

## **Understanding Lexical Choices: A Linguistic Analysis of the *Metatah* Ritual in Menyali Village**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The rapid development of the era impacts the sustainability of language and culture, including the lexicons in Balinese rituals. The young generation's indifference to using lexicons will result in language death which can threaten the community's cultural identity. However, studies on the lexicons used in Balinese rituals, particularly the tooth-filing ritual (*Metatah*), remain limited. While some research has explored the ritual's procedures, there is still a gap in identifying and analyzing the specific lexicons used. This study aims to identify the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village and analyze the cultural meaning of the identified lexicons. The ethnolinguistic perspective is used to examine the relationship between language and culture. This study was used a qualitative descriptive design. Observation and interviews with three selected informants were conducted to collect the data. The instruments used in this study were the researcher, observation sheets, interview guides, interview sheets, smartphones, and notebooks. This study employed an interactive data analysis model, consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification. The study results show that the *Metatah* ritual consists of ten procedures, with a total of thirty-five (35) lexicons used in all of these procedures. These lexicons represent the activities, tools, materials, and offerings involved in the ritual. The obtained lexicons carry cultural meanings that reflect the traditions and beliefs of the Menyali people, connected to the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*. The findings of this study underline the importance of maintaining the lexicons in the *Metatah* ritual as a source of cultural knowledge to maintain a community's identity. Thus, this study can have implications in linguistic studies as an effort to preserve the Balinese language.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Language and culture are interdependent and interrelated, as language serves as a medium for expressing and preserving cultural values, beliefs, and traditions (Karlik, 2023). In linguistics, the relation between language and culture is categorized as ethnolinguistics. This is a branch of linguistics that studies language, especially vocabulary, from a societal perspective to express the

culture of that community (Juanda, 2024). Language and culture are related and present in various phenomena, including traditional rituals such as *Metatah* (tooth-filing ceremony). In this context, language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a medium for conveying cultural values, beliefs, and symbolic meanings contained in the ritual.

*Metatah*, or the tooth-filing ceremony in Balinese Hindu society marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. This ritual involves filing six upper teeth (two canines and four incisors) as a symbolic act of purifying negative human traits known as *Sad Ripu*, including lust (*kama*), greed (*loba*), anger (*krodha*), confusion (*mada*), hatred (*moha*), and jealousy (*matsarya*) (Dewi & Suyasa, 2019; Sumarni, 2021). Throughout the ritual, various lexicons are used to describe actions, tools, materials, and offerings. A lexicon is certain words that have specific meanings (Booij, 2007). According to Kridalaksana and Harimurti (2008), there are two types of lexicons: active and passive lexicons. Active lexicons are lexicons used in daily activities by the community. Meanwhile, passive lexicons are lexicons used by the community on certain occasions or ceremonial events. Each lexicon carries a cultural meaning that reflects the values and beliefs of the community. According to Rais (2017), cultural meaning is the meaning of language based on the cultural context of the speaker. Therefore, the cultural meaning of the lexicons will reflect the values and beliefs of the community, which are often closely linked to broader cultural principles, such as *Tri Hita Karana*. This is a foundation for teaching humans to strive for harmonious relationships with God (*parhyangan*), fellow humans (*pawongan*), and nature (*palemahan*) (Puspayanti et al., 2023). By implementing this concept, it is hoped that a more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world can be created for all living creatures.

Given their cultural significance, lexicons play a crucial role in preserving traditions and transmitting values across generations. However, based on a preliminary study through observation, it was found that the younger generation in Menyali Village lacks an understanding of the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual. This declining knowledge poses a risk of language death, a phenomenon that occurs when a language or specific lexicon is no longer used or passed down to future generations (Crystal, 2002). If these ritual-specific terms continue to be forgotten, the cultural identity of Menyali people may also be lost. Therefore, language maintenance is necessary to keep the language alive and protect the cultural meaning it carries. Maintaining a language involves continuous use, education, and documentation to prevent its extinction (Fishman, 1991). By analyzing the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual, this study aims to contribute to language preservation efforts while highlighting the importance of cultural identity in an increasingly globalized world.

