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UNCOVERING IDEOLOGY AND NOBILITY IN THE MUNA FOLK TALE *KARAMBAU KAINSEDODO*: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF HEREDITARY AUTHORITY AND TEXTUAL MEDIATION

Ela Martisa[1], Dahlia Husain[2]
[1]*English Literature, Faculty of Humanity, Universitas Halu Oleo, Indonesia*
[2]*English Literature, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Gorontalo, Indonesia*

Corresponding author's email: ela.martisa@uho.ac.id

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Abstract: This study examines the Muna folktale *Karambau Kainsedodo* as a cultural discourse that constructs hereditary authority, moral legitimacy, and noble identity. Previous studies on Indonesian folklore have mostly focused on moral values, themes, or cultural preservation, while limited attention has been given to how regional folktales reproduce ideology through linguistic choices and translation. This study aims to analyze how power relations and moral legitimacy are constructed in the tale, how ideological markers are mediated across Muna, Indonesian, and English versions, and how characters embody hereditary authority within Muna social ideology. This study used a qualitative design with Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis, covering textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. The findings show that noble identity is constructed through titles, evaluative expressions, hospitality formulas, coercive commands, symbolic opposition, and ancestral invocation. Translation preserves the main narrative structure but reduces the cultural density of key terms such as *kolaki*. The folktale functions not only as a moral story but also as a discourse that legitimizes hereditary authority and demonstrates how translation mediates indigenous ideology. The findings may support culturally sensitive translation and the use of local folktales in English literature and EFL learning.
Keywords: *Critical discourse analysis; folktale; ideology; nobility.*

INTRODUCTION

Folklore functions not only as cultural heritage but also as a medium through which communities preserve moral values, social identities, and systems of authority (Lubis et al., 2024; Manggau et al., 2025; Setiawan, 2025). In many traditional societies, oral narratives such as myths, legends, and folktales shape collective understandings of legitimacy, hierarchy, and acceptable social behavior (Banda et al., 2024; Liu, 2025; Sakti et al., 2024). Through recurring narrative structures and symbolic representations, folklore may naturalize particular social arrangements by presenting them as morally justified and culturally desirable (Asra et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2024; Rike et al., 2024). This ideological function becomes especially significant in societies where hereditary status and lineage remain central to social organization.

One important example can be found in Muna society in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. Muna oral traditions preserve local concepts related to morality, legitimacy, and inherited authority, including the concept of *kolaki*, which is often translated as "nobility." However, within Muna cultural understanding, *kolaki* represents more than social rank because it is closely associated with ancestral legitimacy, moral propriety, and symbolic authority (Jalil et al., 2021; Van Den Berg, 2018). As a result, representations of nobility in Muna folklore are deeply connected to cultural understandings of rightful power and social order.

The folktale *Karambau Kainsedodo* provides an important site for examining this ideological structure. The narrative centers on Waode Kambea

Mpatani, a female protagonist associated with noble lineage through the title "Waode," and her conflict with Kainsedodo, a destructive buffalo figure associated with aggression and disorder (Yatim, 1981). Although the narrative appears to present a moral conflict between good and evil, it also constructs a symbolic opposition between legitimate hereditary authority and uncontrolled force. The folktale therefore offers insight into how discourse legitimizes nobility and moral authority within Muna cultural ideology.

Recent scholarship increasingly recognizes folklore as a discursive practice that produces social meaning rather than functioning solely as entertainment or cultural preservation (Benabbes & AbdulHaleem Abu Taleb, 2024; Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025; Thompson et al., 2024). Studies have shown that folktales contribute to the construction of identity, morality, and social legitimacy through narrative representation. At the same time, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been widely used to investigate how language reproduces ideology and power relations in political, institutional, and media discourse (Arifin & Lennerfors, 2021; Li & Zhao, 2025; Sadeghi & Belali, 2025). Among CDA approaches, Fairclough's three-dimensional framework is particularly useful because it connects textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. This framework allows researchers to examine how linguistic choices construct meaning, how texts are mediated through production and circulation, and how discourse reproduces broader ideological structures.

