

LEXICONS AND CULTURAL MEANINGS IN THE MELASTI RITUAL OF SEMA AGUNG VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify and analyze the lexicon used in the Melasti ritual and its cultural meaning in Sema Agung Village, Klungkung Regency. This study was conducted using a qualitative design with the ethnolinguistic approach. The instruments in this study were the researcher, observation sheet, interview guide, and smartphone. The data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews with four selected informants. The data was also gathered using four main stages by Miles et al. (2014), including data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Based on the data analysis, the study result shows forty (40) lexicons related to the procedure of the Melasti ritual found along with the cultural meaning. These findings show that the lexicons reflect the close relationship between language, culture, and religious traditions in preserving Balinese cultural heritage for future generations. It was expected that this study would serve as a reference for other researchers interested in Ethnolinguistics, particularly in the lexicon of the Melasti ritual.

Keywords: Cultural Meaning, Ethnolinguistic, Lexicon, Melasti Ritual.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as an archipelagic country consisting of various kinds of culture, tradition, and ethnic groups. The diversity is also expressed through its linguistic variety, as hundreds of local languages are spoken (Budasi et al., 2021; Nurahmad & Natsir, 2026). The lexicon can be observed in regional languages in Indonesia; one example language is Balinese. Bali is one of the world's leading tourist destinations, where the local people actively engage in numerous religious practices, and the language contains a wide range of specialized lexicons that exist within the language (Budasi et al., 2021; Budasi & Anggayana, 2019).

The use of language in a community can be seen through its social and cultural aspects, functioning as a medium to express a community's values, beliefs, and others (Karlik, 2023). According to Budasi and Suryasa (2021), languages are closely related to culture, which organizes how people interact, while language is the system that enables those interactions to function. Utami et al. (2017) state that culture serves as the basis of communication, determining the situations in which messages can be conveyed, received, and interpreted. Therefore, the lexicon is closely related to culture and is used to express cultural aspects in a language that reflects cultural meanings and shows the social identity of its speakers. Lexicon found in many of the Balinese rituals because they have unique and authentic lexicons (Budasi & Suryasa, 2021).

However, the Balinese language remains one of the Indonesian languages that is currently facing issues. The issues mostly arise from globalization that has affected the younger generation, which makes language's role and position in society have undergone noticeable shifts (Budasi et al., 2021; Budasi & Satyawati, 2021). To a certain extent, the Balinese language is becoming increasingly marginalized in its own homeland due to the strong influence of Indonesian and foreign languages, particularly English (Paramarta, 2022). This declining knowledge can lead to the potential risk of language death, a condition in which language or certain lexicons are no longer spoken or used in a society (Crystal, 2002).

Therefore, to address these challenges, it is important to preserve and revive the Balinese language by studying the words or lexicon used in cultural rituals. The aims to preserve the local culture within the community through language, as human beings can adjust themselves to customs, behavior, and so on (Ratminingsih et al., 2020). The situation mentioned above makes certain lexicon in the *Melasti* ritual potentially disappear. Thus, the researcher recorded these traditional lexicons of the *Melasti* ritual to preserve both the linguistic and cultural heritage of the community. It can raise awareness among the youth about the importance of using Balinese correctly in ritual contexts. The *Melasti* ritual is such a ritual that has been carried out for generations, inherited from ancestors. This ritual is for purifying the universe and provides the initial or first stage of purification, namely, the purification of the subconscious (Putri & Nurita, 2021; Suandi & Utama, 2021). The *Melasti* ritual is performed at the sea or nearby water sources, where the sacred objects, including statues, shrines, and symbols, are brought for purification (Dauh & Dharma, 2020).

The *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village has distinctive features, particularly in its timing, purpose, and ritual instruments. Unlike the *Melasti* ceremony that is generally held before *Nyepi* (the Day of Silence), in Sema Agung it is uniquely performed two weeks after. In addition to purifying sacred objects and symbols, this

ritual also serves agricultural functions, such as eliminating pests and cleansing the fields. The villagers believe that the ritual not only purifies the village and its sacred elements but also helps prevent crop diseases, ward off plagues in the rice fields, promote fertility, and maintain harmony between the macrocosm and microcosm, especially since most residents are farmers. Therefore, studying and documenting the lexicons used in this ritual is important for preserving cultural values and maintaining the ethnolinguistic identity of the Balinese community. Ritual instruments also play a crucial role. One of them is *Gredagan*, a traditional bamboo instrument used alongside gong music to drive away pests that damage crops. Another is *Capil Klangсах*, a woven hat made from coconut leaves, traditionally used to protect against the sun and passed down through generations. However, based on a preliminary study through observation, it was found that the younger generation in Sema Agung Village lacks an understanding of the lexicons used in the *Melasti* ritual.