Several studies have discussed the use of lexicons in cultural contexts. The first study was conducted by Budasi and Suryasa (2021) with the research title “The Cultural View of North Bali Community towards *Ngidih* Marriage Reflected from Its Lexicons”. The results of the study show that there are nine stages of the *Ngidih* marriage ritual. In each procedure, sixty-two (62) lexicons were found, all reflecting the uniqueness of the community's cultural meanings. The second study was conducted by Jannah et al. (2020) with the research title “The Lexicons Used in the Procedures of Muslim Wedding Ceremony in Tegalinggah Village-North Bali”. The results of the study show six procedures contained in this ceremony. Thirty-five (35) lexicons were found in the procedures. The lexicons hold cultural meanings that underscore the importance of living in harmony with God, humans, and nature (the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*). The third research is entitled “Procedures and Lexicons Used in *Ngerorod* Wedding Ceremony in Sidetapa Village North Bali” by Angelita (2024). The results show that there are seven procedures found in the *Ngerorod* wedding ceremony. This research shows there are twenty-seven (27) lexicons contained in the procedures of this ceremony. The lexicon in this ceremony has a cultural meaning that is different from other areas.

Although there have been various studies on language and rituals in Bali, there is still a gap in studies that focus specifically on the lexicon used in the *Metatah* ritual. This study aims to identify the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village and analyze

the cultural meaning of the identified lexicons. An in-depth analysis of the specific terms used in this ritual can significantly contribute to understanding how language functions in cultural contexts and religious rites. This study has several important significances. In the linguistic field, this study enriches the understanding of the lexicon and the relationship between language and culture. For the Indonesian government, this study provides data that supports the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. In addition, lecturers in English departments can integrate these findings into their teaching to illustrate the role of language as a tool to express cultural identity. This study is also useful for other researchers as a reference or comparison in examining similar rituals and lexicons in other cultures. Therefore, conducting the study about the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village is very important.

## **METHOD**

A qualitative descriptive design was implemented in this study to identify and analyze the cultural meanings of the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual. The results of the study were presented descriptively, providing a complete picture of the cultural meanings of the lexicons in the ritual. This study was conducted in Menyali Village, Buleleng Regency, North Bali. This village still preserves the *Metatah* ritual by carrying out rituals based on hereditary traditions. The data of this study were obtained through observation and interviews with three selected informants. The informants were Balinese speakers living in Menyali Village and were selected through certain criteria. According to Samarin (1967), ideal informants are native speakers who are at least 35 years old, have lived in their village continuously, are knowledgeable, communicative, easy to reach, friendly, open-minded, proud of their language and traditions, and have no speech impairments. In addition to the criteria, the sampling process used the snowball technique.

The instruments used were the researcher, observation sheets, interview guides, interview sheets, smartphones, and notebooks. The researcher was the main instrument in this study, directly involved in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The observation sheet was used to record findings by listing the actions, words, or symbols observed in the *Metatah* ritual. The interview guide contained a list of questions to collect relevant information from informants about the lexicon used in the ritual and its cultural meaning. Interview sheets were used to write answers and responses from informants in a structured manner. The smartphone was used to take pictures and record audio during interviews to make sure the data was captured correctly and reduce the chance of losing information. This study used the data analysis method proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data analysis is divided into three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Triangulation was used to ensure data accuracy and reliability through methodological triangulation (observations and informants) and data source triangulation (three informants), with consistent results confirming data validity.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **FINDINGS**

The procedures in the *Metatah* ritual have unique variations in each region because it is influenced by local traditions, customs, and values inherent in the village community. This study discusses the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village, which has its characteristics and uniqueness compared to other areas. There are ten procedures in this ritual. The procedures are shown in Figure 1.

