



## The Communication Strategies to Avoid Conflicts When Speaking to Sasak Speakers: A Language Style Analysis

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### Abstract

Sasak language is a language spoken by mostly whole people who live in Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara. As a main media of communication in Lombok, the possibility to get interact with them is wide open since Lombok had become a famous place stayed by various person from all around the world. For the sake of maintaining good relationship with people in Lombok who speak sasaknese, it is crucial to find out what kind of conflicts might happen when communicate to them. Therefore, here is the research aimed at uncovering the conflicts avoidances utilized by speakers of "Sasak," a language belonging to the Austronesian language family, when they converse in "Sasaknese." The study qualitatively describes how Sasak speakers maintain a good relationship and avoid getting involved into possible conflicts through language style and language used. To ensure the accuracy and validity of the data regarding Sasaknese conflict avoiding styles, some relevant literatures on pertinent issues was extensively reviewed to provide supporting data sources. Data collection and analysis followed three stages of analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Based on the result of analysis, the study showed that communication strategies applied by Sasak speakers include noble language, Commoner language, and conventional language. Noble language applied formal lexicon, intricate grammatical structures, and deferential speech patterns. The commoner language is used among ordinary people in everyday interactions, including among peers, friends, and family members. It is more casual and relaxed compared to noble language, with simpler vocabulary and grammar. Conventional language refers to rude language and is categorized as low status but it contributes in avoiding conflict.

**Keywords:** Communication strategies; Language conflicts, Sasaq language

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## INTRODUCTION

Lombok, an island renowned for its stunning tourist destination Kuta Mandalika, has gained international recognition, drawing visitors from across the globe. This island, a pivotal part of West Nusa Tenggara in Indonesia, not only boasts breathtaking landscapes but also serves as the homeland of the Sasak ethnic group (Sukenti et al., 2016; Sugianto & Kamarudin, 2021). The Sasak people, whose language is predominantly Bahasa Indonesia, enrich the island's cultural fabric. However, their native tongue, Sasaknese,

holds a place of considerable significance within their community. Historically, the ability to speak Sasaknese has been a source of pride among its speakers. This linguistic prowess is not merely about communication; it embodies the virtues of bravery, honesty, and responsibility (Thomas et al., 2022). These values are deeply ingrained in the Sasak culture and have, over time, become synonymous with the identity of Lombok itself. The etymology of "Lombok" further reflects the cultural ethos of its inhabitants. Derived from "loubouk" or "lomboq," the name means "straight," a direct nod to the straightforward and honest character attributed to the Sasak people. This linguistic and cultural heritage contributes to the island's allure, making it more than just a destination for leisure and sun. Lombok represents a place where the landscape and the language are deeply intertwined with the identity and values of its people (Archangeli et al., 2020; Sugianto & Kamarudin, 2021). Through the preservation of Sasaknese and the celebration of Sasak culture, Lombok continues to be a vibrant testament to the enduring spirit and integrity of its native inhabitants, enriching the experience of visitors from near and far.

The distribution and dialectical diversity of the Sasak language across Lombok Island presents a rich linguistic landscape, characterized by regional variations and cultural specificity (Pappas, 2021; Thomas et al., 2022). The Sasak language, an essential element of the island's cultural heritage, encompasses five primary dialects: Kuto-Kute, Ngeto-Ngete, Meno-Mene, Ngeno-Ngene, and Mariaq-Mariqu. These dialects are not evenly distributed across the island but are instead associated with particular geographical regions, reflecting the intricate relationship between language and place. In East Lombok, the Sasak language manifests predominantly through the Ngeno-Ngene dialect, particularly in the area specifically known as Ngeno Ngene. This dialect has established itself as the dominant linguistic form in this part of the island (Sugianto & Hasby, 2023). However, outside of this Ngeno Ngene region, the Menu-Meni dialect emerges as the common linguistic variant among Sasak speakers. This indicates a clear dialectical demarcation within East Lombok itself, showcasing the diversity of linguistic expressions within a relatively compact geographical area.

