

INTRODUCING *HELAEHILI*, AN ORAL POETRY FROM SENTANI, PAPUA

Mengenal *Helaehili*, Puisi Lisan dari Sentani, Papua

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Abstract: This paper is partially taken from my research on a Sentani oral poetry, *helaehili* that is sung in mourning occasions or funerals. It is also usually known as a song of lamentation. The research was conducted in Sentani, Papua, for almost four years (2004—2008). The data were taken directly from the field through recording. The data were then transcribed, translated into English and analyzed. Through the research, it is found that *helaehili* is rarely heard. Not many people, especially those who live near Jayapura city and young generation, know the song. It is predicted that *helaehili* will extinct in some years. The research finds the composition, formula, theme, and notation of *helaehili*.

Key Words: oral poetry, formula, theme, *helaehili*

Abstrak: Tulisan ini merupakan sebagian dari penelitian saya tentang lantunan lisan Sentani, *helaehili* yang biasanya dilantunkan ketika ada kedukaan atau penguburan jenazah. Lantunan ini juga disebut sebagai ratapan. Penelitian dilakukan di wilayah Sentani, Papua selama hampir empat tahun, pada 2004—2008. Data diambil melalui rekaman langsung dari para pelantun di lapangan, kemudian ditranskripsi, diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia, dan dianalisis. Melalui penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa *helaehili* sudah jarang dilantunkan. Tidak banyak orang, terutama yang tinggal dekat kota Jayapura dan para generasi muda yang mengenalinya. Dengan demikian, diprediksi bahwa lantunan ini akan hilang pada beberapa tahun ke depan. Penelitian ini menemukan komposisi, formula, tema, dan notasi mayor *helaehili*.

Kata-Kata Kunci: puisi lisan, formula, tema, *helaehili*

INTRODUCTION

Helaehili (also known as *rimehili* and *dimehili*) is a form of oral poetry found among Sentani people, Jayapura, Papua, which is now rarely heard. *Helaehili* songs, heard only in mourning occasions and funerals, are used to commemorate the kindness, good deeds, and heroism of the deceased as a token of respect and love of the singers.

Helaehili, as a form of folklore among Sentani people, Papua, represents the socio-cultural value constructions of the people, in which indigenous life paradigm, social structure, family

system, beliefs system, and socio-cultural values are found (Yektingtyas-Modouw, 2010). Besides, in a more specific sense, *helaehili* serves functions to teach traditional values invite a deeper exploration (cf. Bascom in Dundes, 1980:21—24). Unfortunately, this song is only known by old generation, especially those who stay in villages. Young generation and old generation who stay in the city do not recognize the songs anymore. Thus, this paper serves to provide written documentation as preservation and socialization as well for the oral tradition, given the fact that

nowadays both the *helaehili* singing and the songs are rarely heard. This paper wants to present a short guideline how *helaehili* is usually sung. It serves orality, composition, formula and themes, and notation of *helaehili*.

Theoretically, this study aims at developing the research on folklore, especially Papuan folklore. Practically, this research seeks to (1) reveal and socialize socio-cultural values as represented in *helaehili* with the purpose of maintaining and developing the existing Papuan culture, especially those of Sentani people, (2) document oral poetry of *helaehili* so that the younger generation who are now inadequately exposed to them can take advantage of the documents.

The paper findings are expected to be fruitful in the following areas. Academically, this research may inspire other similar research in Papua. Pragmatically, in line with the regional autonomy, the findings can be used for local-load instructional materials from the elementary to higher education in

Papua. Accordingly, the Sentani younger generation will not become an uprooted generation: they can maintain their own indigenous language, learn their own culture, and investigate as well as develop their own unique identity and critical awareness. In addition, the findings also may serve as reference and comparison related to other research and other practical needs.

The research was conducted in the areas of Sentani, Jayapura, including the remote islands in the Sentani Lake as well as the lake beach (see the map). Sentani is bordered with the mount Cyclops or Dobonsolo (north), Nimboran District (south), Kemtuk District (east), and Arso District (west). The population live in the 25, 5 km² wide of the Sentani Lake beach and in remote islands in the lake. The population is spread in three major areas, namely the East Sentani, the Central Sentani, and the West Sentani – living in 18 islands/villages.

