

**RESEARCH ARTICLE****TOPONOMY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE SOUTH MINAHASA COMMUNITY: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**Vivi Nansy Tumuju¹, Vany Kamu², Jultje Rattu³, Zulfa⁴^{1,2,3}Faculty of Cultural Studies, Sam Ratulangi University, Indonesia⁴Faculty of Postgraduate Studies, Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat, Indonesia**Article History**

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The naming of a region (toponymy) is not merely a geographical label, but rather a linguistic artifact that stores the collective memory and cultural identity of its people. This study aims to dissect the construction of the cultural identity of the South Minahasa community through the meaning of village names from an anthropological perspective. Using a descriptive qualitative method with an ethnosemantic approach, data were collected through historical document studies, field observations, and in-depth interviews with traditional leaders (Tona'as). The results of the study indicate that the toponymy in South Minahasa consists of 8 villages, namely: Menara city, Maluku and Maluku 1, Ritey, Malanos Baru, Lopana and Lopana 1, Pinalin, Pondang, and Ranomea. These 8 toponyms fall into four main categories: (1) flora and fauna aspects (bioglyphs), (2) geographical aspects (geoglyphs), (3) historical events, and (4) hopes or theological values. The identity construction found represents the deep attachment of the Tou Minahasa community to nature (cosmology) and the spirit of ancestral heroism. The implications of this research emphasize that preserving toponymic meaning is a crucial strategy for maintaining the vitality of local culture amidst the tide of modernization.

Introduction

South Minahasa boasts a unique linguistic richness, primarily because the region is a meeting point for various dialects and sub-ethnic groups (such as Tontemboan). Village names like Amurang, Tumpaan, Motoling, and Tareran contain layers of meaning that go beyond simply identifying locations. In anthropological studies, language is viewed as a cultural resource and cognitive practice that shapes worldviews. Village names are part of the long journey of toponymy in South Minahasa. This continues to be emphasized, highlighting the urgency of the emergence of new villages through housing developments scattered throughout South Minahasa. The names and their associated meanings have prompted this author to delve deeper into the scientific meanings of each village name. Furthermore, many of the emerging villages use local languages, which are of interest to scientists and the community at large.

The younger generation is increasingly losing understanding of the local languages left behind by their ancestors. Young people need to learn as early as possible about the local cultural heritage of their respective regions, such as the Tontemboan language spoken by the people of South Minahasa. Local culture is a legacy of our ancestors that should be preserved and even preserved by the surrounding community, including toponymy, which is inherently meaningful and possesses strong linguistic elements. This paper explains the meaning of names in villages in Minahasa Regency, in line with development plans by the district and provincial governments. Examining the linguistic history and meaning of names reveals several fields of study related to the toponymy of villages in South Minahasa Regency.

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This research enriches the existing gazetteer of linguistic meanings, categorizations, and cultural values of village names in South Minahasa Regency, and contributes to the development of local language and culture, fostering the recognition and preservation of contemporary local culture. Given that new villages exist or emerge in South Minahasa Regency and even in North Sulawesi, the recognition of names is inextricably linked. Village names undoubtedly carry meaning. These names and meanings need to be published or commented on scientifically through future research. This allows local culture to be reflected upon by each generation, particularly in its relation to linguistics. This also applies when the process of modernization causes "historical amnesia" among the younger generation regarding the origins of their village names. Without an understanding of toponymy, the construction of cultural identity becomes fragile. This article analyzes how these names construct the collective identity of the South Minahasa community.

References from experts discussing toponymy include Farinelli (Agnew ed., 2004: 316), who defines "Place is a part of the terrestrial surface that is not equivalent to any other, that cannot be exchanged with any other without changing everything." This definition states that a place is a location where events occur that do not occur elsewhere, thus possessing a sense of place. Based on this, places can be influenced by historical factors and human activity. A place is synonymous with a location within a space that is influenced by human activity and thus possesses certain characteristics. This sense of place makes human experiences of place so meaningful that people name places according to the experiences they experience. Names given to places are passed down horizontally and then vertically from generation to generation. This intergenerational transmission of information gives place names cultural value. Maintaining place names through changing circumstances requires a strong and nuanced understanding of local wisdom, as it must consider the historical value of spatial dynamics. By considering spatial dynamics, each toponym will change according to the characteristics of the time.