Moving to Central Lombok, the linguistic landscape shifts notably. Here, the Meriak Meriku variant of the Sasak language takes precedence, marking a distinct departure from the dialects dominant in East Lombok (Nahdi, 2021; Aristiawan, 2018). Interestingly, despite the prevalence of the Meriak Meriku dialect in Central Lombok, there exists a significant minority, approximately 25%, of Sasak speakers who communicate in the Menu-Meni dialect. This overlap of dialects underscores the fluidity of linguistic boundaries and the presence of diverse linguistic communities within the same geographical regions. In contrast, West Lombok and the capital city of Mataram showcase a strong preference for the Ngeno-Ngene dialect, aligning with East Lombok's linguistic trends (Anwar et al., 2019). This suggests a broader regional affinity for this dialect across significant parts of the island. Conversely, the northern part of Lombok presents a different picture with the Kuto-Kute dialect being more prevalent. This distinction not only highlights the diversity of the Sasak language but also points to the possible influences of geographical separation, historical migration, and cultural exchange in shaping the island's linguistic landscape.

In the intricate realm of communication strategies among Sasak speakers, there exists a nuanced approach to achieving mutual understanding and agreement in scenarios where shared meaning structures appear to be absent or unclear. This approach is

grounded in the proactive effort to establish common ground in situations characterized by potential discrepancies in interpretation or understanding (Hasanah, 2017; Sugianto & Hasby, 2023). The primary objective here is to navigate through the complexities of language and cultural nuances to ensure that all parties involved can converge on a shared meaning or interpretation pertinent to the situation at hand. This strategy is particularly significant in its focus on conflict avoidance. In the dynamic interplay of real communication, the potential for misunderstandings and disagreements looms large, especially when implicit meaning structures are not evidently shared among the communicators. By actively engaging in strategies aimed at reaching consensus on the meaning, Sasak speakers demonstrate a profound appreciation for the harmony and cohesion within their interactions.

The approach underscores a collective commitment to maintaining social equilibrium, reflecting a deep-seated cultural value that prioritizes communal harmony over individual dissent. The process involves a delicate balance of negotiation, interpretation, and adaptation, wherein communicators are not merely passive recipients of information but active participants in the construction of shared meaning (Zulkarnaen et al, 2021; Diniarti, 2017). This entails a willingness to explore alternative perspectives, clarify intentions, and, when necessary, adjust one's own understanding in light of new information or insights. Such a strategy requires a high level of linguistic and cultural sensitivity, as well as an openness to dialogue and compromise. The communication strategy among Sasak speakers represents a sophisticated mechanism for managing the inherent uncertainties of linguistic interaction (Saifuddin & Adriansyah, 2022). It is a testament to the community's adeptness at fostering understanding and agreement, even in the face of potential communicative challenges. By prioritizing the negotiation of shared meanings and the avoidance of conflict, Sasak speakers illustrate the profound role that communication strategies play in preserving social harmony and facilitating effective interpersonal engagement.

The Sasak language, spoken by the indigenous population of Lombok, Indonesia, has evolved through a complex tapestry of historical and cultural interactions, significantly shaped by the influences of Balinese and Javanese languages (Rosana et al., 2018). This linguistic interplay can be traced back to periods of historical expansion, most notably during the era of the Majapahit and Karang Asem kingdoms. These periods marked a time of increased contact and exchange between the peoples of these regions, leading to the integration of certain lexical items from Balinese and Javanese into the Sasak language (Setiawan, 2022; Habiburrahman, 2022). Examples of such linguistic borrowing include the word "Cokor," which means "feet" and is understood in both Bali and Lombok, and "tumbas," meaning "buy," a term borrowed from Javanese that retains the same meaning and functional use in Sasak. Despite these overlaps in vocabulary, the process of language borrowing does not equate to mutual intelligibility among the speakers of these languages.

The presence of shared words between Sasak, Balinese, and Javanese does not imply that speakers of Balinese and Javanese can automatically comprehend the Sasak language in its entirety. Rather, achieving such understanding would necessitate a deliberate effort to learn Sasak, underlining the distinction between sharing linguistic elements and sharing a language (Saharudin, 2016; Sultana, 2017). This distinction highlights the complex nature of language contact, where influences and borrowings enrich the recipient language but do not erase the boundaries that define each language's unique character and identity.

The case of the Sasak language exemplifies how historical interactions contribute to the linguistic landscape, weaving a rich mosaic of influences that, while connecting languages through shared words, also celebrate the distinctiveness of each linguistic tradition.

