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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PREFIXATION IN TAJIO AND TIALO

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Abstract || This study compares the forms, functions, and meanings of prefixes in Tajio and Tialo, spoken in Parigi Moutong Regency, Central Sulawesi. A qualitative descriptive approach and comparative morphological analysis were employed. Data were collected from five purposively selected informants through nonparticipant observation, semi-structured interviews, field notes, documentation, and recordings. Analysis involved data condensation, display, and verification. Both languages employ prefixation and nasalization in active verb formation, although their prefix inventories and word-formation patterns differ. The passive prefix Ni- is prominent in the Tajio examples, whereas the Tialo data include Na-, No-, I-, and Ne-. Some Tialo transitive verbs also exhibit a final -e element. Excessive degree is expressed through constructions containing bega in Tajio but through internal modification and reduplication in Tialo. These findings document shared morphological tendencies alongside language-specific patterns and provide a foundation for further analysis of regional linguistic diversity.

Keywords | | Tajio; Tialo, Prefixation, Comparative Morphology, Regional languages.

Abstrak || Penelitian ini membandingkan bentuk, fungsi, dan makna prefiks dalam bahasa Tajio dan Tialo di Kabupaten Parigi Moutong, Sulawesi Tengah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan analisis morfologi komparatif. Data diperoleh dari lima informan yang dipilih secara purposif melalui observasi nonpartisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur, pencatatan, dokumentasi, dan perekaman. Analisis mengikuti tahap kondensasi, penyajian, serta verifikasi data. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa kedua bahasa memanfaatkan prefiks dan nasalisasi untuk membentuk verba aktif, tetapi memperlihatkan perbedaan alomorf dan pola pembentukan kata. Prefiks pasif Ni- menonjol dalam data Tajio, sedangkan data Tialo menunjukkan Na-, No-, I-, dan Ne-. Sejumlah verba aktif transitif Tialo juga memperlihatkan unsur akhir -e. Makna keadaan berlebihan dinyatakan melalui konstruksi dengan bega dalam Tajio, sedangkan Tialo menggunakan perubahan bentuk dan reduplikasi. Temuan ini memperjelas persamaan tipologis serta perbedaan morfologis kedua bahasa dan mendukung pendokumentasian bahasa daerah.

Katakunci || Bahasa Tajio, Bahasa Tialo, Prefiksasi, Morfologi Komparatif, Bahasa daerah.

Introduction

Language serves as a means of communication and a marker of collective identity. In regional communities, linguistic structures encode knowledge and practices transmitted across generations. Sahril (2018) discusses the pressures associated with regional language shift, providing a broader rationale for documenting forms that may be underrepresented in linguistic descriptions. Documentation of morphology is particularly valuable because word-formation patterns reveal systematic relationships between grammatical meaning and linguistic form.

Parigi Moutong Regency in Central Sulawesi is home to speakers of Tajio and Tialo. The manuscript identifies Kasimbar and Tomini districts as its research settings. Both languages are used in local social and cultural activities, while Indonesian plays an important role in education and public communication. Although such contact may affect language use, this study does not measure language vitality or demonstrate an ongoing loss of particular prefixes. Its immediate objective is descriptive: to compare linguistic forms recorded from speakers of the two languages.

Morphology examines the internal structure of words and the processes through which grammatical and lexical meanings are formed. Prefixation attaches an element before a base and may interact with phonological alternation and other word-formation operations. Rahayu (2023) discusses prefix-based word formation in Minangkabau, while Fisnia Pratami et al. (2023), Rohmawati et al. (2024), and Zalukhu et al. (2024) illustrate related interests in affixation across Indonesian linguistic research. Ramli and Erwandi (2019) demonstrate the relevance of comparisons between regional languages, and Soares (2025) provides a further example of prefix analysis in a regional-language context.

Previous research by Suparni et al. (2024) documents full and partial reduplication as well as reduplication combined with affixation in Tajio. However, that study does not provide a systematic contrast between Tajio and Tialo prefix patterns. The present study addresses this more specific gap by examining prefix forms, their reported grammatical functions, and corresponding lexical examples in the two languages. The comparison also considers a final -e element appearing in certain Tialo verbs and contrasting expressions of excessive degree.