The toponymy of a place is a cultural product, both historical and symbolic. According to Liliweri (2014: 7-8), historical culture is a social heritage or tradition passed down from one generation to the next, and symbolic culture is the foundation of meaning collectively established by society. The toponymy of a place is a collective agreement and passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, understanding the meaning of a place requires a historical and symbolic study of culture. This aligns with William R. Bascom's view in Danandjaja (1994), who stated that one of the functions of folklore is related to toponymy as a projective system, namely as a tool for reflecting collective imagination. Furthermore, toponymy is also strongly influenced by geographical factors (hydrological, morphological, biological, and other natural physical conditions), so place names (toponymy) are said to be based on geographical conditions and symbolic historical value.

According to Rais et al. (2008), a term is literally defined as the name of a place on Earth ("topos" means "place" or surface, as "topography" is a description of the surface or places on Earth, and "nym" from "onyma" is name") in Indonesian, it is often used in making maps. The name of a geographical element emerged when humans first inhabited an area and needed to name the geographical elements around them. Naming is related to the realm of semantics. Semantics is a term used for the field of linguistics that studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the things they signify. The word semantics comes from the Greek *sema* (a noun meaning 'sign' or 'symbol').

Ferdinand (in Chaer 2002:2) proposed several components that signify in linguistics: (1) the component that signifies, which takes the form of linguistic sounds, and (2) the component that is interpreted or the meaning of the first component. These two components are signs or symbols, while what is signified or symbolized is something that lies outside the language commonly referred to as a referent or thing referred to. This paper is about anthropological linguistics, a branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and culture, particularly to observe how language is used in everyday life as a tool in social action.

Duranti (in Basaria 2017:14) states that anthropological linguistics is derived from structural linguistics, but has a different perspective or point of view regarding the object of study, language,

and the sharpness of an object. Duranti further explains that anthropological linguistics emphasizes linguistics as a revealer of societal thought patterns. Anthropolinguistics emphasizes the relationship between language and culture within a society, such as the role of language in studying how family relationships are expressed in cultural terminology, how individuals communicate with others in specific social and cultural activities, and how individuals communicate with people from other cultures. How individuals communicate with others appropriately within their cultural context, and how the language of a society in the past adapted to its cultural development (Sibarani 2004:50).

Anthropolinguistics, developed by Foley (1997) and Duranti (1997), which emphasizes the relationship between linguistic forms and cultural practices. Specifically, toponymy theory is used to classify place names based on physical and social aspects. The primary focus of the analysis is ethnosemantics, namely how communities categorize their environment through local languages (Tontemboan or Manado Malay). The meaning of villages in South Minahasa Regency, in anthropolinguistic studies, shows the increasing emergence of new villages with varied names, or diverse names that are of interest to the government and the general public. The beauty and interest of toponymy or village names encourages residents to consider the meaning behind the village name. Therefore, how is the meaning of toponymy in South Minahasa Regency viewed from an anthropolinguistic study, given the unique meanings contained in the villages in East Amurang District, South Minahasa Regency?

Materials and Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The research location is focused on several key sub-districts in South Minahasa. The research instruments include phonetic recording of place names and etymological tracing through oral narratives (oral tradition). Data analysis was conducted using interactive techniques by conducting data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions based on the local cultural context. Descriptive qualitative research is research that aims to understand phenomena about what research subjects experience, such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions, and so on, which exist in a specific, natural context, by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2017:6).

Moleong also stated that this method was used for several reasons. First, adapting qualitative methods is easier when dealing with plural realities. Second, this method directly presents the nature of the relationship between researchers and respondents. Third, this method is more sensitive and more adaptable to the many sharpening of shared influences on the patterns of cultural values encountered. The research method uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, an intralingual matching method with a lingual comparative connection technique (Mahsun, 2007), and a distributional method in terms of analyzing lingual forms. According to Subroto, 2007, which better reflects the analysis of language systems based on the behavior or characteristics of language or certain linguistic units. The data collection process will be carried out in seven districts of South Minahasa where there are villages lined up, each with a unique meaning, with the following stages: data search visits, data identification, data classification, data analysis. The meaning of the name of the village/place or toponymy has three aspects, namely (1) the embodiment aspect (2) the social aspect and (3) the cultural aspect. These three aspects greatly influence the way of naming. Place in Community Life (Sudaryato, 2009: 10).