The research endeavors to investigate the methods employed by Sasak speakers to prevent involvement in specific conflicts on Lombok Island. Its primary objective is to delve into the varied linguistic approaches utilized by Sasak speakers. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on language strategies for conflict avoidance during communication with Sasak speakers in Lombok, an area that has received limited research attention thus far. While discussions on the Sasak language are not uncommon, the aspect of conflict avoidance has been largely overlooked. This aspect distinguishes the research as both novel and compelling.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

In exploring the nuanced interactions among Sasak speakers and their use of language variations, the study adopts a descriptive qualitative research design, a methodology renowned for its effectiveness in providing a detailed examination of specific phenomena or populations (Cohen et al., 2018). This approach is particularly suited to the study's aim: to investigate the communication strategies employed by Sasak speakers to avoid conflicts, highlighting the role of language variations in facilitating harmonious interactions. Descriptive research, by nature, seeks to systematically describe the characteristics, behaviors, and attributes of a given subject without altering any variables or attempting to deduce cause-and-effect relationships (Creswell, 2009). This methodological choice is pivotal for the study's objectives, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the communicative practices within the Sasak community, set against the backdrop of modernization and globalization. By focusing on qualitative data — that is, the words, statements, and expressions used by individuals — the research sidesteps the need for numerical data or statistical analysis, opting instead for a rich, narrative-based examination of language use. This approach is instrumental in capturing the dynamic and fluid nature of language variations among Sasak speakers, offering insights into how these variations not only persist but also thrive in contemporary settings.

The study's descriptive qualitative framework thus serves as a lens through which the intricate tapestry of Sasak language variations is viewed, revealing how these variations contribute to the maintenance of linguistic identity amidst external pressures. It provides a comprehensive snapshot of the communication strategies employed by Sasak speakers, grounded in the real-life use of dialects and language forms. Through careful observation and detailed documentation of Sasak speakers' interactions, the research illuminates the complexity of linguistic practices and the social functions they serve, particularly in negotiating understanding and avoiding conflict within the community. This exploration, rooted in the authentic experiences and expressions of Sasak speakers, enriches our understanding of the linguistic landscape of Sasak and underscores the value of descriptive qualitative research in linguistics.

### **Research Participants**

In the detailed investigation into the linguistic nuances of the Sasak language, the selection of study subjects was approached with meticulous care, prioritizing informants who not only resided in Lombok but also exhibited a high degree of proficiency in the



Sasak language. To ensure a comprehensive and representative analysis, general qualifications were established as a foundational criterion before delving into more specific requirements for participation in the study. These preliminary qualifications served as a gatekeeper to ensure that all potential informants possessed a baseline of characteristics conducive to the study's goals. The specific qualifications for the informants were multifaceted and carefully considered to capture the essence of the linguistic landscape being studied. First and foremost, informants were required to be no older than 30 years, a criterion aimed at understanding the contemporary use and evolution of the language among younger speakers. Secondly, it was imperative that informants were native speakers of Sasak, ensuring authenticity and depth in the linguistic insights gathered. Thirdly, a high level of insight, typically reflected through the informant's educational background, was sought to guarantee informed and reflective contributions to the research.

Lastly, a crucial criterion was that informants must be natives of Lombok, thereby guaranteeing that their language use authentically represented the regional variations and idiosyncrasies of the Sasak language. The research specifically focused on individuals fluent in the Sasak language, particularly those proficient in the Menu Meni and Kuto-Kute dialects. These dialects were selected for their prevalence and significance within the linguistic landscape of Lombok, standing out as the most widely spoken among the island's various dialects. By concentrating on these two major dialects, the study aimed to provide insights that, while derived from a subset of the linguistic spectrum, could be extrapolated to represent the broader linguistic practices and variations within the Sasak-speaking community. This strategic selection of participants and dialects was pivotal in crafting a study that not only delved deep into the specifics of Sasak language use but also offered findings relevant to understanding the broader linguistic dynamics at play in Lombok.

### **Research Instruments**

In the domain of qualitative research, the role of the researcher transcends that of a mere observer or collector of data. As articulated by Sugiyono in 2014, the researcher is often regarded as the primary instrument of the study, embodying a unique capability to navigate the nuanced and multifaceted terrains of human interaction and cultural phenomena. This perspective emphasizes the researcher's adaptability, allowing for an agile and responsive approach to the collection of data that can vary significantly in form and substance. By engaging directly with the research context, the researcher is equipped to gather a broad spectrum of data sources, ranging from observational notes to in-depth interview responses, thereby enriching the study's empirical foundation. Building upon this foundational understanding of the researcher's role, the study at hand ventured into the field with a clear methodological framework, centered around the deployment of open-ended questions within the structured yet flexible format of an interview. This approach was meticulously designed to probe the communicative tendencies of Sasak speakers, specifically their propensity to avoid certain conversations.