Map of Sentani



Notes:

- | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Abar | 4. Babrongko | 7. Yoka | 10. Netar | 13. Siboiboi | 16. Yabuai |
| 2. Asei Island | 5. Doyo | 8. Kabiterau | 11. Puai | 14. Sereh | 17. Yakonde |
| 3. Ayapo | 6. Ifar | 9. Kwadeware Island | 12. Pujo | 15. Sosiri | 18. Waena |

Source: Hemkens, 1996

THEORY

In discussing *helaehili*, an oral poetry of Sentani people, there are at least three

theories that cannot be ignored, i.e. theory of folklore, theory of oral poetry, and theory of translation.

According to Dundes (1972), Dorson (1984), Abrams (1985), Foley (1986), dan Danandjaja (2002), *foklor* is an activity of verbal community, anonymous (*unknown authorship*), passed down orally from one generation to another generation. Folklore comes from two words, “folk” (community) and “lore” (oral tradition) (Danandjaja 1998:53—54; c.f. Dorson, 1972:1—5). This term refers to an understanding that folklore does not only focus on the oral tradition (lore) but also understand the socio-cultural background of a certain community (folk).

Bascom (in Dundes, 1984) states four functions of folklore, i.e. (1) projective system as a reflection of an idealization of a certain community, (2) as a legitimacy of cultural institutions, (3) as a pedagogical device, (4) as a means to force the community to respect social norms. While for Dundes (1980), functions of folklore can be compressed into four, namely: (1) promoting a group’s feeling of solidarity; (2) providing socially sanctional ways for individuals to act superior to other individuals; (3) serving a vehicle for social protest; (4) an enjoyable escape from reality and converting dull work into play.

The recent phenomena of “written folklore” or folklore in written form cannot be viewed as a contradiction of a paradox of the terminology of folklore itself (Dundes, 1980; Lord, 1981; Sweeney, 1987). Danandjaja (2002) highlights that folklore remains to be folklore even though it has been published either in a recording or written form. Folklore has the identity of folklore if it comes from oral sources.

Ong (1982) underlines two kinds of orality i.e. primary orality (orality without written background) (illiterate) (c.f. Foley, 1986) and secondary orality (orality with written background) (literate). This kind of folklore can be

followed through reading books or listening to recordings. *Ehabla* as the subject matter in this research refers to the primary orality since it is directly recorded from the field through some singers. There are no written documents of *ehabla*.

One genre of folklore is oral poetry. Finnegan (1977) says that oral poetry was arranged by a group of illiterate people. While to Vansinna (1965), Finnegan (1977), Lord (1981), and Danandjaja (2002), oral poetry has some fixed requirements, namely (1) fixed phrase not free phrase; (2) having aesthetic values for its essence and form; (3) meeting linguistic structure like rhythm, rhyme, meter, stylistics, and repetition. Finnegan also mentions the importance of “heightened language, metaphorical expression, musical form or accompaniment, structural repetitiveness, prosodic features (meter, alliteration), parallelism in oral poetry.

In *The Singer of Tales*, Lord (1981) says that “An oral poem is composed not for but in performance”. The epic singer only prepares themes in his/her mind that will be elaborated during the performance. Thus, there are no two performances that exactly the same. But Lord (1981: 99–102) does not mention the term of original for the epic that is firstly sung and **variant** for the the epic sung afterwards. All epic song is original.

For an epic singer, performance is a significant moment, as a stepping stone where he/she can demonstrate in composing, singing, and performing the singing. Accordingly, he/she is also called as a composer, a singer, and a performer as well. Since there are similarities between Yugoslavic epic and *ehabla*, the research adopts Lord’s theory.

Ehabla is sung in Sentani language. For its socialization, it needs to be translated from Sentani into English.