1. The physical aspect relates to human life, which tends to be integrated with the earth as its foundation and the natural environment as its habitat. Sudaryat divides the natural environment into three groups: (1) aquatic settings (water features), (2) topographic settings, and (3) natural environmental settings.
2. The social aspect of place naming relates to social interaction or the place of social interaction, including a person's position within the community, occupation, and profession. The social circumstances of a community determine the naming of a place. For example, in a place where the majority of the population is engaged in farming, the residences are named after areas close to agricultural areas. Naming a place after a prominent figure in the community can also be a social aspect in determining a place name.

3. The cultural aspect of place naming is often linked to cultural elements such as mythology, folklore, and belief systems/religion. The meaning of this type of place name is often associated with folklore, known as legends.

Results and Discussion

The division of the Minahasa region began when this area was still called Malesung in 700 AD. This was marked by the implementation of the Maesa I declaration. According to Waroka, (2005:30), there were at least two important things that were decided, namely eliminating class differences in the social order and dividing the Minahasa region into four regions, namely Tonsea (northern Minahasa), Toumuung or Tombulu (central Minahasa, west and southwest), Tolour (central Minahasa, east and southeast) and Tontemboan (southern Minahasa to the Ranoyipapo river). In 1428, through the Maesa II Declaration, specifically at Watu Pinabetengan, the Malesung territory expanded by five to nine: Tousingin, which later became Tonsawang (inhabiting the uninhabited area around Lake Bulilin), Pasan Wangko (inhabiting Ratahan-Bentenan), Ponosakan (the Belang area and its surroundings), Bantik (inhabiting the coastline bordering Tombariri to Wori), and Bawontaho (inhabiting the islands surrounding the Minahasa lands). The Maesa II Declaration also included a customary oath of allegiance, ending inter-ethnic warfare and changing the region's name to Minahasa. Today, the Minahasa region has expanded to four regencies (Minahasa, South Minahasa, Southeast Minahasa, North Minahasa) and three cities: Tomohon, Bitung, and Manado. In addition to the territorial division, the second Maesa Declaration also revealed linguistic differences within each region. For example, it is stated that for those who speak Tombulu, they are centered in Tomohon, those who speak Tontemboan, they are centered in Kawangkoan, those who speak Tonsea, they are centered in Airmaidi, and those who speak Tolour are centered in Tondano. Linguistically, Tombulu means people in bamboo thickets (tow + in + wulu), Tontemboan means people in the mountains (tow + in + tembo'an), Tonsea means people in the Sea' wood thickets (tow + in + sea') and Tondano means people in the water or lake (tow + in + rano), (Ticolau, L, et al, 1984:36). Meanwhile, the Minahasa language for the Bantik and Bawontaho areas has experienced affiliation with the Sangir language, because if seen from a historical perspective, Sangir is recorded as having controlled the entire archipelago around Minahasa, including the Bantik area during the Bawontehu kingdom era between 1300-1400.

Toponymy of East Amurang District, South Minahasa Regency

Historically, based on research by Graffland N (1867:90-91), most of the villages and sub-districts in South Amurang District are now included in the Tombasian District. These include Pondang (317 residents), Ranomea (136 residents), Lopana (109 residents), Malenos (136 residents), Ritey (279 residents), and Maluku (252 residents). Pinalin Village (221 residents) is included in the Tompaso District. Graffland's research does not mention the existence of Kota Menara Village. This is interesting to study because, based on research from several journals and informants, this area was formerly known as Lekuan, an agricultural area within the Kanonang area of Tompaso District. At the same time, research by Rompas (2017:4) indicates that before becoming Pinalin Village, migrating Tompaso residents built homes and settled in the area known as Lekuan.

