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DIALECTAL VARIATIONS OF ADJEKTIVES IN KAILI LEDO AND KAILI ADO: A CONTRASTIVE STUDY

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Abstract || This research addresses an existing deficiency in the field of Austronesian micro-dialectology by exploring the structural differences between the closely situated Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado dialects found in Central Sulawesi. The objective was to compare 50 adjectives, with primary data gathered from native speakers in Palu and Sigi through observational (simak) and conversational (cakap) approaches, which were subsequently examined using intralingual pairing. The results effectively respond to the research inquiries: both dialects possess a common grammatical foundation wherein adjectives operate as stative verbs through mandatory prefixation (na-/ma-), while also exhibiting consistent micro-dialectal variation. From a phonological standpoint, an observable vowel transformation from /a, i/ to /o/ along with the addition of glottals appears in Ado (na ka vs. na'ko), in addition to final nasal prolongations (nalanga vs. nalangan). On a lexical level, complete root substitutions differentiate behavioral ideas (jilere vs. nyenye). In terms of structure, asymmetries are most evident in less desirable contexts, as Ledo utilizes a bound root (na 'da), whereas Ado opts for a phrase (ado nabelo). In summary, this structural alignment facilitates the creation of a cohesive local education program.

Keywords || Adjectives, Contrastive Analysis, Dialectology, Kaili Ado, Kaili Ledo.

Abstrak || Penelitian ini membahas kekurangan yang ada di bidang mikrodialektologi Austronesia dengan mengeksplorasi perbedaan struktural antara dialek Kaili Ledo dan Kaili Ado yang lokasinya berdekatan di Sulawesi Tengah. Tujuannya adalah untuk membandingkan 50 kata sifat, dengan data primer yang dikumpulkan dari penutur asli di Palu dan Sigi melalui pendekatan observasional (simak) dan percakapan (cakap), yang kemudian dianalisis menggunakan metode pasangan intralingual. Hasil penelitian ini secara efektif menjawab pertanyaan penelitian: kedua dialek tersebut memiliki landasan tata bahasa yang sama di mana kata sifat berfungsi sebagai kata kerja statif melalui prefiks wajib (na-/ma-), sekaligus menunjukkan variasi mikrodialek yang konsisten. Dari sudut pandang fonologis, transformasi vokal yang dapat diamati dari /a, i/ menjadi /o/ beserta penambahan glotal muncul dalam dialek Ado (na ka vs. na'ko), selain perpanjangan nasal akhir (nalanga vs. nalangan). Pada tingkat leksikal, penggantian akar kata yang sepenuhnya membedakan konsep perilaku (jilere vs. nyenye). Dari segi struktur, asimetri paling jelas terlihat dalam konteks yang kurang diinginkan, karena Ledo menggunakan akar kata terikat (na 'da), sedangkan Ado memilih frasa (ado nabelo). Singkatnya, keselarasan struktural ini memfasilitasi penciptaan program pendidikan lokal yang kohesif.

Katakunci || Adjektiva, Analisis Kontrastif, Dialektologi, Kaili Ado, Kaili Ledo.

Introduction

Language operates not only as a means of everyday communication among people but also encapsulates cultural identity, cognitive frameworks, and historical legacies. In the diverse field of Austronesian languages, Central Sulawesi is notable for its significant ethnolinguistic variety, with the Kaili language family being the primary tongue prevalent across various regencies such as Sigi, Donggala, Parimo, and the main city, Palu. The extensive research on Sulawesi's languages by Noorduyn (1991) reveals intricate micro-level linguistic divisions where mutually understandable forms rapidly evolve into distinct local variants. From a sociolinguistic perspective, the Kaili language is divided into several unique dialects, with Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado being particularly significant due to their close geographical locations and interconnected speech communities. Even though the speakers of these dialects inhabit adjacent areas, they display subtle yet deeply rooted linguistic differences. Within the framework of any language, adjectives constitute a vital lexical category. Dixon (2004) states that adjectives play a crucial role as semantic identifiers that modify nouns, convey emotional states, assess physical attributes, and interpret sensory experiences. In light of the swift socio-economic developments, urban growth, and language changes taking place in Central Sulawesi, it is crucial to undertake a thorough, synchronic comparative study of the adjective systems in these two dialects. This is essential to safeguard against micro-dialectal loss and to further document local languages (Fishman, 1991).

