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Linguistic Patterns And Ethnolinguistic Meanings In The Names of Traditional Makassar Foods: A Qualitative Document Analysis

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Abstrak : Penelitian ini mengkaji pola linguistik dan makna etnolinguistik dari tujuh nama makanan tradisional Makassar, Indonesia, yaitu Coto Makassar, Pallubasa, Sop Konro, Sop Saudara, Jalangkote, Pisang Epe, dan Barongko. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode analisis dokumen. Data penelitian terdiri atas yang mencakup referensi linguistik, artikel ilmiah, dokumen warisan budaya, serta publikasi sejarah dan etnografi.Analisis data dilakukan melalui empat tahap, yaitu mengidentifikasi bentuk leksikal, mendeskripsikan struktur morfologis, menentukan makna literal atau referensial, serta mengkaji interpretasi budaya yang didukung oleh bukti dokumenter.Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nama-nama makanan tersebut tidak membentuk satu kategori morfologis yang seragam. Beberapa nama mengandung unsur bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa daerah, sebagian merujuk pada bahan makanan atau proses pengolahannya, sedangkan nama lainnya merupakan bentuk leksikal yang asal-usul etimologisnya masih memerlukan verifikasi lebih lanjut.Coto Makassar telah ditetapkan sebagai Warisan Budaya Takbenda Indonesia pada tahun 2015. Namun, pengakuan tersebut tidak secara otomatis membuktikan asal-usul historis maupun etimologi nama makanan tersebut.Temuan penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya membedakan makna leksikal, motivasi penamaan, dan interpretasi budaya dalam kajian etnolinguistik makanan. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pendokumentasian kosakata kuliner lokal serta menawarkan kerangka analisis yang cermat dan berbasis bukti untuk mengkaji nama-nama makanan tradisional di Indonesia.

Kata kunci: etnolinguistik; nama makanan tradisional; etnosemantik; leksikon kuliner; Makassar; warisan budaya.

Abstract: *This study examines the linguistic patterns and ethnolinguistic meanings of seven traditional food names from Makassar, Indonesia: Coto Makassar, Pallubasa, Sop Konro, Sop Saudara, Jalangkote, Pisang Epe, and Barongko. The study employed a qualitative approach using document analysis. The data consisted of [insert number] documents, including linguistic references, scholarly articles, cultural heritage documents, and historical-ethnographic publications. The analysis was conducted in four stages: identifying lexical forms, describing morphological structures, determining literal or referential meanings, and examining cultural interpretations supported by documentary evidence. The findings show that the food names do not form a uniform morphological category. Some names contain both Indonesian and local-language elements, some refer to ingredients or preparation processes, and others are lexical forms whose etymologies still require verification. Coto Makassar was designated as Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2015; however, this recognition does not automatically establish the historical origin or etymology of the dish's name. The findings emphasize the need to distinguish lexical meaning, naming motivation, and cultural interpretation in the ethnolinguistic study of food. This study contributes to the documentation of local culinary vocabulary and provides a cautious analytical framework for examining traditional food names in Indonesia.*

Keywords: ethnolinguistics; traditional food names; ethnosemantics; culinary lexicon; Makassar; cultural heritage

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Introduction

Traditional food represents an important component of cultural heritage closely associated with language, community identity, historical experiences, and indigenous knowledge transmitted across generations. Within social life, food functions not merely as a means of fulfilling biological needs but also as a medium through which communities communicate cultural values, understand their environments, utilize natural resources, establish social relationships, and maintain collective identities. One particularly significant linguistic dimension of culinary traditions is the naming of food. Traditional food names may preserve information concerning ingredients, cooking techniques, physical characteristics, geographical origins, and cultural experiences. Gerhardt et al. (2013) explain that the relationship between language and food can be examined through culinary linguistics, an interdisciplinary field integrating linguistic structures, gastronomic practices, social identity, and cultural representation.