In addition, translation studies emphasize that translation is not a neutral transfer of meaning but a process of ideological mediation (Hicham et al., 2025; Liao & Li, 2023). When culturally embedded concepts are translated into other languages, important symbolic and cultural dimensions may shift or become reduced. This issue is particularly relevant in multilingual representations of indigenous folklore, where culturally specific concepts may lose part of their ideological and cosmological significance when rendered into national or global languages (Alaa & Al Sawi, 2023; Bailey et al., 2025; Fuster & Bardel, 2024; Liang et al., 2024)

Despite these developments, several limitations remain in previous studies. First, the application of Critical Discourse Analysis to Indonesian regional folklore remains limited compared to studies focusing on institutional and media discourse. Second, eastern Indonesian oral traditions, including Muna folklore, remain underrepresented in international discussions concerning discourse, ideology, and cultural legitimacy. Third, previous studies often focus only on narrative content while overlooking how transcription and translation reshape ideological meaning across textual versions.

This study addresses these limitations by examining *Karambau Kainsedodo* as an ideological discourse that constructs hereditary authority through narrative representation and textual mediation. The novelty of this study lies in three aspects. First, the study applies Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis to Muna folklore, which remains underexplored in discourse studies. Second, the study combines textual analysis with attention to transcription and translation as processes of ideological mediation. Third, the study comparatively examines the Muna, Indonesian, and English versions of the folktale to identify how ideological meanings shift across languages.

This study contributes theoretically by extending Critical Discourse Analysis into the study of regional oral traditions and indigenous narrative discourse. It also contributes methodologically by integrating Critical Discourse Analysis with translation-sensitive analysis in examining multilingual textual mediation. Practically, the findings may contribute to more culturally sensitive approaches in the translation and preservation of indigenous folklore.

Based on these concerns, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) How do linguistic choices in *Karambau Kainsedodo* construct power relations and moral legitimation? (2) How are key ideological markers mediated and transformed through transcription and translation across the Muna, Indonesian, and English versions of the folktale? (3) How do narrative characters embody and reproduce hereditary authority within Muna social ideology?

The objective of this study is to analyze how *Karambau Kainsedodo* constructs hereditary authority and moral legitimacy through linguistic representation, discursive mediation, and ideological characterization across its Muna, Indonesian, and English versions.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a textual and interpretive orientation to examine how power, morality, hereditary legitimacy, and ideological mediation are constructed in the Muna folktale *Karambau Kainsedodo*. A qualitative approach was used

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because the study did not aim to measure variables statistically, but to interpret how meaning is produced through discourse (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lim, 2025). More specifically, the study adopted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly Fairclough's three-dimensional model, as the main analytical framework. This model was selected because it enables the analysis to move systematically from textual features to discursive mediation and broader social practice (Fairclough, 1995; Gulestø et al., 2025; Janks, 1997).

The research was designed as a discourse-based study of a traditional narrative that has undergone textual mediation through transcription and translation. Therefore, the folktale was not treated merely as a literary artifact, but as a cultural discourse that reflects and reproduces values in Muna society. The analysis focused on how lexical choices, character construction, symbolic opposition, and translational shifts carry ideological significance.

The primary data consisted of three textual versions of *Karambau Kainsedodo*: the Muna-language version, the Indonesian version, and the English version. The Muna text was taken from Yatim's *Bahasa Wuna*. The story was narrated by La Benu from Lasosodo on November 1, 1976, recorded and transcribed by Nurdin Yatim, and revised in collaboration with La Mokui in 2006. The Indonesian translation was prepared by Nurdin Yatim and rechecked by Siddo Thamrin and Letege Siharis Arifin N.A (*Bahasa Dan Budaya Muna*, n.d.).The Muna version was also printed in the school book *Maimo, dopoguru Wamba Wuna* with vocabulary notes and questions (Mokui & Van Den Berg, 2008). The Muna version was treated as the primary cultural text, while the Indonesian and English versions were used as comparative texts to examine how ideological markers were preserved, reduced, shifted, or reframed through translation. The folktale was selected purposively because it contains explicit representations of nobility, moral conflict, symbolic struggle, gendered vulnerability, and the restoration of social order. In addition, the existence of the tale in more than one language version made it suitable for examining discursive mediation across textual forms.

