

## The Role of Oral Tradition in Character Formation (Case Study of Mo'odulele Poems in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia)



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**ABSTRACT :** This article discusses the role of oral tradition in character formation, with a case study on Mo'odulele poetry in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi. As a form of cultural communication that is passed down from generation to generation, oral tradition, especially Mo'odulele poetry, not only functions as entertainment, but also as a medium for transmitting moral and social values that shape the character of the community. Through the approach of cultural communication theory and social construction, this article analyzes how Mo'odulele poetry conveys moral messages such as honesty, honor, and respect for parents that influence the behavior and identity of individuals in the community. The results of the study indicate that Mo'odulele poetry plays a significant role in character formation in the Rawa Lopa community, strengthening social ties, and preserving local cultural values. Thus, this oral tradition has a strategic role in maintaining the character and cultural identity of the local community.

**KEYWORDS:** Oral tradition, Mo'odulele poetry, Character formation, Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Cultural communication.

### INTRODUCTION

Oral tradition is one of the cultural elements that has existed for a long time and plays an important role in people's lives. As a form of unwritten communication, oral tradition includes various forms of expression, such as folk tales, legends, myths, rhymes, poems, and verses that are passed down from generation to generation [5]. This tradition not only functions as a means of entertainment, but also as an educational medium that teaches moral values, ethics, and character to individuals in a community. The role of oral tradition in character formation is very significant, especially in shaping a person's personality and social behavior [16][17]. In many cultures, stories conveyed through oral tradition serve as a means of instilling life values that are accepted by society, such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, and respect. Through stories full of metaphors and symbolism, individuals learn to understand life situations, recognize the consequences of each action, and develop attitudes and behaviors that are in accordance with social norms. Likewise, in the study of liat pullagajat written by Zulfa [1], [2], [3], [4], [15] there are social norms in the liat pullagajat ritual in Mentawai, West Sumatra province and in the traditional traditions in Riau, Riau province.

In addition, oral traditions also provide opportunities for individuals to connect with their cultural identity. Through storytelling, individuals not only learn about character, but also understand the history and origins of their culture [6][7]. Thus, oral traditions function as guardians of cultural values while forming strong personal characters based on the foundation of values that have been inherited by ancestors.

This article will delve deeper into the role of oral traditions in character formation, as well as how these traditions can adapt to the development of the times without losing the essence of the values contained therein [8][9][10]. This discussion will cover various examples of forms of oral traditions that have shaped the character of individuals and communities, as well as the challenges faced in maintaining the sustainability of oral traditions in the modern era [11].

The Mo'odulele oral tradition is a cultural heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation. As a form of communication, oral tradition not only functions as a means of conveying information, but also plays an important role in shaping the character and identity of a community [5]. One example of an oral tradition that is still alive in Indonesia is the Mo'odulele poem that developed in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi. Mo'odulele poems are a form of oral art that not only contain elements of entertainment, but are also full of moral values and life lessons. Through this poem, the people of Rawa Lopa learn about the norms, ethics, and principles of life that shape their character. This article will discuss the role of oral tradition, especially Mo'odulele poems, in shaping the character of the people of Rawa Lopa, using a communication and cultural theory approach.

## **The Role of Oral Tradition in Character Formation (Case Study of Mo'odulele Poems in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia)**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research method is qualitative with an oral tradition, History, Anthropology and Sociology approach. This research was conducted in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi province. The informant sources were selected by purposive sampling from various groups. The informant sources consisted of: sub-district government, cultural figures, academics and the community. Each informant consisted of speakers of the Mo'odulele Poem oral tradition, 3 cultural figures, academics from the oral tradition study department of the community as connoisseurs of the Mo'odulele poem.

This research uses a qualitative approach, with a case study method. Data and information collection in this study was carried out in various ways and techniques from various sources, both human and non-human. Data and information collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, documentation studies and literature studies. Data analysis refers to the steps used by Miles and Huberman [14] which consist of three simultaneous activity flows, including: data collection; data reduction; display and drawing conclusions/verification. To improve the researcher's ability to assess the accuracy of research results and convince readers about the accuracy of the research conducted, various strategies must be used in conducting validation [15]. For this reason, this study uses three strategies in conducting data validation, including continuous observation, triangulation and discussion with colleagues.