From a linguistic perspective, food names constitute lexical units characterized by particular structures and meanings. Their formation may involve individual words, phrases, compounds, lexical borrowing, or other word-formation processes. However, not every traditional food name can automatically be classified as a compound or assigned to a particular morphological category without sufficient linguistic evidence. Chaer (2009) emphasizes that semantic analysis requires careful consideration of the relationship between linguistic forms, referents, and contexts of usage. Similarly, Kramsch (1998) argues that language and culture are mutually interconnected because language serves to express, construct, and preserve the cultural realities of a community.

Ethnolinguistics provides a broader perspective for understanding the relationship between traditional food naming and cultural knowledge. Rather than concentrating exclusively on lexical forms and literal meanings, this approach examines how linguistic expressions relate to the knowledge systems, social practices, and cultural experiences of their speakers. Duranti (1997) conceptualizes language as an integral component of social practice that cannot be separated from cultural life. Consequently, traditional food names can be investigated as linguistic data that potentially reveal relationships between language and culturally situated knowledge. Nevertheless, cultural interpretation must be distinguished from lexical meaning and historical naming processes to prevent conclusions that exceed the available evidence.

Indonesia possesses extensive culinary diversity, particularly in South Sulawesi, where Bugis, Makassar, Toraja, and other ethnic communities maintain distinctive culinary traditions. Nahriana and Tawani (2022) documented 481 traditional food varieties in the Bugis-Makassar culinary context. Their research indicates that linguistic differences, population mobility, and interactions among ethnic communities may contribute to variation in food naming, even when dishes share similar ingredients or preparation techniques. These findings demonstrate the importance of linguistic investigation in understanding regional culinary diversity.

The culinary traditions of South Sulawesi have also attracted scholarly attention because of their relationships with cultural identity, economic activities, and tourism development. Sandarupa et al. (2026)

examine culinary characteristics associated with Bugis, Makassar, and Toraja communities, emphasizing the importance of regional food traditions in documenting cultural knowledge and gastronomic identity. Their perspective suggests that culinary vocabulary can serve as a valuable source of information for linguistic documentation and cultural studies. Food naming, therefore, constitutes an interdisciplinary research subject connecting linguistics, anthropology, gastronomy, and cultural heritage.

Makassar is widely recognized as an important center of traditional culinary development in South Sulawesi. Among the foods associated with its culinary traditions are Coto Makassar, Pallubasa, Sop Konro, Sop Saudara, Jalangkote, Pisang Epe, and Barongko. These seven food names exhibit interesting variations in linguistic form and potential naming motivation. Coto Makassar contains an identifiable geographical marker, whereas Sop Konro and Pisang Epe appear to combine Indonesian lexical elements with regional expressions. Sop Saudara contains a lexical element associated with kinship, while Pallubasa, Jalangkote, and Barongko represent conventionalized lexical forms whose internal structures and etymological origins require further investigation.

Previous research has examined culinary naming practices in Makassar from different linguistic perspectives. Yusup (2024), for example, investigated variations in the naming of local culinary businesses using a sociolinguistic approach. The study identified the use of Indonesian, regional languages, foreign languages, and mixed linguistic forms in commercial culinary naming. These findings suggest that language choice in culinary contexts may reflect identity, business representation, and communicative intentions. Nevertheless, the naming of culinary businesses differs conceptually from the linguistic analysis of traditional food names themselves.

Similarly, Basri et al. (2026) investigated coffee shop naming practices in Makassar through a linguistic landscape perspective. Their study highlights the interaction of Indonesian, regional, and foreign languages in urban commercial spaces. Although this research contributes to understanding linguistic diversity in culinary-related environments, it does not specifically establish the lexical origins or ethnolinguistic meanings of traditional food names. Consequently, further investigation is necessary to examine food names as independent linguistic units rather than merely as commercial labels.

Research more closely related to traditional culinary vocabulary was conducted by Muchlis (2024), who examined the lexicon and philosophical dimensions of foods used in traditional Bugis ceremonies in South Sulawesi. The study identified 43 food-name lexical items, comprising 23 word forms and 20 phrasal forms. These findings demonstrate the importance of distinguishing lexical and grammatical structures before associating food names with cultural functions. However, the ritual context of Bugis ceremonial foods differs from the broader culinary context of traditional foods commonly associated with Makassar.