The open-ended nature of the questions served a dual purpose: firstly, it provided the informants with the latitude to express their perspectives and experiences without the constraints of predetermined responses, and secondly, it allowed the researcher to delve into the complexities underlying these communicative behaviors. The inquiry was strategically directed towards uncovering the motivations behind why Sasak speakers

might steer clear of particular topics or conversational contexts. It sought to elucidate not only the specific subjects that were deemed off-limits or sensitive but also to understand the cultural, social, or individual rationales that informed these boundaries. Moreover, the investigation aimed to discern the parameters within which certain topics or behaviors were considered permissible or impermissible, thereby mapping out the contours of communicative norms and taboos within the Sasak speaking community. Through this meticulously crafted interview strategy, the study endeavored to capture a nuanced portrait of Sasak communication practices. It recognized the intricate dance of verbal and non-verbal cues, social norms, and individual agency that characterizes human communication, particularly within the context of a culturally rich and linguistically diverse community such as that of the Sasak speakers. By foregrounding the researcher's role as an adaptive instrument within this qualitative inquiry, the study positioned itself to gather deep, meaningful insights into the dynamics of conversation avoidance and the social fabric that shapes it.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The process of analyzing data gathered from interview activities within qualitative research encompasses a systematic and multifaceted approach, ensuring a thorough examination and interpretation of the information collected. This analytical journey is articulated through a series of defined steps, each playing a crucial role in distilling and understanding the nuances of the data. These steps are data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2018), which together form a comprehensive framework for qualitative data analysis. The first step, data condensation, involves a meticulous process of sifting through the raw data to identify core themes, patterns, and insights. This stage is not merely about reduction but about synthesizing and highlighting the essence of the data, allowing researchers to distill the vast amounts of information into manageable and meaningful chunks. By doing so, researchers can focus on the most relevant and impactful aspects of the data, setting the stage for deeper analysis. This process often involves coding the data, categorizing responses, and identifying recurrent themes or narratives that emerge from the interviews. Following condensation, the next phase is data display, where the condensed data are organized in a manner that facilitates understanding and interpretation. This could take various forms, such as charts, tables, mind maps, or narrative summaries, depending on the nature of the data and the research objectives.

The purpose of display step is to lay out the data visually or descriptively, making it easier for the researcher to see connections, patterns, and anomalies. This organized presentation of data helps in identifying underlying trends and relationships, making the analytical process more intuitive and insightful. The final step in the qualitative data analysis process is drawing conclusions. This stage involves interpreting the displayed data, making sense of the patterns and themes that have been identified, and weaving them into a coherent narrative or set of findings. Researchers critically evaluate what the data reveal about the research questions or objectives, considering the implications and significance of the findings. This phase may also involve verifying the conclusions with the data or through triangulation with other data sources to ensure the reliability and validity of the interpretations made. Together, these steps form a rigorous and structured approach to analyzing qualitative data from interviews. By systematically condensing the data, displaying it in an accessible format, and drawing informed conclusions, researchers can

uncover deep insights into the subjects of their study, offering valuable contributions to the field and informing future research directions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

The findings of the research reported that there are some language styles need to paid attention as the conflicts avoidances when speak to sasak people who live in Lombok. The first finding suggests that conflicts in Sasak communication styles can be mitigated by incorporating a "false noble title" when interacting with unfamiliar or new acquaintances. To illustrate this point, let's examine two similar statements or requests and observe the vastly different responses they elicit from the listener. Statement without False Noble Title.

*Speaker 1: "liwat juluk amak" (asking permission without false title)*

*Speaker 2: "kamu-kamu dirikm liwat" (the road is not made for you: not really excited)*

*Another example:*

*Speaker: "Silak de mangan." (Please eat.)*

Response: The listener may perceive this as a straightforward request, with little emphasis on formality or social hierarchy. The response might be neutral, without any particular emphasis on respect or deference.

