



Fahrudin Hanafi^a
Haerun Ana^b
Maulid Taembo^c
Yunus^d

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Abstract

The study aims to describe verbal affixes in the Muna language based on morphological aspects and to describe verbal affixes in the Muna language based on semantic aspects. Data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The results of the study indicate that the Muna language has several verb-forming affixes, some of which are derived from nouns, adjectives, or verbs themselves. Verb affixes in the Muna language can be prefixes, infixes, suffixes, and confixes. However, this article only discusses Muna verb prefixes and infixes. In the Muna language, verbs as a category are characterized by forms that, in the context of language use, always appear in a complex manner through the process of affixation. The affixation process is characterized by the combination of two or more morphemes in the form of affixes to the base or bases. From a semantic level, Muna verbs can be identified based on their grammatical units. Among the meanings of the verb affixes are doing something as mentioned in the base word, unintentional activities, imperatives, possessiveness, mutual or reciprocal actions, calling, and actions that will be carried out. The results of this study are expected to be one of the efforts to preserve regional languages, especially the Muna language in Southeast Sulawesi.

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Corresponding author:

Maulid Taembo,
Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education,
Universitas Trunjoyo Madura, Bangkalan, Indonesia
Email address: taembomaulid@gmail.com

^a Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari, Indonesia

^b Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari, Indonesia

^c Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Universitas Trunjoyo Madura, Bangkalan, Indonesia

^d Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari, Indonesia

1 Introduction

Language, as a tool for communication and social interaction, plays a crucial role in cultural activities and is also a part of culture itself. Besides determining the thought processes of its users and speakers, language also serves as a lingua franca within society (Pujiyanti et al., 2024).

Language is a phenomenon of human life, manifested only in human society as a means of communication. This is evident in everyday human activities, which are inextricably linked to the use of language in various aspects of life.

The world's languages are incredibly diverse. Likewise, Indonesia boasts hundreds of regional languages. These regional languages continue to be used and maintained by their speakers. However, some regional languages are becoming increasingly rare. In fact, some regional languages are threatened with extinction, and some have even become extinct. Therefore, the government is implementing various methods and programs to preserve regional languages.

Regional languages have many functions, including (1) supporting the national language, (2) symbolizing regional identity, (3) symbolizing regional pride, (4) a means of communication within families and local communities, and (5) a tool for developing and supporting regional culture (Halim, 1984).

One of the regional languages still in use is Muna. Muna is a regional language in the Southeast Sulawesi Province. This language is spoken by the Muna people, whose original territory is in Muna Regency, West Muna Regency, and Central Buton Regency. However, the use of Muna has begun to spread to several areas in Southeast Sulawesi, such as Kendari City, Konawe, and Buton. It is even found outside Southeast Sulawesi Province.

The topic discussed in this article relates to verbal affixes in the Muna language, which will be examined from both a morphological and a semantic perspective. Therefore, this article will describe verbal affixes in the Muna language based on morphology and semantics (Meyer & Beucher, 1990).

This discussion is crucial because it provides a detailed and in-depth overview of verbal affixes in the Muna language, based on morphological aspects. Furthermore, the results of this study can be a valuable contribution to the development of linguistic theory, or at the very least, enrich the existing body of linguistic theory. It is hoped that this article will contribute to the preservation of regional languages, particularly the Muna language in Southeast Sulawesi.

Theoretical Framework

In the discussion and analysis of this article, the author refers to several relevant theories appropriate to the research topic. This section will discuss the underlying concepts in this article, namely the concepts or theories of morphology and semantics.

Essentially, the expert opinion on morphology is that morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the intricacies of word form. Morphology is a branch of linguistics that addresses the intricacies of word function and meaning. Therefore, discussions of morphology also involve aspects of meaning. Many experts have expressed their opinions on morphology and contributed extensively to its research.

Keraf (1984) states that morphology is a part of grammar that discusses word form. The Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language explains that morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies morphemes and their combinations, or that morphology is a part of language structure that encompasses words. Both of these views conclude that morphology is the study of language whose object is words and their various intricacies.

