greeting's internal structure, thus, it can be found the elements form the Cultural Greeting. Next, at the stage of componential analysis, those elements were used as representations to extract information and opinions from respondents or informants. At this stage, analysis was carried out to find common threads from the beginning of the processes of domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, and componential analysis. This was done by compiling coding based on place categories, tribes, respondent profiles, and types of greetings. Additionally, coding was done using a numerical scale to determine the number of greetings expressed by respondents. Finally, at the cultural theme analysis stage, the relationships among the elements of cultural greetings confirmed by respondents were sought to conclude.

2. The Effort of Cultural Return

People's daily life is very visible so far from cultural nuances. Strategic efforts that allow cultural spaces to re-open, grow, and develop naturally and sustainably can be started from the smallest cultural spaces in the family, school, society, and even in the workplace. Civilization transforms behavior through awareness of thinking patterns (Latif, 2010). The process of civilization is one of the best ways to revive one's inner mentality and identity (Subamia, 2011; Suradarma, 2018). Rediscovering identity is the goal of the civilizing process - reviving values, norms, customs, traditions, and cultures that have been lost.

The culture of greeting is an expression of appreciation that is emotionally linked to our own identity. Greeting someone using their local language means that the person concerned is greeting the identity, personality, and identity of the person being addressed (Fajaruddin, Retnawati, Prihono, Yusron, & Prihatni, 2021). Greeting is an expression of the heart and mind through a language and can be a characteristic for certain regions as a form of local wisdom.

One of the strategic steps to start the process of civilizing and revitalizing values, norms, customs, and traditions can be done through greetings. Saying hello is the entrance to open a room for communication, staying in touch, and so on. The greeting has the power that make people who are addressed feel cared for, valued, and respected. It can also make the person being greeted feel comfortable, open, and willing to accept the person who greets him. It also finally becomes the entrance to talk about many issues in a good, correct, and civilized manner. That is why greeting is an inseparable part of human life, not even in the community of indigenous peoples. It is because greetings are realized to be part and at the same time a mirror of a person's personality, ethics, and identity.

3. Language, Its Change and Development

Language, culture, and thought are interrelated and cannot be separated (Wintergerst & McVeigh, 2011). There are three important things about how language, culture, and thought are interrelated (Kramsch, 2014). First, language is used to express cultural reality. It is used by speakers to express experiences in general to and from others. In addition, it is also used as a tool to reflect the beliefs, attitudes, and worldviews of its speakers. Second, language manifests as a cultural reality. It means that through its form (spoken and written), language is used to form meanings that can be understood by different cultural groups. Third, language is a symbol of cultural reality. In everyday life, language describes the social identity of its speakers. How a person views, judges, believes, or does something is a reflection of his culture.

This study has used the language structure approach of the Wemale and Alune tribes. Before the study was conducted, the researchers considered it important to understand what is meant by language structure (Lapele, 2020). It was to test whether or not the suggested cultural greetings that have been decided are part of one of Wemale and Alune tribes' language structures. Furthermore, the suggested cultural greetings were examined for the meaning of the word and tested for their application in everyday life.

The structure of language is the combination of language elements to form a patterned language. It includes phoneme (phonology), a morpheme (morphology), syntax, and semantics (Darwin, Anwar, & Munir, 2021; Rumilah & Cahyani, 2020). A phoneme is an element of speech sound that can be used to distinguish the meaning of a word. A morpheme is the smallest element of word formation that is adapted to the rules of a language. The syntax is the merging of words into sentences based on systematic rules that apply to a particular language. Semantics is used to study the meaning of a language that is formed in a sentence. Discourse is used to study language at the stage of the conversation, paragraphs, chapters, stories, or literature.

A study on the structure of the Alune language was carried out in 1993/1994. One of the results was to make six classifications of sentences in the Alune language, namely: 1) the number and types of clauses; 2) the internal structure of the first clause; 3) the type of response expected; 4) the nature of the relationship between the action actors; 5) the presence or absence of negative elements in the main verbal phrase, and 6) the context and answers are given (Wattimury, Haulussy, & Pentury, 1996). Based on this classification, salutations or cultural greetings in terms of this research, were part of the sixth classification, explicitly the context and the answers given. Therefore, it was clear that based on the classification of sentences in the language of the Alune tribe, cultural greetings became part of the language structure study.