Although there is a pressing sociolinguistic need to safeguard dialectal ecosystems, a thorough examination of the issue shows that the lines separating micro-dialects within the younger demographic of Kaili speakers are becoming increasingly indistinct due to a contemporary shift in language. This situation is made worse by a significant lack of academic studies that thoroughly explore dialectal differences with a precise contrastive approach. Initial structural outlines by Inhuong et al. in 1979 and 1985 laid the groundwork for understanding Kaili morphology and syntax, but their analyses mostly addressed the language family in broad terms or concentrated mainly on Kaili Ledo as the regional common language. Additionally, lexical resources like the dictionary compiled by Wumbu et al. in 1985 focus mainly on documenting standard vocabulary without providing a comparative analysis of the closely related and adjacent dialects.

Previous contrastive research has typically focused on juxtaposing a single prominent dialect against national or international languages, such as Bahasa Indonesia or English, thus neglecting the internal structural subtleties, phonetic changes, and distribution of bound morphemes that exist between sister dialects like Ledo and Ado. Given this academic gap, the main aim of this manuscript is to methodically identify, categorize, and compare the morphological forms and semantic characteristics of 50 essential adjective lexicons across the Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado dialects from a synchronic perspective.

The prolonged disregard for cross-dialectal comparative analysis creates an urgent need for research that requires immediate empirical engagement. In the absence of a methodical, evidence-focused examination of essential adjectives encompassing important semantic categories like human character, spatial extent, sensory experiences, aesthetic judgment, physical forces, and emotional conditions the unique linguistic characteristics that define the cultural and cognitive identities of the Ado and Ledo groups are likely to be irrevocably integrated into the prevailing national language. Following the comparative frameworks set by Robert Lado (1957), a well-organized contrastive analysis between two similar dialects is essential as a diagnostic method to reveal fundamental structural changes and possible linguistic similarities. This study's importance operates on two separate levels: from a theoretical standpoint, it enhances the domains of descriptive linguistics, comparative morphology, and Austronesian dialect studies by offering an empirical example of lexical diversity in dialects that are closely related (Adelaar, 2005; Himmelmann, 2005). On a practical level, the compiled list of 50 comparative adjectives serves as an invaluable, data-supported resource for educators and local decision-makers involved in developing mother-tongue education programs and materials for language revival in primary institutions throughout Central Sulawesi.

The uniqueness of this study is found in its careful and intensive use of a structural contrastive approach, which is applied specifically to a collection of 50 distinct pairs of adjectives in the Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado dialects an unheard-of dataset that has not been gathered, analyzed, or published in a cohesive scientific paper. The research this project addresses is the long-standing absence of information regarding minute phonological changes, differences in bound morphemes (affixation patterns), and minor semantic expansions within the adjectives of these closely related dialects. While this investigation

recognizes certain geographic and sampling limitations, since the main data was collected from a select number of native speakers located in particular administrative areas within Palu and Sigi Regency, the thoroughness of the linguistic examination ensures a strong internal validity (Miles et al., 2014). By examining these 50 descriptive terms through a structured intralingual perspective, this research effectively clarifies the complex network of structural resemblances and unique distinctions that characterize the lexical-semantic environment of the Kaili-speaking community.

Previous Research

In order to create a strong empirical basis for this research and clearly outline its academic limits, it is crucial to conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing literature. Historically, investigations into the language environment of Central Sulawesi have relied on extensive dialectal studies or standalone descriptive grammar focused on particular dominant dialects. A significant advance in the documentation of the Kaili language family was realized by Wumbu et al. in 1985, who put together the Kamus Bahasa Kaili - Indonesia. Although their dictionary work offered an important overview of the regional vocabulary, it served more as a broad translation reference instead of an in-depth, localized examination of precise grammatical aspects among different dialects. As a result, the nuanced morphosyntactic and semantic differences found among neighboring, mutually comprehensible dialects—like Ledo and Ado—were largely overlooked, creating a research gap concerning the intricate details of micro-dialectal variations.