Other ethnosemantic studies provide additional theoretical foundations. Hendri et al. (2025) investigated the naming of traditional foods in Wonosobo and demonstrated that culinary names may relate to ingredients, physical forms, tastes, preparation techniques, and cultural values. Pamantung and Sudipa (2021) also examined traditional Minahasan food naming, illustrating the relevance of gastronomic vocabulary to linguistic and cultural

investigation. Together, these studies suggest that traditional food names may contain both referential and culturally contextualized meanings.

Despite these contributions, methodological challenges remain in investigating the etymologies of traditional food names. Explanations of culinary name origins frequently appear in popular publications, tourism materials, and community narratives without sufficient linguistic or historical documentation. Such accounts may provide preliminary information, but they cannot automatically be treated as verified etymological evidence. This distinction is particularly important because the contemporary lexical meaning of a name, the historical motivation for its creation, and the symbolic interpretation subsequently associated with it represent different analytical dimensions.

Coto Makassar provides an illustrative example. The dish was officially recognized as Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2015. Although this recognition establishes its documented cultural significance, it does not independently determine the linguistic origin of the word *coto*. Likewise, cultural interpretations associated with Barongko require explicit historical, linguistic, or ethnographic evidence before being presented as established findings.

Against this background, the present study investigates the lexical and morphological patterns, literal and referential meanings, and ethnolinguistic interpretations of seven traditional Makassar food names through qualitative document analysis. Its central research questions concern the linguistic structures represented by these names, the meanings supported by documentary sources, and the strength of evidence underlying their cultural interpretations.

The principal contribution of this study lies in its analytical distinction among linguistic form, lexical meaning, naming motivation, and cultural interpretation. By maintaining these distinctions, the research seeks to provide a more rigorous framework for studying culinary vocabulary while contributing to the documentation of traditional food names and the development of ethnolinguistic research in Indonesia.

Literature Review

Culinary linguistics is an interdisciplinary field investigating relationships among language, food, and sociocultural practices. Gerhardt et al. (2013) explain that linguistic activities associated with food include naming dishes, communicating recipes, describing ingredients, discussing preparation techniques, and constructing social identities. From this perspective, food names are not simply labels distinguishing one dish from another. They are linguistic expressions that participate in the culinary classification systems of particular communities.

Traditional food names may refer to principal ingredients, preparation methods, physical characteristics, geographical locations, or social associations. Nevertheless, the relationship between a food's observable characteristics and its name requires linguistic verification. A dish containing a particular ingredient is not necessarily named after that ingredient, and a name possessing a transparent literal meaning may not have originated from the historical motivation suggested by its contemporary interpretation.

Pamantung and Sudipa (2021) demonstrate the relevance of traditional Minahasan food names to culinary linguistic investigation. Similarly, Lindayani et al. (n.d.) examine the naming of ritual dishes from a

gastrolinguistic perspective, connecting linguistic expressions with culturally situated food practices. These studies indicate that culinary naming should be investigated through the interaction of linguistic structure, semantic interpretation, and cultural context.

Lexical semantics examines the meanings of words and the relationships between linguistic forms and the concepts they represent. Cruse (1986) argues that lexical meaning should be understood through relationships among linguistic expressions and their contexts of usage. In culinary research, lexical semantics helps identify whether food names refer to ingredients, locations, preparation processes, or social concepts.Morphology concerns the internal structure of words and the processes through which linguistic forms develop. Bauer (2003) emphasizes that morphological analysis requires attention to word formation rather than reliance exclusively on apparent segmentation. A lexical form that seems divisible into two elements may not necessarily constitute a historically established compound.