### **THE APPROACH OF CULTURAL COMMUNICATION THEORY AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION IN UNDERSTANDING MO'ODULELE POEM**

Mo'odulele Poem in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, as part of the oral tradition, not only functions as a means of entertainment or communication media, but also has a deeper role in shaping the character of individuals and society. To understand more deeply the role and meaning of this poem in a social and cultural context [7], we can use the approach of cultural communication theory and social construction. Both of these approaches provide insight into how communication, especially through oral tradition, shapes worldview, identity, and behavior in society.

Cultural communication theory focuses on how communication, both oral and non-verbal, shapes and is influenced by culture. In the context of Mo'odulele poem, cultural communication plays a role as a means of transmitting cultural values contained in the Rawa Lopa community. Mo'odulele poem becomes a medium for conveying various moral messages, life values, and ancestral experiences that shape the character of society.

Mo'odulele poem can be understood as a cultural symbol that contains deep meaning. Every word and phrase in this poem conveys social, moral, and cultural values that shape the way of life of the community. Through cultural communication, this poem not only informs but also creates an experience that connects individuals with their cultural identity. In this case, the poem functions as a means to introduce and reaffirm the norms and values that exist in the Rawa Lopa culture.

The Mo'odulele poem is also an example of how cultural communication functions in a social context. In every performance of the poem, there is an interaction between the presenter (for example, a traditional elder or parent) and the listener (usually the younger generation). This creates a space for transmitting knowledge and social values. This interaction creates social bonds, strengthens relationships between individuals, and introduces ways of life that are considered correct by the community.

The social construction approach focuses on how meaning and understanding of the world are constructed through social interaction and communication. In the context of the Mo'odulele poem, this theory helps us understand how the Rawa Lopa community constructs their views on goodness, ethics, and social behavior through the stories and messages conveyed in the poem. Through the Mo'odulele poem, the Rawa Lopa community constructs their social construction of how a person should behave in society. Each poem often describes the actions or moral decisions taken by the characters in the story. Characters who do good or right actions will be praised, while bad or wrong actions will be avoided or punished. Thus, this poem not only conveys a story, but also shapes the community's view of what is right and wrong, good and bad, and how individuals should act in social life.

Mo'odulele poems also serve to strengthen the collective identity of the Rawa Lopa community. Through the repetition of stories and messages in the poems, the community forms a shared understanding of the values they hold dear. For example, values about respect for parents, the importance of mutual cooperation, and social responsibility are repeated regularly in the poems, thus forming a collective understanding that directs individuals to adjust their behavior to these values.

The social construction built through Mo'odulele poems also influences the formation of individual character. Every individual who listens to and is involved in the performance of this poem actively interacts with the values conveyed. This poem is part of the socialization process that shapes character, provides moral guidance, and teaches the importance of values that are greater than the individual, such as a sense of responsibility towards family, society, and cultural traditions.

Through these two approaches, Mo'odulele poetry can be seen as an effective means of character formation in the Rawa Lopa community. As a medium of cultural communication, this poetry not only functions to convey social values, but also to strengthen cultural identity and form a collective mindset that leads to the formation of good character. In the context of social construction, this poetry plays a role in building a deep social perception of the values that are valued by society, and how these values are internalized by individuals through social interaction. Thus, Mo'odulele poetry is more than just an oral art form; it is a

## **The Role of Oral Tradition in Character Formation (Case Study of Mo'odulele Poems in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia)**

powerful educational tool, which forms individual character by teaching morals, ethics, and the importance of maintaining social values. This poetry connects each individual to the history and cultural identity of the, and instill a collective understanding of how to live morally and harmoniously in society.

Through the approach of cultural communication theory and social construction, we can see that the Mo'odulele poem in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, plays a very important role in character formation. As a means of cultural communication, this poem conveys moral and social messages that shape the cultural identity and behavior of the community. On the other hand, through social construction, this poem helps the community build their social reality and directs individuals to adapt to existing social values. Thus, the Mo'odulele poem is not only a cultural heritage, but also an important tool in the formation of character and social identity of the Rawa Lopa community.

### **ORAL TRADITION AS A MEDIUM FOR CHARACTER FORMATION**

Oral tradition functions as a medium for transmitting cultural values, including social and moral norms that shape individual behavior in society. According to Hymes [18], oral tradition not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a means to maintain and uphold social structures in a community. In this case, oral tradition acts as a "guardian" of the noble values accepted by society.

Character formation through oral tradition occurs indirectly, through the delivery of moral messages expressed in the form of stories, poems, or pantun. Values such as courage, honesty, loyalty, and humility are often conveyed in the form of narratives or proverbs that can be remembered and applied in everyday life.