In contrast to Alune, studies on the structure of Wemale language were almost non-existent. However, it was possible that the two tribes, Alune and Wemale, have relatively the same sentence classification. Based on an interview conducted in Eti and Taniwel villages showed that Wemale and Alune tribes once lived side by side in Nunusaku (Sanjoko & Erniati, 2020). Moreover, Bartels' research in his book also reveals a similar story which according to him is a myth of the Wemale tribe (Bartels, 2017). Next, the fact that in some locations there were Alune tribes living with Wemale tribes, and the languages of the two tribes can be used interchangeably.

Language is dynamic, not only as an actual result of its internal environment development but also as a result of the influence of its external reality. It cannot be avoided because humans are figures who tend to change and develop. The use of new vocabulary, unconventional speaking styles, and behavioral changes, are some examples that occur everywhere. Furthermore, internal changes are essentially changes that occur from within the language in its grammatical system (Poedjosoedarmo, 2006).

The language change could occur in the phonological system (sentence intonation patterns and word prosodic patterns) and the pattern of the phrase order in sentences. It began with the behavior of speakers in their daily lives to adjust to each other and followed by a tendency to innovate in familiar society groups. This early change could gradually be followed by other changes in a chain, which ultimately made the languages different from one another. Meanwhile, external change in this study

was the change and development of language caused by the contact of one language with another language. That contact has the following effects: (1) the inclusion of loanwords; (2) the inclusion of new morphological elements; (3) the entry of new phonemes; and (4) the inclusion of new speech variations. It was called a sociolinguistic phenomenon, where the relationship between language and society was portrayed as two fields that can be studied separately. They were the formal structure of language by linguistics and the structure of society by sociology.

However, the existence of the structure of language could be reviewed historically and provides a specific, isolated, and separate place among other elements of society. Regarding the structure of language and the limitations that exist in it (lexical semantics, phonology, morphology, syntactic systems, and functional stylistics), language became a very specific and relatively isolated social phenomenon. At this point, tribal languages, such as Wemale and Alune languages, were expected to continue to be revived and inherited in a regenerative and sustainable manner.

4. Cultural Greetings from Wemale and Alune Tribes

The suggestion for cultural greetings according to the language structure of the Wemale and Alune tribes obtained from the eight research locations had diversity, both in terms of spoken and written greetings. Eti Village in West Seram District was the first location visited by the researchers. The results of interviews with traditional elders showed that cultural greetings from this village were not widely found. Eti language had been lost for a long time because the generations aged 50 years and under no longer used that language. The cultural greetings offered in Eti Village were *Tabea*. Those who heard it also answered by greeting *Tabea*. Gaspar Pasireron (Personal Communication, September 15, 2021) as one of the society leaders in Eti Village said:

... di Eti sini penggunaan salam par orang tua-tua dolo dong menggunakan salam Tabea, contoh Tabea Upu. Upu artinya orang besar, raja, tuan, seperti upu lamite, lamite tai tapele (Tuhan dan tete nene moyang, langit dan tanah)...

Translation:

... in Eti, the use of greetings for their former elders used Tabea greeting, for example, Tabea Upu. Upu means big man, king, or lord, such as Upu Lamite, Lamite Tai Tapele (God and ancestors, sky and land) ...

Following Eti Village, the data was then gathered in Piru Village. In a brief discussion with several traditional leaders, it turned out that a lot of information was obtained from the research related to language and customs. In the discussion, there were several greetings suggested including *Mese*, *Salamate*, *Somba Hatutene*, and *Tabea*. The term *Mese* was used to raise the spirits of people, the term *Salamate* meant to pray for salvation, the term *Somba Hatutene* was used to greet local officials and traditional elders, and the term *Tabea* was used in formal forums. The answers to those greetings were the same. If someone said *Mese*, then the answer was also with the word *Mese*. Piru Village in the traditional family was included in the Alune Tribe society alliance.