For example, Sop Saudara can be analyzed as a phrase containing the recognizable Indonesian elements *sop* and *saudara*. In contrast, analyzing Pallubasa as *pallu* plus *basa* requires evidence from authoritative Makassarese dictionaries or linguistic studies. Without such evidence, the proposed segmentation should remain a hypothesis rather than an established morphological finding.Ethnolinguistics investigates the relationships between language, cultural practices, and community knowledge systems. Duranti (1997) argues that language should be understood within the social activities and cultural experiences through which meaning is constructed. In traditional culinary studies, ethnolinguistics provides a framework for examining relationships among food vocabulary, preparation practices, cultural knowledge, and social identity.Ethnosemantics focuses more specifically on how communities organize and interpret meaning within their cultural environments. Nazarea-Sandoval (1991) demonstrates that indigenous knowledge concerning biological resources can be investigated through culturally established classification systems. This perspective is relevant to culinary terminology because food names may reflect local classifications of ingredients, preparation techniques, and food-related practices.

Hendri et al. (2025) applied an ethnosemantic perspective to traditional food naming in Wonosobo. Their research demonstrates that linguistic meanings may be associated with food characteristics and cultural experiences. However, symbolic interpretations require explicit supporting evidence. Researchers should avoid attributing cultural meanings to food names merely because those interpretations appear plausible.

Language contributes significantly to the construction and maintenance of cultural identity. Kramsch (1998) argues that language expresses and embodies cultural realities, allowing communities to communicate shared experiences and values. Within culinary traditions, food names may function as markers of regional identity and cultural belonging.Appadurai (1988) demonstrates that culinary practices can participate in the construction of collective identities through historical and social processes. Food traditions may acquire broader cultural significance when associated with regional pride, ceremonial practices, or national representation.

In South Sulawesi, Rijal et al. (2020) discuss gastronomic culture as a resource for tourism development. Sandarupa et al. (2026)

likewise examine the cultural and economic dimensions of Bugis, Makassar, and Toraja culinary traditions. These studies suggest that traditional foods contribute to the representation of regional identity. However, the cultural significance of a dish should not automatically be treated as evidence concerning the linguistic origin of its name.

Previous Indonesian research has examined culinary naming through sociolinguistic, anthropolinguistic, and ethnosemantic approaches. Yusup (2024) investigated linguistic variation in Makassar culinary business names, whereas Basri et al. (2026) examined coffee shop naming through linguistic landscape analysis. Both studies contribute to understanding the relationship between language choice, identity, and commercial communication.Muchlis (2024) analyzed lexical forms and philosophical interpretations of traditional Bugis ceremonial foods. Meanwhile, Syamsuddin et al. (2026) investigated morphological and ethnolinguistic patterns in Kaili culinary lexicons. These studies highlight the importance of distinguishing words, phrases, and culturally motivated naming patterns.

Nevertheless, comparatively limited attention has been devoted to systematically separating lexical meaning, historical naming motivation, and cultural interpretation in the analysis of traditional Makassar food names. The present study addresses this gap by examining seven selected culinary names through documentary evidence while explicitly identifying interpretations that remain linguistically or historically unverified.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach using document analysis to investigate the linguistic patterns and ethnolinguistic meanings of traditional Makassar food names. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the research focused on describing lexical structures, identifying morphological characteristics, examining semantic relationships, and interpreting cultural information contained in documentary sources.

Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as a systematic procedure for examining and evaluating written or electronic materials to generate understanding and empirical knowledge. This approach allows researchers to investigate linguistic and cultural phenomena through previously documented information while considering the credibility and limitations of individual sources.

The study adopted a descriptive-interpretative orientation. Descriptive analysis was used to identify observable linguistic forms, whereas interpretative analysis examined possible relationships between food names and their cultural contexts. No interviews or direct field observations were included. Consequently, the findings were limited to documentary evidence and were not intended to represent the interpretations of all contemporary Makassarese speakers.

The research objects comprised seven traditional food names associated with Makassar: Coto Makassar, Pallubasa, Sop Konro, Sop Saudara, Jalangkote, Pisang Epe, and Barongko. These names were purposively selected because of their presence in regional culinary documentation and their potentially diverse linguistic characteristics.