Oral tradition is one of the cultural heritages that has existed since ancient times and continues to play an important role in the lives of people, both in rural and urban areas. As part of non-written culture, oral tradition includes various forms of expression, such as folklore, myths, legends, fairy tales, pantun, poetry, and other spoken words that are passed down from generation to generation. In addition to functioning as entertainment and a medium of communication, oral tradition plays a very vital role in shaping the character of individuals and society.

As a natural learning medium, oral tradition serves to instill moral values, ethics, and social norms that apply in a community. Through stories that are conveyed orally, individuals learn to recognize the difference between good and bad, understand the consequences of actions, and appreciate the importance of values such as honesty, responsibility, wisdom, and courage. For example, many folk tales depict the character of a hero or main character who has noble values, who through their struggles and sacrifices teach the importance of steadfastness, kindness, and justice.

One of the main strengths of oral tradition in character formation is its ability to convey profound moral messages in a way that is easy to understand. The use of simple language, as well as a lively and emotional delivery method, makes these messages easy to accept and remember by the listener. In this way, oral tradition can shape a person's attitudes and behavior from an early age, equip them with useful life guidance in interacting with others, and direct them to become individuals with character.

In addition, oral tradition also plays an important role in strengthening cultural identity. Stories passed down through oral tradition not only contain moral values, but also teach history, customs, and views on life that are rooted in local culture. Through the telling of these stories, communities can maintain their cultural heritage, introduce the younger generation to their origins, and form a sense of pride and respect for traditions and ancestors. Thus, oral tradition not only shapes individual character, but also forms collective character in a community.

The importance of oral tradition in character formation is not only limited to the past. Although in this digital era, many forms of oral tradition have begun to be replaced by mass media and information technology, its existence remains relevant as an effective means of education. In many communities, especially in rural areas or areas with high cultural diversity, oral tradition is still used to teach the younger generation about the importance of moral and social values that shape good behavior in society.

However, the challenge faced by oral tradition in this modern era is the cultural shift due to technological developments. Globalization and the penetration of mass media can cause oral traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation to be marginalized or even forgotten. Therefore, it is important to preserve oral traditions through various means, such as documenting traditional stories, teaching these stories to children, and integrating traditional values into formal and non-formal education. Oral traditions play a very important role in character formation, both at the individual and societal levels. Through stories that are passed down orally, individuals learn about moral values that shape their personality and how they interact with the world around them. On the other hand, oral traditions also contain cultural elements that strengthen the identity and cultural diversity of the community. Therefore, efforts to preserve oral traditions are very important so that future generations can continue to gain valuable lessons from the existing cultural wealth and make oral traditions one of the one pillar in the formation of national character.

## The Role of Oral Tradition in Character Formation (Case Study of Mo'odulele Poems in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia)

### MO'ODULELE POEMS IN RAWA LOPA, SOUTHEAST SULAWESI

Mo'odulele poems are a form of oral tradition that is typical of the Rawa Lopa community, Southeast Sulawesi. These poems have a dual function, namely as entertainment and as a means to teach moral values to the community. Mo'odulele poems are delivered through a distinctive rhythm and are filled with meaningful expressions.

These poems contain various moral messages, such as the importance of maintaining harmony in the family, the obligation to respect parents, and the values of honesty and simplicity [19]. In the Mo'odulele tradition, every word spoken is not only to be understood literally, but also to be practiced in everyday life.

For example, in several Mo'odulele poems there are teachings about the importance of maintaining a good name and self-respect. This kind of message is not only taught through words, but also through the behavior demonstrated by the adherents of this tradition. The community who listens to these poems are invited to instill these values in their lives, which in turn contributes to the formation of a strong and dignified character [20].

### VIDEO 1 MODULELE POEM ABOUT CLEANLINESS

Moronene language: Tabea ruapulu tabea hopulu tangkeno hopulu lae'e melilini mentalahi matano oleo die Kapala village dahaku mebinta hai lampeantani leu hai watu-watu ico'o da nta to'ori pokodalio kampo pokowuaho wonua co'o village watu-watu KAI moico po 'atoro'u kampo pontotoku wonua nangkua kampondo raro miano motu'a da mebinta hai Bombana wita hai moronene dungku dekana dahosi pino'iyahi you osie kolumoe atoro'o wonua kisau to'ori atoro'o wonua pokodalio kampo pokomolinyaho wonua kau ruru'o rengko osie basiako saro daho nta dampasico api takonako confess kai mosampu wonua kai dungku'o tempo daho nta moloolo kampo kai sompulo wonua

Meaning: Today we met the watu-watu village to discuss and settle in the watu watu village which was a village until now still inhabited by the watu-watu community. therefore the watu-watu village cleaned up the village as expected by the government so that the watu village -Don't let there be too much dirt because if there is too much dirt it can cause flooding or for example drought then there will be a fire so therefore Watu-Watu village is always ready to clean from now on so that the village becomes clean.