Rompas' research findings are supported by Ontolay (2018:11) who concluded that the name of the village before the Tower City was Lekuan. The question is, why was Lekuan not described by Graffland as a village in his 1867 survey? Geographically, Lekuan is adjacent to Maluku village (a village described by Graffland as part of the Tombasian district). Secondly, why was Pinalin village mapped within the Tompaso district at that time? Whereas the current location of Pinalin village is adjacent to Pondang and Lopana (areas included in the Tombasian district, before finally becoming the East Amurang sub-district). Referring to these statements, the researcher assumes that Lekuan was Pinalin's village during Graffland's survey, before they finally migrated to the current location. The reasons are very clear: first, Lekuan borders directly with Kanonang in the Tompaso district; Second, from a historical perspective, the original inhabitants of Lekuan (Pinalin) originated from Tompaso (Rompas: 2007:4), and Ontolay (2018:11) clarifies that the Lekuan population originated from Kanonang village, Tompaso district. This explanation merely clarifies the ancient existence of Pinalin village and its role as a historical milestone in the founding of Kota

Menara village; as neither study examined the area's mapping based on Graffland's exploration. Geographically, the research locations can be described as follows: Ranomea Village, Pondang Village, Pinalin Village (directly behind Ranomea and Pondang villages), Lopana Village, Lopana 1 (on the same route as Ranomea and Pondang villages on the Trans-Sulawesi Highway), then up into the hills south to Malenos Village, Ritey Village, Maliku Village, and Maliku 1 Village, finally reaching Kota Menara Village. Road access only reaches this last village. So, if we want to go to Kanonang, we have to make a very long detour. Kanonang and Kota Menara are actually just next door.

In general, the naming of villages and sub-districts in this district refers to ancient human observations of the most prominent objects or conditions. This effort aims to provide more specific signs and distinguish them from other places. At this stage, people's memories of previously named places serve as a naming reference, reducing sensory stimuli in response to a prominent feature in a new area. This was commonplace at that time, due to the nomadic habits of people, although in reality, there are also similarities in place names within a region. For example, Lopana, the name of a village in this district, is also used as the name of a garden in several areas in South Minahasa. This phenomenon is undeniable, as the earth's surface is essentially universal. At this stage, linguistic anthropological studies serve as a guide for analyzing place names based on the sociocultural context of ancient societies. Armed with historical descriptions of their origins, researchers can determine the patterns they are using to describe new locations they discover. It is acknowledged that historical factors are inseparable from efforts to discover the reasons behind place names. Therefore, historical studies are categorized as preliminary research or a trigger for someone to explore social and cultural fields, including linguistic analysis.

Once historical data is found, one can determine the regular patterns inherent in each place name. For example, some places derive from the names of plants or wood, rocks, rivers, mountains, beaches, and capes. Furthermore, place names can arise from soil structure, shape, properties, and soil content. Others are based on community customs. For example, a place may be used as a stopover or resting place on the way to another location. These community customs then give rise to a collectively agreed-upon name. One village in the South Amurang sub-district that meets this criterion is Pinalin, which the community defines as a stopover or resting place. Informants' accounts reinforce this idea. It is said that the Pinalin area was once used exclusively by farmers from Kanonang for resting. Sometimes, when nightfall approaches, they would usually stay overnight in the area. As is known, lighting in ancient times was very minimal, making it very risky to walk the streets at night.

To strengthen the evidence, historical and linguistic anthropological facts were tested with structural linguistics studies. This field serves to re-examine the appropriateness of linguistic meanings resulting from morphological patterns. In some areas, formulating the rationale for place names often encounters difficulties due to the neglect of structural linguistics studies. Some rely solely on historical studies. For example, one village in the area research, namely Malenos. Historically, this village was once located very close to the village of Ritey. As plantation land became increasingly scarce, the village of Malenos decided to seek a new location. They chose the northern hilly area not far from the village of Ritey. Locals define Malenos as 'slippery stone', a river stone that flows through the middle of the village. For some researchers who often heed structural linguistic studies, this data is considered sufficient. However, it is better to first examine the accuracy of the data in terms of its linguistic form and meaning. All regions in Minahasa recognize stone as *watu*, and the prefix *ma-* functions as a verb marker.