Furthermore, the next location was Kaibobu Village. It was discovered that the greetings offered in this village were *Tabea* and *Malam Bae*. According to the traditional elders, these greetings were passed down from their ancestors long ago. Piter Souhuken (Personal Communication, September 15, 2021) as a traditional elder revealed in the interview:

... salam di Kaibobo itu Tabea, dan kalo diartikan dalam bahasa Indonesia atau melayu berarti selamat. Bahasa Tabea ini bisa digunakan diforum, kalo di siang hari pake Tabea tapi di malam hari itu pake bahasa malam Bae. Jadi bahsa ini dipake dari dolo sampe sekarang ini di Kaibobu...

Translation:

... Greetings in Kaibobo is Tabea, and if it is interpreted in Indonesian or Malay it means congratulations. Tabea language can be used in forums. During the day people use Tabea but at night it uses Malam Bae. This language has been used since ancient times in Kaibobu...

Greetings *Tabea* and *Malam Bae* found in this village were almost no longer used because many traditional languages had been eroded and even lost. It was shown in their daily activities, where most of the residents of Kaibobu Village used Malay, not traditional or regional languages.

The next location observed was Taniwel District. From this district, there were seven representative villages, namely Lisabata, Taniwel, Nuniali, Patahuwe, Hulung, Uweth, and Wakolo. Of the seven villages, only one cultural greeting was greeted found. That was *Upu Ana*. The answer was also with the greeting *Upu Ana*. Although part of the Taniwel district was quite large and had a location between residents who were quite far away (separately on the sets of Tala river), it did not make them have a variety of cultural greetings. Even they appreciated the sibling relationship between one village with another village.

Likewise, the following interview took place in Loki Village, which is part of the Alune tribe. For generations, the cultural greetings used by the people in the village were *Tabea Salamate* and *Mese*. *Tabea* means excuse me. People said the greeting *Tabea* (tabe') when passing in front of others. *Tabea* also means salutations. People there stated *Tabea* in their meeting and leaving. From generation to generation, people used it as greetings of respect and farewell. In addition, people also used the word *Mese* which means "guard". This greeting was used in traditional events to raise the spirits of people.

Similarly, the next interview was conducted in Luhu village part of the Alune tribe. The results of the interview in this village showed that the greeting used by the elders as encouragement was *Atutu Lilie Salawa Huale*. The translation is not yet known. This sentence applied to encouraging activities or other traditional activities. It was not a salutation given to other people. In this village, the greeting used was *Ale* and answered also with the word *Ale*. *Ale* means brother or friend.

The next research location was in Huamual Belakang District, namely Buano Selatan Village and Buano Utara Village. Traditionally, when people met and welcomed each other, they used the terms *Kalpane/Kalpeno*, *Whualpewe*, and *Salamate*. *Kalpane/Kalpeno* was a greeting or expression of conversation starter or a kind of welcome for guests, while *Whualpewe* was an expression or reply from *Kalpeno* followed by a conversation carried out along with activities. *Salamate* was an expression or greeting delivered at the end of an event or activity at a meeting.

It was revealed by one of the traditional elders (Personal Communication, September 23, 2021) in Buano Selatan Village that:

...katong pung orang tua dolo-dolo yang membalas dengan ucap whualpewe, lalu baru dilaksanakan baku bicara atau apa yang akan dilakukan... katong tidak mengetahui sapaan utama yang dipake, cuma biasanya kalo di akhir kegiatan biasanya katong menggunakan bahasa salamete.

Translation:

... our ancestors then replied with the greeting *Whualpewe*, then the conversation was carried out or what would be done ... we don't know the main greeting used. Usually, at the end of the activity, we use the term *Salamate*.

Moreover, the greeting did not only apply to Buano Selatan Village but also applied to Buano Utara Village. Thus, the term *Salamate* is still often used in activities today. In Buano Utara Village, the greeting commonly used by ancestral elders in the past was *Upuo*, with the response to that term being *Jo'u*. However, there was another greeting that was also used by indigenous peoples in Buano Utara Village, namely *Sopai*, which means respect. It was used in official, traditional, and other activities. The greetings *Upou* and *Jo'u* are used in certain activities as exposed by traditional elders (Personal Communication, September 23, 2021) explained below.