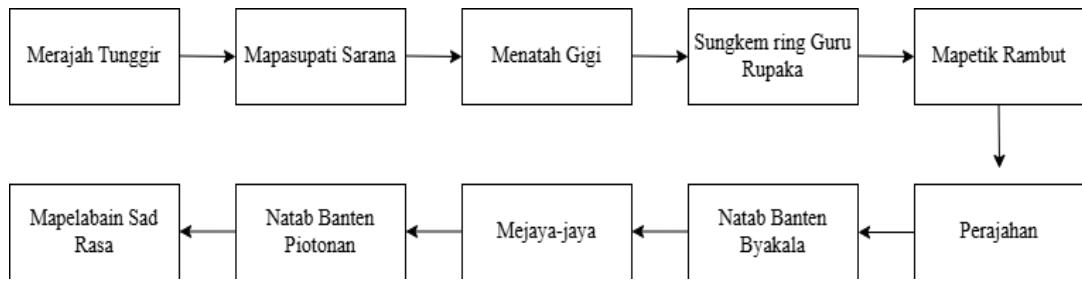


Figure 1. Procedures of the *Metatah* Ritual in Menyali Village

Based on Figure 1, the procedures in the *Metatah* ritual are *merajah tunggir*, *mapasupati sarana*, *menatah gigi*, *sungkem ring guru rupaka*, *mapetik rambut*, *perajahan*, *natab banten byakala petatahan*, *mejaya-jaya*, *natab banten byakala petatahan*, and *mapelabain sad rasa*.

The first procedure is *merajah tunggir*. In this procedure, *pemangku* (the priest) will paint the back of the neck of the participant using a marker. The symbol painted must match the identity. If the participant is a female, the script *ong kara lengodbawa* will be painted. This script symbolized feminine energy, such as gentleness and fertility. On the other hand, the script *ong kara amerta* will be painted for male participants. This script symbolized masculine energy, such as strength and eternity.

The second procedure is *mapasupati*. This ritual aims to enliven and give spiritual energy to all the equipment used in it, making it sacred and worthy of use. This process is carried out using the main offering, namely *sayut pasupati*.

The third procedure is *menatah gigi*. This is a major procedure in the *Metatah* ritual. A participant sits on the *bale petatahan* facing east. Then, a prayer is offered using a *kwangen*. The participant is laid down on his back with both hands on his chest. *Rurub* is then placed, covering the participant from legs to neck. *Sangging* places *sekar tunjung* on the participant's forehead. Then, the *caket* is placed under the pillow. The teeth are carefully carved 3 times. The molars are wedged using *pedangal tebu* and *carang kayu dapdap*. *Sangging* carves the six upper teeth, starting from the right canine, the four incisors to the left canine using *pahat mapati cakra*. Then, the six teeth are slowly filed using *kikir lalung*. After being filed, the six teeth are sharpened using *asab tala*. After being sharpened, the six teeth are rubbed slowly using *untun tilap*. Then, *Sangging* takes turmeric and dips it in honey as a toothpaste. After the *menatah gigi* process is complete, *pedangal tebu* and *carang kayu dapdap* are removed. Then, the participant rinses using *nyuh gading* water. The mirror is held up to the face of the *participant* to see his new teeth. Then the *sangging* asked the participant "Are you beautiful/handsome now?" because the teeth had been carved three times, the answer would be "Yes". After that, the participant is helped down from the *bale petatahan*, and the *banten biyakala mijian*, located next to the bottom of the *bale petatahan*, is stepped on.

The fourth procedure is *sungkem ring guru rupaka*. Both of the participant's parents, or their representatives, sit side by side on chairs. Then, the participant honors the parents. This step aims to arouse the participant's feelings of affection towards the parents who gave birth to and raised them, as well as towards the people around them.

