

## Consanguineal and Affinal Kinship in the Sasak Language of Karang Bayan

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify and classify the kinship terms used by the Sasak ethnic community in Karang Bayan and to analyze the social functions of these terms within cultural and communicative contexts. Using a qualitative descriptive method with an ethnolinguistic and anthropolinguistic approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation involving three generational groups: elders, adults, and youth. The findings reveal that the Sasak kinship lexicon in Karang Bayan consists of two major categories: consanguineal kinship (e.g., *amaq*, *inaq*, *polong*) and affinal kinship (e.g., *semame*, *senine*, *mentoak mama*). These terms not only denote familial relations but also serve as linguistic expressions of social values such as respect, hierarchy, and customary obligations. The usage of these terms reflects ethnic identity and functions as a mechanism for intergenerational transmission of cultural values. The study confirms the essential role of language in maintaining social structure and cultural identity among the Sasak people amid the pressures of modern change.

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## INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a communicative medium but also as a social and cultural artifact that encodes a community's worldview, hierarchy, and traditions (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2014). Among the most culturally significant domains of language is the lexicon of kinship, namely terms used to identify and classify familial relationships. These terms do not merely denote blood and marital ties, but also reflect complex social norms such as respect, obligation, and status, particularly in traditional societies like the Sasak ethnic community of Karang Bayan, West Lombok.

Koentjaraningrat (1978) emphasizes that language is an essential subsystem of culture that preserves values and transmits knowledge across generations. In this context, kinship terms among the Sasak people function not only as linguistic expressions, but also as symbolic representations of cultural identity and communal structure. Terms such as *amaq* (father), *inaq* (mother), *polong* (sibling), and *semame* (husband) are governed by factors including age, gender, lineage, and ritual context, illustrating what Duranti (1997) describes as the "performative" function of kinship lexicons—language that actively accomplishes social work.

At the same time, language shift in Lombok forms an important backdrop to this discussion.

According to *Badan Pusat Statistik* (2020), the use of local languages such as Sasak has decreased significantly among younger generations, influenced by urbanization, national education policies, and the dominance of Bahasa Indonesia. This situation indicates that documentation and analysis of Sasak kinship lexicon are both timely and necessary, because, as Fishman (1991) argues, the loss of minority languages and their unique lexical systems entails not only linguistic attrition but also a rupture in cultural memory.

Therefore, this study is guided by two main research objectives: (1) to identify and classify the kinship lexicon of the Sasak ethnic community in Karang Bayan, focusing on both consanguineal and affinal terms; and (2) to analyze how these terms function socially by reflecting familial hierarchy, cultural values, and the performative norms embedded in Sasak tradition.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design within the interdisciplinary framework of linguistic anthropology and ethnolinguistics. The qualitative approach was selected because it allows for an in-depth understanding of how language functions as a cultural tool and how kinship terms reflect and reinforce social realities in traditional communities (Muhidin, 2021). As Creswell (2014) notes, qualitative research is particularly appropriate when the aim is to explore meaning-making practices within specific social and cultural contexts. In line with Mahsun (2017), the descriptive method enables the researcher to systematically observe, document, and interpret cultural expressions through language, especially in communities where oral traditions are prominent.

The research was conducted in Karang Bayan, a Sasak ethnic community located in Lingsar District, West Lombok. This site was purposively chosen due to its linguistic vitality and strong retention of traditional kinship practices. The primary data of this study consisted of naturally occurring oral utterances and elicited responses containing kinship terminology, collected directly from native Sasak speakers in the community. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, emphasizing representativeness across generations. Twelve informants were interviewed: four elders (aged 60+), four middle-aged adults (aged 35–50), and four youth (aged 18–25), all of whom were active Sasak speakers engaged in everyday family and community interactions.