...kata Upuo ini biasanya dong pake ketika ingin memasuki kegiatan Maulid atau Ramadhan dan itu dong berteriak dari jalan ke jalan supaya masyarakat tau dan yang lain bisa menjawab Jou...

Translation:

... term *Upuo* is usually used when they want to enter *Mawlid* or *Ramadan* activities and they shout from street to street so that the society can find out and that others can answer *Jou* ...

Additionally, another location visited by the researchers was Manipa Island. This island had cultural greetings which were known as *Sumba Upu* and *Sumba Jou*. *Sumba Upu* was used in daily activities, for example, as a greeting to honor the King (as the head of the customary village), while *Sumba Jou* was used only for indigenous elders to honor them. This greeting did not only apply to the King but can also be used for all respected people.

In Hentihu Village, Kairatu District, the dominant people were not very familiar with cultural greetings. This was motivated by inter-tribal conflagrations that occurred a long time ago. On security grounds, people chose to use Malay. If it used the regional language, it would be easy to identify the tribe. In times of conflict, this was very dangerous and could threaten the safety of the community. For this reason, the use of Malay continued to be carried out until now. This led to the unpreservation of the typical cultural greetings of the region. The greetings used were almost the same as the greetings of other regions in the Wemale tribe. Isac Silaka (Personal Communication, September 30, 2021) one of the community leaders who was also an educational figure in West Seram District said:

... *ucapan salam yang cocok adalah sou salamate atau tabea salamate. Alasannya karena kedua kata ini sudah sangat familiar di kalangan masyarakat Seram Bagian Barat dan selalu digunakan dalam upacara-upacara adat, serta digunakan dalam Pasawari atau Kapata...*

Translation:

... A suitable greeting is *sou Salamate* or *Tabea Salamate*. The reason is that these two words are very familiar among the people of Western Seram and are always used in traditional ceremonies such as *Pasawari* or *Kapata*...

The term *Salamate* means "congratulations to all of us" whereas *sou* refers to the grammar of a good thing. In other words, *Sou Salamate* invited someone to talk about a good thing.

Furthermore, cultural greetings in Rumakay Village, which is the Wemale Tribe, the offer were: *Haone* and *Malam Bae* or *Siang Bae* (according to the conditions whether night or day). The answer to the greeting was the same. It was known that the indigenous language of this area had now begun to disappear and tended to use Malay. During the collection of data, many local greetings in the Western Seram Regency were lost. The community suggested that local governments should develop a local regulation to maintain local languages into regional languages through Local Content Education in schools.

Moreover, the results of the interview in Latu Village displayed that the cultural greetings offered were *Tabea Salamate* and *Hiaho*. The responses to those greetings were all the same. If someone stated *Salamate*, the answer included the word *Salamate*. Tupamahu (Personal Communication, September 18, 2021), one of the traditional leaders of Latu Village stated:

... *selain bilang kata Mese dong juga bilang sih siaho deng kalimat ini diartikan sebagai kaimat Lailahailallah Muhammadarasulluah. Karena kata ini adalah kata keagungan seagai contoh kata sholat bahasa Latunya Sembahia atinya Allah Swt. Jadi kalimat siho siaho artinya kalimat tidak ada tuhan selain Allah...*

Translation:

... They also say *Siaho*, in addition to *Mese*. It can be interpreted as the word *Lailahailallah Muhammadarasulluah*. Because this word is a word of majesty as an example of the word prayer in Latin. Worship means Allah. Thus, *Siho* means there is no god but Allah...

Additionally, in Elpaputih Village of Wasia District, which includes in Wemale Tribe, most people hardly recognize the cultural greetings in their area. It was because the generation under 50 years no longer spoke the Wasia language. They were familiar with the greetings of this area. However, some people admitted that they once listened to the words of *Mese*, *Salamate*, and *Tupanea* from their ancestors. Besides, the researchers confirmed to the traditional elders that the cultural greetings from Waisa Village include *Mese* and *Salamate* which were then answered also with those words. The term *Mese* was used to raise the spirits of people while the word *Salamate* means to pray for salvation.