Because these latter phenomena extend beyond strict prefixation, they are treated as associated word-formation patterns rather than as prefixes in themselves.

Preliminary contrasts illustrate the motivation for this analysis: the manuscript records Tajio Nonulis and Tialo Monulise for "write," Tajio Nelinjok and Tialo Melinjo'e for "run," and Tajio Ni'nang and Tialo Inano for "be eaten." Such pairs suggest functional parallels alongside segmental differences. Their precise segmentation, spelling conventions, and morphosyntactic distribution require contextual verification; the examples are reproduced as recorded rather than silently standardized.

The study asks: (1) What forms, functions, and meanings of prefixes occur in Tajio and Tialo? (2) What similarities and differences are observable between their prefix systems? The objective is to provide a comparative account grounded in the forms reported by participants. This synchronic description does not, by itself, establish genetic subgrouping, sound-change histories, or a general productivity hierarchy between the languages.

The importance of describing Tajio and Tialo arises from their place in the daily cultural practices of communities in Parigi Moutong. The original study situates Tajio in settings associated with agriculture, maritime life, and customary activities, while identifying oral storytelling, customary counsel, and ceremonial expressions among the contexts in which Tialo is used. These accounts establish why community-based linguistic documentation is relevant. They do not imply that every participant regularly uses all these varieties of speech, nor can the present morphological dataset establish the relative frequency of the languages across those settings. What can be investigated through the available evidence is the organization of particular word forms and the kinds of grammatical meaning expressed by them.

Contemporary changes in technology, schooling, mobility, and the public use of Indonesian may influence the domains in which smaller regional languages are maintained. As Sahril (2018) observes in a study of language shift in another Indonesian setting, changes in patterns of language use are relevant to local language maintenance. The original manuscript raises these issues as part of the research motivation. However, a study of five informants and a sample of morphological forms cannot measure the extent of shift in Tajio or

Tialo. The present article therefore treats those pressures as background for documentation rather than as an independently established result. Detailed analysis of prefixes contributes to a reusable record of the grammatical knowledge of the speakers who provided the data.

The focus on the beginning of a word is a deliberate restriction. Prefixes may change the grammatical category of a root, mark how the event is construed, or distinguish a form referring to an actor from one emphasizing an affected participant. At the same time, an observed word may include additional phonological or morphological material. For this reason, it would be misleading to ignore an ending merely because the study is principally about prefixes. The -e recorded in some Tialo forms is discussed as a potentially associated ending, while the free form bega is examined as a separate element in degree constructions. Neither automatically counts as a prefix. This analytic boundary follows the distinction between the central object of the study and related phenomena that help explain the recorded forms (Ramli & Erwandi, 2019).

Prior work on word formation provides a context for these decisions. Rahayu (2023) addresses prefixes in Minangkabau, while Soares (2025) examines the morphological interpretation of prefixes in Makasae. Ramli and Erwandi (2019) employ a regional-language comparison involving Jamee and Minangkabau, illustrating that correspondences across languages can be examined systematically without assuming identical grammatical structures. The analyses of affixation by Fisnia Pratami et al. (2023), Rohmawati et al. (2024), and Zalukhu et al. (2024) concern distinct language materials and research settings; they are useful methodological points of reference rather than direct evidence about Tajio or Tialo.

The closest point of departure is the study by Suparni et al. (2024), which describes patterns of reduplication in Tajio, including complete reduplication, partial reduplication, and reduplication associated with affixation. Their findings establish that Tajio word formation extends beyond the addition of single prefixes. Yet they do not supply a direct paired description of the forms documented here for Tajio and Tialo. The main contribution of this research is therefore not a claim to have discovered prefixation or reduplication, but the organization of comparable Tajio–Tialo examples according to active, passive, accidental or stative, and excessive-degree meanings.

The preliminary lexical pairs make this problem concrete. Tajio Nonulis and Tialo Monulise are associated with the meaning "write"; Tajio Nelinjok and Tialo Melinjo'e with "run"; and Tajio Ni'nang and Tialo Inano with a passive reading of "eat." These are not interchangeable forms, even where their Indonesian glosses overlap. The research asks which segments precede the lexical base, how those segments relate to grammatical interpretation, and whether any additional changes accompany them. A comparative analysis must also notice that an equivalent translation does not necessarily establish identical syntax, voice status, or internal morphological boundaries.