Data were collected through three techniques: semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The interviews were conducted in Sasak and Bahasa Indonesia depending on the speaker's preference and aimed to elicit kinship terms used in various relational contexts. Key guiding questions included: "How do you refer to your father's older brother?", "What term do you use for your daughter-in-law?", and "Are there any terms that have changed or disappeared over time?" These were designed to uncover both lexical forms and cultural interpretations of kinship roles. Participant observation was carried out during family gatherings, ceremonies, and informal social interactions to record spontaneous use of kinship terms in natural contexts. This ethnographic strategy provided rich contextual data and supported the triangulation of findings. Additionally, documentation involved collecting supporting materials such as *Tesaurus Bahasa Sasak* (Muslim et al., 2016) and prior ethnolinguistic records relevant to the community.

The types of data analyzed included lexical items (e.g., *amaq*, *senine*, *pisaq mama*), speech patterns, and contextual usage observed in social interactions. These data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman (2014) interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the reduction phase, all raw data, transcripts, field notes, and recordings, were coded and categorized according to type (consanguineal vs. affinal), generational reference, gender distinction, and formal/informal use. The display stage involved organizing key terms into thematic tables and linguistic maps to illustrate relational functions and sociocultural meanings. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on recurring patterns and cross-verified through triangulation with observations and existing literature. This methodological approach ensured

both the validity and cultural depth of the analysis, in line with the ethnographic standards of linguistic research (Shalika & Widayati, 2023).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The kinship lexicon of the Sasak ethnic community in Karang Bayan reveals a culturally embedded linguistic system that reflects not only biological relations but also sociocultural values. Based on data collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, the terms are grouped into two major lexical categories: consanguineal (by blood) and affinal (by marriage). Each category carries layered semantic, hierarchical, and functional meanings, which play a central role in daily communication and ritual practice.

### Consanguineal Kinship Terms: Lexical Structure and Cultural Function

Table 1. Consanguineal Lexicon Kinship

No.	Kinship Term	Meaning	Relation Type	Generation
1.	Amaq	Father	Consanguineal	Ascending
2.	Inaq	Mother	Consanguineal	Ascending
3.	Polong	Sibling	Consanguineal	Same Gen.
4.	Bapuk Mama	Grandfather (father's side)	Consanguineal	Ascending
5.	Bapuk Nina	Grandmother (mother's side)	Consanguineal	Ascending
6.	Pisaq Mama	Cousin (father's brother's child)	Consanguineal	Collateral
7.	Tuak	Uncle (older than parent)	Consanguineal	Ascending
8.	Inaq Saiq	Aunt (younger than parent)	Consanguineal	Ascending

The consanguineal terms identified in Karang Bayan reflect the social fabric of intergenerational and intrafamilial relationships. Terms such as *amaq* (father), *inaq* (mother), and *polong* (sibling) represent primary relationships and are frequently used across all age groups. Others, like *bapuq mama* (paternal grandfather) and *pisaq* (cousin), denote secondary but still significant relations. These terms are not neutral descriptors; they reflect the speaker's obligations, level of respect, and position within the family network.

According to Lyons (1977), lexical meaning exists not only in referential form but also in relational positioning within a semantic field. This is evident in the variation found in Sasak kinship expressions. For example, *polong* (sibling) is often modified to *polong tuak* when referring to an older sibling, signaling deference and social rank. Such modification demonstrates what Seymour-Smith (1987) calls the "moral grammar" of kinship systems, where vocabulary acts as a guide for behavior and relational norms.

The clear distinctions between terms for maternal and paternal grandparents (*bapuq nina* vs. *bapuq mama*) also align with Koentjaraningrat's (1978) view of Indonesian kinship systems as structured around both patrilineal and matrilineal awareness, despite their predominantly patrilineal organization. This dual recognition suggests a balanced social awareness in Karang Bayan's kinship system that is reflected linguistically.

Furthermore, the use of these terms is governed by context. In ritual events such as *selametan* or *nyongkolan*, precision in kinship references is mandatory. Mislabeled a senior relative, or using a generic Indonesian term like *kakek* (grandfather) instead of *bapuq mama*, can be perceived as a cultural violation. As Holmes (2013) asserts, address terms are among the most powerful linguistic tools for expressing respect and social distance.