Several previous studies have discussed the use of lexicons in the cultural context to support this study. The first study was conducted by Budasi & Ana (2025), entitled *The Balinese Alpha Generation's Understanding of Traditional Balinese Game Lexicons: Urban vs Rural Area*. Then, the second research, which was analyzed by Natih et al. (2025), entitled *Understanding Lexical Choices: A Linguistic Analysis of the Metatah Ritual in Menyali Village*. Moreover, the third study, conducted by Kartika et al. (2025), entitled *The Cultural Meaning of Lexicons in 'Ngusaba Bukakak' Ritual in Giri Emas Village*. Based on these previous studies, no studies have been found that specifically discuss the lexicon of the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village. In fact, this ritual contains distinctive lexicons with the profound cultural meanings that can offer new insights into the values and traditions upheld by the community that practices it.

Moreover, limited attention has been given to the ethnolinguistic aspects, particularly the lexicons used in the ritual activities. In addition, studies specifically discussing the lexicons of the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village and their cultural meanings are still limited. Thus, identifying and analysing the lexicons in the ritual's procedure is important for language and cultural heritage. The aims of this study is to identify and analyze the lexicons used in the *Melasti* ritual and their cultural meanings. This study has several significant contributions, which are for the government, the English Department, and the Village community. Furthermore, at the community level, these findings can also benefit local villagers by increasing awareness of the importance of preserving traditional lexicons as part of their cultural heritage. Therefore, this study fills the gap by analyzing the lexicons used in the *Melasti* ritual through an ethnolinguistic approach to preserve Balinese linguistic and cultural heritage.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was implemented using an interactive qualitative data analysis model framework proposed by Miles et al. (2014) which the data analysis process consisted of four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions. The setting of this study is in Sema Agung Village, Klungkung Regency, Bali. This village was chosen as the setting of the study because the *Melasti* is a regular ritual held once a year by local people. The observation was conducted during *Purnama Kedasa*, the 15th full moon in the Balinese calendar. The ritual lasted approximately seven hours, from dusk until midday.

This study used a variety of instruments, including the researcher, observation sheets, interview guides, interview sheets, and a smartphone. The researcher served as the primary instrument in this study and was directly involved in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The observation sheet was used to document findings by recording observed actions, words, and symbols in the ritual. The in-depth interviews were carried out twice, which are before and after the observation, with a duration of approximately 30-60 minutes. An interview guide is used during the in-depth interview, which contains a list of questions to obtain relevant information from informants regarding the lexicon used in the ritual and its cultural meanings. In addition, a smartphone was used to take photographs and record audio during interviews to ensure accurate data capture and to minimize the risk of data loss.

The data of this study were collected through observation and in-depth interviews with four selected informants, such as *Bendesa* (Ritual Leader), *Jero Mangku* (Local Priest), and two *Serati Banten* (Offering specialists) who were selected based on purposive sampling, considering their deep knowledge and direct involvement in the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village. The number of the informants was determined not by quantity but by data adequacy and information richness. Data collection was continued until data saturation was reached, meaning no new information or lexicons emerged. Therefore, the four informants were considered sufficient to provide comprehensive and reliable data for this study.