The documentary sources were organized into four categories: linguistic references, scholarly publications, government cultural

heritage records, and historical or ethnographic literature. Linguistic references provided information concerning lexical meanings and morphological structures. Scholarly publications contributed theoretical perspectives and contextual evidence, while official cultural heritage records supported claims concerning institutional recognition.

Relevant literature was identified through academic databases and publication platforms, including Google Scholar, Garuda, DOAJ, Crossref, university journal portals, and Indonesia's official Intangible Cultural Heritage database. Search terms included *Makassar traditional food*, *culinary linguistics*, *food naming*, *ethnolinguistics*, *ethnosemantics*, and the names of the seven selected foods.

The final number of documents included in the analytical corpus and the exact search period must be confirmed from the research source log before publication. The number of bibliography entries should not automatically be treated as the number of analyzed documents because some references provide theoretical foundations rather than primary documentary evidence.

Data collection involved document identification, selection, examination, and systematic recording. Documents were considered relevant when they contained information concerning at least one selected food name, including its linguistic form, lexical meaning, ingredients, preparation techniques, historical background, or cultural associations.Sources were evaluated according to traceability, relevance, academic credibility, and evidential contribution. Scholarly articles, dictionaries, academic books, official institutional records, and identifiable historical publications were prioritized.Popular articles and promotional materials were considered only when they provided information about narratives circulating in public discourse. Such materials were not treated as conclusive evidence of historical or etymological origins unless their claims could be independently verified.Information from eligible documents was organized into a data matrix containing the author's name, publication year, document type, relevant food name, linguistic information, cultural explanation, and evidence status.

Data analysis was conducted in four stages. First, the lexical form of each food name was identified according to its documented spelling and recognizable linguistic components. Second, morphological analysis was undertaken to determine whether the name represented a single lexical form, a phrase, a potentially mixed-language expression, or a structure requiring further verification.

Third, semantic analysis identified literal and referential meanings supported by linguistic or culinary documentation. Fourth, ethnolinguistic interpretation examined possible connections between linguistic expressions and cultural practices.

The analytical categories were informed by the principles of thematic analysis discussed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Patterns were identified through comparison across food names and documentary descriptions.

Trustworthiness was addressed through source evaluation, transparent documentation, and comparison of information across independent publications. Each interpretation was classified according to whether it was directly supported, supported by multiple independent secondary sources, reported by a single source, or unverified.

Documentary triangulation was used to identify agreement and disagreement among sources rather than to establish certainty through repetition of unsupported claims.The principal limitation was the absence of primary linguistic and ethnographic field data. Therefore, interpretations concerning word origins, historical naming motivations, and symbolic meanings were presented cautiously whenever documentary support remained insufficient.

Results

The analysis revealed that the seven traditional Makassar food names display heterogeneous lexical and morphological characteristics. Differences were identified in the number of recognizable linguistic elements, potential language origins, relationships between names and food characteristics, and the strength of documentary evidence supporting particular interpretations.Four broad naming patterns were identified: food names containing geographical markers, phrases potentially combining Indonesian and regional-language elements, Indonesian phrases with transparent social meanings, and conventional lexical forms whose internal structures remain uncertain.

Table 1. Linguistic patterns and interpretative status of traditional Makassar food names

Food name	Linguistic pattern	Referential meaning or information	Evidence status
Coto Makassar	Dish name + geographical marker	Soup associated with Makassar	Heritage recognition documented; etymology uncertain
Palluba sa	Single lexical form; hypothesized segmentation	Traditional soup-based dish	Proposed segmentation requires verification
Sop Konro	Potential mixed-language phrase	*Konro* reportedly refers to ribs or bones	Regional lexical meaning requires verification
Sop Saudara	Indonesian phrase	*Saudara* denotes kinship or relatives	Literal meaning transparent; naming history uncertain
Jalangkote	Single lexical form	Traditional fried snack	Etymology unverified
Pisang Epe	Potential mixed-language phrase	Banana and a reported flattening process	Meaning of *epe* requires verification
Barongko	Single lexical form	Banana-based food wrapped in leaves	Culinary characteristics documented; etymology uncertain

The table demonstrates that apparent linguistic segmentation does not necessarily establish historical word formation. Each food name therefore requires individual examination rather than automatic

classification within a single morphological category.