## Affinal Kinship Terms: Social Integration and Marital Hierarchy

Table 2. Affinal Lexicon Kinship

No.	Kinship Term	Meaning	Relation Type	Gender	Context Use
1.	Semame	Husband	Affinal	Male	Daily/Familial
2.	Senine	Wife	Affinal	Female	Daily/Familial
3.	Mentoak Mama	Father-in-law (husband's side)	Affinal	Male	Respectful/ritual
4.	Mentoak Nina	Father-in-law (husband's side)	Affinal	Female	Respectful/ritual
5.	Ipar	Sibling-in-law	Affinal	Both	Casual/Daily
6.	Menantu	Son-in-law daughter-in-law	or Affinal	Both	Ritual/Formal
7.	Kelih	Co-wife (in polygamous context)	Affinal	Female	Rare/Ceremonial

The affinal kinship terms found in Karang Bayan are equally significant and include expressions like *semame* (husband), *senine* (wife), *mentoak mama* (father-in-law), and *ipar* (sibling-in-law). These terms reflect the social incorporation of individuals through marriage and the establishment of new hierarchical relationships.

Pustejovsky's (1995) generative lexicon theory is helpful in understanding the composite structure of some of these terms. For instance, *mentoak mama* combines the base kinship term (*mama*) with an affinal classifier (*mentoak*), forming a compound that communicates both lineage and relational distance. These expressions are highly ritualized and are primarily used in formal contexts such as marriage ceremonies and public introductions.

Interestingly, unlike many consanguineal terms that are flexible in tone and usage, affinal terms tend to be rigid in form and context. The term *ipar* (in-law sibling) is used across generational lines with minimal variation, but its usage still demands attention to politeness and ceremonial relevance. As Fishman (1991) points out, linguistic stability in kinship terminology is often a sign of its ritualized function in society.

The presence of rare but culturally specific terms like *kelih* (co-wife) also illustrates the lexicon's ability to preserve older social practices. Although polygamy is no longer common in Karang Bayan, the term survives in collective memory, functioning as what Aitchison (2003) calls "passive vocabulary" words that are recognized even if infrequently used. Their retention reflects what Rahmawati (2022) describes as the conservative nature of ritual language, which often outlives the practices it once described.

### Kinship Lexicon as a System of Social Meaning

Overall, the Sasak kinship lexicon serves not just as a vocabulary set but as a system of encoded social logic. Addressing one's father as *amaq*, rather than the generic Indonesian *ayah*, signals alignment with Sasak identity and traditional values. This aligns with Fishman's (1991) assertion that language choice in kinship is a symbolic act of cultural affirmation.

The generational consistency in the usage of terms like *inaq*, *polong*, and *semame* demonstrates that, despite external linguistic influences, core kinship terminology remains intact within the domestic and ritual spheres. The findings resonate with Sustiawan's (2021) study on Javanese kinship, which found that local terms persist in rural communities due to their embeddedness in custom and etiquette.

Thus, kinship terms in Karang Bayan are both communicative and performative. They signal respect, delineate social structure, and enact familial obligations. Their continued use shows that the community not only remembers its linguistic heritage but actively performs it in daily life, thereby maintaining cultural identity and intergenerational continuity.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the kinship lexicon in the Sasak language of Karang Bayan demonstrates that language plays a vital role not only in communication but also in preserving cultural values,

structuring social relationships, and reinforcing identity. By investigating both consanguineal and affinal terms, this study reveals how deeply embedded kinship vocabulary is in the Sasak people's sociocultural fabric. These findings validate the view that kinship terms are not mere linguistic labels, but active agents in maintaining traditional systems of respect, hierarchy, and social coherence.

This research has fulfilled its objectives by identifying and classifying the kinship terms used in the Karang Bayan Sasak dialect, and analyzing the social functions they perform. The consanguineal terms, such as *amaq*, *inaq*, and *polong*, establish lineage, generation, and status, while affinal terms, like *semame*, *senine*, and *mentoak mama*, introduce layers of marital integration, obligation, and formal respect. Both sets of terms continue to function as tools of identity, especially within ritual contexts and intra-family communication. Moreover, the generational continuity observed in the use of these terms, despite broader national language shifts, signals the persistence of cultural resilience in the community. Thus, kinship terms serve as an essential expression of the Sasak worldview and social order.

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