To ensure the data validity, this study employed data triangulation by Carter et al. (2014) and the types of triangulation, including method triangulation, data source triangulation, and theory triangulation. The method of triangulation employed through the use of multiple data collection method: the observation and in-depth interview. The data source triangulation is conducted by gathering data from various informants. The theory triangulation applied by analyzing data using two different theoretical frameworks: Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) qualitative data analysis model and ethnolinguistic theory. Trustworthiness, or the reliability of data, is crucial for ensuring that research findings are valid, consistent, and truly represent the realities observed in the field. It is established through four

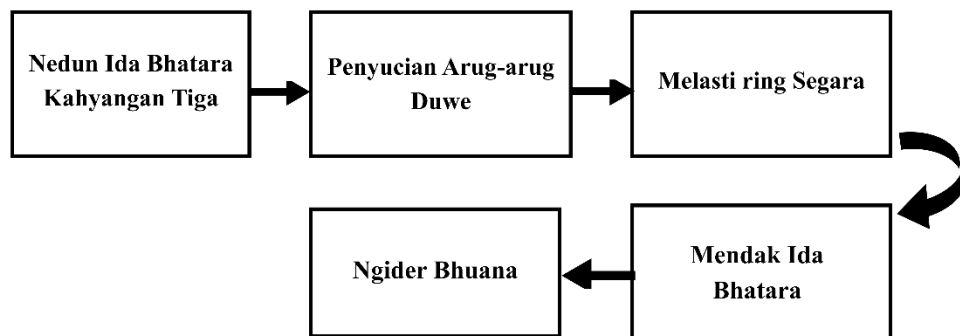
key criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Elo et al., 2014).

FINDING

This study identifies two types of findings: the first one is the lexicon found in the *Melasti* ritual, and the second one is the cultural meaning of the identified lexicons. This section will describe the lexicon and its cultural meaning interpretation.

1. The Procedures Found in the *Melasti* Ritual

There are 5 procedures found in the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village. Those procedures will be shown in Figure 1 below:



Picture 1. Procedure of the *Melasti* Ritual in Sema Agung Village

Based on the preliminary observation, there are 5 procedures found in the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village, namely *Mendak Ida Bhatara Kahyangan Tiga*, *Penyucian Arug-arug Duwe*, *Melasti ring Segara*, *Mendak Ida Bhatara*, and *Ngider Bhuana*. Those lexicons comprise 5 ritual stages, from the escorting sacred objects process to the purification of the village. Each stage introduces its own distinctive terminology related to sacred objects, offerings, materials, ritual activities, and symbolic meanings. Those procedures will be explained in detail as follows.

1. *Nedun Ida Bhatara Kahyangan Tiga*

The first procedure is *Nedun Ida Bhatara Kahyangan Tiga*. *Nedun* means bringing down and escorting, while *Ida Bhatara*, in literal terms, means God. However, in this context, it refers to a sacred object in the form of *Tirta Kekuluh* (Holy water in bamboo), and *Kahyangan Tiga* means the three main temples in each traditional village, including *Dalem* Temple, *Desa* (Village) Temple, and *Puseh* Temple. This procession is held early in the morning before the peak of the ritual.

The villagers will gather in the *Melanting* Temple, the male villagers will wear the *capil klangсах* (sacred hat made of green coconut leaves), *Gredagan* (traditional instrument made of bamboo), and they will paint their face and body using *Pamor* and *Adeng* (Lime betel and charcoal). The villagers walk together to those three temples, and then to the *Penyarikan* Temple, where the *Prelingga* (the sacred object) is located. This event aims to welcome and escort the sacred object to the place that will be purified to the *segara* (beach).

2. *Penyucian Arug-arug Duwe*

The second procedure is *Penyucian Arug-arug Duwe*. *Penyucian* means purify, and *Arug-arug Duwe* means the sacred object in the form of several weapons that are sacred in the *Penyarikan* Temple, which include *Arit* (Sickle), *Caluk* (Sickle with a long handle), and *Keris* (Kris/creese). This procedure aimed to purify the sacred object in the *Dalem Penyarikan* temple, including *arit*, *caluk*, and *keris* with *Tirta Wangsuhpada* (Holy water) by *Jero Mangku* (Local Priest). After that, the villagers *Nunas Tirta* (sprinkling of holy water by the local Priest) to purify the people before going to the beach.

3. *Melasti ring Segara*

The third procedure is *Melasti ring Segara*. This procedure means purifying all the sacred objects, weapons, and the holy water at the *Segara* (beach). In this procedure, some of the villagers walk one by one from the *Melanting* Temple to the *Segara* (beach) carrying the sacred objects: *Rantasan*, *Tigasan*, *Tapakan*, *Arak*, *Berem*, *Tuak*, *Canang Sari*, *Canang Rebong*, *Peasepan*, *Senjata Nawa Sanga*, *Tedung*, *Tombak*, *Umbul-umbul*, and non-sacred objects: *Gredagan*, *Semprong*, and *capil klangсах*. It has several aims, the first is purifying the *sacred* temple belongings, such as *Prelingga* (an object embodying God), *Arug-arug Duwe* (sacred weapons), holy water, the second is to dissolve all kinds of impurity in thoughts, words, and deeds in human being, and the last to maintain the villager's agricultural fields and providing fertility to avoid pests obtain with *Angamet Tirta Amerta* (holy water in the beach).