Subsequent structural documentation shifted toward evaluating the morphosyntactic boundaries of the regional vernacular. Extensive research by Inhuong et al. (1979) on the morphology and syntax of the Kaili language, alongside their subsequent analysis of Kaili sentence structures (Inhuong et al., 1985), successfully demonstrated the baseline structural framework of the language family. Additionally, their specialized investigation into the reduplication systems of Kaili (Inhuong et al., 1984) provided crucial insights into how bound morphemes and morphological processes trigger semantic shifts. However, because these historical inquiries frequently aimed to establish a unified structural profile for the language group, they overlooked how specific open word classes such as adjectives

independently behave when contrasted between closely related sister dialects.

In the specialized realm of Western Austronesian lexical classifications, the structural characteristics of descriptive words have become the subject of considerable research. Researchers like Himmelmann (2005) and Dixon (2004) have thoroughly discussed the grammatical role of adjectives in regional languages of Indonesia, revealing that descriptive ideas in these languages often operate as stative verbs that necessitate distinct bound morphemes, including specific stative prefixes. Local empirical studies focused on the prominent Kaili Ledo dialect such as those assembled by Evans (2003) established that Ledo adjectives systematically undergo affixation changes when transitioning from attributive to predicative syntactic positions. However, these investigations primarily centered on Kaili Ledo, given its role as the regional common language, treating it as a singular example of the entire Kaili language group.

Moreover, the current contrastive investigations concerning the Kaili language have typically concentrated on inter-lingual comparisons instead of intra-lingual ones. Earlier publications mainly compared Kaili Ledo with standard Bahasa Indonesia or international languages to aid in language teaching and translation research. Although these inter-lingual analyses offer significant benefits for educational purposes, they do not adequately address the subtleties of internal dialectal variations. A crucial element missing in the dialectology of Central Sulawesi is a thorough intra-lingual contrastive examination that systematically pairs similar, neighboring sister dialects. This present study effectively addresses this long-identified gap in research by offering a focused, comparative analysis of 50 essential adjectives between Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado, redirecting the academic attention from broad generalizations to specific structural details.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research approach grounded in the frameworks of synchronic dialectology and contrastive linguistics. According to the foundational principles of contrastive analysis proposed by Lado in 1957, analyzing two linguistically connected systems at a particular moment enables researchers to methodically uncover structural similarities and nuanced differences that might be hidden in broader assessments. The main analytical tools

utilized in this study are the intralingual pairing technique and the extralingual pairing technique, both of which are informed by the extensive linguistic methods developed by Sudaryanto in 2015. The intralingual pairing technique is carefully applied to scrutinize, correlate, and synchronize the phonological forms, bound morphemes, and structural distributions found within the adjective data of Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado.

The process of gathering data was carried out through on-site work employing a two-pronged method that included both observation (simak) and interviews (cakap), along with a targeted lexical questionnaire for elicitation. As stated by Sudaryanto (2015), the simak and cakap techniques represent the essential elements of descriptive linguistic research in the field, ensuring an accurate capture of both spontaneous, natural speech events and structured, prompt-based lexical items. The central tool for research featured a carefully chosen collection of 50 fundamental adjectives in Bahasa Indonesia, chosen deliberately to cover six general semantic categories: human traits, size and measurement, sensory experiences, aesthetic judgment, physical power or dynamics, and emotional conditions. This systematic approach is consistent with Samarin's (1967) foundational manual on field linguistics, which illustrates how specific semantic questionnaires effectively reduce referential confusion during cross-dialectal queries.