Since *ehabla* is a social product that cannot be separated from Sentani's socio-cultural background, Hewson dan Martin's theory on translation (1991:155—183) that highlights the singnificance and the importance of socio-cultural parameter and norms as the concepts of translation is used. Translation is a cultural transformation from *source text* to the *target text* considering the following elements, namely (1) text production and source text, (2) source text, (3) production of interlinguistic homology, (4) *generation*; (5) intralinguistic parameter in souce text and cultural homology of source text, (6) interlinguistic parameter in source text, (7) *cultural equation*; (8) filter through sensibility, motif, and translator's competency, (8) socio-cultural parameter, (9) selection of a translator's environment, cultural source environment, target language culture, previous translation, (10) production of target text. Bathgate's theory in Widyamartaya (1989:20) who stresses tuning, analysis, understanding, terminology, restructuring, checking, and discussion in a translation is adopted as an enrichment in translating *ehabla*.

Ehabla cannot be holistically understood without understanding the socio-cultural background of Sentani people. Kamma (1975) says that "folklore will make no sense if it is literally taken". This is also related to the facts that folklore is a reflection of socio-cultural of a certain community (Dundes, 1980; Wolff, 1981:1—4). Thus in exploring the essence of *ehabla*, theory of semiotics is needed. There are some principles of semiotics as follows. Semiotic system refers to signs. Jakobson in Hawkes (1978) and Culler (1989) said that every message is made of signs. The sign system is made of signifier and signified. In it, there are three main signs, i.e. icon, index, and symbol (Hawkes, 1978). As a social

product, *ehabla* cannot be separated from the icon, the index, and the symbol of Sentani community as the source of its singing. One important aspect in semiotic analysis is intertextuality: the relation of intertext. There are two understandings of text. In general, text is the universe as the setting of a new text. In this understanding, socio-cultural background of a certain community is a text. Specifically, text is the "text", either it is written or oral (Kristeva, 1980:36—37; Culler, 1989:139). Kristeva strengthens that a text cannot be totally understood without understanding the background as a part of a text and vice versa. Thus, since *ehabla* is a text that cannot be understood without understanding socio-cultural background of Sentani community as another text, theory of semiotic is adopted.

METHOD

The data gathered in the study comprised of two kinds, i.e. primary and secondary data. The primary data were the *helaehili* songs gathered from the singers, either done by males or females. The data gathering was conducted in Sentani area, especially in Asei, Waena, Nolakla, and Kwadeware. It is noteworthy that the different dialects—eastern, central, and western Sentani dialects—were not taken into account in this study, since the different linguistic structures did not substantially change the meaning significantly. The primary data were supported by a series of interviews done with other Sentani people, including the elderly people. The secondary data were obtained from the written documents of previous research, either on culture, language, or folklore of the Sentani people.

Helaehili songs, the data in this paper, were recorded in some mourning occasions and in funerals from the singers for almost 4 years in 2004–2008 (cf. Finnegan, 1977; Dundes, 1980;

Lord, 1981; Danandjaja, 2002), then transcribed (*cf.* Hartzler, 1992, Kleden-Probonegoro, 1998), translated (*cf.* Hewson and Martin, 1991; Bathgate in Widyamartaya, 1989) and analyzed (*cf.* Lord, 1981, Nagy, 1989).

DISCUSION

1. Orality of *Helaehili*

Helaehili is sung in a mourning occasion or a funeral. In general, the singing discloses the singer's memory on the life, work, and kindness of the deceased during his/her lifetime. Anybody may sing *helaehili*, either males or females. However, in reality it is the elderly people (*abu enime*) who can really perform the singing. If it is the traditional leader (*ondofolo*) who dies, only the high-class status people are allowed to sing *helaehili*. Common people (*yobu yoholom*) may contribute to sing if permitted by the traditional chiefs (*abu ako*). If the dead is from the low-class status (*yobu yoholom*), no restriction applies. Any people from any social status may perform the song. *Helaehili* is not accompanied by musical instruments. In general, an experienced singer will accompany the singing by specific movements like dance. For example, when the singer tells gardening activities that the dead has done during his/her lifetime, the singer imitates them through movements such as cutting trees, fencing, sowing seeds, unweeding garden, harvesting, and others.

In principle, all the singing of *helaehili* is done spontaneously in the singing spot (*composing while performing*), without memorization and written notes. The singer prepares a theme and plot to explore in the singing site (*cf.* Lord 1981). Consequently, it never happens that the same *helaehili* songs appear twice exactly the same, even though sung by exactly the same person.