From these two studies alone, we can conclude whether the meaning of Malenos is correct or not. First, the word Malenos is a verb, and second, it is not a compound word. The word Malenos is formed from a single word, such as the name of the village of Pondang. However, the difference is the morphological process of adding the prefix *ma-* to the root word *lenos*. The concept of the reason for naming based on compound words can be found in the name of the village of Ranomea. Locals interpret Ranomea as a red river or red-colored river water. Historically, people encountered river water that suddenly turned red, like blood. According to a local official (Drias Kojanson, the village head of Ranomea), a search was conducted on wood growing around the river that contained substances that could change the color of the water. The results showed that nothing growing around the river met the evidentiary criteria for triggering the blood-red water. However, there is another account that suggests a bloody conflict occurred in the river. After

going through several stages of data collection, a logical reason was discovered. Historically, this area has seen inter-tribal warfare, specifically between local residents and the Bolaang Mongondow tribe. Wenas J (2007:64), in his writing on Minahasa history and culture, states that a Minahasan custom arose after victory in a war. The heads of the opposing side were brought home to be boiled, then eaten by the cheeks; the skulls were used as a symbol of a warrior's prowess. Meanwhile, male captives, from teenagers to old men, were beaten to death with sticks.

Based on a measured, structured, and systematic analysis, historically, place names are examined from a sociocultural perspective, and ultimately strengthened by an analysis of linguistic form and meaning. Ultimately, a regular pattern of village naming emerges, following the customs of ancient communities in identifying new locations. From a structural linguistic perspective, word formation is categorized based on morphemic processes, including root words, composition, and the use of prefixes and suffixes. Furthermore, some words are indicated as belonging to the abbreviation category. Meanwhile, at the level of reasons behind naming, the results of this classification include several aspects, such as soil, plants and water.

1. Kota Menara

Kota Menara Village was inaugurated on March 11, 1985. Historically, its residents originated from Kanonang Village, now in Kawangkoan District. The majority of the population is farmers. Their main commodities are coconuts and cloves. It is said that the village was once only a resting place for farmers from Kanonang. They built 'simple houses' to store farming tools and other belongings, sometimes sleeping there when it was getting dark. Possibly due to the distance, some families decided to settle there. Gradually, many other farmers followed their predecessors, bringing relatives and settling there, so the population grew at that time. Ontolay (2018: 12) explains that in 1882, on the instructions of the head of Pakasaan Lolombuan, residents were relocated to several areas such as Motoling, Maluku, and Kanonang due to a plague outbreak. Reportedly, the death toll could reach 26 people per day. At that time, an agreement was made that their descendants would return and rebuild their settlement at the site.

Initially, one might assume that this village would be synonymous with the tower, as its name suggests. Furthermore, the combination of the word "kota" (city) suggests that it is no longer a remote village. However, in reality, this village is still classified as a 3T (frontier, outermost, and underdeveloped) village. Internet access is still lacking. Roads are narrow and potholed. Village lighting still needs to be optimized, including improvements to health and education infrastructure. Research suggests that the village's name was influenced by an agreement initiated by the head of Pakasaan Lolombuan. Residents who were initially relocated later took the initiative to return after the epidemic subsided. However, from 1907 to 1913, the community fled again to Morea village (present-day Ratatotok) due to the eruption of Mount Soputan. This hampered the village's development. The name "Kota Menara" (Tower City) was coined by Mr. Yosephus Monintja in 1951. Morphologically, this name is an abbreviation, meaning "Kanonang" (K) by (O) "bantuan" (T) "Allah" (A) "Mendapat" (M) "Neighborhood" (N) "Reason" (A) "People" (R) "Assured" (A). This abbreviation is intended as an expression of gratitude to God the Creator for reuniting the scattered people.

2. Maluku and Maluku 1

These two villages share a shared history. On December 24, 2011, a regional expansion program was implemented, separating Maluku 1 as a distinct village. To foster a sense of brotherhood, the community refers to Maluku and Maluku 1 as "Maluku Raya." Both will be studied together within the context of Maluku's history. Formerly, Maluku was known as Lalumpe. Lalumpe is a type of soft wood commonly used for coffins. This is what is meant by the initial efforts of communities to identify each new location they encounter. Human senses spontaneously respond to the most prominent feature as a reference for naming. Most likely, this location was indeed abundant with this tree, leading to a common agreement on the name. Over time, Lalumpe was then changed to Liliku, which means my beloved. /Lili/ [lili] 'desire' /ku/ 'aku'.

Informants stated that the people of Lalumpe have long been known for their hospitality. They adopt a harmonious and peaceful lifestyle, non-hostile, and loving one another (masiri-sirian, makopu-kopusan).