4. *Mendak Ida Bhatara*

The fourth ritual is the *Mendak Ida Bhatara*. This ceremony is performed after the group of villagers returns from the beach. The purpose of this offering is to provide a sacred welcome and purification to the *Ida Bhatara* before entering the village. Upon arriving at the village boundary, the *Prelingga* (an object embodying God) is presented with offerings in the form of *Banten Pemendak* (opening offerings) and *Segehan Agung* (grand offerings). These offerings are arranged by the *pengupang* (local priest).

5. *Ngider Bhuana*

The fifth procedure is *Ngider Bhuana*. This procedure aimed to purify the village through the four corners of the village: northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast. The purification process uses several offerings, such as *Banten Pejati* and *Banten Suci*, offered by *Jero Mangku* (Local Priest) and *Serati* (local offering specialist). It is carried out after coming from the beach, and the villagers walk from one corner to another.

2. The Lexicons and the Cultural Meanings found in the *Melasti* Ritual

Based on the observation and in-depth interview, the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village contains forty (40) lexicons with cultural meanings. The cultural meanings of each lexicon will be elaborated based on the informants' descriptions.

Table 1. The Identified Lexicon of Offerings and Their Cultural Meaning

No	Lexicons	Cultural Meaning
1.	<i>Banten Ajengan</i>	<i>Banten Ajengan</i> contains various foods, such as rice, roast chicken, and more. It is intended to express gratitude for the abundance of food and sustenance provided by God.
2.	<i>Banten Gandhawari</i>	<i>Banten Gandhawari</i> is a special offering used for the needs of the priest as a form of devotion and respect in leading the ceremonial procession.
3.	<i>Banten Pakelem</i>	<i>Banten Pakelem</i> is offered by throwing it to the ocean, as “ <i>Kelem</i> ” means to drown. This offering's purpose is to restore harmony and return the natural elements as a symbol of universal balance.
4.	<i>Banten Pejati</i>	<i>Banten Pejati</i> refers to the core of offerings (<i>banten</i>) and is made to express the sincerity towards God. It presents the three foundations and guidelines for human life, which are thought (<i>Manacika</i>), speech (<i>speech</i>), and action (<i>Kayika</i>).
5.	<i>Banten Pemendak</i>	<i>Banten Pemendak</i> is offered at the beginning of a procedure in a ritual and symbolically to invite the presence of sacred powers to enter the area of the ritual, and in this ritual is used to welcome the sacred object from the beach to enter the village.
6.	<i>Banten Pengeresikan</i>	<i>Banten Pengeresikan</i> is used for the purpose of cleansing or purifying (<i>ngereresik</i>) the place,

		ceremonial equipment, or people before carrying out the main ceremony.
7.	<i>Banten Penyambleh</i>	<i>Banten Penyambleh</i> is a type of offering that is used as a means of involving the slaughter of certain animals, usually chickens, ducks, or pigs. It offers before the <i>Prelingga</i> descends and functions to deliver or escort the sacred object from the usual place to the other place.
8.	<i>Banten Saji Melasti</i>	<i>Banten Saji Melasti</i> is a specific ceremonial instrument used in the <i>Melasti</i> ritual, as " <i>Saji</i> " means an offering or sacred dish offered to God and His manifestations.
9.	<i>Banten Salaran Bebek Selem</i>	<i>Banten Salaran Bebek Selem</i> offered in the consist of a black duck as the main element, symbolizing a sacred sacrifice for the balance of the natural and spiritual worlds.
10.	<i>Banten Suci</i>	<i>Banten Suci</i> reflects the entire Vedic cosmological process, beginning with creation (<i>Brahmana</i>), followed by the manifestation of divine power, and ending with the processes of maintenance and dissolution.
11.	<i>Canang Sari</i>	<i>Canang Sari</i> is a common type of offering made of yellow coconut leaves, usually in the shape of a round, and arranged with various colors of flowers. It symbolizes the <i>Lingga Yoni</i> (masculine and feminine symbol), symbolizing the union of <i>Brahma</i> , <i>Vishnu</i> , and <i>Shiva</i> .
12.	<i>Segehan Agung</i>	<i>Segehan Agung</i> is the highest form of <i>segehan</i> unit that is only presented in a major ceremony to <i>Bhuta Kala</i> (<i>natural spiritual forces</i>) to help balance and spiritually cleanse the surrounding area.