Furthermore, according to Ramlan (1987), morphology is a branch of linguistics that examines the intricacies of word forms in relation to word classes and meanings. In other words, morphology studies the intricacies of word forms and the functions of word form changes, both grammatical and semantic. This understanding is similar to Finegan et al. (1992), who view that morphology examines the structured meanings within words. Chaer (2003) states that morphology examines the intricacies of morphemes, how to determine a form as a morpheme, and how those morphemes are processed into words. A morpheme is the smallest meaningful grammatical unit, while a word is the smallest unit in syntax. Achmad & Alek Abdullah (1996) state that morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the intricacies of words and their changes, as well as the impact of those changes on meaning and word classes.

Form analysis, identification of affixation items and other morphological processes, classification of meaning-determining items, and so on, are carried out using procedures commonly used by structural linguists. References regarding morphology are taken from Nida's (1970) view with the following set of principles. Forms that are

repeatedly encountered and have the same meaning are allomorphs of the same morpheme. Similar forms are allomorphs of the same morpheme if their differences can be applied phonologically.

Forms that differ in phoneme composition and cannot be explained phonologically, their differences can still be considered as allomorphs of the same or similar morpheme, as long as the differences can be explained morphologically. Hidden forms can form morphemes that are different if their meanings are the same, with the provisions (a) the morphemes are different if their meanings are different, and (b) the morphemes are the same if their meanings are the same and their distribution can be determined (complementary). A form can be considered a morpheme if (a) it stands alone, (b) it represents a formal difference within a sequence of structures, or (c) it occurs in combination with other elements that cannot stand alone or in other combinations. If a form is the only combination within another form that can, at some point, stand alone or occur in a combination of other forms, that form is also considered a morpheme. If within a sequence of structures there is a difference that is not a form, but rather a gap, that gap is considered (a) a separate morpheme if the sequence of structures is related to an allomorph of another morpheme (Tonta & Darvish, 2010).

Similarly, regarding semantics, there are also many expert views on it. However, this article only mentions a few definitions and concepts of semantics. According to Slamet (in Djajasudarma, 1999), semantics is the study of the meaning of words in a particular language according to its classification system. Semantics is the science of meaning, discussing meaning, how meaning originated (for example, the history of words, in terms of how words emerged), how it developed, and why meaning changes occur in the history of meaning. Chaer (2003) states that semantics is a branch of linguistics that discusses meaning.

Semantics is the study of meaning. Semantics examines symbols or signs that express meaning, the relationships between these meanings, and their impact on humans and society. Therefore, semantics encompasses the meanings of words, their development, and their changes.

2 Materials and Methods

In relation to the research design, this study employed qualitative description through the interview method. Kirk and Miller, in Nasution (1996), state that the qualitative method is a method used in the social sciences that fundamentally relies on observation. Furthermore, Bogdan & Biklen (1992) explain that a qualitative method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data. The method used in this study was field research, meaning the researcher went directly to the research area to collect data. The research data consisted of words, phrases, and sentences containing verb affixes (Farqi-Shah & Thompson, 2004).

Data collection was carried out using the conversational and listening methods (Mahsun, 1995). The conversational method employed face-to-face conversation, which involved visiting each research location and conducting conversations based on a list of questions. The listening method employed a listening technique, followed by a further technique of note-taking and recording. The listening technique involved the researcher eavesdropping on the informants' language use. Next, note-taking and recording techniques were employed, namely, recording and documenting information about the questionnaire and matters related to the research object. The analytical method employed in this study was the distribution method (Mahsun, 2007).

3 Results and Discussions

Based on the background outlined above, the following will explain the verbal-forming affixes or verb affixes in the Muna language, based on morphological and semantic studies. The Muna language has several frequently used affixes in word formation. These affixes are as follows:

Prefix: *ti-*

The prefix *ti-* is attached to verbs that convey the meaning of an unintentional action. The following examples explain the use of this prefix more clearly.