Based on the results of this study, the recommended cultural greetings of each region based on the language structure of the Wemale and Alune tribes are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 The proposed greetings for each region are based on the language structure of the Wemale and Alune tribes

District/Village	Ethnic group		Greetings	
	Wemale	Alune	Give	Respond
West Seram				
1. Eti		√	1. <i>Tabea</i>	1. <i>Tabea</i>
2. Piru		√	1. <i>Mese</i> , 2. <i>Salamate</i> , 3. <i>Somba Hatutene</i> , 4. <i>Tabea</i>	1. <i>Mese</i> , 2. <i>Salamate</i> , 3. <i>Somba Hatutene</i> , 4. <i>Tabea</i>
3. Kaibobu		√	1. <i>Tabea</i> , 2. <i>Siang/Malam Bae</i>	1. <i>tabea</i> , 2. <i>Siang/Malam Bae</i>
Taniwel	√	√	1. <i>Upu Ana</i>	1. <i>Upu Ana</i>
Huamual				
1. Loki		√	1. <i>Tabea</i> , 2. <i>Salamate</i> , 3. <i>Mese</i>	1. <i>Tabea</i> , 2. <i>Salamate</i> , 3. <i>Mese</i>
2. Luhu		√	1. <i>Ale</i>	1. <i>Ale</i>
Huamual Belakang				
1. South Buano	√	√	1. <i>Kalpane/Kalpeno</i> , 2. <i>Whualpewe</i> , 3. <i>Salamate</i>	1. <i>Kalpane/Kalpeno</i> , 2. <i>Whualpewe</i> , 3. <i>Salamate</i>
2. Buano Utara	√	√	1. <i>Upoo</i> , 2. <i>Sopa'i</i>	1. <i>Jo'u</i> , 2. <i>Sopa'i</i>
Manipa Islands				
		√	1. <i>Sumba Upu</i> , 2. <i>Sumba Jou</i>	1. <i>Sumba Upu</i> , 2. <i>Sumba Jou</i>
Kairatu				
1. Hunitetu	√	√	1. <i>Ho Salamate</i> , 2. <i>Mese</i> , 3. <i>Sou salamate</i> , 4. <i>Tabea Salamate</i>	1. <i>Salamate</i> , 2. <i>Mese</i> , 3. <i>Salamate</i> , 4. <i>Salamate</i>
2. Rumakay	√		1. <i>Haone</i> , 2. <i>Malam/Siang Bae</i>	1. <i>haone</i> , 2. <i>Malam/Siang Bae</i>
Amalatu				
1. Latu	√		1. <i>Tabea Salamate</i> , 2. <i>Hiaho</i>	1. <i>Tabea Salamate</i> , 2. <i>Hiaho</i>
Elpaputih				
1. Wasia	√		1. <i>Mese</i> , 2. <i>Salamate</i>	1. <i>Mese</i> , 2. <i>Salamate</i>

5. The Proposed Cultural Greetings

Based on Table 1, there were at least 20 cultural greetings obtained from indigenous peoples in the SBB of Maluku Province. Ten of them were proposed as cultural greetings in formal meetings, including greetings: *Ale*, *Ho Salamate*, *Hormate Upu*, *Mese*, *Siang/Malam Bae*, *Somba Upu/Jou*, *Sopai*, *Tabea Salamate*, *Sou Salamate*, and *Upu Ana*. Furthermore, based on the FGD conducted between the local government, the researchers, and the indigenous society, it was decided to select six greetings that were recommended to be used as cultural greetings based on the language structure of Wemale and Alune tribes in SBB Regency, including greetings: *Ho Salamate*, *Sou Salamate*, *Tabea Salamate*, *Mese*, *Upu Ana*, and *Sopai*.

Although the explanations of the six proposed cultural greetings were conveyed by the informants when interviewed at the research site and in the FGD, all the information recorded by the researchers was not sufficient to explain in detail the reasons behind the proposals for the six cultural greetings. Therefore, the researchers will conduct further studies to uncover and capture substantial aspects, of language development and language structure of Wemale and Alune tribes as additional material to enrich and complete the research results, thus, the six proposals for the distinctive cultural greetings obtain a more comprehensive justification.