Table 2. The Identified Lexicon of Sacred Objects and Their Cultural Meaning

No	Lexicons	Cultural Meaning
1.	<i>Arak Berem</i>	<i>Arak</i> is a traditional Balinese liquor made from fermented coconut sap. <i>Berem</i> is a traditional Balinese liquor made from fermented black or white sticky rice. Both of them symbolize the sacred script

	<i>"Ah-kara"</i> , which represents sacred <i>Utpeti</i> , <i>Stiti</i> , and <i>Pralina</i> symbols (three cycles of human life). In this case, the <i>arak</i> and <i>berem</i> are sacred and put on the head and taken to the beach.
2. <i>Arug-arug Duwe</i>	<i>Arug-arug Duwe</i> is a sacred object in the form of weapons that is located in the <i>Penyarikan</i> temple.
3. <i>Bandrangan</i>	<i>Bandrangan</i> is the sacred weapon of the Gods or the troops accompanying Ida Bhatara, which functions to neutralize negative forces and spiritually clear the path.
4. <i>Canang Rebong</i>	<i>Canang Rebong</i> is lined with a small tray decorated with hanging coconut leaves, decorated with ingredients such as yellow rice, fragrant burat, fragrant longa, golden bananas, and flower decorations. This offering symbolizes mountains and prosperity.
5. <i>Kober</i>	<i>Kober</i> is a ceremonial media in the form of a banner/flag, which symbolizes the presence of sacred power and becomes a symbol of the <i>Pralingga</i> (embodiment) of the <i>niskala</i> in the procession.
6. <i>Payung Pagut</i>	<i>Payung Pagut</i> is a pair of sacred ceremonial umbrellas used together in a series of rituals, functioning as a symbol of honor and sacred protection in various traditional ceremonies.
7. <i>Prelingga</i>	<i>Prelingga</i> is a small statue that represents the gods in physical form, typically in human shape. It is believed that God's spirit to stays for a short time after being invited to the ceremony, and also allows for spiritual communication between the community and higher powers.
8. <i>Rantasan</i>	<i>Rantasan</i> is an offering in the form of a pile of cloth, a symbol of the human mind that is like a long piece of cloth wrapped and folded, holding many things.
9. <i>Senjata Nawa Sanga</i>	<i>Senjata Nawa Sanga</i> are the nine symbolic weapons of the nine Gods of the cardinal directions in Hinduism. Those weapons, such as <i>Cakra</i> (discus), <i>Gada</i> (mace), <i>Trisula</i> (trident), and so on. These weapons symbolize complete cosmic protection and show that the sacred space is safeguarded by divine energy from all cosmic levels.

10. <i>Tapakan</i>	<i>Tapakan</i> means a container or embodiment of God, which in this ceremony is manifested in the form of a <i>daksina linggih</i> .
11. <i>Tirta Kekuluh</i>	<i>Tirta Kekuluh</i> is a sacred object in each Temple of <i>Kahyangan Tiga (Desa, Dalem, and Puseh)</i> as a form of holy water in a bamboo.
12. <i>Tombak</i>	<i>Tombak</i> is a sacred spear or weapon that has one sharp edge. It is used in temple ceremonies and ritual processions as a symbol of authority and spiritual protection. It represents firmness, moral principles (dharma), and the power to guard the community against negative forces.
13. <i>Umbul-umbul</i>	<i>Umbul-umbul</i> is a tall, colorful ceremonial flag placed around the temple and along the procession route. They show that a ritual is taking place, mark the ceremonial area, and invite the presence of the gods.