At a theoretical level, comparing the two sets of word forms enriches the descriptive record available for work on Austronesian morphology and regional language typology. At a practical level, the examples and their glosses could provide initial material for local-language learning resources, word lists, and future dictionary projects, provided they are checked with speakers and presented in an agreed writing system. These potential applications are implications of the documentation rather than outcomes that the current investigation has experimentally tested.

Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive design with a comparative morphological focus. Fieldwork was conducted in Kasimbar and Tomini districts, Parigi Moutong Regency, Central Sulawesi, where the manuscript reports community use of Tajio and Tialo. The primary units of analysis were recorded word forms containing prefixes, alongside their Indonesian glosses and the functions attributed to them. Secondary materials included studies of morphology and regional-language description (Ramli & Erwandi, 2019; Soares, 2025).

Five key informants were selected purposively on the basis of their command of Tajio or Tialo and familiarity with local language use. The original documentation does not specify how many informants represented each language, nor does it provide their age distribution or a complete elicitation schedule. These details should be supplied from field records when available rather than inferred. Data collection combined nonparticipant observation, semi-structured interviews, note-taking, documentation, and recording. Comparable collection approaches are also described in linguistic research by Fisnia Pratami et al. (2023).

Analysis followed an interactive sequence of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, as described in the source manuscript with reference to Zalukhu et al. (2024). Candidate forms were grouped according to active, passive, accidental/stative, and excessive-degree meanings, and then compared across the two languages. A distinction was maintained between affixes, full word forms, and independent lexical items. The analysis is interpretive and qualitative; the available manuscript does not support claims about statistically measured frequency or allomorphic productivity.

Results and Discussion

Results

The data identify several forms that correspond in broad grammatical meaning across Tajio and Tialo, together with differences in their formal realization. Table 1 retains the illustrative forms and variants reported in the source while presenting the material in a more compact comparative arrangement. Capitalization and spacing of examples have been regularized only for readability; uncertain morphological boundaries are not treated as established facts.

Table 1. Comparison of morphological patterns documented in Tajio and Tialo.

Morphological function	Tajio evidence	Tialo evidence
Active verbs	Reported prefixes: No-, Nom-, Mo-, Mom-, Ne-, Pa-. Examples: No ngoli "buy"; Nom basa "read"; Mom bava "carry."	Reported prefixes: Mo-, Mom-, Mong-, Me-, Ie-. Examples: Mo ngoli "buy"; Mom ba "carry"; Mo nulise "write"; Me ampa "walk."
Passive verbs	Ni oli "be bought"; Ni epe "be heard"; also No nyempa "be kicked" and I yangkung "be carried."	No oli "be bought"; Na sapui "be swept"; I longo "be heard"; prefixes listed as Na-, No-, I-, Ne-.
Accidental / stative meanings	Te turu "fall asleep"; Na navu "fall"; Ne te'ita "be seen."	No powae "catch fire"; Te utuge "fall asleep"; I nito "be seen."
Excessive degree	Ne dei bega "too small"; Na basag bega "too large"; bega is described as a free morpheme.	De'dei "too small"; Gio mbange "too large"; the source proposes internal modification and partial reduplication.

The original analysis initially distinguishes four broad domains of prefix-related expression. The first comprises active verbs naming activities carried out by a subject. The second involves passive expressions in which an affected participant receives greater grammatical prominence. A third group covers events construed as unintentional or the resulting state of an event. The fourth addresses excessive states or degrees. This last category is retained because the source juxtaposes prefixed adjective-like forms with an independent degree word in Tajio and modified forms in Tialo. The classification is useful for organizing the discussion, although voice, event structure, and degree marking should not be treated as equivalent categories at every level of grammar.

In the table accompanying the original manuscript, the active set is associated with the Tajio shapes No-, Nom-, Mo-, Mom-, Ne-, and Pa-, and with the Tialo shapes Mo-, Mom-, Mong-, Me-, and a form recorded as Ie-. The passive set is associated with Tajio Ni-, No-, and I- and Tialo Na-, No-, I-, and Ne-. For accidental or stative interpretations, the forms listed are Tajio Ne te-, Te-, and Na-, and Tialo No-, Te-, Na-, I-, and Ne-. The excessive-state group includes Tajio Ne-, Na-, and No- in constructions with bega; Tialo is described with forms labeled De'dei, Gio, Li, I, A, Ma, and Mei, but these labels do not all have demonstrated status as prefixes. The differences between an affix inventory and an inventory of complex words are kept explicit.

