

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Language plays an important role in representing cultural values and preserving the identity of a community (Erimbetova, 2025). Through language, cultural knowledge, local wisdom, beliefs, and traditions are transmitted from one generation to another (Aliyeva, 2023). In ritual contexts, language has a more specific function because ritual lexicons often contain symbolic meanings and traditional knowledge related to the cultural practices of the community (Natih et al., 2025). Ritual lexicons function not only as linguistic expressions but also as carriers of cultural values and collective memory within traditional societies (Cantika et al., 2025). In many traditional communities, ritual language contains particular terms that are rarely used in everyday communication, making them difficult to understand without proper cultural knowledge (Senasih, 2025). Therefore, the preservation and documentation of ritual lexicons are important to maintain cultural identity and traditional knowledge within the community (Setiawan et al., 2025).

In the context of Balinese culture, one ritual that still uses specific and unique lexicons is the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village. According to Suastini (2021), *Mabiyukukung* is a ritual performed by rice farmers when the rice plants begin to bear grain. The ritual aims to pray for fertility, safety, and protection of the rice plants from pests. The term *biyukukung* comes from the words *beya* ('offering') and *kukung* ('affection/love'), which symbolize hopes for a successful fertilization process of the rice. The ritual is carried out through several procedures, each

accompanied by specific lexicons that are understood mainly by local community members who are directly involved in the ritual practice. In addition, the ritual reflects the relationship between humans, nature, and spiritual beliefs that are closely connected to Balinese agricultural traditions, which are philosophically grounded in the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, the harmony between humans, God, and nature (Suastini, 2021).

This connection to *Tri Hita Karana* also relates *Mabiyukukung* to a wider issue concerning the sustainability of Bali's traditional agricultural system. The *Subak* irrigation system, recognized by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage since 2012, faces increasing challenges due to land conversion for tourism and settlements, causing the reduction of rice fields in Bali (Ardana et al., 2024; Miyazawa, 2026). This decline does not only affect the *Subak* system but also threatens ritual traditions such as *Mabiyukukung* because fewer rice farmers may reduce opportunities to perform and pass down the ritual and its lexicons (Suwindia, 2023; Budasi et al., 2021). Therefore, documenting *Mabiyukukung* ritual lexicons becomes important before the practice becomes less common.

However, a significant issue arises in relation to the understanding of the ritual language used in the *Mabiyukukung* ritual. Based on pre-interviews conducted in Baha Village, some younger participants were able to follow the ritual procedures but had limited understanding of several ritual terms used during the ritual. For instance, terms such as *pangulapan*, *sanggah urip*, and *penyeneng alit* were known only as ritual equipment or parts of the ceremony, without a clear understanding of their meanings and symbolic values. Some ritual expressions were more familiar to elders and traditional leaders. This condition may happen because ritual knowledge

is mostly transferred orally and has limited written documentation (Lalombo, 2024). As a result, many ritual terms continue to be used without clear understanding of their lexical and cultural meanings, which may gradually lead to the loss of cultural knowledge embedded in the ritual. If this condition continues, younger generations may become increasingly unfamiliar with the meanings and functions of ritual language, which can weaken the transmission of local cultural knowledge in the community (Kusuma et al., 2020).

To analyze this issue, an ethnolinguistic approach is considered appropriate because it examines the relationship between language and culture. Ethnolinguistics allows researchers to identify specific lexicons used in cultural practices and to interpret both their lexical meanings and the cultural values they represent (Eni & Jango, 2024). Previous ethnolinguistic studies on Balinese rituals have demonstrated that ritual lexicons contain important cultural knowledge and meanings, for example, Budasi et al. (2021), in *The Status of Lexicon Used in Tabuh Rah Ritual in Menyali Village, North Bali: An Ethnolinguistic Study*, identified 71 lexicons used in the Tabuh Rah ritual and found that the ritual lexicons were in a threatened status due to limited intergenerational transmission. Similarly, Natih et al. (2025), in *Understanding Lexical Choices: A Linguistic Analysis of the Metatah Ritual in Menyali Village*, identified 35 lexicons used in ten procedures of the Metatah ritual, which reflected cultural values related to *Tri Hita Karana*. In addition, Cantika et al. (2025), in *Lexicons Used in the Bayuh Oton Ritual in Menyali Village*, identified 29 lexicons used in eight procedures of the ritual that reflected spiritual and cultural meanings within Balinese society. These studies

show that ritual lexicons contain important cultural meanings and reflect local beliefs and traditions.