Table 3. The Identified Lexicon of Sacred Tools and Their Cultural Meaning

No	Lexicons	Cultural Meaning
1.	<i>Baleganjur</i>	<i>Baleganjur</i> is a group of Balinese traditional rhythm instruments. Those rhythms are thought to shape the ritual atmosphere, drive away evil influences, and give spiritual protection to participants as they pass from one realm to another.
2.	<i>Bija</i>	<i>Bija</i> is typically given after prayers as a sacred mark placed on the body, representing a connection between humans and the divine, as well as a reminder of inner balance and devotion.
3.	<i>Capil Klangсах</i>	<i>Capil Klangсах</i> is a traditional hat for shade when walking to the beach, and symbolizes the identity of the village population, with the majority having the potential to become farmers. It also serves as one of the characteristics of the <i>Melasti</i> ritual in Sema Agung Village.
4.	<i>Genta</i>	<i>Genta</i> is a sacred bell used by priests during religious rituals to lead the ceremony. It is a spiritual symbol

		with a religious significance and sacred power in the performance of <i>yadnya</i> (sacred ceremonies).
5.	<i>Gredagan</i>	<i>Gredagan</i> is also known as <i>Gong Duwe</i> (sacred traditional instrument), which is a symbol of the five sounds and complementary sounds that accompany the <i>Baleganjur</i> .
6.	<i>Peasepan</i>	<i>Peasepan</i> is used as a medium to open a spiritual path, and the sacred smoke produced from burning incense and coconut fiber (<i>sambuk</i>). This smoke is believed to act as a spiritual medium that cleanses the path and carries sacred energy to the place of ceremony.
7.	<i>Semprong</i>	<i>Semprong</i> is a bamboo tube that is blown and produces sound to silence the gong during the <i>Melasti</i> journey to the beach.
8.	<i>Tedung</i>	<i>Tedung</i> is a sacred umbrella that is common in Hinduism ceremonies, which emphasizes spiritual dignity and defense.
9.	<i>Tirta Penglukatan</i>	<i>Tirta Penglukatan</i> is holy water used to purify ceremonial objects, buildings, offerings, and individuals through sprinkling by Priests.
10.	<i>Tirta Wangsuhpada</i>	<i>Tirta Wangsuhpada</i> , also known as <i>Banyun Cokor</i> which is sacred water purified with Vedic mantras and is believed to carry healing and protection. It is used at the end of prayers as a symbol of worship and devotion to God, seeking the gift of holy water and happiness.

Table 4. The Identified Lexicon of Decorations and Their Cultural Meaning

No	Lexicons	Cultural Meaning
1.	<i>Adeng</i>	<i>Adeng</i> is a charcoal used to paint mostly male villagers' bodies and faces during the ritual as a decoration and characteristic of the <i>Melasti</i> ritual in Sema Agung Village.
	<i>Andong leaves</i>	<i>Andong leaves</i> are specific leaves colored green and red that are used as decoration for <i>capil klangсах, gredagan, semprong, and penjor</i> .
3.	<i>Pamor</i>	<i>Pamor</i> is another material used to paint mostly male villagers' bodies and faces during the ritual as a

	decoration and characteristic of the <i>Melasti</i> ritual in Sema Agung Village.
4. <i>Penjor</i>	<i>Penjor</i> is made of a tall bamboo pole with various coconut leaves ornaments and agricultural products that symbolize wealth, fertility, and offerings to the God.
5. <i>Pipid</i>	<i>Pipid</i> is a decoration made from coconut leaves to decorate <i>capil klangсах, gredagan, semprong, and penjor</i> .

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village contains 40 forty (40) culturally significant lexicons, which are distributed across several ritual procedures, including *Nedun Ida Bhatara Kahyangan Tiga, Penyucian Arug-arug Duwe, Melasti ring Segara, Mendak Ida Bhatara, and Ngider Bhuana*. These lexicons also represent several components, such as offerings, sacred objects, sacred tools, and decoration. These lexicons are not merely linguistic but function as cultural symbol that reflect religious beliefs, cultural values, and communal values embedded in Balinese Hindu tradition.