To facilitate further studies to uncover and capture substantial aspects, the proposals are grouped according to the similarities and differences in words. Of the six proposals for cultural greetings, three proposals used the same word, namely *Salamate*. The other three words were different from each other. All of these cultural greetings contain Islamic and Christian values. The studies were carried out successively as follows:

Ho Salamate, Sou Salamate and Tabea Salamate

The three suggestions above all shared one word: *Salamate*. *Salamate* signifies “safe”, based on the result of interviews in areas where the word *Salamate* was introduced, as well as during FGDs. However, the problem then emerged and became a serious question. Is the word *Salamate* a native word of the Wemale and Alune tribes? So far, there had been no answer confirming that was originally owned by the Wemale and Alune tribes. As mentioned above, those two tribes in Taniwel did not know the term *Salamate*. Their ignorance of this diction was confirmed in the Alune-Indonesian Bilingual Dictionary (Erniati, Wahidah, & Harlin, 2018; Wahidah, Kumbangsila, Hasan, & Mukhtar, 2018).

Several locations that openly rejected the use of the word *Salamate* claimed that the term was not native to Wemale and Alune tribes. It was imported from Hebrew, namely *shalom* and/or Arabic *salam*. Therefore, the mention of the terms *Salamate*, *Shalom*, and *Salam* was almost the same. This opinion might be acceptable. However, taking it for granted without rationale will likely only trigger endless debate (Daftary, 2002).

In religious traditions, the terms *Shalom* and *Salam* had a lengthy history. However, this study only provided fragments from a few portions of this extensive history. *Shalom* in Hebrew has a broader meaning than just the word “peace” (Asy’ari, 2021). The word *Shalom* can also connote justice and truth (Borgias, 2021; Rantung, 2017). Thus, every individual could be considered peaceful (*Shalom*) if the situation was safe, prosperous, healthy, and satisfactory.

From the explanation above, the term *selamat* in Indonesian was derived from the words *Shalem*, *Shalom*, and *Salam*, which are anchored in the letters SLM. These three words (*Salamate*, *Shalom*, and *Salam*) even though they had different meanings, the purpose was the same, that was submitting and obeying God's commands and prohibitions. It was a way of surrendering oneself to Him. The term surrender means active, not passive. That was doing everything following orders and leaving His prohibitions. Being an enforcer of justice and truth, and making sacrifices, in the context of the quotations of the experts above.

Hence, what about the term *Salamate*? Regarding this question, there are at least two answers. First, the word *Salamate* was accepted as a word that originates from the treasures of religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as a result of the arrival of these imported religions and having an influence on the social order of the tribes in Maluku. It included the Wemale and Alune tribes. Second, the term *Salamate* was accepted as a word that comes from divine religions, but then there was an acculturation between the languages of religions (*Shalem*, *Shalom*, and *Salam*) and Indonesian (congratulations) with Wemale and Alune tribes (*Salamate*). It was because there had been a change in articulation from “*Selamat*” to “*Salamat*” and added an ending “e”, then, it turned into *Salamate*. Therefore, the term *Salamate* was a product of acculturation and sociolinguistic processes.

Moreover, the term, *Tabea* was an expression or greeting that was very familiar in Eastern Indonesia. For example in South Sulawesi, specifically in Bugis and Makassar, the term *Tabe'* was usually used as an expression of respect to say excuse me (Faradillah & Wardani, 2019; Sanusi, Kerebungu, & Salem, 2020). Likewise, in Southeast Sulawesi, it was also used as a polite attitude which

implies excuse me. Especially for Maluku, such as on the islands of Seram, Ambon, Lease, Buru, to Southeast Maluku, the term *Tabea* was used. It was a respectful greeting with high politeness and also be used in traditional rituals, traditional ceremonies, meetings, and *Pasawari* or *Kapata*.

Furthermore, the term "*Ho*" which was placed in front of the word *Salamate* did not have any meaning. It was being shouted as a way to invite the attention of the public or the people around them. *Ho Salamate!* Then, the term *Sou* which was also placed in front of the term *Salamate* means language or speech. *Sou Salamte* means to speak, say, tell, or convey congratulations or safety. Or, perhaps, the meaning was the same as the term *Ho Salamate*. The term *sou* only strengthens the word *Salamate*.