A further issue is orthography. The manuscript sometimes writes a prefix apart from its base, as in No ngoli or Nom basa, but elsewhere writes apparently comparable material as one word, as in Nonulis or Monulise. This variation may reflect transcription conventions rather than a genuine difference in morphological constituency. For comparability, the article preserves source examples and indicates purported segments with a hyphen only in the discussion of possible prefixes. A publication-ready morpheme analysis should apply one transcription scheme to every example and give the corresponding unsegmented word so that the evidence remains inspectable.

Active verb formation and nasal alternations

Both languages exhibit forms reported as active verbs in which material preceding the lexical base has a nasal component. Tajio examples include No ngoli "buy," Nom basa "read," and Mom bava "carry"; Tialo examples include Mo ngoli "buy," Mom ba "carry," and Mo layar "sail." The source lists No-, Nom-, Mo-, Mom-, Ne-, and Pa- for Tajio

and Mo-, Mom-, Mong-, Me-, and Ie- for Tialo. These lists are retained as the author's inventory, although some forms in the accompanying examples warrant closer segmentation.

The most informative comparison involves the "write" forms, recorded as Tajio Nonulis and Tialo Monulise. The Tialo form appears to contain a final -e element not represented in the comparable Tajio form. Similarly, the source contrasts Tajio Nelinjok with Tialo Melinjo'e for "run." The distribution of -e should be examined across a larger set of bases before it is analyzed as a productive suffix, and still more evidence would be needed to establish a circumfix. Its possible association with a subset of Tialo verbs is nevertheless a valuable descriptive observation.

The reported nasal alternations warrant further examination in phonological environments rather than being attributed automatically to a single assimilation rule. For example, the same manuscript gives Tialo Nom baca "read" in its table but excludes Nom- from its summary inventory of Tialo active prefixes. This inconsistency is preserved as a verification point rather than resolved without speaker evidence.

The active-verb examples describe ordinary actions such as buying, reading, bringing, sailing, walking, and writing. Tajio No ngoli "buy," Nom basa "read," and Mom bava "bring" show distinct initial formations associated with broadly comparable action meanings. The Tialo sample includes Mo ngoli "buy," Nom baca "read," Mom ba "bring," Mo layar "sail," and Me ampa "walk." These forms are important because the prefix shapes cannot be understood simply by assuming that one segment always maps to one grammatical meaning. Distinguishing phonologically conditioned variants from separate prefixes requires additional comparison of the same bases in different verbal environments.

The source argues that nasalization is central to the formation of active verbs in both languages. In linguistic terms, this may involve nasal-initial affixes, changes at the prefix–root boundary, or more complex interactions between affixation and the initial consonant of the root. The available spellings are compatible with an important role for nasal material, but they are not a sufficient phonetic record from which to deduce a single process. More elicited pairs would need to control for root-initial vowels, nasals, and oral consonants, and for whether the verbs are used transitively or intransitively.

The distinction between the two languages becomes most visible where Tialo has an ending not present in the paired Tajio expression. The reported Tialo Monulise "write" ends in -e, as does Melinjo'e "run," whereas the comparable Tajio items Nonulis and Nelinjok do not have the same final segment. The original manuscript refers to the additional segment as a closing suffix and proposes an analysis involving circumfixation. That is a potentially productive hypothesis, but a circumfix is normally identified through evidence that the initial and final segments function together as one discontinuous affix. The recorded pairs alone do not prove that dependency. An alternative possibility is an independent verbal suffix or an inflectional difference linked to the particular base.

It is also necessary to distinguish the lexical examples from the grammatical generalization that every active transitive Tialo verb requires -e. The current sample does not include a systematic paradigm of the same transitive verbs with and without -e, nor corresponding intransitive forms in matching environments. Indeed, the example Melinjo'e glossed "run" is not ordinarily transitive in its Indonesian translation. The evidence therefore supports a narrower statement: final -e appears in certain Tialo verbal forms and merits targeted morphological testing. Recording that distribution precisely is more informative than asserting a universal rule before it has been demonstrated.