<i>ti- + lengka</i>	→	<i>tilengka</i> 'opened'
<i>ti- + songko</i>	→	<i>tisongko</i> 'closed'

<i>ti- + wora</i>	→	<i>tiwora</i>	‘seen’
<i>ti- + ghora</i>	→	<i>tighora</i>	‘thrown’
<i>ti- + buna</i>	→	<i>tibuna</i>	‘uprooted’
<i>ti- + ala</i>	→	<i>tiala</i>	‘taken’
<i>ti- + hoba</i>	→	<i>tihoba</i>	‘spilled’
<i>ti- + owa</i>	→	<i>tiowa</i>	‘carried away’

Based on this data, the word *tilengka* ‘opened’ comes from the word *lengka* ‘open’. Thus, the prefix *ti-* implies an unintentional action. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *fe-*

The prefix *fe-* is an allomorph of *fe-* and *fo-*. The change from *fe-* to *fo-* occurs due to the different word environments. The prefix *fe-* is used before words beginning with a vowel or voiced consonant, while the prefix *fo-* is generally used before words beginning with a voiceless consonant or a nasal. This prefix has an imperative meaning. More clearly, the implementation of this usage, attached to a number of verbs, can be seen in the following description.

<i>fe + buni</i>	→	<i>febuni</i>	‘hidden’
<i>fe + ghato</i>	→	<i>feghato</i>	‘build a roof’
<i>fe + kanggela</i>	→	<i>fokanggela</i>	‘make it clean’
<i>fe + kala</i>	→	<i>fokala</i>	‘tell to walk’
<i>fe + foni</i>	→	<i>fofoni</i>	‘raise’
<i>fe + kuni</i>	→	<i>fokuni</i>	‘make it yellow.’
<i>fe + suli</i>	→	<i>fosuli</i>	‘return it’
<i>fe + ndawu</i>	→	<i>fondawu</i>	‘drop it’
<i>fe + idho</i>	→	<i>feidho</i>	‘become green’
<i>fe + wiese</i>	→	<i>fewise</i>	‘face’
<i>fo + ngkora</i>	→	<i>fongkora</i>	‘put or ask someone to sit’
<i>fo + fumaa</i>	→	<i>fofumaa</i>	‘feed’
<i>fo + lima</i>	→	<i>folimba</i>	‘go out’

Based on this data, the word *febuni* (asking to hide) comes from the word *buni* (hiding). Similarly, the word *feghato* (asking to provide a roof or to be covered) comes from the word *ghato* (roof). Thus, the prefix *fo-* has an imperative meaning, a request to do something. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

The prefix *fe-*, which is an allomorph of *fo-*, also has the meaning of attaching something mentioned to the root word, which is imperative. This occurs when the root word or its basic form is a noun.

<i>fo + sala</i>	→	<i>fosala</i>	‘Put on pants’
<i>fo + beta</i>	→	<i>fobeta</i>	‘Put on a sarong’
<i>fo + buha</i>	→	<i>fobuha</i>	‘Put on powder’
<i>fo + mina</i>	→	<i>fomina</i>	‘Put on oil’

Based on this data, the word *fosala* (put on pants) comes from the word *sala* (pants). Thus, the prefix *fo-* implies the act of requesting the putting on of something mentioned in the root word. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *feka-*

The prefix *feka-* has an imperative or commanding meaning, as mentioned in the root word. This prefix is attached to adjectives. More clearly, the implementation of this prefix attached to several verbs can be seen in the following description.

<i>feka- + bala</i>	→	<i>fekabala</i>	‘zoom in’
<i>feka- + rubu</i>	→	<i>fekarubu</i>	‘reduce’
<i>feka- + wanta</i>	→	<i>fekawanta</i>	‘extend’

<i>feka- + rimba</i>	→	<i>fekarimba</i>	‘speed up’
<i>feka- + kesa</i>	→	<i>fekakesa</i>	‘make it better’
<i>feka- + roko</i>	→	<i>fekaroko</i>	‘sharpen’
<i>feka- + kuni</i>	→	<i>fekakuni</i>	‘become yellow’

Based on this data, the word *fekabala* ‘enlarge’ comes from the word *bala* ‘big’. Thus, the prefix *feka-* has an imperative meaning, attached to the adjective stem. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *foko-*

The prefix *foko-* has the meaning of “to call”, as mentioned in the stem. This prefix is attached to noun stems. More clearly, the implementation of this prefix, attached to many verbs, can be seen in the following description..

<i>foko- + idha</i>	→	<i>fokoidha</i>	‘call father’
<i>foko- + ina</i>	→	<i>fokoina</i>	‘call mother’
<i>foko- + isa</i>	→	<i>fokoisa</i>	‘call old brother’

Based on this data, the word *fokoidha* (call father) comes from the word *idha* (father). Thus, the prefix *foko-* implies calling the person mentioned in its root form or word. Similarly, other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *po-*

The prefix *po-* can be added to verbs to create a reciprocal or mutual meaning. More clearly, the implementation of this prefix, attached to some verbs, can be seen in the following description.

