

The *aN*- Agent Focus Affix in Minangali Music Terms¹

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Music is a universal phenomenon, but it is not a universal language. Concepts and terms related to a society's art forms and rituals can occupy different semantic domains across cultures. Discovering an insider's perspective is possible only through the structures of the language of the society being studied. Direct questioning (e.g., "Who are the musicians in your society?") necessarily relies on terms and concepts from the questioner's perspective. Indeed, outsider questions are often nonsensical or do not represent valid avenues of inquiry in the thought structures of the interviewee.

The *aN*- agent focus affix in Minangali is used to derive some objects into verbs, including all of the society's music instruments (i.e., *aN*-[instrument] = to play [instrument]). *aN*- affixed verbs are also formed when someone is doing something to a specific object that is in the process of realizing its ultimate purpose (e.g., the preparation of houses and food). Additionally, some objects are similarly prefixed when someone is using them to project/send away something in order to achieve a result (e.g., spears, guns, and stones.) Examining the limited set of objects that can have this affix attached to it led us to some preliminary conclusions about an emic conceptualization of music. We are suggesting that Minangali music instruments are affixed in this way when describing the action of them being sounded because this is when they are being utilized for their ultimate purposes. Additionally, we believe that music is something which is intended to be "sent away in order to achieve a result".

¹ Most of the seven thousand Lower Tanudan Kalinga speakers of northern Luzon, Philippines inhabit the northern half of Tanudan municipality, Kalinga province. Minangali is the name of the language variety of Lower Tanudan Kalinga spoken in the largest village of the language area (Mangali). The data for this paper was supplied by speakers of the Minangali variety. In this paper the language in question will be referred to as "Minangali."