The units of analysis included words, phrases, clauses, dialogue sequences, narrative episodes, lexical patterns, honorific expressions, evaluative terms, symbolic actions, and translation shifts. These units were selected when they fulfilled at least one of the following criteria: representing power relations, signaling moral evaluation, referring to nobility or inherited status, marking ritual or social norms, or showing semantic change across the Muna, Indonesian, and English versions. Particular attention was given to culturally significant terms such as *Waode*, *kolaki*, and other expressions related to hereditary status and moral authority.

Data were collected through documentation and close textual reading. First, the available Muna, Indonesian, and English versions of *Karambau Kainsedodo* were compiled and arranged as a parallel corpus. Second, the texts were read repeatedly to identify recurring linguistic, symbolic, and ideological patterns. Third, relevant excerpts were marked and grouped according to the research questions. These excerpts were then classified into preliminary categories, including noble identity, moral judgment, authority, symbolic conflict, hospitality formulas, and translational mediation.

The data analysis followed Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The first stage was textual analysis, which examined vocabulary, lexical repetition, naming patterns, honorific titles, clauses of command or obligation, evaluative expressions, metaphorical constructions, agency distribution, and symbolic oppositions such as human versus animal, order versus chaos, and virtue versus aggression. This stage aimed to identify how the folktale linguistically encodes power, morality, hierarchy, and legitimacy.

The second stage was analysis of discursive practice. This stage examined how the folktale was mediated through transcription and translation. The analysis compared selected expressions across the Muna, Indonesian, and English versions to identify whether oral features, formulaic expressions, and culturally dense terms were retained, reduced, generalized, or transformed. For example, the concept of *kolaki* was examined in relation to its Indonesian and English equivalents to determine whether its moral, genealogical, and symbolic dimensions were preserved or weakened in translation.

The third stage was analysis of social practice. At this stage, the textual and translational findings were interpreted in relation to the broader socio-cultural context of Muna society. The analysis focused on how the narrative represents nobility, hereditary authority, honor, moral purity, and communal order. Characters and events were interpreted not only as fictional elements, but also as symbolic representations of wider ideological structures. In this sense, the triumph of the noble heroine was read as a discursive reaffirmation of social order and moral hierarchy.

To ensure analytical consistency, the researcher used a structured analysis sheet based on Fairclough's three dimensions: text, discursive practice, and social practice. A cross-version comparison table was also used to trace key terms and expressions from Muna into Indonesian and English. The coding process was conducted in three cycles. The first cycle involved open coding to identify relevant excerpts. The second cycle involved focused coding to group excerpts into broader themes, such as moral authority, illegitimate power, hospitality discourse, ancestral legitimacy, and ideological transformation through translation. The third cycle involved relational coding to connect textual evidence, discursive mediation, and socio-cultural interpretation.

Because translation was central to the study, comparative translation analysis was incorporated into the analytical procedure. This step did not aim to evaluate translation quality in a purely technical sense, but to examine how ideological meanings shifted across versions. Each comparison considered semantic equivalence, cultural density, pragmatic force, and ideological implication. Expressions related to compassion, nobility, order, and ritual interaction were given special attention.

Since this study used textual folklore data and did not involve direct human participants, formal ethical approval was not required. However, the study maintained academic ethics by acknowledging the source of the folktale, preserving culturally specific terms where necessary, and avoiding interpretations that detach the narrative from its Muna cultural context. The analysis sheet and cross-version comparison table were prepared as supporting materials to make the analytical process transparent.

Overall, this methodological design provided a coherent pathway from data identification to interpretation. Through purposive selection of the folktale, close reading of its Muna, Indonesian, and English versions, and systematic analysis based on Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model, the study aimed to reveal how language constructs legitimacy, how translation mediates ideology, and how narrative representation reproduces hereditary authority in Muna society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis demonstrates that the folktale does not function merely as a moral narrative about danger, rescue, and restoration. Rather, it operates as a discourse that constructs legitimacy through language, naturalizes noble authority through symbolic contrast, and reproduces a culturally grounded ideology of hereditary power in Muna society.