From the Islamic perspective, the use of the term *salam* has a deep meaning, being one of the 99 names of Allah which reflects His nature as the Most Savior. Apart from that, in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, greetings are said as a sign of kindness and honor between fellow humans, containing the meaning of peace, safety and prosperity (Sulaiman, 2021). In the context of the Wemale and Alune tribes, although the term *Salamate* may have undergone a process of acculturation with other religious languages, in the lives of the people of these tribes, the word may have been adopted and understood within the framework of Islamic values, prioritize peace, safety and the common good.

In a Christian context, the perspective of '*Salam/Salom*' is seen as a manifestation of the values of the Gospel, which emphasize love, peace, and forgiveness (Brondos, 2020; Van Oudtshoorn, 2014). Christianity, with the teachings of Jesus Christ which prioritizes love of neighbor and peace, supports the use of greetings that contain similar values (Wolterstorff, 2017). Standardizing cultural greetings, in this case, is not only an effort to preserve culture but also an expression of deep Christian values.

Mese

The term *Mese* was also proposed to be used in expressing cultural greetings. This term was not only meant to harmonize the cultural greeting with the motto of Western Seram Regency, that is "*Saka Mese Nusa*", but also to be seen as having the power to express or articulate a common interest. In other contexts, the meaning of the term *Mese* was also more connoted with expressions of encouragement for war, fighting, trying, working, competing, and so on. The words *Mese* or *Mise*, or also *Mese-Mese* were terms that have relatively the same meaning, namely *Bae-bae* (good) or strong (Pentury, 2020; Tuasa et al., 2020). Saying *Mese* means don't be careless, don't be slack, don't be mushy. You have to stay strong and you have to be the best. Thus, the term *Mese* was more inclined to articulate a shriek. "*Mese!*" was saying in a raised hand position with fingers clenched, forming a fist. In several locations, the informants suggested that the answer to the term *Mese* was *Mese* as well. The word *Mese* was more proportionally used to raise the spirit or encourage the spirit of citizens or the society to do things that are useful for the common good or common interests, such as cooperation (*masohi*) or in terms of achieving achievements.

From the Islamic perspective, the concept of *Mese* can be seen as a call to strengthen the spirit and determination in living life. Although in some contexts this term is more often connoted with preparation for war or competition, in Islamic teachings, this spirit can be directed towards doing good, working hard, and competing for goodness. As in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad which teaches the importance of working hard and striving to achieve the common good (Mainiyo & Sule, 2023). In this case, the use of the term *mese* in the context of people's social life can be understood as a call to maintain the spirit of contributing to the common good, in line with Islamic values which encourage hard work, courage and tenacity in achieving good goals.

From the Christian perspective, the concept of *Mese* resonates with Christian teachings about perseverance, courage, and brotherhood. In Christian teachings, values such as steadfastness in trials, passion for doing good, and strength in unity are highly emphasized (Tozer, 1961). The term *mese* which invites people not to be careless and remain strong echoes Paul's call in his letter to the congregation, to stand firm in faith and do everything with love. Thus, *Mese* can be seen as a call to build a community based on the strength of faith, persistence in facing challenges, and commitment to the common good, which aligns with the basic principles of Christian teachings.

Sopai

The term *Sopai* was proposed because it contained a message of respect for others. It had an important meaning that everyone was required to respect each other (Jamarudin, 2016). It tended to be used exclusively in public spaces in the relation between the government and society. The term *Sopai* had its charm and character. Emotionally it emphasized "respect" more to the active, not passive verb. That was why, when someone conveys a special greeting with the term *Sopai*, the response uses the term *Sopai*.

From the Islamic perspective, the use of the term *sopai* is a form of respect for other people by the moral values taught in religion. Islam encourages its followers to respect each other and treat each other well, in line with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad about the importance of respecting and glorifying each other (Khan et al., 2020). The use of the term *sopai* in this context can be considered as an implementation of Islamic values which emphasize the importance of respect and appreciation for fellow humans in all aspects of life.

From the Christian context, the term *Sopai* which emphasizes respect is in accordance with Christian teachings about love and respect for others. This teaching is similar to the principle of "love your neighbor as yourself," underscoring the importance of respecting each individual (Witoto, 2021). The use of the word *Sopai* reflects Christian values regarding dignity and modesty, supporting the formation of a harmonious community full of respect for differences.