2. Composition of *Helaehili*

Thematically, *helaehili* can be divided into some stanzas. Each stanza consists of two or four lines, depending on the ability of the singer to develop particular words and phrases to compose the lines in each stanza. Consequently, the number of stanzas in *helaehili* is not the same. Some are long, some others are short. The stanzas of the songs are dominated by the parallelism in the form of synonyms, complex words, reduplications, and words/phrases of parallel semantics. For a song consists of two lines, the first line is repeated in the second line, using parallel words/phrases. For a song consists of four lines, the first line is repeated in the third line, and the second line in the fourth, also using parallel words/phrases. In other words, the third and the fourth are essentially the same as the first and the second lines. Please notice the bold words/phrases in the following example of the song (sung by Mr. Cornelis Modouw, 2005).

Ra Igwa yono omi *menake wa foijsaele,*
Miyae nundaeya

We Ebaeit yonu titili kandeya, ana
kandeya

Re Raei yamno maengge *menake wa*
moijaele, Miyae howalaeya

Wa Hayaere yoha fale-fale kandeya,
ana kandeya

(A lady from Igwa village, your
kindness, lady, has gone

We, Ebaeit's children, are sad, mother,
we are sad

A lady from Raei village, your
kindness, lady, has gone

We, Hayae's children, are crying,
mother, we are crying)

The words "Igwa" and "Raei" which refer to names of place are parallel semantically. The words "yo" and "yam" (village) are synonymous. The same with "omi" and "maengge"

(lady/woman) are also synonymous. Let us see another example below.

*Ra Igwa yono omi **ayaele** elekoi miyae mewaneya*
*We Ebaeit yomolo kundang **nafoijaele** kanyeke, Omi kanyekeya*
*Ra Raeit yamno maengge **faeuwaele** huweikoi mewaneya*
*We Hayaere yammolo wamendang **namoijaele** kanyeke, Omi kanyekeya*

(A lady from Igwa village, you come with your **sweet words**
 Your husband, Ebaeit's descendent, is **respected** in the traditional gatherings, lady, you have gone
 A lady from Igwa village, you come with your **nice words**
 Your husband, Hayae's descendent, is **respected** in the traditional gatherings, lady, you have gone)

The words "ayaele" and "faeuwale" (sweet words) are synonymous. "Nafoijaele" and "namoijaele" (respected) are also synonymous. From the two examples above, it is clear that *helaehili* singing depends on the singer's ability in finding words/phrases to develop the plot of his/her songs. In the above song, the singer is able to explore the personality of the character as a lady from Igwa village/Raei village with her kindness (*foijaele/moijaele*), and sweet words (*ayaele/faeuwale*). Those characteristics then made her husband who come from Ebaeit/Hayae village is respected (*nafoijaele/namoijaele*) in the traditional gatherings (*kundang/wamendang*). It is challenging that then some experienced singers can develop various songs of long stanzas while some inexperienced ones compose only short songs.

In addition to the words/phrases prepared by the singers, traditionally there are some fixed words/phrases. Lord (1980:30) and Finnegan (1977:64) refer to these as "ready-made phrases" or "stereotyped phrases." A few examples

are as follows: *yono/yoha* (the next generation), *meliyaele/mekaiyale* (left/right hand dexterity), *penime/yoinime* (beautiful), *kui-kui/yale-yale* (cheerful), *kelu/maengge* (son/daughter), and the like.

Helaehili is commenced with a cry and then repeated for several times after the singer sings a theme. The cry is set to provide a period for the singer to think and compose words or phrases to appear in the next stanzas. For the audience, the cry sets to provide a time for comprehending the singing essence. *Helaehili* is based on the traditional region in general, for example *Igwane* *Ranyaei* (the Eastern Sentani), *Igwane* *Tanyaei* (the Central Sentani), *Igwane* (*Oleu*) *Danyaei* (the Western Sentani). The regions become the settings of place for the singings. The settings of place are then localized by mentioning a particular place in the specific traditional place. The character's name is never allowed to appear in the singing. Instead, the singer uses metonymy to refer to the character, i.e. mentioning where the character was from, for example, *Kamoi yono* (the husband from Kamoi village), *Ro omi* (the female from Ro village), *Fela fa* (the child from Fela village), *Igwa yono omi* (a lady from Igwa village), and so on. Please see the example as follows.