From an ethnolinguistic perspective, these lexicons demonstrate the inseparable relationship between language and culture. As proposed in ethnolinguistic theory, language functions as a cultural system that shapes and reflects human cognition and social experience. Ethnolinguistics emphasizes that individual thoughts and societal culture continuously influence each other, especially through the use of language and symbol (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985, as cited in Kramsch, 2014). In this context, the lexicons of the *Melasti* ritual serves as linguistic representation of Balinese Hindu cosmology, where each term reflects culturally specific ways of understanding purification, sacredness, and harmony between humans, nature, and the spiritual realm.

The symbolic meaning of these lexicons reflects the community's religious values and cultural worldview, as symbols function as vehicles of meaning within ritual practices (Geertz, 1973). According to Turner (1967), ritual symbols function as meaningful representation that connect social, spiritual, and cultural values within a community. In ritual practices, symbols are not merely physical or ceremonial elements, but they convey deeper meanings that reflect collective beliefs, moral values, and shared cultural experience. The symbolic meaning of these lexicons is evident in their categorization into offerings, sacred objects, sacred tools, and decorations. For instance, offerings such as *Banten Gandawari, Banten Suci, Banten Saji Melasti, Banten Pejati, Banten Pengeresik, Banten Pemendak, Banten Penyambleh, Banten Salaran Bebek Selem, Segehan Agung, Banten*

Pakelem, Canang Sari, Banten Ajengan, Segehan Agung. The sacred objects also play a crucial role, including *Arak Berem, Arug-arug Duwe, Bandrangan, Canang Rebong, Kober, Payung Pagut, Prelingga, Rantasan, Senjata Nawa Sanga, Tapakan, Tirta Kekuluh, Tombak, and Umbul-umbul.* Moreover, the sacred tools include *Baleganjur, Bija, Capil Klangah, Genta, Gredagan, Peasepan, Semprong, Tedung, Tirta Penglukatan, and Tirta Wangsuhpada.* These symbolic representations illustrate that language in ritual context functions as a medium of meaning-making rather than merely a communicative tool.

Furthermore, the documentation of these lexicons contributes to the preservation and revitalization of traditional practices while ensuring that cultural knowledge can be transmitted to future generations. The use of *Melasti* ritual lexicons also strengthens cultural identity, as language plays an important role in constructing and maintaining communal identity (Hall, 1997). This effort also encourages greater appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity in the modern globalized era. The deep cultural meaning of the *Melasti* lexicon comes from several aspects, such as traditional beliefs, symbols, and community practices that have been passed down from generation to generation. It also reflects the agricultural and religious parts, such as in the *Melasti ring segara*, where the aim is to purify the sacred objects and also the land in Sema Agung Village, as their common job in that place is farming. Furthermore, the *Melasti* ritual reflects rich cultural significance through its lexicons.

The documentation of ritual lexicons contributes to language preservation efforts, particularly in maintaining endangered cultural vocabulary in the modern era (Crystal, 2002). Fishman (1991) emphasize that preserving traditional language practices is essential for sustaining cultural continuity across generations. In terms of language preservation discourse, the documentation of these lexicons plays an important role in maintaining intangible cultural heritage. In the context of globalization, traditional ritual vocabulary faces the risk of decline among the younger generation. Therefore, recording and analyzing these lexicons not only contribute to ethnolinguistic scholarship but also support efforts in cultural and linguistic preservation for future generations.

Overall, the *Melasti* ritual lexicons in Sema Agung Village demonstrate a strong interconnection between language, symbolic meaning, cultural identity, and heritage preservation. These lexicons function as carriers of cultural knowledge that sustain the continuity of Balinese Hindu traditions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the *Melasti* ritual in Sema Agung Village embodies a rich ethnolinguistic system reflected in forty (40) culturally significant lexicons representing procedures, offerings, sacred objects, tools, and

decorations. These lexicons function as symbolic expressions of religious devotion, cultural identity, and communal values within the Balinese Hindu tradition. The findings contribute to ethnolinguistic studies by showing the close relationship between language, culture, and ritual practices in preserving traditional cultural knowledge and community identity. In addition, this study supports the preservation of Balinese cultural heritage through the documentation of ritual lexicons that contain traditional cultural knowledge and religious values. Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of introducing and maintaining traditional ritual lexicons among younger generations, particularly in the modern era, where local languages and cultural practices are increasingly influenced by globalization. Thus, understanding the meanings of these lexicons can strengthen cultural awareness, encourage appreciation, and foster a sense of responsibility among the younger community to preserve their cultural identity.

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