The data analysis process adhered to a meticulous four-phase protocol aimed at maintaining an open, reproducible, and thorough linguistic assessment of the 50 pairs of adjectives. The initial phase focused on phonetic transcription and categorization, during which the unprocessed audio recordings provided by the informants were converted into standardized written forms and entered into a comprehensive comparative matrix. The second phase centered on semantic categorization, where the 50 adjectives that had been gathered were allocated into their six specified semantic categories to facilitate comparisons relevant to specific fields. The third phase involved an in-depth contrastive analysis, in which each pair of adjectives was systematically scrutinized through two main linguistic aspects: (a) phonological alignment, assessing the precise structural correspondence, shifts in vowel sounds, or the absence of consonants between the two language varieties to establish cognate relationships, and (b) morphological configuration, examining whether the conceptual properties acted as single morphemes or necessitated multiple morphemes through the addition of stative verbal prefixes

(Inhuong et al., 1979; Himmelmann, 2005). The fourth and concluding phase was characterized by descriptive generalization, where the resulting patterns of structural commonalities and unique differences were crafted into systematic linguistic principles before being organized into transparent, categorized analytical tables for display.

Results

Table 1. Comparison Data Table for The Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado Languages

No	From adjektiva	Dialectal Variation	Form	Meaning
1.	Big	Ledo: *Nambaso* Ado : *Nabete*	Prefix (Na-) + root (mbaso)	Refers to the semantic concept of a quality-specifically the dimension or size of an object-that exceeds normal limits.
2.	Dirty	Ledo: *Natagara* Ado: *Natana*	Prefix (na-) + Root word (tagara) Prefix (na-) + Root (tana)	Refers to an object that is impure or stained
3.	Smart	Ledo: *Napande* Ado: *Natau*	Prefix (na-) + Root word (pande) Prefix (na-) + Root (tau)	Refers to a person's ability or expertise in any field
4.	Stupid	Ledo: *Navuvo* Ado: *Nandongo*	Prefix (na-) + Root (vuvo) Prefix (na-) + Root (dongo)	Refers to a condition where a person lacks the ability to think, know, or understand.
5.	Slow	1. Ledo: *Naleve* 2. Ado: *Nalia*	Prefix (na-) + Root (leve) Prefix (na-) + Root (lia)	Refers to a condition of time or movement that takes a long time to complete.
6.	Good	1. Ledo: *Nabelo* 2. Ado: *Nabelo*	prefix (na-) + root (belo) prefix (na-) + root (belo)	Refers to something that is desirable, of high quality, right, or morally excellent.
7.	Bad	1. Ledo: *Na da* 2. Ado: *Ado nabelo*	Prefix (na-) + root ('da) Negation phrase (ana) + prefix (na-) + root (belo)	Refers to something that is unpleasant, low quality, harmful, or morally wrong.
8.	Beautiful	1. Ledo: *Nagaya* 2. Ado: *Nagaya*	prefix (na-) + root (style) prefix (na-) + root (style)	Refers to an aesthetically pleasing appearance or qualities that delight the senses.

9.	Sharp	1. Ledo: *Natada* 2. Ado: *Natda*	prefix (na-) + root (tada) prefix (na-) + root (tada)	Refers to an object having a thin edge or point that can cut or pierce easily.
10.	Small	1. Ledo: *Nakodi* 2. Ado: *Nakodi*	prefix (na-) + root (kodi) prefix (na-) + root (kodi)	Refers to something that is little in size, strength, or amount compared to others.
11.	Itchy	1. Ledo: *Nakakata* 2. Ado: *Kakata*	prefix (na-) + root word (kakata) Monomorphic/basic form (kakata)	Refers to an irritating sensation on the skin that causes a desire to scratch.
12.	Long	1. Ledo: *Nandate* 2. Ado: *Nandoe*	prefix (na-) + root (ndate) prefix (na-) + root (ndoe)	Refers to a great distance from one end to the other, or a long duration of time.
13.	Short	1. Ledo: *Naede* 2. Ado: *Naede*	prefix (na-) + root (ede) prefix (na-) + root (ede)	Refers to a small distance from end to end, or a brief duration.
14.	Fast	1. Ledo: *Nagasi* 2. Ado: *Nagasi*	prefix (na-) + root (gasi) prefix (na-) + root (gasi)	Refers to moving, happening, or developing at a high speed.
15.	Strong	1. Ledo: *Nakua* 2. Ado: *Narisi*	prefix (na-) + root (kua) prefix (na-) + root (risi)	Refers to having great physical power, force, or ability to withstand pressure.
16.	Weak	1. Ledo: *Nalente* 2. Ado: *Nalente*	prefix (na-) + root (lente) prefix (na-) + root (lente)	Refers to lacking physical strength, energy, or power.
17.	Diligent	1. Ledo: *Naraji* 2. Ado: *Naraji*	prefix (na-) + root (raji) prefix (na-) + root (raji)	Refers to showing care, conscientiousness, and hard work in one's duties.
18.	Sick	1. Ledo: *Nadua* 2. Ado: *Nadua*	prefix (na-) + root (dua) prefix (na-) + root (dua)	being sick" or "sick
19.	Lazy	1. Ledo: *Nasanda* 2. Ado: *Nabuto*	prefix (na-) + root (sanda) prefix (na-) + root (buto)	A feeling of reluctance or lack of motivation to do an activity despite being physically and mentally capable.
20.	Messy	1. Ledo: *Nakamburaka* 2. Ado: *Nagarumpu*	prefix (na-) + root (kamburaka) prefix (na-) + root (garumpu)	Untidy or cluttered conditions