Statement with False Noble Title:

*Speaker 1 : "liwat juluk miq/miq tuan" ("can I pass by, sir" even though he is not a noble or Haji)*

*Speaker 2 : "liwat anaku, de mentelah juluk" (surely son, no worry)*

*Another example:*

*Speaker: "Silak de mangan, Lalu" (Please eat, Ms./Mr. Noble. Without knowing he is a noble or non noble)*

Response: By adding the false noble title "Lalu" (which translates to "Ms./Mr. Noble"), the speaker elevates the formality of the request and implies a sense of respect towards the listener. The listener may respond more positively to this statement, feeling acknowledged and esteemed due to the perceived noble title.

The examples of different responses when incorporating a false noble title into the communication style enhances politeness and respect, potentially fostering a more harmonious interaction and reducing the likelihood of conflict. The second finding said that the existence of social class among the society demand a different language style used when communicate to one of them.

In Sasak society, there exists a distinction in the use of language based on social class. The Sasak language spoken in a refined or elevated manner, often associated with high-class individuals or noble families, may be employed when communicating with those perceived to belong to a similar social stratum. Conversely, this elevated language variation is typically not used when interacting with individuals from lower social classes.

In essence, there is a social stratification reflected in the use of language, where the high-class language variation is reserved for those with perceived high pride or noble

lineage. This linguistic distinction serves to reinforce social hierarchies and maintain distinctions between different segments of society. The research findings indicate that using the phrase "Enggih tiang sampun medaran" may seem awkward when addressed to individuals categorized as "commoners" or the general populace. In contrast, the phrase "aok wahq tak mangan" is deemed a more suitable variation for such contexts. This latter expression is perceived as friendlier and more casual in nature.

Furthermore, the research suggests that foreigners learning the Sasak language are advised to focus on studying the variations used by commoners. This recommendation stems from the notion that foreigners may establish friendships more easily by using language variations that are familiar and accessible to the broader population. By adopting the linguistic patterns and expressions typical of everyday conversation among commoners, foreigners can potentially integrate more seamlessly into Sasak-speaking communities and foster meaningful connections.

In Sasak daily communication, commoner variations are prevalent and offer greater flexibility, featuring a wider range of vocabulary compared to noble variations. For instance, while the noble class may use terms like "medaran" or "medahar" to refer to "eat," commoners employ a diverse array of expressions such as "mangan," "nelen," and "kakan." Additionally, in situations of anger, commoners utilize specific variations like "ngerodok," "ngeredek," "takgatih," and "takdarak" to convey the same concept. This abundance of linguistic diversity within commoner variations underscores their versatility and adaptability in everyday communication among Sasak speakers.

The language variations in Sasak can be categorized into three classes, each reflecting a different societal class. Noble Variation: This variation is characterized by its respectfulness and is typically used by individuals belonging to the noble class. Not everyone from any societal class can use or understand this variation, as it requires a certain level of social standing or cultural understanding.

Commoner Variation: The middle-class variation of the Sasak language is utilized by individuals from various societal classes. It offers casualness and flexibility in communication, making it accessible to a wide range of people. Due to its versatility, this variation is recommended for those who wish to learn the Sasak language.

Rude or Angry Variation: This variation is employed by individuals when expressing anger or behaving in a manner considered rude. Its usage may lead to conflicts between the speaker and the listener. Consequently, this variation is not commonly found in village settings but rather in places like bus stations or crowded areas with a higher incidence of criminal activity.

The research findings highlight three distinct utterances in the Sasak language, each eliciting a different response: firstly, "Silak de bekelor": This expression typically garners respect and honor for the speaker. Secondly, "Aneh te mangan": Uttering this phrase tends to foster a friendly and amicable response, with the speaker being treated in a friendly manner. Thirdly, "Mah tie ngerodok": However, saying this phrase may escalate tensions and even lead to a physical altercation between the speaker and the individual addressed.

The findings highlight how language variations in Sasak serve as markers of the social class of the speakers. However, it's important to recognize that the selection of



language variation is also shaped by the specific context or situation. While employing respectful language variations may result in favorable responses in suitable settings, it's imperative to acknowledge that not all interactions involve cooperative individuals. In situations where conflict is probable or expected, the choice of language variation becomes especially crucial. Therefore, comprehending the subtleties of language usage across diverse contexts is vital for facilitating effective communication and navigating social interactions successfully.