The fifth procedure is *mapetik rambut*. *Sekar tunjung* and *seet mingmang* are cut by the priest on the participant's head three times. The ends of the participant's hair are cut at the front, right, left, back, and top. Last, *amput-amput* is flicked over the participant's body, covering his head, right shoulder, left shoulder, and chest.

The sixth procedure is *perajahan*. The priest performs this activity using *katik base mecarang tiga* dipped in honey and sandalwood powder. The sacred script is painted on the forehead, chest, tongue, shoulders, and palms.

The seventh procedure is *natab banten byakala petatahan*. The participant asks for a blessing from God and the ancestors through *banten byakala petatahan* offering. Then, they perform *natab*, an act of waving the essence of the offerings toward themselves.

The eighth procedure is *mejaya-jaya*. This is a ritual that aims to ask for blessings from God. After that, *melukat* is performed. This procession aims to purify oneself using holy water accompanied by a mantra to remove the bad traits in humans. Then, the *mesosolan* ritual is carried out by placing a duck on the participant's head and a chicken on both palms.

The ninth procedure is *natab banten piotonan petatahan*. A *pucacang urip* is placed on the participant's head. During the ceremony, both hands are moved towards the body to perform *natab banten piotonan petatahan*. After that, the family held a prayer. Last, the participant and family *nunas tirta* and *nunas bija* to the priest.

The tenth procedure is *mapelabain sad rasa*. The participant tries six elements of taste (sweet, bitter, sour, salty, astringent, and spicy). The sweet taste comes from honey, the salty taste from salt, the bitter taste from the *kentewali* tree, the sour taste from tamarind, the spicy taste from chili, and the astringent taste from several types of ginger. This activity signifies that humans are inherently connected to the six elements of sensation in life.

Based on the results, the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village has ten procedures. The lexicons describe the activities, tools, and materials used in the ritual. The following is an explanation of the lexicons found in each procedure and their cultural meanings.

**Table 1. Lexicons Used in the Procedures of *Metatah* Ritual in Menyali Village and Their Cultural Meaning**

No	Lexicons	Procedures	Cultural Meaning
1.	<i>merajah tunggir</i>	<i>merajah tunggir</i>	<i>Tunggir</i> is the point where the head and body unite. Painting sacred script in this point seeks divine blessings to purify the mind and guide the body to behave well.
2.	<i>pemangku</i>	<i>merajah tunggir</i>	An intermediary between humans and God, responsible for conveying prayers and offerings from humans to God, ensuring spiritual harmony, and the proper execution of rituals in Balinese society.
3.	<i>mapasupati</i>	<i>mapasupati</i>	A ritual to enliven or give soul to all the tools used in the <i>Metatah</i> ritual. <i>Mapasupati</i> aims to purify and empower the tools spiritually, ensuring they are properly prepared and ready for use.
4.	<i>sayut pasupati</i>	<i>mapasupati</i>	This offering consists of flowers, chicken, and thread, all of which are red. The color red symbolizes God Brahma with His divine power to give soul to all the tools used in the ritual. Through this offering, the tools are spiritually purified and imbued with divine energy.
5.	<i>bale petatahan</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A symbol of the spiritual readiness of participants to leave behind negative traits. Facing east, this area symbolizes a new beginning towards a better life.
6.	<i>kwangen</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A symbol of God. The fragrance of <i>kwangen</i> is a sign for humans to always remember, recite, and glorify the name of God.
7.	<i>rurub</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A blanket is a symbol of protection from negative energy or bad influences that can disrupt balance.
8.	<i>sekar tunjung</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A tool for transferring human souls aims to cleanse the participant's mind from emotional disturbances.
9.	<i>caket</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A cutting tool to ward off negative energy.
10.	<i>menatah</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	The tooth-filing process aims to eliminate the six enemies within humans ( <i>Sad Ripu</i> ).
11.	<i>sangging</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A spiritual person who helps participants to achieve spiritual maturity.