21.	Arrogant	1. Ledo: *Nasombo* 2. Ado: *Natameme*	prefix (na-) + root (rau) prefix (na-) + root (boe)	Feelings of displeasure caused by insults or inappropriate treatment.
22.	difficult	1. Ledo: *Nakaja* 2. Ado: *Santangamate*	prefix (na-) + root word (kaja) Complex polymorphemic structure (santagamate)	Something hard to accomplish
23.	Dishonest	1. Ledo: *Najeko* 2. Ado: *Nebagiu*	prefix (na-) + root (jeko) prefix (ne-) + root (bagiu)	Unfair or unlawful acts for the sake of profit
24.	Brave	1. Ledo: *Nabia* 2. Ado: *Nabia*	prefix (na-) + root (bia) prefix (ne-) + root (bia)	Confidence in facing something
25.	Afraid	1. Ledo: *Naeka* 2. Ado: *Naeka*	prefix (na-) + root (eka) prefix (ne-) + root (eka)	The feeling that arises when something is threatening.
26.	Patient	1. Ledo: *Nosabara* 2. Ado: *Nosabara*	prefix (no-) + root word (sabara) prefix (no-) + root word (sabara)	Restrain yourself when facing difficulties
27.	Angry	1. Ledo: *Narau* 2. Ado: *Nahoe*	prefix (na-) + root (rau) prefix (na-) + root (hoe)	Feelings of displeasure caused by insults or inappropriate treatment.
28.	Happy	1. Ledo: *Nadamba* 2. Ado: *Nadamba*	prefix (na-) + root (damba) prefix (na-) + root (damba)	Feeling happy about something
29.	Sad	1. Ledo: *Naasi* 2. Ado: *Nasirara*	prefix (na-) + root (asi) prefix (na-) + root (sirara)	The feeling of unhappiness that arises when there is loss, failure or disappointment
30.	Fun	1. Ledo: *Nadamba* 2. Ado: *Nadamba*	prefix (na-) + root (damba) prefix (na-) + root (damba)	Used to express inner satisfaction, gratitude, or personal happiness.
31.	Delicious	1. Ledo: *Narasa* 2. Ado: *Narasa*	prefix (na-) + root (rasa) prefix (na-) + root (rasa)	Used to praise dishes that are seasoned just right, tasty, and appetizing (for example when eating food)