Figure 1. Mo'odelele Oral Tradition (Source: Research Documentation)

Mo'odulele poetry is one example of an oral tradition that lives in the Rawa Lopa community, Southeast Sulawesi, which plays an important role in character formation. This poetry is a form of oral poetry that contains cultural, moral, and philosophical values that are passed down from generation to generation by the local community [21]. As part of the oral tradition, this poetry not only functions as entertainment, but also as an educational tool to shape the character of individuals and society. Mo'odulele poetry is one form of poetry that has developed among the people of Southeast Sulawesi, especially in the Rawa Lopa area. This poetry is usually used in various traditional events or cultural activities, such as weddings, traditional ceremonies, or other social activities. Mo'odulele itself in the local language means "to convey" or "to speak" in a beautiful and meaningful way, through a series of words that have a certain rhythm and rhythm. Mo'odulele poetry often contains moral messages related to social values, life, and moral teachings [20]. With its distinctive structure, this poem is able to convey profound ideas and teachings in a way that is easily digested by its listeners, both young and old.



# The Role of Oral Tradition in Character Formation (Case Study of Mo'odulele Poems in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia)

## 1. Character Building through Values in Mo'odulele Poetry

The moral values contained in the Mo'odulele poem have a significant impact in shaping the character of the Rawa Lopa community. As a form of oral tradition, this poem not only teaches morality, but also strengthens social ties between members of society. In everyday life, the values contained in this poem are internalized by individuals and applied in their social interactions [21].

Examples of moral values that can be found in the Mo'odulele poem are respect for parents and the importance of maintaining honesty. These two values are often emphasized in the Mo'odulele poem and are part of the norms that are firmly held by the Rawa Lopa community. This creates a culture that values discipline and honor, which in turn forms a strong social character. Wedding modulele poetry:

Moronene language: Tabea me tabea somba mepa'owose hai ra'ino sara woressano adati, adatinimbue Sarano damotu'a hai raindo pamarentah Kawa hai raindo rarompetila atawa miano motu'a ronga police chief Rarowatu da attendi hai ra'i tabeado Ira raro miano motu'a atawa Ira pamarentah da toloro onto or wakideiho anado tina da nta pinongkokawi hai tama da hai ra'i daho pinanga asaetu asampngaha da lenteheo'olota adatinto Bombana Sarano tomornene hintodateleu toloro ilota tawahitonga tonga kato da onto banderano adati tombino tomornene damo kuni dalenteolota atawa Ira damolori, damolori banderano Ira tamalaki or kawala'o raja, damo kuni sangkoleo pae or da mobelai pae, da motaha irai apua tawa Ira da totonga'o wonua, da mopila banderano limbo ataw petila kai ari nyahopo you pebali lako mopindai sincu, scan sincu koe daho opia dada'a bolo sincu daho palino daho e'eno daho riri douleno daho komapuno daho olondorono daho basawuano adat oath da niweweu hai ra'ino laica damoico kaihalala marriageo panawarano gau tapuno pebitara pokompohuleakono'o hai pamarentah.

Indonesian: A thousand apologies between the parents and the recipients of the customs among the government or ordinary people who attended the traditional wedding ceremony in Lakomea, including the Rarowatu Police Chief who took the step to hear and see the implementation of the Moronene marriage custom in Lakomea. Therefore, we as implementers and held the traditional ritual in front of the family which we offered to the recipient of the custom from the woman who took her child to the man in the morning. Let us watch the distribution of the traditional ritual in front of us. We apologize. thousands of apologies among all the families that we respect and among the kings who have been present at this place, we apologize if there are any mistakes, we carried out the customs, we were wrong, we are ordinary people, the truth is the truth, let's see this Moronene custom which is carried out in the morning when girls and boys are married before being married, then yesterday afternoon we held the montompa tua mentaa, the tua mentaa is a traditional flag which is stretched over the altar, symbolizing the first Moronene custom, the black one. is a symbol of tamalaki or guard The yellow king is from the rice ritual. When it is yellow then we will pamula. The third rice is red. The red is the symbol of the Moronene kingdom. The white flag is the symbol of the people, called Limbo, and after that there will be another ritual, Mompindai Sincu. Mompindai Sincu is a traditional marriage vow that is carried out to marry off a daughter or son..