The impact of this harmonious lifestyle led the surrounding villagers to continually visit, longing for, and loving the people of Lalumpe village. This is where the historical change in the village's name to Liliku occurred. During the Dutch era, the name Liliku changed to Maliku. Linguistically, researchers believe this change was simply to simplify pronunciation. The Dutch found it difficult to pronounce the glottal phoneme in the middle of words, resulting in a smoother pronunciation. However, this smoothing of the name gave rise to a new morphological process: the addition of the prefix /ma-/ at the beginning of words and the removal of the phoneme in the middle of words during morphophonemic processes. Despite the change in form, the meaning remains the same. The prefix ma- here serves only to form nouns into verbs, thus the meaning of Maliku becomes to miss or love.

3. Ritey

According to village archives and informants, the current settlement location originated from the story of five Tompasso villagers. According to the story, Liud, Tongko, Rumondor, Sembung, and Sendow were hunting south of the river, below Teka Wali Ure (the site of the old village). After observing the surrounding area and ensuring a source of water and food, they decided to build a hut. A light drizzle did not dampen their enthusiasm until the hut was completed. The weather conditions at the time are the sole source of the village's name, Ritey, which is carefully preserved by the community today. In the Malesung language (an ancient Minahasan language), the word for drizzle is /ritey/ [ritɛy]. Because the drizzle activity is repetitive, a process of reduplication occurred and the prefix /ma-/ was added, creating maritey-ritey, meaning "drizzle is falling."

4. Malenos Baru

This village witnessed the historic diplomacy between PERMESTA and the state on April 4, 1961. The negotiations took place on the Ritey plantation, near the headwaters of the Malenos River. This location was chosen by the village head of Malenos Baru, Victor A. Tutu, at the direct request of the Deputy Governor of SULUTENG, representing the government. The negotiations then continued at the GMIM Malenos Baru and resulted in an agreement to end the civil war. Today, we can find a peace monument right in front of GMIM Malenos Baru. This story is clearly described in Sulu P.M (2011). Formerly, this village was called Malenos. Their settlement is still located directly behind the current Ritey church. Initially, they lived side by side until 1961 (shortly before PERMESTA diplomacy was implemented), when the Malenos community moved to the northern hills because the surrounding plantation land was predominantly controlled by the Ritey community. This meant that the Malenos community wanted to clear a larger plot of land in a new location. Hence, we now know it as Malenos Baru village.

The origin of this village's name remains uncertain. Research has revealed at least two versions of the data: the word "Malenos," meaning "Slippery Rock" and "Fast Flowing." Analyzing these words requires a thorough study that can shed light on the debate within the community. This is why structural linguistics is crucial in toponymy. Through this study, we can understand the morphemic patterns and resulting linguistic meanings. While both meanings of the village name suggested by informants refer to a river that flows through the village, they have different interpretations. First, "Malenos" means "slippery rock." From a morphological perspective, this interpretation is somewhat ambiguous because the village name shows no indication of word composition; instead, it is an affixation that transforms an adjective into a verb. "Slippery" in the Tontemboan language is "keos," while "batu" is "watu." This definition is also said to be ambiguous in terms of sound alignment, because the change of the phoneme /k/ to /l/ and the emergence of the phoneme /n/ between the phonemes /e/ and /o/ in the word Malenos is somewhat difficult to prove. Second, the meaning of "beraya deras," which informants said comes from the Malesung adjective root ledos 'deras' (referring to river water). The word ledos is then attached with the affix ma- and produces the meaning "rambutan dengan cepat." Here, there is an indication of a morphophonemic pattern, namely the change of the sound d to n. Morphologically, this change is common because the two phonemes are in the same sound environment. For example, the appearance of the phoneme /n/ in the form /ma-/ + /dengar/ becomes /mendengar/ in Indonesian. In the Tontemboan language, this linguistic phenomenon is even found in the meeting of words and words in a phrase. For example, tou in rano becomes tou in

dano. In the process, the phoneme /r/ changes to /d/ because there is a harmonious phoneme /n/ in the articulatory environment.