Passive verb formation

The source presents Ni- as a prominent marker in Tajio passive forms, exemplified by Ni oli "be bought," Ni epe "be heard," and Ni'nang "be eaten." However, it also records No nyempa "be kicked" and I yangkung "be carried." Consequently, the data support describing Ni- as salient among the examples, not as the language's sole passive prefix. In Tialo, the recorded passive examples include No oli "be bought," Na sapui "be swept," I longo "be heard," and Inano "be eaten," with Na-, No-, I-, and Ne- included in the stated inventory.

The contrast between Tajio Ni oli and Tialo No oli is especially useful because it juxtaposes similar lexical material with different initial elements. The variety of Tialo forms may reflect phonological conditioning, lexical classes, or grammatical distinctions. Although the source proposes vowel harmony as a possible explanation, evidence from the vowel environments and alternations of additional roots is needed to test that analysis. It is therefore preferable to describe the

surface variation without presenting a specific morphophonemic rule as demonstrated.

The passive examples are useful because they concern corresponding roots with related Indonesian meanings. Tajio Ni oli and Tialo No oli both receive the gloss "be bought," making their initial markers directly comparable within the limits of the available translation. The source additionally gives Tajio Ni epe "be heard," No nyempa "be kicked," and I yangkung "be carried." The existence of these additional Tajio forms complicates the broader claim that Ni- is the only passive prefix. A defensible interpretation is that Ni- is recurrent or salient in the examples selected by the authors, while No- and I- are also represented.

For Tialo, the manuscript illustrates passive meaning with No oli "be bought," Na sapui "be swept," and I longo "be heard"; it also cites the form Inano as a passive expression meaning "be eaten." The listed forms Na-, No-, I-, and Ne- suggest surface variation, but the examples do not establish whether each is an allomorph of one underlying marker. Demonstrating allomorphy requires evidence that the forms share a grammatical function and occur in complementary or otherwise systematically conditioned environments. If the environments overlap and meanings differ, it may instead be necessary to analyze them as distinct affixes or constructions.

The original discussion proposes that Tialo passive markers are affected by phonological adjustment or vowel harmony. This is plausible as a research question, but the proposed mechanism should be demonstrated through comparisons of roots with different initial sounds or vowel patterns. No such comprehensive distributional comparison is supplied in the present manuscript. The article consequently reports the authors' suggested interpretation while reserving judgment on the exact rule. This is particularly important because forms classified as passive may in some contexts participate in other voice, aspectual, or stative constructions.

In comparative terms, the most secure observation is therefore a patterned difference among the cited expressions rather than a fully proven typological distinction in morphological complexity. Tajio prominently exhibits Ni- in the examples examined; Tialo has several different initial shapes. Determining whether one system is genuinely more complex would require controlling for sample size, the kinds of bases elicited, and the number of grammatical functions grouped under

each heading. Such controls would allow future work to move from a preliminary inventory to an empirically supported morphophonemic description.

Accidental and stative constructions

Both languages also encode accidental events or states with forms comparable in translation to certain uses of Indonesian ter-. The Tajio dataset includes Te turu "fall asleep," Na navu "fall," and Ne te'ita "be seen." The Tialo dataset includes No powae "catch fire," Te utuge "fall asleep," and I nito "be seen." The similarity in Indonesian glosses should not obscure possible differences among inchoative, stative, passive, and accidental interpretations.

The Tajio sequence Ne te'ita is particularly noteworthy: the source treats Ne- and Te- as potentially co-occurring elements. Without additional paradigmatic evidence, this is best described as a recorded complex form rather than as confirmed hierarchical prefixation. Likewise, comparing the Tialo forms No powae and I nito suggests that different constructions may share approximate translations while differing in grammatical behavior. Contextual sentences would help establish the boundaries between their meanings.

The accidental and stative group contains forms that resemble the range of meanings associated with Indonesian ter- but cannot automatically be equated with that single Indonesian prefix. The Tajio expression Te turu is translated "fall asleep," and Na navu is glossed "fall." Both could involve event development or entry into a state. Ne te'ita, glossed "be seen," instead suggests a visual perceptual result or passive-like interpretation. The contrast highlights the need to test whether the examples represent one morphological category or several semantically related categories.