12.	<i>pedangal tebu</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	The sweet taste of sugarcane symbolizes the positive traits expected to appear in participants.
13.	<i>carang kayu dapdap</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A wood with spiritual power that is believed to protect humans against negative energy or evil forces
14.	<i>pahat mapati cakra</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A chisel to carve or erase bad traits in humans.
15.	<i>kikir lalung</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	An unserrated knife to erode the bad traits inherent in humans
16.	<i>asab tala</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A stone that is used to sharpen human positive nature and character in entering adulthood.
17.	<i>untun tilap</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A red stone is used to brush away bad traits within a person.
18.	<i>nyuh gading</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	A yellow coconut, symbolizing God Shiva, the destroyer of evil, contains water with sacred power to dissolve and eliminate bad qualities in humans.
19.	<i>banten biyakala mijian</i>	<i>menatah gigi</i>	An offering that is used to neutralize the power of negative energy.
20.	<i>sungkeman guru rupaka</i>	<i>ring ring</i>	A gesture of respect and gratitude from the participants to their parents for their love in raising and caring for their children.
21.	<i>mapetik rambut</i>	<i>mapetik rambut</i>	The act of cutting hair on the front, right, left, back, and top of the human's head symbolizes the removal of dirt from the body. Each section has specific meanings: the front represents clearing negative thoughts for wisdom, the right and left balance positive and negative attitudes, the back releases the burden of the past, and the top signifies readiness to embrace adulthood.
22.	<i>saet mingmang</i>	<i>mapetik rambut</i>	A bunch of weeds that symbolize the strength or sharpness to erase all bad traits in humans.
23.	<i>amput-amput</i>	<i>mapetik rambut</i>	A tool made from a bunch of weeds to purify the participants.
24.	<i>perajahan</i>	<i>perajahan</i>	The act of painting sacred script on the tongue, chest, shoulders, and palms. It aims to instill positive traits and energy, with each body part symbolizing specific hopes: the tongue for polite speech, the chest for spiritual balance, the shoulders for fragrant behavior in the community, and the palms for bringing benefits to oneself and others
25.	<i>katik base mecarang tiga</i>	<i>perajahan</i>	A tool symbolizing God Vishnu, the preserver of the universe. This tool is used to ask for blessings from God to preserve good qualities in humans.
26.	<i>natab</i>	<i>natab banten</i> <i>byakala petatahan</i>	Moving both hands towards the body to absorb blessings and holy energy from God through the offerings that are presented.
27.	<i>banten byakala petatahan</i>	<i>natab banten</i> <i>byakala petatahan</i>	Offerings used to express human gratitude, request self-cleansing, and neutralize negative energy.
28.	<i>mejaya-jaya</i>	<i>mejaya-jaya</i>	A ritual symbolizes the human transition to adulthood and spiritual cleansing, signifying the participants' readiness to live responsibly in both actions and thoughts.
29.	<i>melukat</i>	<i>mejaya-jaya</i>	A ritual using holy water that is believed to be able to cleanse the human body and soul.
30.	<i>mesosolan</i>	<i>mejaya-jaya</i>	A ritual to ask for blessings from God using ducks and chickens: placing a duck on the head is meant to provide wisdom in difficult situations while placing a chicken on the hand is meant to foster a strong work ethic.
31.	<i>pucacang urip</i>	<i>natab banten</i> <i>piotonan petatahan</i>	A headband is used symbolically to return the soul to the participant's body after the tooth filing process. This signifies that the individual has returned to a holy state