<i>po + wono</i>	→	<i>powono</i>	‘kiss each other’
<i>po + pongko</i>	→	<i>popongko</i>	‘kill each other’
<i>po + temba</i>	→	<i>potemba</i>	‘shooting each other’
<i>po + thela</i>	→	<i>pohela</i>	‘pulling each other’
<i>po + sangka</i>	→	<i>posangka</i>	‘accusing each other’
<i>po + bini</i>	→	<i>pobini</i>	‘pinching each other’
<i>po + ala</i>	→	<i>poala</i>	‘take each other’

Based on this data, the word *powono* (kissing each other) comes from the word *wono* (kissing). Thus, the prefix *po-* implies mutual action. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *me-*

The prefix *me-* can be added to verbs to convey the meaning of doing something as stated in the word or its base form. More clearly, the implementation of this prefix, attached to some verbs, can be seen in the following description.

<i>me + wono</i>	→	<i>mewono</i>	‘to kiss’
<i>me + pongko</i>	→	<i>mepongko</i>	‘to kill’
<i>me + weta</i>	→	<i>meweta</i>	‘to defend’
<i>me + lengka</i>	→	<i>melengka</i>	‘to open’
<i>me + wanu</i>	→	<i>mewanu</i>	‘wash hand or leg’
<i>me + lodo</i>	→	<i>molodo</i>	‘go to sleep’

Based on this data, the word *mewono* (to kiss) comes from the word *wono* (to kiss). Thus, the prefix *me-* implies doing something. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *ko-*

The prefix *ko-* can be added to verbs to create the meaning “to have”. A more detailed explanation of the use of this prefix attached to a number of verbs can be seen in the following description.

<i>ko + ghotu</i>	→	<i>koghotu</i>	‘having jutu’
<i>ko + walu</i>	→	<i>kowalu</i>	‘having grain’
<i>ko + bake</i>	→	<i>kobake</i>	‘having fruit’
<i>ko + buku</i>	→	<i>kobuku</i>	‘having bone’
<i>ko + oe</i>	→	<i>kooe</i>	‘watery’

Based on this data, the word *koghotu* (having jutu/lice) comes from the word *ghotu* (lice). Thus, the prefix *ko-* implies possession, as mentioned in the root word. Similarly, the other examples have the same meaning. However, when this prefix is attached to a verb stem, it means to prohibit.

<i>ko + foroghu</i>	→	<i>koforoghu</i>	‘don’t drink’
<i>ko + buri</i>	→	<i>koburi</i>	‘don’t write’
<i>ko + basa</i>	→	<i>kobasa</i>	‘don’t read’
<i>ko + owa</i>	→	<i>koowa</i>	‘don’t bring’

Based on this data, the word *koforoghu* (don't drink) comes from the word *foroghu* (drink). Thus, the prefix *ko-* implies prohibition, as mentioned in the root word. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *noti-*

The prefix *noti-* can be added to verbs to convey the meaning of an unintentional action, to change a transitive verb to an intransitive one, or to emphasize an action that has already occurred (not long ago).

More clearly, the implementation of this prefix, attached to a number of verbs, can be seen in the following description..

<i>noti + kai</i>	→	<i>notikai</i>	‘hooked’
<i>noti + lengka</i>	→	<i>notilengka</i>	‘opened’
<i>noti + fuma</i>	→	<i>notifuma</i>	‘eated’
<i>noti + songko</i>	→	<i>notisongko</i>	‘closed’
<i>noti + tunu</i>	→	<i>notitunu</i>	‘burnt’
<i>noti + ghora</i>	→	<i>notighora</i>	‘thrown’

Based on this data, the word *notikai* (hooked) comes from the word *kai* (hook). Thus, the prefix *noti-* implies an unintentional action. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *piki-*

The prefix *piki-* can be added to verbs to convey the meaning of an action that must be done immediately or on time. More clearly, the implementation of this prefix, attached to a number of verbs, can be seen in the following description.