4.2. Coto Makassar: Geographical Identity and Cultural Heritage

Coto Makassar consists of two identifiable elements: *coto* and *Makassar*. The second element functions as a geographical marker connecting the dish with the Makassar region. Structurally, the name can be interpreted as a dish designation followed by a location identifier.

Coto Makassar was officially recognized as Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2015. This recognition provides documentary evidence of the dish's cultural significance within national heritage documentation.

Pradiati (2023) discusses Coto Makassar from a historical gastronomic perspective and associates the dish with the historical context of the Gowa region. However, the historical development of the dish must be distinguished from the linguistic origin of the word *coto*. The available evidence does not conclusively establish the language from which this element originated.

4.3. Pallubasa: Uncertain Morphological Segmentation

Pallubasa represents a traditional culinary name whose written form suggests the possibility of internal segmentation. One proposed interpretation divides the name into *pallu* and *basa*, associating these elements with cooking activities or characteristics of a soupy dish.

Nevertheless, the proposed segmentation cannot be regarded as an established morphological fact without confirmation from authoritative Makassarese linguistic references.

Accordingly, Pallubasa was classified as a conventional lexical form requiring additional etymological investigation. The analysis does not establish whether the name originated as a compound, a historically fused expression, or another lexical formation.

4.4. Sop Konro: Possible Ingredient-Based Naming

Sop Konro contains two recognizable components, *sop* and *konro*. The first is commonly used in Indonesian culinary vocabulary to refer to soup, while the second is reported to be associated with ribs or bones.

This combination suggests a potential mixed-language naming structure and a referential relationship between the food name and its principal ingredients.

However, the linguistic origin and precise lexical meaning of *konro* require verification through authoritative regional-language dictionaries or linguistic publications. The analysis therefore identifies ingredient-based naming as a plausible interpretation rather than a conclusively established etymology.

4.5. Sop Saudara: Lexical Meaning and Social Association

Sop Saudara consists of the Indonesian elements *sop* and *saudara*. The word *saudara* has a relatively transparent lexical meaning associated with siblings, relatives, or kinship relationships.

This meaning creates a potential association between the food name and social concepts such as familiarity and interpersonal closeness.

Nevertheless, the literal meaning of *saudara* does not establish the historical reason for selecting the name. Claims that the name was

deliberately chosen to promote solidarity or familiarity among customers require documentary evidence concerning its original naming circumstances.

4.6. Jalangkote: A Lexical Form with Unverified Etymology

Jalangkote is a traditional fried snack associated with Makassar culinary practices. In its current written form, the name is treated as a single lexical unit.

Popular accounts sometimes connect the name with historical street-vending practices or propose segmentation into smaller linguistic elements. However, the documentary evidence examined in the original analysis was insufficient to establish these explanations as verified etymologies.

Consequently, Jalangkote was not classified as a compound. Its historical linguistic development remains an area requiring further investigation.

4.7. Pisang Epe: Ingredient- and Preparation-Related Naming

Pisang Epe contains the recognizable Indonesian word *pisang*, meaning banana, and the element *epe*, which is reportedly associated with pressing or flattening.

This combination suggests a possible naming pattern connecting the principal ingredient with a preparation technique. The dish's culinary characteristics are consistent with this referential interpretation.

However, the precise meaning and linguistic origin of *epe* require verification through authoritative Makassarese references. Therefore, preparation-based naming remains a supported possibility rather than a fully established etymological conclusion.

4.8. Barongko: Culinary Characteristics and Cultural Interpretation

Barongko is a traditional banana-based food commonly prepared and wrapped in banana leaves. These characteristics connect the dish with regional food preparation practices.