32.	Clean	1. Ledo: *Nagali* 2. Ado: Nagasa	prefix (na-) + root (gali) prefix (na-) + root (gasi)	refers to a physical condition that is "clear," "transparent," or "not cloudy." This word was originally often used to describe clear mountain water or transparent glass.
33.	Neat	1. Ledo: *Narapi* 2. Ado: *Nabelo*	prefix (na-) + root (rapi) prefix (na-) + root (belo)	refers to an arrangement that is "orderly," "sequential," or "parallel." This word has a similar sound and meaning to the Indonesian word "rapi"
34.	Bright	1. Ledo: *Nareme* 2. Ado: *Nareme*	prefix (na-) + root (reme) prefix (na-) + root (reme)	The root word "reme" refers to the emission or glow of light photons (luminosity). Scientifically, "nareme" is defined as "an environmental condition or spatial area that receives high exposure or intensity of light waves (bright/not dim)."
35.	Dark	1. Ledo: *Nalanda* 2. Ado: *Nalondo*	prefix (na-) + root (landa) prefix (na-) + root (londo)	A condition of a space/environment that experiences a deficit or absence of visual light illumination intensity.
36.	Warm	1. Ledo: *Nalongi* 2. Ado: *Nalongo*	prefix (na-) + root (longi) prefix (na-) + root (longo)	The thermal condition of an entity or environment that is at a moderate (lukewarm) temperature level.
37.	Cold	1. Ledo: *Naranindi* 2. Ado: *Nasela*	prefix (na-) + root (ranindi) prefix (na-) + root (sela)	The thermal condition of a substance/body that experiences a decrease in temperature below the normal limit, resulting in a tactile sensation of shivering.
38.	Sweet	1. Ledo: *Namomi* 2. Ado: *Namomi*	prefix (na-) + root (momi)	the gustatory condition of a

			prefix (na-) + root (momi)	substance dominated by glucose/saccharide stimuli on the sense of taste; metaphorically extends to the representation of sincerity
39.	Salty	1. Ledo: *Napaga* 2. Ado: *Napaga*	prefix (na-) + root (paga) prefix (na-) + root (paga)	The gustatory state of a substance dominated by the stimulus sodium chloride (salt). In the Ledo dialect, it is homonymous with the emotional concept of "sadness/pity".
40.	Spicy	1. Ledo: *Nalala* 2. Ado: *Nalala*	prefix (na-) + root (lala) prefix (na-) + root (lala)	A condition of taste stimulation on the tongue that produces a hot or stinging sensation due to exposure to the substance capsaicin (chili).
41.	Bitter	1. Ledo: *Napai* 2. Ado: *Napai*	prefix (na-) + root (pai) prefix (na-) + root (pai)	The gustatory condition of an object dominated by alkaloid compound stimuli on the posterior taste buds; contrast to sweet taste.
42.	Fragrant	1. Ledo: *Navangi* 2. Ado: *Navongi*	prefix (na-) + root (vangi) prefix (na-) + root (vongi)	The olfactory condition of a space or object that is dominated by the release of aromatic molecules that produce a pleasant, fragrant, or pleasant odor sensation on the sense of smell.
43.	Rotten	1. Ledo: *Navau* 2. Ado: *Navau*	prefix (na-) + root (vau) prefix (na-) + root (vau)	The condition of organic decomposition of a substance that triggers the release of ammonia/sulfide gas, producing a pungent odor sensation that stimulates the sense of smell.

44.	Wet	1. Ledo: *Nabangga* 2. Ado: *Nagege*	prefix (na-) + root (bangga) prefix (na-) + root (gege)	The physical condition of an entity or surface that experiences saturation, retention, or adhesion of liquid molecules (especially water) in high intensity.
45.	Dry	1. Ledo: *Nangau* 2. Ado: *Nangau*	prefix (na-) + root (ngau) prefix (na-) + root (ngau)	The physical condition of an object or environment that experiences depletion, total evaporation, or the absolute absence of water/liquid content.
46.	Talkative	1. Ledo: *Najilere* 2. Ado: *Nanyenye*	prefix (na-) + root (jilere) prefix (na-) + root (nyenye)	A psychological behavioral condition of an individual characterized by high intensity of speaking, a tendency to nag, or repeatedly criticizing minor things.
47.	Stingy	1. Ledo: *Nasina* 2. Ado: *Nasina*	prefix (na-) + root (sina) prefix (na-) + root (sina)	A psychological behavioral condition of an individual characterized by an extreme reluctance to share, give alms, or relinquish material/financial possessions to others.
48.	Hard	1. Ledo: *Na ka* 2. Ado: Na'ko	prefix (na-) + root (ka) prefix (na-) + root (ko)	The physical condition of an object is characterized by solid density, sturdy structure, high resistance, and does not easily change shape or break due to external mechanical pressure.
49.	Smooth	1. Ledo: *Nalusu* 2. Ado: *Nalusu*	prefix (na-) + root (lusu) prefix (na-) + root (lusu)	The physical condition of the surface of an object that has a smooth, even texture, is free from roughness, or the particle size of the