Upu Ana

The term *Upu* in this context was an emotional expression of feeling, namely affection. The attraction of this term was openness. Anyone could use this word in any space and all social segments. It happened because the meaning of the term *Upu Ana* was love. If there is a conflict, then someone said *Upu Ana*, it could be a silencer or calming the conflict. In *Upu Ana's* words, all leaders, people, fathers, mothers, women, men, parents, and young people were in an equal position in sharing love. There was no difference in sharing affection. Thus, conveying the word *Upu Ana* to people meant spreading love. The response of greeting *Upu Ana* was the same, *Upuas Ana*. In this context, it became a bond between citizens or a community in the name of love.

The term *Upu Ana*, which contains the meaning of compassion and equality between individuals, can be seen as a reflection of Islamic values which emphasize the importance of compassion, unity, and justice in interacting with fellow humans. In Islamic teachings, the Prophet Muhammad taught the importance of loving and loving others regardless of social or cultural differences (Islam, 2020). Therefore, the use of the term *Upu Ana* in this context can be considered as an effort to affirm the values of love and togetherness in society, in line with Islamic principles which encourage brotherhood and equality among human beings.

From the Christian perspective, the concept of *Upu Ana* as an expression of affection reflects Christian values regarding the importance of love and equal dignity before God. The teachings of Jesus Christ teach that love is the main principle of the Christian life, and that every individual has equal value in the eyes of God (Lakoff, 2017). In this case, the use of *Upu Ana* as an expression of affection not only reflects an understanding of social diversity but also emphasizes the basic principle of universal Christian love, strengthening community bonds in an environment characterized by love and respect for others.

The determination of cultural greetings that will be conducted based on the results of this study chooses expressions/greeting words with the following criteria. Firstly, the greetings have linguistic genealogical roots in Wemale and Alune peoples, although socio-linguistically it was undeniably acculturated. Moreover, socio-historically our customary law people had experienced encounters with various cultures, especially languages both in the archipelago and internationally. Secondly, the greetings contain positive values such as respect, courtesy, civilizational, and relevance to Islamic religious values. Thirdly, the greetings are relevant to the distinction, which is the indigenous community that upholds the spirit of *Orang Basudara*. Fourthly, familiar and accepted by the majority

of the people of Western Seram Regency. Fifthly, linguistically, the diction used in the greetings has a positive influence socio-culturally, economically, and so on. Greetings are a symbol of unity and love that crosses religious boundaries, creating a bridge of mutual understanding and respect between Christian and Muslim communities in Maluku. This shows how cultural greetings function not only as a means of social communication but also as an expression of the universal principles of love and peace espoused by both religions, strengthening interfaith relations and promoting harmony in diversity.

6. Conclusions

The cultural greetings of the Wemale and Alune tribes are Indonesian treasures that must be preserved. The use of those cultural greetings must always be applied so that it becomes an effort to prevent the extinction of wrong customs in society. There are six proposals for cultural greetings of Wemale and Alune tribes to be used in the public or formal forum in SBB Regency. They are *Ho Salamate*, *Sou Salamate*, *Tabea Salamate*, *Mese*, *Upu Ana*, and *Sopai*. The words *Ho* and *Sou* are spoken or shouted as a way to invite public attention before saying the word *Salamate*, while the word *Tabea* is an expression of respectful greetings with high politeness. *Salamate* is the language of religions (*Shalem*, *Shalom*, and *Salam*) and Indonesian (congratulations). The word *Mese* means to take good care and is an expression of encouragement to start struggling, trying, and working. *Upu Ana* is an expression of affection as well as a silencer or calming of a quarrel or conflict due to a fight between interested parties. The results of the determination and ratification of the cultural greeting are then followed up by making a curriculum of local content to integrate or as supplementary/teaching materials in school learning for elementary and junior high schools in Western Seram Regency. In future research, there is potential to delve deeper into the Functional Systemic Linguistic Analysis of these cultural greetings. This exploration would aim to enhance our understanding of local culture, specifically within the Wemale and Alune Tribes in Maluku.

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