The research discovered that certain language variations, particularly those perceived as "rude," can elicit negative responses when used towards individuals from different societal groups who are not familiar with those variations. For instance, society members from the western part of Lombok, such as Narmada, Lingsar, and Gerung, may feel offended if individuals from the southeast part of Lombok, around Jerowaru, Sukaraja, and Keruak, welcome and offer dishes by saying "silak de jamban," which translates to "silahkan disantap" or "please enjoy the meal." This variation is considered rude by the recipients, potentially leading to unfavorable reactions, including the possibility of conflict or physical altercations. This underscores the importance of understanding the cultural nuances and sensitivities associated with language variations when interacting with individuals from different societal groups to avoid unintended offense or misunderstandings.

Conversely, when individuals from the western part of Lombok extend an invitation to those from the southeast part to enjoy a meal by saying "aneh silak entak wah," the likelihood of causing offense is high. This language variation is perceived as conveying anger and carries a negative connotation. To recipients, its usage implies disapproval and can be interpreted as "What a shame, do not you dare eating that meal!" This variation is typically employed by individuals expressing frustration or anger, and its utilization in this context may lead to misunderstandings or hurt feelings among the recipients.

Indeed, it is evident from these observations that a language variation categorized as standard and polite within one societal group may not be perceived similarly when used within other societies. The nuances and interpretations of language variations can vary significantly between different cultural groups, leading to potential misunderstandings or offense. This highlights the importance of understanding the cultural context and sensitivities associated with language usage when interacting with diverse communities. What may be considered appropriate or respectful language in one setting may be interpreted differently or even deemed inappropriate in another. Therefore, it is crucial to exercise caution and sensitivity in communication, particularly when employing language variations across different societal groups.

## Discussion

### *Communication strategies to avoid conflict*

The concept of noble language, a pivotal communication strategy within the Sasak culture, emanates directly from the practice of according noble titles, or "gelar," to individuals of significant social standing (Sugianto & Kamarudin, 2021). These titles are not merely nominal designations but are imbued with deep cultural significance, reflecting

the recipient's aristocratic heritage or notable accomplishments within the community. The tradition of noble titles is an integral part of Sasak society's fabric, embodying the community's reverence for social hierarchy, respect, and recognition of individual contributions. It is in line with Sukenti et al. (2016) who argue that noble titles in the Sasak language serve as markers of social distinction, bestowed upon individuals who either descend from aristocratic lineages or have earned widespread acclaim for their contributions to the welfare and advancement of their communities. Such acknowledgments are deeply rooted in the island's historical and cultural landscapes, symbolizing the enduring values of honor, respect, and social responsibility that permeate Sasak culture.

The titles, passed down through generations or awarded in recognition of personal achievements, play a crucial role in the social dynamics of Lombok, influencing not only the perception of individuals within the community but also the manner in which they are addressed and interacted with. The variety and significance of these noble titles are reflective of the multifaceted nature of Sasak society (Sugianto & Hasby, 2023; Nahdi, 2021). Titles such as Raden, Lalu, Mamiq, Haji, Hajah, Lale, or Baiq, among others, are indicative of the individual's gender, social status, and the specific nature of their contributions or heritage. For instance, titles like Haji and Hajah are conferred upon those who have completed the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, signifying not only their religious devotion but also their elevated status within the community. Similarly, titles like Raden or Lalu might denote aristocratic lineage, underscoring the individual's hereditary ties to the island's noble families.

The deployment of noble language as a communication strategy is thus a reflection of the complex social hierarchies and cultural norms that define Sasak society. When addressing individuals with noble titles, speakers employ a specific register of language that conveys respect and acknowledges the recipient's esteemed position within the community. This practice underscores the importance of verbal etiquette in Sasak interactions, where language serves not just as a medium of communication but as a tool for reinforcing social bonds and respecting established hierarchies (Aristiawan, 2018; Anwar et al., 2019). Through the use of noble language, Sasak speakers navigate the intricacies of their social environment, adhering to a time-honored tradition that venerates the achievements and heritage of its distinguished members.

Historically, the social and political landscape of Lombok was deeply entwined with a feudal system that placed rulers and individuals of noble descent at the apex of the societal hierarchy. Within this framework, noble titles were not merely ceremonial but were indicative of tangible power and influence. Individuals bearing these titles wielded considerable authority over the local populace, managing land, governing people, and playing pivotal roles in the administration and cultural life of the island. This historical context underscores the profound significance of noble titles, reflecting a time when social stratification and governance were directly linked to one's lineage and title (Sugianto & Hasby, 2023). As time progressed and the traditional structures of feudalism began to diminish under the pressures of modernization and political change, the overt power and administrative roles associated with noble titles underwent a transformation. Despite the

dissolution of the feudal system as a form of governance, the cultural importance of noble titles has persisted into the contemporary era.