5. Lopana dan Lopana 1

The naming history of these two villages will be discussed together, as they share similar historical significance. Lopana Satu was a separate region from Lopana on June 21, 2010, with Freddy B. Tambajong as acting governor. Previously, this area was a Dutch-owned coconut plantation. According to Graffland's research (1867: 91), the population of Lopana village was 109. However, today, most residents are farmers and fishermen. Along the coast, we can see rows of boats used by fishermen to catch fish. The most prominent plantation commodity in this area is coconut. Some residents also maintain cloves as a primary commodity to boost their income. In general, the name Lopana refers to the flat terrain of the mountains. The name may have originated with residents migrating from the mountains and discovering a stretch of flat land along the coast. Lopana itself comes from the Tontemboan word "lopa," meaning flat. The historical archives of Lopana Satu village state that malopa-malopa means "very flat." The root word "lopa" takes the suffix /-na/, becoming "lopana," meaning the flat part of a mountain or hill. This village name is also used in the names of gardens in other areas of southern Minahasa, such as those found in Mapolo village.

6. Pinalin

In this village there is a monument commemorating the village's founding on September 6, 1891. This means that the current Pinalin village was established 24 years after Graffland conducted his exploration of Minahasa land. As previously revealed, in 1867, Graffland did indeed describe the existence of Pinalin village and its population, but not the village's current location. The first evidence is found in Graffland's notes, which mapped Pinalin to the Tompaso district, not Tombasian. Second, Rompas's (2017) investigation states that there were five recorded migration attempts by the community before finally settling in the current location. He also added that at that time the community was already intensively engaged in buying and selling. They brought vegetables, fruits, and all kinds of agricultural products to be sold at the Amurang market. They stored unsold garden produce in a location they called paiban in paalin, (a stopping place to rest). This activity continued for quite some time, until finally several families chose to settle. Gradually, this migration process was followed by other communities, eventually forming the present-day Pinalin village. Based on this perspective, it can be concluded that, before settling in the Tombasian district (now East Amurang), the residents of Pinalin village were still part of the Tompaso district. Their location could have been the current location of Kota Menara village or the surrounding area, which they called Lekuan. Therefore, analysis of the origins of the name must be based on the history of the village in the old location, not the current location. This is clear, because Pinalin has been registered as a village for 24 years before the village was founded.

The custom of the Kanonang residents, such as leaving their farming tools and other belongings they considered unavailable after gardening, deserves to be brought to light. This story was told by an informant from Kota Menara village. It is said that the location they call Lekuan was once used as a resting place. The farmers from Kanonang built a "simple house" to store their farming tools and produce. Sometimes they had to stay overnight there when night fell. The lingual form of the village name Pinalin can be used as a benchmark to answer the question of how and what the naming process was like. Pinalin is formed from the root word alin, which means to carry, and is combined with affixes such as the prefix /pa-, the infix /-in-, and the suffix /-an/ to become pinaalian, which literally means it has been used as a place to carry. The meaning of the lingual form in this village name clearly describes the entire historical parcel and supports several sources that have been successfully collected. The reason for the place naming is based on sociocultural factors, namely naming related to community customs.

7. Pondang

In 1983, Pondang village was elevated to a sub-district, with Jan S. Tandaju as its first village head. The village is located near the center of South Minahasa Regency. The assimilation of urban life is already

evident. This has resulted in a decline in the number of speakers of regional languages, especially among those under 40. Most residents now use Manadoese Indonesian as their primary language of communication. Some residents work as farmers and fishermen. However, many have also started small-to-medium businesses from their homes.

The name of the Pondang sub-district comes from the sea pandan plant, with the Latin name *Pandanus odoriver*, a member of the *Pandanaceae* family. Sea pandan, also known as sand pandan, and also known as prickly pandan, was once abundant along the coast of Pondang, becoming an iconic plant and ultimately the name of the village. This plant has gradually declined as the local community converted the land for plantations, particularly coconut plantations. Pondang itself is derived from the Malay word for fragrant pandan leaves, a fragrant monocot plant used as a spice and food wrapper. Due to the similarity in leaf shape, locals initially named sea pandan with the same name, Pondang. The naming pattern and rationale are clearly based on the dominant plant.