At the broadest level, the results answer the three research questions that guided this study. First, the text constructs power relations and moral legitimacy through naming practices, evaluative expressions, hospitality formulas, symbolic oppositions, and patterns of agency. Second, key ideological markers are mediated in important ways through transcription and translation, particularly when culturally dense concepts move from Muna into Indonesian and English. Third, the characters function not only as agents of plot development but also as ideological embodiments of social order, with Waode Kambea Mpatani representing morally sanctioned nobility and Kainsedodo representing destructive force detached from legitimate authority. Together, these findings confirm that the folktale is an important site for observing how language, narrative form, and textual mediation work together to sustain a local moral-political worldview (Firdaus, 2025; Kurnia Yuki et al., 2024; Surya Kencana, 2025)

Textual construction of power, morality, and legitimacy

The first set of findings concerns the textual dimension of the folktale. At this level, the analysis shows that power and morality are not expressed through abstract explanation, but through specific linguistic choices that guide readers toward a structured interpretation of the characters and their actions. These choices include naming, lexical repetition, evaluative labeling, speech formulas, narrative sequencing, and symbolic contrasts. The text consistently associates legitimate authority with nobility, moral restraint, and cultural propriety, while associating illegitimate force with anger, aggression, and social disruption.

One of the clearest textual mechanisms is the construction of possession as a basis for action. In the episode where buffalo Kainsedodo returns and discovers that his fruit has been picked, the narrative immediately frames his reaction through a sequence of observation, anger, and pursuit. The wording presents him as the possessor of the mangoes and therefore as someone whose grievance initially appears justified. This is significant because the story does not begin by depicting him as irrational from the outset. Instead, it gives him a recognizable claim rooted in property and violation. However, the narrative quickly transforms that apparently legitimate grievance into a morally excessive reaction. His anger escalates into aggressive intrusion, thereby shifting

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him from injured owner to disruptive actor. In this way, the text constructs an important ideological distinction: the possession of power or ownership does not automatically produce moral legitimacy. Legitimate power requires emotional control and social conformity (Hoeft et al., 2025; Polyportis et al., 2025)

A second major textual pattern appears in the hospitality sequence. When Kainsedodo is received by others and offered smoke and betel chew, the exchange represents more than polite conversation. It functions as a culturally marked ritual of recognition, respect, and inclusion. The repeated imperative to offer him smoke and betel signals a social norm of hospitality, one that affirms communal morality even in moments of tension. Yet Kainsedodo rejects these gestures and insists that he wants only loud laughter. This refusal is highly meaningful at the textual level. It marks a break from shared custom and signals his moral deviation under the pressure of anger. The scene therefore presents social order not simply as a background cultural fact, but as a discursive norm embedded in repeated formulaic language. Kainsedodo's rejection of hospitality becomes a linguistic sign of his movement outside moral restraint.

The analysis also reveals that emotional expression functions as a discourse marker of truth and guilt. In the episode where a person in the room is identified as not laughing, the narrative treats laughter not as incidental behavior but as a social signal. The inability or refusal to laugh exposes hidden wrongdoing. Waode Kambea Mpatani becomes identifiable precisely through this discrepancy in emotional performance. The textual force of the passage lies in the way ordinary bodily action is turned into moral evidence. Truth is not extracted through interrogation or punishment but through a discursive reading of behavior. This indicates that the folktale encodes morality through signs that are publicly interpretable within a shared cultural frame. In other words, discourse does not merely describe guilt. It makes guilt visible through patterned social expectations.

Another important finding lies in the representation of abduction and embodied domination. When Waode Kambea Mpatani is dressed by her parents and then carried away by Kainsedodo, the language of movement and command establishes a clear hierarchy of control. Kainsedodo's instruction for her to sit on his back and hold his horns emphasizes his attempt to control both her body and her mobility. This is not merely a narrative of physical force. Textually, it dramatizes illegitimate domination through bodily positioning and imperative speech. The buffalo figure becomes the embodiment of coercive power that ignores the norms of protection, consent, and social order. At the same time, the heroine's vulnerability is not framed as weakness in any absolute sense. Rather, it prepares the ground for a later reversal in which moral and ancestral legitimacy prove stronger than brute force.