Raden represents the most esteemed noble title presently existing in Lombok. This title is bestowed upon individuals who are either directly related to royalty or are descendants of kings. However, Raden individuals are scarcely encountered in Lombok, with a few residing in the northern region near Bayan. Members of the Raden families lead intricate daily lives governed by a hierarchical status system. They speak a distinct language compared to the common populace and adhere to a unique marriage system (Sarwadi et al, 2019; Zulkarnaen et al., 2021). Due to the complexities of their marital customs, some nobles bearing the Raden title opt to remain unmarried throughout their lives. "Lalu" is another esteemed title in Lombok, reserved exclusively for men hailing from noble lineages and their descendants. Conversely, women of noble descent are referred to as "baiq," a title designated solely for females. The title "Lalu" undergoes a transformation when the individual gets married and has children. Instead of being addressed as "Lalu," they are referred to as "miq" or "mamiq," titles exclusively granted to noble men who are already married.

In contemporary Lombok society, noble titles are still respected and esteemed, though their influence may have evolved alongside modern governance structures. Individuals bearing noble titles often play important roles in community leadership, cultural preservation, and social affairs, upholding traditions while adapting to the changing dynamics of the island's socio-political landscape. Overall, noble titles in Lombok serve as a testament to the island's rich cultural heritage and the enduring legacy of its aristocratic past, continuing to shape social dynamics and identities within the local community (Rosana et al., 2018; Sugianto & Kamarudin, 2021). Using a noble title when addressing someone in Lombok can help prevent conflicts. Asking for permission in the traditional manner, such as "liwat juluq mamiq," is more likely to yield a positive response compared to using a generic request like "permisi numpang lewat" or "can I go this way." This approach represents an initial communication strategy for ensuring a respectful and appropriate response when interacting with Sasak people in Lombok.

To effectively communicate the same message to a commoner without causing offense, you can use the phrase "aok wahq tak mangan," which translates to "I already ate." This expression is not considered rude and is commonly used when speaking to friends of similar age, schoolmates, or peers. However, it is not recommended to address individuals who are older than the speaker with this phrase, as it may be perceived as impolite and could potentially lead to conflict. When communicating with Sasaknese in Lombok, it's important to understand the language strategies that align with the three main stages of language caste prevalent in the region. The first stage is characterized by noble language, known as "basa karma," which is exclusively spoken among nobles and individuals of high social status. Speaking this language to commoners is perceived as diminishing the noble status and could potentially result in conflict (Nahdi, 2021). Basa karma represents the highest level of language caste in Sasak Lombok, designated for interactions among nobles and those with elevated social standing. Noble language is distinguished by its formal lexicon, intricate grammatical structures, and deferential

speech patterns. It is commonly employed in formal settings such as ceremonies, official meetings, or when addressing individuals of superior status. Utilizing noble language demonstrates respect and acknowledges the authority and prestige of the recipient (Sugianto & Hasby, 2023; Sarwadi et al., 2019). To say eating in karma basa is “medaran” it is honour and noble to say this, and it is must be addressed to a noble too.

The second stage of according to its caste is Commoner language. This kind of language is used among ordinary people in everyday interactions, including among peers, friends, and family members. It is more casual and relaxed compared to noble language, with simpler vocabulary and grammar. Commoner language may also include slang, regional dialects, and colloquial expressions (Setiawan, 2022; Saharudin, 2016). To say eating in commoner is “mangan” it is permissible to be addressed to a school friend and peers, and may not to be addressed to parents and old men. The third language caste is basa kasar. This language is assumed to be the lowest level of language caste, low language, is typically associated with marginalized or stigmatized groups within the community. It may include informal speech, non-standard dialects, or languages spoken by minority groups. Low language is often used in informal or familiar contexts, such as among close friends, family members, or in casual settings. While low language may lack the prestige and formality of noble or commoner language, it serves as a means of communication and identity expression for certain segments of the population.