				substance is very finely ground.
50.	Tall	1. Ledo: *Nalanga* 2. Ado: *Nalangan*	prefix (na-) + root (langa) prefix (na-) + root (langan)	The spatial condition of an object or entity that has a vertical dimension above the average size, measured from the base plane boundary to the top point.

Discussion

The empirical comparison of the 50 assembled adjective lexicons from Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado offers innovative perspectives on Western Austronesian micro-dialectology. On a broader structural scale, the findings support the traditional comparative models proposed by Robert Lado in 1957, demonstrating that while mutual understanding is largely maintained, delicate internal structural divisions are significantly established. Morphologically, the findings consistently endorse the claims made by Himmelmann (2005) and Dixon (2004) concerning the typological position of property terms within Sulawesi languages. Adjectives are not presented as uninflected nominal modifiers; instead, they function as dynamic stative verbs that require prefixation. The prefix na- pervasively influences nearly all semantic domains, serving as the foundational marker for environmental, spatial, and physical characteristics.

Nevertheless, the main practical significance of this research resides in observing the minor alterations and word substitutions that set Ado apart from Ledo. Phonologically, a clear pattern of vowel alteration is presented. In the Ado-speaking community, root words that include the vowels /a/ or /i/ in Ledo consistently transition to /o/, evident in examples such as *landa* turning into *londo* (dark), *longi* changing to *longo* (warm), *vangi* converting into *vongi* (fragrant), and significantly ka transforming into 'ko (hard). This last change is also characterized by the insertion of a glottal stop in Ado (na'ko), indicating a specific phonetic limitation. In addition, there is an instance of morphological expansion seen in the term tall, as the Ledo word *nalanga* adds a final velar nasal to become *nalangan* in Ado. On the other hand, there is a case of morphological contraction in sensory descriptors like itchy, where Ado eliminates the prefix entirely to operate as a

standalone monomorphemic root (*kakata*), whereas Ledo retains the complete polymorphemic construction (*na-kakata*).

Lexical-semantic differences reveal significant cognitive mismatches between the two language systems. In domains that focus on human actions and physical conditions, complete fundamental substitutions happen often. The term talkative is entirely distinct in *jilere* (Ledo) and *nyenye* (Ado), whereas environmental descriptors such as wet change from *bangga* (Ledo) to *gege* (Ado). The highest degree of structural and phrase-level imbalance is observed when expressing negative or unfavorable ideas like bad. While Kaili Ledo employs a bound stative root (na 'da), Kaili Ado formulates an explicit negation phrase (ado nabelo), which combines the dialect-specific negative marker *ado* (no) with the affirmative vector *belo* (good). This distinctive phrasing illustrates how micro-dialects utilize their internal syntactic frameworks to address lexical deficiencies, supporting modern theories of linguistic evolution and cultural conceptual frameworks.

Conclusion

This research effectively carries out an extensive synchronic contrastive examination of 50 essential adjective lexicons within the Kaili Ledo and Kaili Ado dialects. The data reveals that although both dialects have a fundamental grammatical structure based on stative prefixes (mainly na-), they experience pronounced localized phonological changes, morphological simplifications, and total lexical root swaps in significant semantic areas. Unique indicators like the vowel transformations from /a, i/ to /o/, the insertion of glottal stops (na'ko), the addition of final nasals (nalangan), and phrases of syntactical negation (ado nabelo) serve as clear evidence of micro-dialectal variation between these neighboring communities. In practical terms, these insights offer a well-defined, evidence-backed lexical framework that local educators and policymakers can leverage to develop effective, dialect-sensitive mother-tongue curriculum modules in Central Sulawesi, effectively linking descriptive linguistics with the preservation of regional languages.

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