The source explicitly draws attention to Ne te'ita as a complex sequence involving Ne- and Te-. If both segments can be identified independently and their ordering is productive, the word may provide evidence for layered prefixation. Yet a single example does not establish a consistent derivational sequence. The analysis would be strengthened by showing the independent base ita, forms with just one of the two proposed prefixes, and comparable examples involving other roots. This would also help determine whether the perceived boundary is morphological rather than merely an artifact of transcription.

Tialo examples are similarly varied. No powae "catch fire," Te utuge "fall asleep," and I nito "be seen" bring together changes of state and perceptual-result meanings. The comparison with Tajio indicates that both languages have means of encoding such events, but it does not demonstrate that the exact semantic partition or grammatical function is identical. A sentence-level analysis should consider whether the forms can take an expressed agent, whether a spontaneous interpretation is obligatory, and whether they occur with aspectual or tense markers. The present data establish the existence of the forms and their reported interpretations, not the full distribution of those constructions.

Excessive-degree constructions

The clearest contrast beyond the core verb-prefix inventory concerns expressions of excessive degree. Tajio Ne dei bega "too small" and Na basag bega "too large" contain the independent element bega following an adjective-like form. By contrast, Tialo De'dei "too small" and Gio mbange "too large" are reported without an equivalent free element. This contrast supports a preliminary distinction between a construction involving a free morpheme in Tajio and more word-internal or reduplicative formations in the Tialo examples.

The forms also require careful categorization. Because bega is a free morpheme, its occurrence is not itself an instance of prefixation. Moreover, De'dei may involve partial reduplication, but Gio mbange cannot be assigned to the same process without more complete segmentation. Suparni et al. (2024) demonstrate that reduplication is relevant to the wider morphology of Tajio; the Tialo examples here invite a parallel study of reduplication and degree marking rather than justifying an unqualified claim that one language is analytic and the other synthetic.

The excessive-degree contrast illustrates why the interpretation of morphology must consider constructions extending beyond the word. In Tajio, the adjective-like forms Ne dei bega "too small" and Na basag bega "too large" include bega as a separate form placed after the modified element. The source also identifies No- among the possible initial elements in this class. The contribution of bega is semantically central: it expresses a degree that exceeds a contextual standard. A grammatical description should therefore analyze the combination of an initial element, the property expression, and the following free morpheme rather than assign the entire meaning to a prefix alone.

The Tialo equivalents De'dei "too small" and Gio mbange "too large" lack a directly corresponding free element bega. The source relates the difference to internal modification and partial reduplication. The repeated part of De'dei suggests that reduplicative analysis may be appropriate, but morphological evidence for Gio mbange should be considered separately. The source additionally lists Li, I, A, Ma, and Mei among relevant forms without providing a complete set of exemplifying base–derived pairs. In the absence of such pairs, it would be premature to call each of these items a separate prefix or to assign the same formation rule to all of them.

The analytic contrast between a construction with an independent degree expression and a modified word form is nevertheless an important descriptive observation. It suggests that equivalent meanings may be distributed over different grammatical resources. Tajio draws on a construction that combines word formation with the free form bega, whereas the cited Tialo examples suggest more compact or reduplicated expressions. This distinction is more precise than characterizing entire languages as analytic or synthetic, since a language may use both strategies in different domains. The observed degree expressions show how functional comparison can uncover contrasts that an affix list alone might overlook.

The relationship with previous work is especially relevant here. Suparni et al. (2024) document reduplication in Tajio, establishing that repetition of linguistic material can interact with word class and other morphological processes in a related descriptive domain. The present Tialo expression De'dei highlights a possible cross-language point of comparison involving degree or intensification, but it cannot simply be treated as confirmation that the two languages have the same reduplication system. More targeted examples are required to establish whether the relevant reduplication marks excess, plurality, distributivity, aspect, or some combination of functions.

Comparative interpretation and contribution

Across the documented forms, three comparative tendencies stand out. First, the languages share broadly similar functional domains for prefixation and nasal-initial active verb formations while differing in the recorded prefix shapes. Second, the passive examples suggest Ni- is salient in Tajio whereas Tialo exhibits several surface forms. Third, some Tialo verbs contain final -e, and excessive-degree meanings are represented through different constructions in the two languages.