#### *Knowing Language Potential Conflicts in Lombok*

Interactions with the Sasak people of Lombok, like any cultural exchange, require a nuanced understanding of local customs and language sensitivities. One particular phrase that visitors should be cautious of is “Mah tie kaken,” which translates to “eat” or “just eat it” in the Sasak language. Although it might seem innocuous to the uninitiated, this expression can be fraught with unintended connotations when used in conversation with Sasak individuals. It is perceived as carrying an undertone of anger or irritation, which could be interpreted as disrespectful or dismissive by the recipient. The use of this phrase, especially by outsiders, may inadvertently convey a sense of command or impatience, contrasting sharply with the polite and respectful communication norms valued in Sasak culture (Setiawan, 2022; Saharudin, 2016). To foster positive interactions and convey respect towards Sasak cultural norms, it is advisable to use alternative expressions that align more closely with local etiquette. One such phrase is “silak de keloran,” which means “you are pleased to eat.” This expression is imbued with a sense of invitation and goodwill, encouraging the listener to enjoy their meal in a respectful and considerate manner.

By choosing to use “silak de keloran” over “Mah tie kaken,” visitors can demonstrate their respect for Sasak customs and sensibilities, thereby enhancing the quality of their interactions with the local population (Sugianto & Hasby, 2023). Employing the phrase “silak de keloran” not only aligns with the polite and hospitable nature of Sasak culture but also serves as a bridge for smoother communication between visitors and locals. It reflects an awareness and appreciation of the subtle nuances of Sasak linguistic etiquette, contributing to a more harmonious and respectful exchange. Such mindful communication is crucial in building rapport and fostering positive relationships with the Sasak people, allowing visitors to better integrate and engage with the community during



their time in Lombok. Thus, understanding and adapting to these linguistic and cultural nuances is key to ensuring respectful and meaningful interactions in the rich cultural tapestry of Lombok.

The expression is advisable to avoid saying "silak de entak" when speaking to Menu Meni dialect speakers residing in central and southeast parts of Lombok. While this phrase may not be deemed offensive by all Sasaknese people, it is considered inappropriate by some due to its potentially rude connotation. "Silak de entak" literally means "you can eat it," and grammatically, it is acceptable as it uses high-class language (basa karma) (Sugianto & Hasby, 2023; Sugianto & Kamarudin, 2021). However, it has the potential to cause conflict because "entak" is commonly associated with an angry person. Therefore, it's best to use alternative expressions to prevent any misunderstandings or offense. The possible region to have conflicts with this statement is those who live in Jerowaru, Sukaraja, Ganti, and Marong.

In the vicinity of West Lombok, it's best to avoid saying "silak de jamban" to the Sasaknese residents. This phrase is considered humorous because it carries an alternative meaning for them. In their context, "jamban" refers to a toilet with feces in it, so using this phrase can be quite distasteful when offering a meal. Rather than causing offense, however, it tends to evoke laughter from them due to its comedic connotation. The possible region which possibly denied this utterance is west Lombok region like Ampenan, Gerung, Narmada and other supporting regions in the west of Lombok.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, effective communication strategies play a crucial role in preventing conflicts when interacting with Sasak people in Lombok. Understanding the significance of noble titles and employing them respectfully can enhance positive interactions and foster mutual respect. Utilizing appropriate language based on social hierarchies and regional dialects helps to avoid misunderstandings and potential offense. Additionally, being mindful of cultural nuances, such as avoiding phrases with unintended meanings, contributes to smoother communication and promotes harmonious relationships within the community. By employing these strategies, individuals can navigate interactions with Sasak people in Lombok with sensitivity and respect, thereby minimizing the likelihood of conflicts. One notable finding suggests that conflicts can be mitigated by incorporating a "false noble title" when interacting with unfamiliar individuals, thus enhancing politeness and respect in communication. Additionally, the existence of social class distinctions within Sasak society demands different language styles for communication with individuals of varying social status. Language variations serve as markers of social class and societal expectations, with different variations eliciting varied responses from listeners.

Moreover, the research highlights the importance of understanding cultural nuances and sensitivities associated with language usage, particularly when interacting with individuals from different societal groups. Certain language variations, especially those perceived as "rude," may elicit negative responses when used inappropriately. Therefore, it is essential to exercise caution and sensitivity in communication across diverse cultural contexts to avoid unintended offense or misunderstandings. Overall, the research emphasizes the complexity of language dynamics in Sasak society and underscores the importance of effective communication strategies for navigating social interactions and fostering harmony within the community.

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