Figure 2. Mo'odelele Oral Tradition in Wedding Ceremonies (Source: Research Documentation)

Although Mo'odulele poetry plays an important role in character building, the challenges of preserving it in the modern era are quite large. Globalization and technological developments have changed the way people interact and access information. Many young people are less interested or do not understand the importance of oral traditions such as Mo'odulele poetry. Therefore, it is important to involve various parties, such as the government, cultural communities, and educational institutions, to preserve and develop this poetry as a cultural heritage that must be maintained and passed on to the next generation.

Mo'odulele poetry functions as one of the important means in character building for the people of Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi. Through this poetry, the young generation is taught various noble values that shape their behavior and character in everyday life. Here are some aspects that prove how important this poetry is in character building:

## **The Role of Oral Tradition in Character Formation (Case Study of Mo'odulele Poems in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia)**

### **a. Moral and Ethical Teaching**

Mo'odulele poetry often conveys moral messages that teach about goodness, honesty, hard work, and mutual respect. In the context of the Rawa Lopa community, this poetry is used to educate the young generation so that they have noble personalities, full of integrity, and are responsible for themselves and others. For example, these poems can teach the importance of harmonious relationships between fellow members of society, as well as how to maintain traditional values such as respect for parents and community leaders. In this way, poems become an effective means of strengthening moral values needed in community life.

### **b. Instilling Social and Kinship Values**

Mo'odulele poems also function to instill social values related to kinship and solidarity. In many poems, there are teachings about the importance of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and helping each other in facing difficulties together. Through these poems, people are taught to maintain good relationships with family, neighbors, and communities, which in turn forms a sense of togetherness and belonging in a social group.

### **c. Character Formation Based on Ancestral Experiences**

Mo'odulele poems often contain stories about the struggles and life experiences of ancestors who are considered role models. Through these stories, the younger generation can learn about perseverance, patience, and courage in facing life's challenges. Teachings about how to overcome difficulties and fight for goodness are an integral part of character formation in the Rawa Lopa community.

### **d. Strengthening Cultural Identity**

As part of the oral tradition, the Mo'odulele poem also serves to strengthen the cultural identity of the Rawa Lopa community. In this poem, the younger generation is taught to be proud of their cultural heritage and preserve traditional values that have existed for a long time. By knowing and understanding this poem, they also become more aware of the importance of preserving local culture as part of their character and identity as people of Southeast Sulawesi.

The Mo'odulele poem is not only studied in formal contexts or traditional ceremonies, but can also be conveyed in everyday life. For example, parents or traditional figures can teach this poem to children on various occasions, such as when gathering, discussing life values, or when giving advice. The delivery of this poem orally also strengthens social ties within the family or community.

The formation of character through oral tradition can be explained using the theory of cultural communication developed by Stuart Hall [16]. Hall states that cultural communication, which includes oral tradition, has an important role in shaping the identity and character of a community. In this context, the Mo'odulele poem not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a form of learning that shapes the way members of society think and behave.

In addition, the social construction theory of Berger and Luckmann [15] can be used to understand how the values contained in oral traditions, such as the Mo'odulele poems, shape individual perceptions and actions. They argue that social reality is formed through social interaction, including through verbal communication that includes oral traditions. Thus, the Mo'odulele poems play a role in the social construction of the character of the Rawa Lopa community.

## **CONCLUSION**

Mo'odulele poetry in Rawa Lopa, Southeast Sulawesi, plays a very important role in shaping the character of the community. Through this poetry, moral, social, and cultural values that shape an individual's personality are taught in an interesting and profound way. As part of the oral tradition, this poetry is not only a means of entertainment, but also an effective educational tool to shape a strong, moral, and responsible character. Therefore, it is important to maintain and preserve Mo'odulele poetry so that it can continue to play an important role in building the character of the community in the future. Oral tradition, especially Mo'odulele poetry, plays a very important role in shaping the character of the Rawa Lopa community, Southeast Sulawesi. Through this poetry, the community not only gets entertainment, but also moral values that shape their behavior and character. By using the theory of cultural communication and social construction, we can understand how Mo'odulele poetry functions as a medium to transmit values that strengthen social ties and shape the cultural identity of the Rawa Lopa community. Therefore, oral traditions such as Mo'odulele poetry have a very strategic role in maintaining and shaping the character of a community.

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