These observations constitute a useful preliminary comparative description, but the available evidence does not establish exact allomorph-conditioning rules or a categorical requirement for -e in all transitive verbs.

The findings complement earlier research in two respects. Whereas Suparni et al. (2024) focus on Tajio reduplication, the present comparison introduces Tialo evidence and brings the interaction of prefixation, phonological alternation, and degree marking into view. More broadly, the analysis responds to the descriptive concerns found in Rahayu (2023), Soares (2025), and Zalukhu et al. (2024), and to the comparative orientation of Ramli and Erwandi (2019). Research on affixation in written Indonesian contexts (Fisnia Pratami et al., 2023; Rohmawati et al., 2024) also underscores the importance of identifying word-formation functions in their specific linguistic settings; however, their datasets are not directly equivalent to spontaneous or elicited regional-language speech.

The study contributes a structured comparison and a set of forms for further community-based verification. It does not test genealogical relatedness through comparative reconstruction, nor does it provide demographic evidence that the languages are currently endangered. More comprehensive future work should document speaker metadata, expand elicitation across phonological contexts, supply sentence-level glosses and audio-linked tokens, and test whether the proposed -e element and passive forms exhibit consistent grammatical distributions. These steps would strengthen both typological description and locally relevant language documentation (Sahril, 2018).

In returning to the two research questions, the results first provide an inventory of reported shapes and grammatical interpretations. They include nasal-initial active verb formations, several passive initial markers, forms associated with accidental events or states, and constructions denoting an excessive degree. Second, they identify differences in the realization of these functions across languages. This includes the divergent initial markers in corresponding passive examples, the final -e in some Tialo verbs, and the presence of bega in Tajio degree expressions. These are concrete comparisons grounded in the listed forms rather than assertions of complete system identity or complete system separation.

A methodological implication follows from comparing data that are similar in translation but not necessarily equivalent in grammar. A gloss such as "be seen" may describe a passive event, a resulting state, or an expression with a different argument structure. Similarly, "too small" may be expressed with a separate degree element or a bound morphological operation. Comparative descriptions should therefore report the segmental shape, lexical base, syntactic context, and intended interpretation independently. This approach makes it easier to discover which distinctions are linguistically meaningful rather than artifacts of Indonesian translation.

The article also indicates several priorities for the next stage of field-based documentation. A balanced sample of Tajio and Tialo speakers would permit direct elicitation of the same lexical bases. Recordings should be aligned with phonetic or orthographic transcriptions and provide morphological glossing for each element. The proposed nasal alternations should be tested across different root-initial sounds; passive-marking hypotheses should be compared with active counterparts; and verbs showing final -e should be contrasted with otherwise comparable forms lacking that element. The aim of these recommendations is to validate and extend the recorded results, not to replace them.

Finally, the significance of the study extends to the preservation of local linguistic knowledge. Describing inflectional and derivational patterns produces information not readily captured in simple word lists. Such information may help communities and educators develop grammatical explanations or culturally relevant teaching materials, provided they are collaboratively checked and adapted. This implication follows from the documentation objective stated in the introduction. The immediate achievement of the present article remains the comparative organization and interpretation of the Tajio and Tialo forms actually reported in the manuscript.

Conclusion

This qualitative comparative study identifies shared word-formation functions and contrasting surface patterns in Tajio and Tialo. The examples indicate nasal-initial formations among active verbs in both languages. The Tajio passive data prominently include Ni-, whereas Tialo examples exhibit Na-, No-, I-, and Ne-. Accidental and stative meanings are expressed through additional forms in both languages.

Some Tialo active verbs exhibit a final -e element, while excessive degree is illustrated through constructions containing bega in Tajio and modified or reduplicated forms in Tialo.

These findings provide a foundation for more detailed morphological documentation in Parigi Moutong Regency. They should be interpreted as patterns within the reported sample rather than as exhaustive rules of either language. Testing prefix productivity, morphophonemic conditioning, transitivity, and the status of final -e requires a larger, contextualized dataset and direct consultation with speakers. The comparative record remains valuable as a starting point for such research and for the preservation of community linguistic knowledge.

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