Nevertheless, information about ingredients and cooking techniques does not automatically establish the etymology of *barongko*. Interpretations associating the name with particular moral values or cultural philosophies also require explicit linguistic or ethnographic evidence.

Accordingly, Barongko was classified as a conventional lexical form whose etymological origin remains uncertain.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that traditional Makassar food naming reflects several linguistic patterns, including geographical identification, possible language contact, social lexical associations, and references to ingredients or preparation processes.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that traditional Makassar food names exhibit heterogeneous linguistic structures. This diversity indicates that culinary naming cannot be adequately explained through a single morphological classification. Some names consist of relatively transparent phrases, while others represent conventional lexical forms whose etymological development remains uncertain.

These findings correspond with Bauer's (2003) argument that morphological classification requires consideration of linguistic structure and word-formation processes rather than reliance on superficial segmentation. Within the present study, Coto

Makassar and Sop Saudara contain recognizable lexical components, whereas Pallubasa, Jalangkote, and Barongko cannot automatically be classified as compounds.

The findings also complement Muchlis (2024), who identified both word and phrasal forms in traditional Bugis ceremonial food names. However, the present research places greater emphasis on distinguishing observable linguistic structures from hypothetical historical formations. This distinction is particularly important in ethnolinguistic research because apparently transparent lexical forms may have undergone borrowing, phonological change, or conventionalization.

Traditional food names may reflect relationships between linguistic expressions and culturally situated culinary knowledge. Names referring to ingredients or preparation techniques can potentially preserve information about how communities recognize, classify, and prepare food.

In the present study, Sop Konro and Pisang Epe suggest possible relationships between lexical components and culinary characteristics. If their regional-language elements are independently verified, these names may illustrate how food terminology encodes information about ingredients and preparation processes.

This interpretation is consistent with Nazarea-Sandoval (1991), who connects indigenous knowledge with culturally established classification systems. Sandarupa et al. (2026) similarly emphasize the significance of culinary traditions in documenting local gastronomic knowledge in South Sulawesi.

Nevertheless, referential relationships should not be confused with historical naming motivations. A contemporary association between a food name and a preparation technique does not necessarily demonstrate that the name originally emerged from that technique. Linguistic investigation must therefore distinguish synchronic interpretations from diachronic explanations.

The potential combination of Indonesian and regional-language elements in Sop Konro and Pisang Epe highlights the relevance of language contact in culinary vocabulary.

In multilingual communities, lexical elements from different languages may coexist through borrowing, social interaction, and conventional linguistic usage. However, the presence of apparently mixed linguistic elements does not automatically demonstrate that a particular expression originated through a specific code-switching event.

Yusup (2024) identified Indonesian, regional, foreign, and mixed-language forms in Makassar culinary business naming. Basri et al. (2026) also examined linguistic diversity in coffee shop names, demonstrating the presence of different language choices within urban commercial environments.

Reski et al. (2025) further investigated language choice during Makassar Culinary Night, providing contextual evidence of multilingual communication in culinary settings.

These studies indicate that culinary activities constitute important environments for language interaction. Nevertheless, the present research differs by focusing on traditional food names as lexical units rather than commercial naming strategies or conversational language choices.

One of the most significant contributions of this research is the analytical distinction

among lexical meaning, historical naming motivation, and cultural interpretation.

Lexical meaning refers to the semantic content of a linguistic expression. Naming motivation concerns the historical reasons a particular name was selected. Cultural interpretation involves the meanings communities associate with a food or its name within specific social contexts.

Although these dimensions may overlap, they should not be treated as interchangeable.

Sop Saudara provides a clear example. The Indonesian word *saudara* refers to kinship or familial relationships. However, establishing that the dish was deliberately named to encourage solidarity among customers would require historical documentation concerning the naming process.

Similarly, the traditional preparation and presentation of Barongko do not automatically demonstrate that its name represents a particular moral philosophy. Such interpretations require explicit ethnographic evidence linking the linguistic expression to the cultural concept.