The most ideologically dense textual evidence appears in Waode Kambea Mpatani's invocation of noble ancestry. In the key scene where she calls upon the truth of her mother's nobility and asks that the silk tree rise, the text makes hereditary status function as performative force. Her speech does not merely mention lineage; it activates lineage as a source of efficacy. The repeated conditional formulation—if the mother is truly noble—turns ancestry into a testable moral truth that nature itself responds to. The tree's upward movement confirms the legitimacy of the invocation, thereby connecting noble identity with cosmological alignment. This is a central result of the study: nobility in the folktale is not represented only as inherited rank, but as morally and spiritually effective authority.

The ending of the story further confirms the moral structure already built by the earlier episodes. When Kainsedodo is ultimately consumed, the narrative reverses his earlier position as predator and aggressor. The reversal is direct and memorable: the one who threatened order becomes the object of destruction. This is a classic form of poetic justice, but within the logic of the tale it carries more than narrative closure. It demonstrates that moral order eventually overrides physical dominance. The result is not simply revenge, but restoration. The story's closure reaffirms that force without legitimacy is unstable and self-defeating.

A final textual pattern appears in the reward episode involving the sparrow. The bird is offered food, gold, and other gifts, yet refuses them and accepts only a red necklace. This scene extends the moral architecture of the folktale beyond the central conflict. The sparrow's refusal of material wealth encodes humility, restraint, and ethical selectivity. Virtue is represented not through accumulation, but through measured acceptance. The red necklace then becomes a symbolic marker that carries the moral memory of the act into the natural world. Thus, even secondary characters participate in reinforcing the folktale's value system, where moral worth exceeds material reward.

Taken together, these textual findings show that the folktale encodes power through a strong moral grammar. Titles, speech acts, ritual formulas, embodied commands, evaluative contrasts, and symbolic reversals all contribute to an interpretive pattern in which legitimate authority is inseparable from inherited nobility, ethical conduct, and cosmological approval (Birsyada & Utami, 2024; Blommaert, 2006; Dunga et al., 2025; Rahardjanto et al., 2025)

Mediation through transcription and translation

The second set of findings concerns discursive practice, particularly the role of transcription and translation in shaping the ideological meaning of *Karambau Kainsedodo*. Since the tale exists in Muna, Indonesian, and English versions, it should not be treated as a fixed narrative that simply moves unchanged from one language to another. Rather, each version participates in the mediation of meaning. The Muna version functions as the primary cultural text, while the Indonesian and English versions make the story accessible to broader audiences. However, this accessibility also involves semantic adjustment, cultural reduction, and ideological reframing.

The shift from oral narration to written transcription is the first form of mediation. In oral performance, meaning is supported not only by words but also by voice, rhythm, repetition, pauses, and audience response (Jamal-Eddine & Abboud, 2025; Tagg & Lyons, 2024). In written form, these performative elements become less visible. Repeated expressions that may function as rhythmic emphasis in oral narration can appear as ordinary repetition in the written text. This indicates that transcription preserves the narrative sequence but may reduce the performative force through which moral and ideological meanings are originally delivered (Fernandes & Bowden, 2022; Tagg & Lyons, 2024).

Translation introduces a second layer of mediation. The most significant example is the term *kolaki*. In the Muna version, *kolaki* is not only a label of social rank but also a culturally dense marker of lineage, ancestral legitimacy, and moral authority. In the Indonesian version, it is translated as *bangsawan*, while in the English version it becomes *nobility*. These translations preserve the general meaning of noble status, but they do not fully carry the local ideological weight of *kolaki*. The ancestral and cosmological dimensions of the term become less explicit in translation.

A similar process occurs in the expression *kaasi*, translated into Indonesian as *kasihan* and into English as “the poor thing.” Although the basic meaning of pity is retained, the emotional and communal nuance of the Muna expression becomes weaker in English. In the source context, *kaasi* does not merely express sympathy; it helps position characters within a moral relationship. Its translation therefore preserves the affective meaning but reduces part of its relational and cultural force. The hospitality formula also shows how translation can preserve literal meaning while weakening ideological depth. The repeated Muna expression *Waaghoo nesosoghoo, waaghoo nepanaghoo* is translated into Indonesian as “Beri dia merokok, beri dia bersirih” and into English as “Give him a smoke, give him a betel chew.” Literally, the translations are clear. However, the social significance of offering smoke and betel chew may not be fully understood by readers outside the Muna context. In the narrative, this formula marks recognition, respect, and social inclusion. Kainsedodo’s refusal of the offer therefore becomes more than a personal preference; it signals his rejection of communal norms and moral restraint.