Anayo, anayo, ana nundaeya
 (mother, oh mother, mother has gone)

*Ra Igwa yono **itaeyaele** mokoboi miyae mewanaeya*
*We Baeit yomolo kundang **kui-kui jaele** omi kanyeke, Omi kanyekeya*
*Re Raeit yamno **habayaele** hareiboi miyae mewanaeya*
*We Hayaere yamolo wamendang **yale-yale** kanyeke, Omi kanyekeya*

(A lady from Igwa village, able to do lots of things with your **smartness**, you have come)

Your husband, Ebaeit's descendent, **is happy in the traditional gatherings**, lady, you have gone
 A lady from Igwa village, able to do lots of things with your **smartness**, you have come
 Your husband, Ebaeit's descendent, **is happy in the traditional gatherings**, lady, you have gone

Ra Igwa yono wa nakafa foi-foi nekewate
We Baeit yomolo kundang puma-puma kanyeke, Omi kanyekeya
Re Raeit yamno we paekefa moi-moi nekewate
We Hayaere yamolo wamendang dandam mokainyeke, Omi mokainyekeya

(A lady from Igwa village, able **to take care of your relatives**, you have come
 Your husband, Ebaeit's descendent, **is celebrated in the traditional gatherings**, lady, you have gone
 A lady from Igwa village, able **to take care of your relatives**, you have come
 Your husband, Ebaeit's descendent, **is respected in the traditional gatherings**, lady, you have gone

3. Formula and Themes of *Helaehili*

3.1 Formula

Lord (1981:30) argues that formula is "a group of words which is regularly

employed under the same metrical condition to express a given essential idea. Principally, the formula of *helaehili* is explicitly seen from the use of parallelism and repetition in each stanza. The words and phrases, either ready-made or prepared by the singers, are used to replace the specific words or phrases in the next stanzas. Adequately comprehending the formula, a novice singer is expected to sing *helaehili* songs well. For singers, the most important thing to do is to prepare the frame of *helaehili* songs and to have enough knowledge as well as vocabulary items/phrases and their pairs in order to compose the next *helaehili* stanzas. The more skillful a singer makes use of pair words/phrases, either synonyms or complex words, the longer the stanzas will be.

As an illustration, the following is a *helaehili* to mourn the death of Ms. Marice Pepuho (sung by Mr. Cornelis Modouw, 2005). This stanza clearly depicts the singing formula and the replacement of words/phrases. The permanent words/phrases are underlined (_____), and the replaced words/phrases are underlined using dashes (- - - -).

liiii liiii liiii (sound of mourning cries)

Anayo, Anayo, ana nundaeya
 (Mother, mother, oh mother has gone)

1
Ra Igwa yono omi menake wa foijaele miyae nundaeya,

We Ebaeit yonu tihili kandeya, ana kanendeya

Re Raei yamno maengge menake wa moijaele miyae howaleya

Wa Hayaere yoha fale-fale kandeya, ana kanendeya

(A **kind-hearted** lady from Igwa village, you have gone
 These Ebaeit children **are saddened**, mother has gone
 A **kind-hearted** lady from Raei village, you have gone,

These Hayae children **cry**, mother has gone)

Iiii iiii iiii (sound of mourning cries)

2

*Ra Igwa yono menake **wa nimeyaele** miyae, nundaeya*

*We Ebaeit yonu **tiboyaele** kanende, ana kanendeya*

*Ra Raei yamno maengge menake **we habayaele** miyae howaleyae*

*We Hayaere yoha **inseyaele** kandeya, ana kanendeya*

(A **gentle-hearted** lady from Igwa village, you have gone
These Ebaeit children **are mourning**, mother has gone
An **intelligent** lady from Raei village, you have gone
These Hayae children **are crying**, mother has gone).