However, previous studies mainly focused on different rituals and locations, while studies specifically discussing the lexicons used in the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village are still very limited. In addition, previous studies have mostly focused on identifying ritual lexicons and their cultural meanings, while systematic analysis of word classes, lexical meanings, and cultural meanings within the *Mabiyukukung* ritual has not been sufficiently conducted. Furthermore, there is still limited documentation related to the ritual vocabulary used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual. This condition indicates a clear research gap that needs to be addressed.

Based on this gap, this study aims to conduct an ethnolinguistic analysis of the lexicons used in the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village. The study focuses on identifying the lexicons in each stage of the ritual, classifying their word classes, analyzing their lexical meanings, and revealing their cultural meanings. This research is expected to contribute to the documentation and preservation of ritual language as part of cultural heritage, as well as to deepen the understanding of the relationship between language and culture in Balinese rituals.

1.2 Problem Identification

The *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village is still actively practiced by the local community. However, the lexicons used in the procedures of the ritual are not widely understood, especially by younger generations. Most of the knowledge related to these lexicons is transmitted orally by elders or religious leaders, while

written documentation is very limited. As a result, many ritual terms are used without clear understanding of their lexical and cultural meanings.

1.3 Research Limitation

This study is limited to the analysis of lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village. The research focuses on identifying the lexicons that appear during the ritual procedures and analyzing their lexical meanings and cultural meanings. The data are obtained from observations and information provided by local informants involved in the ritual practice.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the research background, the research questions of this study are:

1. What lexicons are used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village?
2. What are the word classes of the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village?
3. What are the lexical meanings of the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village?
4. What are the cultural meanings of the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village?

1.5 Research Objective

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village.
2. To identify the word classes of the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village
3. To analyze the lexical meaning in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village
4. To analyze the cultural meanings of the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village.

1.6 Research Significance

This research is expected to provide meaningful contributions both theoretically and practically in the field of linguistics and cultural studies. By focusing on the lexicons used in the procedures of the *Mabiyukukung* ritual in Baha Village, this study aims to enrich academic understanding and support cultural preservation efforts.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study contributes to linguistic and ethnolinguistic studies by providing a detailed analysis of ritual lexicons used in a specific cultural context. The identification of lexicons and the analysis of their lexical and cultural meanings can strengthen theoretical discussions on the relationship between language, ritual, and culture. This research also adds empirical data to studies of ritual language, particularly in the context of

Balinese Hindu rituals, and supports the development of lexical and cultural meaning analysis in traditional practices.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

Practically, the findings of this research can be useful for various parties involved in cultural and educational activities.

a. For the Government

This research can serve as a reference for cultural preservation programs by providing documented information about the lexicons used in the *Mabiyukukung* ritual. The results may support efforts to safeguard local linguistic heritage and traditional knowledge.

b. For Educational Institutions

The findings of this study can be used as learning material for students and lecturers, especially in linguistics, cultural studies, and local culture courses. This research may also support the development of teaching materials related to Balinese language and ritual practices.

c. For Future Researchers

This study can be used as a reference for future research on ritual language, lexicons, and cultural meanings in Balinese or other local traditions. It may encourage further studies using different approaches or comparative perspectives.

d. For the Community of Baha Village

This research is expected to help the local community gain a clearer understanding of the lexicons used in the *Mabiyukukung* ritual and their meanings. By increasing awareness of the linguistic and cultural values embedded in the ritual, this study may support community efforts to preserve and pass on cultural knowledge to younger generations.