Table 1 presents selected ideological markers across the Muna, Indonesian, and English versions of *Karambau Kainsedodo* to show how cultural meanings are preserved or transformed through transcription and translation.

Table 1. *Key ideological markers across three versions of Karambau Kainsedodo*

Marker	Muna form	Indonesian / English rendering	Ideological shift
Noble identity	*Waodhe, kolaki*	*Waode, bangsawan / nobility*	Noble status is preserved, but the ancestral meaning of *kolaki* is reduced.
Hospitality ritual	*Waaghoo nesosoghoo, waaghoo nepanaghoo*	“Beri dia merokok, beri dia bersirih” / “Give him a smoke, give him a betel chew”	Hospitality remains visible, but its ritual force becomes weaker.
Rejection of norms	*Koemo aesosoa, koemo aepanaa*	“Tidak usah saya merokok…” / “Forget about smoking…”	Kainsedodo rejects communal norms and moral restraint.

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Marker	Muna form	Indonesian / English rendering	Ideological shift
Exposure of guilt	*miina namutaa*	"tidak tertawa" / "is not laughing"	Laughter functions as social evidence of hidden guilt.
Coercive domination	*Mengkora ne towuku ini*	"Duduk di panggungku" / "Sit on my back"	Command language represents bodily control and illegitimate power.
Noble invocation	*Saina-inamu kolaki*	"mamakku bangsawan" / "mother is truly nobility"	Nobility is retained, but ritual and cosmological force is weakened.
Ownership accusation	*ihintumo ini mutano fookua*	"engkau… memetik buah manggaku," / "you… picked my mango"	Repetition turns ownership into coercive accusation.
Threat of consumption	*dofumaaghoo mu mie…*	"makan orang yang saya dapat" / "eat the person I caught"	Accusation shifts into excessive violence.
Rescue request	*Kolo kanau*	"Dukunglah saya" / "Please carry me"	The request marks vulnerability and begins moral restoration.
Moral reversal	*dofumaamo karambau Kainsedodo*	"makanlah kerbau Kainsedodo" / "they ate buffalo Kainsedodo"	The aggressor becomes the victim, restoring moral order.
Ethical restraint	*Nokiido*	"ia tolak" / "he refused"	Refusal of wealth symbolizes humility and discipline.
Symbolic reward	*tongko kadea*	"kalung merah" / "red necklace"	The symbol links ethical assistance to cultural memory.

As shown in Table 1, several ideological markers remain structurally visible across the three versions, especially those related to nobility, coercive authority, hospitality rituals, and moral reversal. However, the table also demonstrates that translation tends to reduce the cultural density of certain Muna expressions. Terms such as *kolaki* and *kaasi* retain their general meanings in Indonesian and English, but their broader associations with ancestral legitimacy, communal morality, and cosmological authority become less explicit. This finding supports the argument that transcription and translation function not as neutral transfers of meaning, but as processes that reshape ideological representation for different audiences (Hashemi, 2025; Ozturk, 2024; Pym, 2010; van de Pol-Tegge, 2023)

Characters as ideological embodiments of social order

The third major set of findings concerns the social-practice dimension of the analysis. At this level, the characters emerge not only as narrative participants but as symbolic embodiments of a broader cultural worldview. Their roles, actions, and outcomes reproduce an ideological structure in which hereditary nobility is aligned with moral legitimacy and social order, while violence detached from proper status is aligned with chaos and eventual destruction.

Waode Kambea Mpatani is the clearest example of this process. She is not represented simply as an individual heroine who overcomes danger through personal cleverness alone. Her effectiveness is persistently tied to her title and lineage. The title "Waode" is not ornamental; it frames the reader's understanding of her moral and social position from the beginning. Her eventual triumph therefore confirms more than individual survival. It confirms that true authority derives from a legitimate inherited order. The scene in which her invocation produces a response from nature strongly reinforces this interpretation. Her lineage is not passive background identity but active symbolic capital.