32.	<i>banten piotonan natab banten petatahan</i>	<i>natab piotonan petatahan</i>	An offering made on someone's birthday according to the Balinese calendar addressed to <i>Sang Hyang Dumadi</i> , the God who blesses and protects humans. This offering aims to ask for safety and a long life.
33.	<i>nunas tirta</i>	<i>natab banten piotonan petatahan</i>	A symbol of washing the feet and hands of <i>Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa</i> which in Hindu tradition is considered a holy gift from God.
34.	<i>nunas bija</i>	<i>natab banten piotonan petatahan</i>	The sacred seed symbolizes the God Kumara which is planted in humans for self-purification.
35.	<i>mapelabain rasa</i>	<i>sad</i>	This activity involves tasting six flavors—bitter, sour, spicy, astringent, salty, and sweet—which represent different human emotions and experiences. Each taste carries a lesson: bitter and sour teach resilience in tough times, spicy encourages patience, astringent reminds us to follow rules in the community, salty represents wisdom, and sweet symbolizes the happiness gained through hard work and perseverance. By tasting six different flavors, participants are reminded that life consists of both joys and hardships. This ritual serves as a spiritual lesson, preparing individuals to face life's challenges with balance and understanding.

Referring to Table 1, it is showed there are thirty-five (35) lexicons used in the procedures of *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village. The lexicons are *merajah tunggir*, *pemangku*, *masupati*, *sayut pasupati*, *bale petatahan*, *kwangen*, *rurub*, *sekar tunjung*, *caket*, *menatah*, *sangging*, *pedangal tebu*, *carang kayu dapdap*, *pahat mapati cakra*, *kikir lalung*, *asab tala*, *untun tilap*, *nyuh gading*, *banten biyakala mijian*, *sungkem ring guru rupaka*, *mapetik rambut*, *seet mingmang*, *amput-amput*, *perajahan*, *katik base mecarang tiga*, *natab*, *banten byakala petatahan*, *mejaya-jaya*, *melukat*, *mesosolan*, *pucacang urip*, *banten piotonan petatahan*, *nunas tirta*, *nunas bija*, and *mapelabain sad rasa*.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study found there are ten procedures in the *Metatah* ritual. In these procedures, 35 (thirty-five) lexicons were obtained. These lexicons represent the activities, tools, materials, and offerings involved in the ritual. The obtained lexicons carry cultural meanings that reflect the traditions and beliefs of the Menyali people, connected to the concept of *Tri Hita Karana* (the harmonious relationship between humans with God, fellow humans, and nature). The findings of this study are supported by several previous studies that highlight the relationship between lexicons and cultural meanings in traditional ceremonies. A relevant previous study was conducted by Budasi and Suryasa (2021), with the research title “The cultural view of North Bali community towards *Ngidih* marriage reflected from its lexicons”. The results of the study show that there are nine stages of the *Ngidih* marriage ritual. In each procedure, sixty-two (62) lexicons were found, all reflecting the uniqueness of the community's cultural meanings. Another relevant previous study is by Jannah et al. (2020) with the research title “The Lexicons Used in the Procedures of Muslim Wedding Ceremony in Tegalinggah Village-North Bali”. The results of the study show six procedures contained in this ceremony. Thirty-five (35) lexicons were found in the procedures. The lexicons hold cultural meanings that underscore the importance of living in harmony with God, humans, and nature. The other relevant previous study is by Angelita (2024) with research titled “Procedures and Lexicons Used in *Ngerorod* Wedding Ceremony in Sidetapa Village North Bali”. The results show that there are seven procedures found in the *Ngerorod* wedding ceremony in Sidetapa Village. This research shows twenty-seven (27) lexicons contained in the traditional wedding ceremony of *Ngerorod* in Sidetapa Village. The lexicon in this

ceremony has a cultural meaning that is different from other areas. The previous studies collectively reinforce the findings of this research, confirming that every cultural phenomenon has a sequence of important procedures. The procedures contain various lexicons that reflect the values, beliefs, and cultural identities of the community. Furthermore, each lexicon contained in the procedure has a deep cultural meaning. This meaning is believed by the local community and passed down from generation to generation as part of the cultural heritage.