This evidence-sensitive approach is consistent with Duranti's (1997) understanding of language as socially situated practice while emphasizing the need to substantiate cultural interpretations through identifiable sources.

Coto Makassar illustrates the relationship between food naming, geographical identification, and cultural heritage recognition. The element *Makassar* serves as a regional marker that connects the dish with a particular culinary identity.

Its recognition as Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2015 demonstrates the cultural importance attributed to the dish within official heritage documentation. However, institutional recognition cannot independently establish the etymology of *coto*.

This distinction is important because cultural heritage documentation and etymological investigation serve different purposes. Heritage documentation recognizes cultural practices and their significance, whereas etymology investigates the origins and historical development of linguistic forms.

Appadurai (1988) demonstrates that culinary practices can contribute to the construction of collective identity. In the South Sulawesi context, Rijal et al. (2020) and Nahriana and Tawani (2022) similarly highlight the relationship between culinary diversity and regional cultural identity.

Traditional food names may therefore function as cultural identifiers even when the historical origins of their lexical components remain uncertain.This study contributes to ethnolinguistic research by proposing an analytical framework that emphasizes the strength and traceability of documentary evidence.

Theoretically, the findings suggest that food naming should be examined through the complementary perspectives of lexical semantics, morphology, ethnolinguistics, and cultural studies without conflating their analytical functions.Methodologically, document analysis provides opportunities to compare linguistic and cultural information while identifying uncertainty and contradictions among sources. Bowen (2009) emphasizes the importance of systematic document evaluation, while Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a foundation for identifying patterns through thematic analysis.

The findings also have implications for regional-language documentation. Traditional food names can serve as starting points for developing culinary lexical inventories containing linguistic forms, pronunciation variants, referential meanings, preparation methods, and contexts of use.

However, documentary analysis alone cannot establish whether particular expressions remain actively used, understood, or transmitted across generations. Such questions require primary data collected through interviews, observations, and community-based linguistic research.

Future investigations should therefore incorporate authoritative Makassarese and Buginese dictionaries, historical documents, and interviews with native speakers, traditional cooks, culinary practitioners, and cultural experts. Comparative studies involving Bugis, Makassar, and Toraja culinary terminology would also help clarify linguistic contact, semantic development, and the transmission of regional culinary knowledge.

Conclusion

This study investigated the linguistic patterns and ethnolinguistic meanings of seven traditional Makassar food names—Coto Makassar, Pallubasa, Sop Konro, Sop Saudara, Jalangkote, Pisang Epe, and Barongko—using a qualitative document analysis approach. The findings demonstrate that these names exhibit diverse lexical structures and naming characteristics. Coto Makassar contains a geographical marker associated with regional identity and has received official recognition as Indonesian Intangible Cultural Heritage. Sop Konro and Pisang Epe potentially represent mixed-language expressions associated with culinary ingredients and preparation processes, although their regional lexical components require further verification. Sop Saudara possesses a transparent lexical meaning related to kinship, while Pallubasa, Jalangkote, and Barongko remain conventional lexical forms whose etymological origins require additional investigation. The principal finding emphasizes that linguistic structure, lexical meaning, historical naming motivation, and cultural interpretation constitute interconnected but analytically distinct dimensions that must be examined according to the strength of available evidence.

This research contributes to culinary ethnolinguistics by offering an evidence-sensitive analytical framework for investigating traditional food names and their relationships with regional cultural knowledge. Documenting culinary vocabulary can enrich linguistic inventories and strengthen scholarly understanding of the relationship between language, gastronomy, and cultural heritage in South Sulawesi. Nevertheless, reliance on secondary documentary sources limits the extent to which the study can establish historical etymologies or community-specific symbolic interpretations. Future research should therefore incorporate linguistic ethnography, interviews with native speakers and culinary practitioners, authoritative regional-language dictionaries, and historical documentation. Comparative investigations involving Bugis, Makassar, Toraja, and other Indonesian culinary traditions are also recommended to clarify processes of language contact, semantic development, and intergenerational transmission of local culinary knowledge.

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