Kainsedodo, by contrast, embodies force without legitimacy. Although he begins with a plausible grievance, his actions move beyond justice into excess. He rejects social norms,

violates moral boundaries, and attempts domination through coercion. This makes him a powerful figure in discursive terms: he represents what power looks like when it is disconnected from accepted moral and social order. His eventual destruction is therefore not only punishment for wrongdoing but a reassertion of the principle that strength alone does not authorize rule.

Supporting figures also contribute to the ideological pattern. Parents, elders, and helper figures do not merely fill narrative roles; they participate in validating moral hierarchy. Their actions and speech support the heroine's legitimacy and reinforce the communal recognition of value. The sparrow, in particular, serves as a minor but important ethical model. Through refusal of wealth and selective acceptance, it demonstrates that virtue is measured through restraint rather than greed. Even the nonhuman world is therefore incorporated into the folktale's moral order.

The overall result at the social-practice level is that the folktale naturalizes a hierarchy in which noble lineage, moral purity, and rightful authority are mutually reinforcing (Goraya et al., 2025; Nurul Asa, 2025). This hierarchy is not argued theoretically within the story; it is dramatized until it appears self-evident. That is precisely how ideology works most effectively. Social arrangements become persuasive not when they are constantly defended, but when they are woven into emotionally compelling narratives of justice, danger, and restoration (Contreras et al., 2025; Price, 2025; Sakki, 2025)

Table 2. *Summary of ideological patterns in Karambau Kainsedodo*

Ideological pattern	Evidence	Function
Nobility as moral authority	*Waodhe*, *kolaki*, noble invocation	Positions noble lineage as legitimate authority.
Force without legitimacy	Kainsedodo's anger, commands, and threat	Represents power detached from moral restraint.
Hospitality as social order	Smoke and betel-chew formula	Marks communal recognition and proper conduct.
Laughter as moral exposure	Waode is identified because she does not laugh	Turns emotional behavior into social evidence.
Ancestry as performative power	Rising silk tree after noble invocation	Shows lineage as morally and spiritually effective.
Moral reversal	Kainsedodo is eaten by other buffaloes	Restores social and moral order.
Ethical helper	Sparrow rescues Waode and refuses wealth	Reinforces humility, assistance, and restraint.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Muna folktale *Karambau Kainsedodo* functions not only as a traditional moral story, but also as an ideological discourse that constructs and legitimizes hereditary authority in Muna society. Through Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis, the study shows that the tale operates at the levels of textual construction, discursive practice, and social practice.

At the textual level, power and moral legitimacy are constructed through naming practices, honorific titles, evaluative expressions, hospitality formulas, symbolic oppositions, commands, and patterns of agency. The noble identity of Waode Kambea Mpatani is associated with virtue, truth, restraint, and rightful authority, while Kainsedodo represents uncontrolled force, anger, coercion, and disruption. This contrast indicates that power becomes legitimate only when it is connected to moral conduct, cultural propriety, and inherited noble status.

At the level of discursive practice, the study shows that transcription and translation are not neutral processes. The movement of the folktale from oral tradition into written form, and from Muna into Indonesian and English, reshapes the ideological meanings embedded in the narrative. Although the translated versions preserve the main storyline, culturally dense terms such as *kolaki* experience semantic reduction. This shows that translation can make indigenous folklore accessible to wider audiences while also weakening local associations among nobility, ancestry, morality, and cosmological authority.

At the level of social practice, the tale reproduces a worldview in which hereditary nobility is naturalized as a source of moral authority and social legitimacy. Waode Kambea Mpatani embodies noble legitimacy, whereas Kainsedodo embodies force without rightful authority. The narrative resolution affirms that social harmony is restored not through physical

strength, but through morally sanctioned and culturally legitimate power.

This study has several limitations. First, it relies on written transcriptions and translations rather than direct oral performance, so voice, rhythm, gesture, and audience response could not be fully examined. Second, it does not include audience reception data from Muna communities. Third, it focuses on one folktale, so the findings cannot represent the whole system of Muna oral literature. Future studies may compare *Karambau Kainsedodo* with other Muna folktales, examine oral performances, or conduct reception studies with Muna audiences. The findings may also inform EFL and English literature classrooms by showing how translated local folktales can be used to teach critical reading, cultural identity, and ideology in narrative texts.

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