Iiii iiii iiii (sound of mourning cries)

3

*Ra Igwa yono omi menake **wa puma-puma** yaele miyae, nundaeya*

*We Ebaeit yono **kenane bam** kanende, ana kanendeya*

*Re Raei yamno maengge menake **we dandam** maele miyae howaleyae*

*We Hayaere yoha **une bam** kandeya, ana kanendeya*

(A **supporting** lady from Igwa village, you have gone
These Ebaeit children **are sad**, mother has gone
(A **supporting** lady from Raei village, you have gone
These Hayae children **are sad**, mother has gone

Iiii iiii iiii (sound of mourning cries)

4

*Ra Igwa yono omi menake **wa iteiteiyaele** miyae, nundaeya*

*We Ebaeit yonu **mehiyaele** folanende, ana folanendeya*

*Re Raei yamno maengge **wa waka-wakayaele** miyae, nundaeya*

*We Hayaere yoha **hakoyaele** kandeya, ana kanendeya*

(A **cheerful** lady from Igwa village, you have gone
These Ebaeit children **are sorry**, mother has gone
A **cheerful** lady from Raei village, you have gone
These Hayae children **are sorry**, mother has gone)

As shown in the *helaehili* above, the replacements in the first stanza involve two aspects, i.e. the adjectives referring

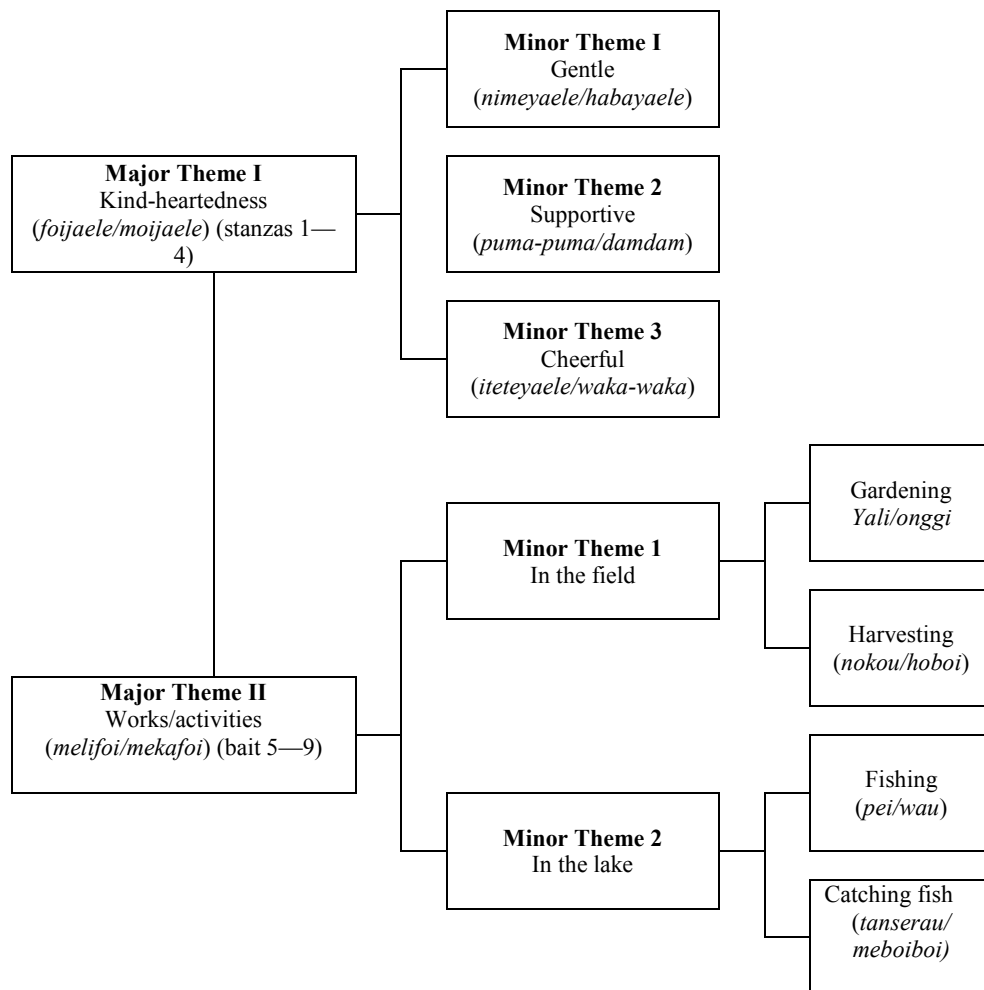
to the personality of the character in the first and the third line (*foijaele/moijaele*), which mean “kind-hearted”