In linguistics, the relation between language and culture is categorized as ethnolinguistics. According to Soge and Janggo (2024), ethnolinguistics is a branch of science that studies the relationship between language and culture, and how the two influence and reflect each other. This field examines a language's vocabulary from its speakers' perspective to understand the community's culture (Juanda, 2024). In line with these ideas, the ethnolinguistic theory is highly relevant to this study's findings, as the lexicons identified in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual reflect the values, beliefs, and traditions upheld by the Menyali community.

In this study, several lexicons are obtained. The lexicons represent the activities, tools, materials, and offerings involved in the ritual. These findings align with the statement by Budasi et al. (2021), which highlights that cultural and religious activities often involve numerous lexicons containing specific terms. According to Booij (2007), a lexicon is certain words that have specific meanings. This theory is relevant to the findings of this study because the lexicons found in the *Metatah* ritual have detailed descriptions and distinctive cultural meanings passed down by the ancestors of the Menyali people. The lexicons found in this study are words that are only used in specific situations or during ceremonial events. This finding supports the theory of Kridalaksana and Harimurti (2008) who divide lexicons into active and passive lexicons. The findings of this study show the list of lexicons in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village are predominantly categorized as passive lexicons because the lexicon is only used by local people during the *Metatah* ritual.

Since this study aims to analyze the cultural meanings of the obtained lexicons, the theory of cultural meaning is required. According to Tarigan (1985) in Utami & Eriyani (2022), meaning is conveyed through words, symbols, or signs. This theory is relevant in analyzing the data of this study. The meaning of each lexicon in this study is derived from the symbols and signs of the tools, materials, and offerings used in the ritual. For example, *nyuh gading* is a yellow coconut, and participants use its water for gargling during the tooth-filing process. This coconut symbolizes the God Shiva, the Destroyer of evil. The water of *nyuh gading* is believed to have the sacred power to destroy or eliminate bad qualities in the human body. From this example, the cultural meaning of the lexicon comes from the symbols it represents, which reflect the community's cultural beliefs. A similar perspective that supports this study is expressed by Rais (2017), who explains that cultural meaning is the meaning of language that is determined by the cultural context of its speakers. This study analyzes the cultural meaning of the lexicons based on the perspective of the Menyali community. Therefore, the cultural meaning of the obtained lexicon represents the culture and beliefs of the community. However, it is important to remember that each region may have different interpretations of the cultural meaning of these lexicons. While some words may have common meanings in Balinese culture, their purpose may vary depending on the local traditions and views of each community.

Based on the findings of this study, the cultural meaning of the obtained lexicons is related to the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*. According to Puspayanti et al. (2023) *Tri Hita Karana* serves as a foundation for teaching humans to strive for harmonious relationships with God (*parahyangan*), fellow humans (*pawongan*), and nature (*palemahan*). Lexicons in the *Metatah* ritual which are addressed to God as a means of expressing gratitude and asking for blessings from God are included in the *parahyangan* aspect. The examples are *mapasupati*, *kwangen*, and *natab*. Lexicons in the *Metatah* ritual that aim to build harmonious relationships between humans, through self-transformation that is manifested in a series of rituals, as well as activities that involve coordination with others, are included in the *pawongan* aspect. The examples are *sangging*,

*sungkem ring guru rupaka and mapetik rambut*. The lexicons in *Metatah* ritual that aim to protect oneself from the influence of negative energy and maintain balance with nature are included in the *palemahan* aspect. The examples are *rurub*, *caket*, and *carang kayu dapdap*.

The lexicons that exist in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual have the potential to experience language death. This potential is caused by several factors. First, this ceremony is held at particular times according to the Balinese calendar. Therefore, lexicons are only used when the ritual is conducted. Second, members who participate in the ritual only follow the procession without understanding the lexicons and their meaning. Third, there is a lack of information about the ritual and its lexicons in broader Hindu culture. These three causes contribute to the potential for language death. According to Crystal (2002), a language is said to be dead when no one is using it anymore. This statement is also supported by Isa et al. (2014), language is considered dead when no one is using the language anymore and no one is learning it anymore.