<i>piki + fuma</i>	→	<i>pikifuma</i>	‘eat it immediately’
<i>piki + songko</i>	→	<i>pikisongko</i>	‘close it immediately’
<i>piki + lodo</i>	→	<i>pikilodo</i>	‘go sleep immediately’
<i>piki + mai</i>	→	<i>pikimai</i>	‘come soon’
<i>piki + ala</i>	→	<i>pikiala</i>	‘take it immediately’
<i>piki + basa</i>	→	<i>pikibasa</i>	‘read it immediately’

Based on this data, the word *pikifuma* (eat immediately) comes from the word *fuma* (eat). Thus, the prefix *piki-* implies an action that must be done immediately. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Prefix *poka-*

The prefix *poka-* can be added to verbs to convey the meaning of act as if, just, only, or still. A more detailed explanation of the use of this prefix attached to a number of verbs can be seen in the following description.

<i>poka + lambu-lambu</i>	→	<i>pokalambu-lambu</i>	‘just play’
<i>poka + fuma-fuma</i>	→	<i>pokafuma-fuma</i>	‘just eat a little food’
<i>poka + rako-rako</i>	→	<i>pokarako-rako</i>	‘catch, but just a play’

Based on this data, the word *pokalambu-lambu* (just play) comes from the word *lambu-lambu* (play). Thus, the prefix *poka-* implies an act, as if, just, only, or still. Similarly, the other examples have the same explanation.

Infix *-um-*

The infix *-um-* can be added to verbs to convey the meaning of an action to be performed. More clearly, the implementation of this infix attached to a number of verbs can be seen in the following description.

<i>-um- + songko</i>	→	<i>sumongko</i>	‘will close’
<i>-um- + lodo</i>	→	<i>lumodo</i>	‘will go sleep’
<i>-um- + lengka</i>	→	<i>lumengka</i>	‘will open’
<i>-um- + tunu</i>	→	<i>tumunu</i>	‘will burn’

The infix *-um-* has many allomorphs, namely *-um-*, *-m-*, and *-im-*. These allomorphs depend on the initial letter or vowel of the first syllable of the word to which they are attached. Most data indicate that the distribution or frequency of the allomorph *-um-* is higher when the word to which it is attached does not have the vowel *i* in the first syllable.

Example:

<i>-um- + solo</i>	→	<i>sumolo</i>	‘will blow’
<i>-um- + rato</i>	→	<i>rumato</i>	‘will arrive’

If the word attached to it has the vowel *i* in the first syllable, the infix has the allomorph *-im-*, as in the following example:

<i>-um- + tisa</i>	→	<i>timisa</i>	‘will plant’
<i>-um- + lima</i>	→	<i>limimba</i>	‘will go out’

Meanwhile, if the infix is added to a word that begins with a vowel, or the phonemes /p/, /f/, and /w/, the infix *-um-* has the allomorph *-m-* and the initial consonant of the word becomes dissolved or deleted.

Example:

<i>-um- + uta</i>	→	<i>muta</i>	‘will pick’
<i>-um- + foni</i>	→	<i>moni</i>	‘will go’
<i>-um- + pili</i>	→	<i>mili</i>	‘will choose’
<i>-um- + futaa</i>	→	<i>mutaa</i>	‘will laugh’
<i>um- + wora</i>	→	<i>mora</i>	‘will see’
<i>-um- + ere</i>	→	<i>mere</i>	‘will stand up’

4 Conclusion

Based on the discussion presented above, we can conclude that the Muna language has several verb-forming affixes, whether the base word is a noun, an adjective, or the verb itself. Verb affixes in Muna can be prefixes, infixes, suffixes, and confixes. However, this article only discusses Muna verb prefixes and infixes.

In Muna, verbs, as a category, are characterized by forms that, in the context of language use, always emerge in complex ways through the process of affixation. This affixation process is characterized by the combination of two or more morphemes in the form of affixes to a base or stem. Some Muna verbal affixes include the prefixes *ti-*, *fe-*, *feka-*, *fo-*, *po-*, *poko-*, *ko-*, *me-*, *noti-*, *piki*, *poka*, and the infix *-um-*.

From a semantic perspective, Muna verbs can be identified based on their grammatical units. Among the meanings of the verb affixes are doing something as mentioned in the root word, unintentional activities, imperative, possessive, mutual or reciprocal, calling, and meaning an action that will be carried out.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests.

Statement of authorship

The authors have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The authors have approved the final article.

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