and the verbs in the second and the fourth line (*tihili/fale-fale*), which mean “are saddened and cry.” *Foijaele* and *moijaele* are synonymous, while *tihili* and *fale-fale* refer to mourning situation. In the second stanza, the adjectives explaining the personality of the female character, namely *foijaele/moijaele* (kind-hearted), are replaced—by other adjectives, namely *nimeyaele/habayaele* (gentle-hearted/intelligent) (the first and third line, of stanza 2). Meanwhile, the verbs *tiboyaele* and *inseyaele* (the second and fourth line) are used to replace *tihili/fale-fale*. This pattern remains the same until the end of the singing.

3.2 Themes

In the mean time, the themes in *helaehili* are the topics revealed in the singing. Referring to Lord (1981:69), a theme is a

grouping of ideas. Lord divides themes into two, namely major and minor themes (66—67). The major theme is the main idea that underlines the whole story or part of the story. The minor theme is a part of the major theme, which serves to elaborate the topics. For example, in the *helaehili* to mourn the death of Ms. Marice Pepuho, there are two major themes, the first referring to her being kind-hearted during her lifetime (stanzas # 1—4), and the second referring to her activities (stanzas # 5—9). Her being kind-hearted is elaborated into a number of minor themes, such as her being gentle, good personality, and others. Meanwhile, her activities are also broken into a number of minor themes, such as the activities in the household, in the field, in the lake, and in the sago field. See the following scheme.



4. Notation of *Helaehili*

Following is the example of *helaehili* notation. Principally, *helaehili* has similar notation, but some singers,

especially the experienced ones, make some various improvisation (Yektiningtyas-Modouw, 2010).

Notation of *Helaehili*

ANA RANIME

1. Ra i - gwa yo-no o - mi me - E - yaele mo-kha - bol mi - me
 2. Ra i - gwa yo-no o - mi i - twa-yaele mo-kha - bol mi - me
 3. Ra i - gwa yo-no o - mi i - twa-yaele mo-kha - bol mi - me
 4. Ra i - gwa yo-no o - mi i - twa-yaele mo-kha - bol mi - me

1. yae me-ma - ma-ya Wa(E)bae - yo - mo-kha - dang - mo-pu - shan-ye
 2. yae me-ma - ma-ya Wa(E)bae - yo - mo-kha - dang - mo-pu - shan-ye
 3. yae me-ma - ma-ya Wa(E)bae - yo - mo-kha - dang - mo-pu - shan-ye
 4. yae me-ma - ma-ya Wa(E)bae - yo - mo-kha - dang - mo-pu - shan-ye

1. kha - o - mi kha-ye - kha-ye
 2. kha - o - mi kha-ye - kha-ye
 3. kha - o - mi kha-ye - kha-ye
 4. kha - o - mi kha-ye - kha-ye

D.S. D.C. all Fine

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Helaehili is one of Sentani oral poetry that is now rarely heard. Only old generation who live in villages or remote islands recognize the song. It is usually sung in mourning occasions or in funerals. Structurally, different from Lord's theory (1981), the structure of *helaehili* shows some characteristics: (1) the character's name is metonymically mentioned by relating it to the character's home, (2) the songs can be transcribed into two or four lines each stanza, (3) the formula of *helaehili* is enriched by parallelism in each line of the song in the form of synonym, reduplication, and other complex words, (4) in *helaehili*, setting of place is related to the character's name, and (5) *helaehili* is commenced with a cry.

The singing of *helaehili* as social product of Sentani people, manifesting one of the cultural assets, is supposedly maintained since it reveals the social and moral values that can be used as a learning medium as well as a reflection of the socio-cultural dynamics of the Sentani people.

The current decreases as well as the loosening of the social and traditional values that take place in villages close to cities are very likely to spread to other societies living in remote islands. Accordingly, this research sets to propose the importance of maintaining the singing of *helaehili* and strengthening moral values as represented in the songs through a number of activities: (1) teaching the singing in the schools; (2) conducting singing dramatization shows; (3) holding singing contests without

neglecting its unique characteristics, i.e. spontaneity.

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