8. Ranomea

Ranomea Village was established as a sub-district two years before Pondang, in 1981. Pieter F. Repi became the last village head, also leading him as the first village head in this sub-district. Based on the village's historical archives and some data found through informants, in 1630-1650 there was a conflict between the king of Bolaang Mongondow and Dotu Oki. Datu Oki was a brave female datu, leading the struggle and dashing the king of Bolaang Mongondow's dream of controlling the Amurang region. It was reported that, right on the Ranomea River (approximately 100 meters from the sub-district office) a fierce battle took place. The river water suddenly turned blood red, due to the many soldiers who died. The Bolaang king's side suffered defeat, while Amurang was successfully captured and until now it is part of the South Minahasa government. Based on this brief historical excerpt, the community claims that the name of their residence comes from the change in the color of the water to blood red. Grammatically, rano means river, while mea [mɛa] means red. This naming form is based on:

Name	Reason Naming	Form Grammatical	Process Morphology	Meaning
Kota Menara	<i>Historical Dominance</i>	/kota/ + /menara/	Composition	Kanonang with God's Help Gets a Country
Maliku	<i>Societal Habits</i>	/malikuʔ/	Affixation	Native People
Ritey	<i>Water Dominance</i>	/maritey-ritey/	Affixation	Frequently visited,
Malenos Baru	<i>Water Dominance</i>	/malenos/	Affixation	loved
Lopana	<i>Land Dominance/Landform</i>	/lopana/	Affixation	Drizzling
Pinalin	<i>Societal Habits</i>	/pinalin/	Affixation	Flowing fast
Pondang	<i>Dominance Plants</i>	/pondam/	Stem	Flat parts of mountains or
Ranomea	<i>Water Dominance</i>	/ranomeaʔ/	Composition	hills

Table 1. Topographic Forms of South Minahasa Source: Processed Research Data Results (2025)

Discussion

Toponymy, or the study of place names, is not simply a geographical naming system but a cultural artifact that records the interaction between humans and their environment throughout history.

Based on field data collected in this study, toponymy in the South Minahasa region is constructed through several significant domains of meaning, reflecting the local wisdom of the local community. The first domain is the bio-ecological domain, where many village names refer to dominant vegetation types in the past. Naming references to specific tree species or medicinal plants indicates that the Minahasa people were historically agrarian, highly dependent on nature and valued biodiversity as an integral part of daily life. This aligns with ecolinguistic theory, which states that language functions as a reflection of the ecosystem relationships of its speakers.

In addition to vegetation, the hydrological domain also plays a vital role in the naming patterns of this region. The use of prefixes or lexemes referring to water elements, such as those found in the terms "Salu" or "Ranotana," provides empirical evidence that early settlements were always established close to sources of life. This phenomenon reflects the identity of a community that strategically adapted to aquatic environments. Water availability not only supports physical needs but also serves as a central spatial orientation, which is then immortalized in place names. Thus, the toponymic map of this region can be read as a historical record of the South Minahasa community's environmental adaptation to their geographical conditions.

Furthermore, toponymy functions as a collective memory, immortalizing significant events in the community's history. Village names in the coastal region of Amurang, for example, are often closely linked to past cultural contact or territorial defense strategies. This naming pattern shapes a community identity that is open to external interaction while maintaining a strong cultural defense line. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this demonstrates that place names act as identity markers, distinguishing "us" from "them," while also bearing silent witness to the socio-political dynamics that have occurred in the region.

From an anthropolinguistic perspective, this overall naming pattern reinforces the construction of the South Minahasa community's identity, or "Tou Minahasa," in three main dimensions. First, as a cosmos society, they demonstrate a harmony between settlement and nature, as evident in the bio-ecological and hydrological domains. Second, as a historical society, they value ancestral references (such as the term "Tumani") as the foundation for village development, emphasizing the importance of lineage and oral history. Third, as a theological society, several place names that emerged after the arrival of religious influences indicate a shift in identity toward a religious society. Thus, toponymy in South Minahasa is not simply a geographical label, but rather a complex symbolic system that validates the cultural, historical, and spiritual existence of its inhabitants.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the naming of places in the South Amurang sub-district is shaped by four factors: community customs, water dominance, soil dominance, and plant dominance. Meanwhile, from a morphological perspective, three naming patterns were identified: word formation through affixation, composition, and root words. Village names in South Minahasa are "oral inscriptions" that construct the cultural identity of the community. From an anthropolinguistic perspective, it was discovered that regional naming is not merely an administrative technique, but rather a manifestation of how the Minahasa people view nature, respect history, and project hopes for the future. Preserving the meaning of toponyms is synonymous with preserving national identity.

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