The study of the lexicon used in the *Metatah* ritual is an effort to preserve the language from extinction, especially the Balinese lexicon. According to Fishman (1991), language maintenance is an effort to maintain the sustainability of a language by using it as often as possible. This study documents the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual and describes the cultural meanings in detail. This effort is made to provide a deeper understanding of the lexicon to the community. Therefore, the lexicon in the context of the ritual can continue to be used by them. This step is in line with the concept of language maintenance to keep the language of the community alive from generation to generation.

Empirically, no researcher has specifically conducted a study on the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village. However, this study shares certain similarities with the previous studies. First, if this study is compared with research conducted by Angelita (2024), with the title "Procedures and Lexicons Used in *Ngerorod* Wedding Ceremony in Sidetapa Village, North Bali," a similarity lies in the focus on ceremonial events, both of which involve structured procedures. Second, if this study is compared with research conducted by Andini et al. (2023), with the title "Lexicons in *Nelayan* Dance Movements," similarities lie in the method of data collection and the instruments. Both of these studies conducted observations and interviews to collect the data. The observation sheets, interview guides, and interview sheets were used as the instruments. Third, if this study is compared with research conducted by Darmawan (2023), with the title "Descriptive Study: Lexicons Used in the *Makepung* Tradition by the Jembrana Regency Community", the similarity is both of these studies used a descriptive qualitative design. Fourth, if this study is compared with research conducted by Sacani and Ramendra (2022), entitled "Lexicon in *Cendrawasih* Buleleng Dance." Their focus on analyzing lexicons within cultural contexts is similar.

Based on these previous studies, this study is very similar to the study that is conducted by Angelita (2024), who focuses on finding the cultural meaning of the lexicons through the procedures of ceremonial Balinese events. Both of these studies used a descriptive qualitative design and had similar methods of data collection and instruments. Observation, interview, and recording were conducted to obtain the data. The instruments used in this research were interview guides and observation sheets. However, the previous study entitled "Lexicons in *Nelayan* Dance Movements", "Descriptive Study: Lexicons Used in the *Makepung* Tradition by the Jembrana Regency Community", and "Lexicon in *Cendrawasih* Buleleng Dance" have differences with this study regarding the focuses and lexicons.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, thirty-five (35) lexicons were found in the procedures of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village. The lexicons include the names of activities, tools, materials, and offerings used in the ritual. Each lexicon contains cultural meanings that reflect the beliefs and cultural identity of the Menyali community. The meanings of these lexicons

are connected with *Tri Hita Karana*, a Balinese concept that emphasizes the importance of maintaining harmony between God (*parahyangan*), fellow humans (*pawongan*), and nature (*palemahan*).

This study contributes to several areas of knowledge. First, it enriches ethnolinguistic studies, particularly in understanding how language and culture are interrelated in Balinese rituals. Second, it supports Balinese language learning and language preservation, as the lexicons found are primarily in Balinese, which is at risk of being forgotten by the younger generation. Third, it helps foster cross-cultural understanding, allowing both local and foreign communities to appreciate the cultural meaning of the lexicons in the *Metatah* ritual. Lastly, this study plays a role in preserving the cultural identity of the Menyali people, ensuring that the *Metatah* ritual lexicon continues to be recognized, understood, and passed on to future generations.

This study focuses on identifying the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual and analyzing their cultural meanings. Future studies are encouraged to explore the word formation processes of these lexicons to deepen linguistic insights into the ritual. Additionally, the Menyali community is encouraged to use this study as a reference for cultural learning, ensuring that language preservation continues across generations. Maintaining the use of these lexicons in rituals can help prevent language death and strengthen cultural identity. Educators are also encouraged to develop a discovery book based on these findings, making it easier for foreign visitors to learn about Balinese culture and language, thus contributing to both cultural and linguistic sustainability.

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