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Ethnographic Study Preservation Sasak Polite Languages among Nobility Padamara Village Form as Defending Local Wisdom

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ABSTRACT

The Sasak Polite Language is part of the cultural heritage of the Lombok community, reflecting its social structure and values of local wisdom. However, its existence is facing challenges due to the influence of globalization and social shifts. This study aims to examine the form of maintenance of Sasak Polite Language by noble families in Padamara Village, Sukamulia District, East Lombok Regency. The focus of the research includes preservation efforts, obstacles faced, and the variety of languages maintained in social interactions. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection through observation and interviews. The results of the study show that noble families maintain the Sasak Polite Language in three main domains: family, neighbors, and public space. In the family realm, the language is used in daily communication between family members; in the neighboring realm, its use depends on the social background of the interlocutor; while in the general realm, Polite Language is used consistently. The main challenges in preserving this language include the flow of globalization, the dominance of other languages, and inter-ethnic marriages that have an impact on language transmission. The form of Sasak Polite Language that is maintained includes a variety of speech between fellow nobles and between nobles and non-nobles. These findings show that the preservation of Sasak Polite Language is still ongoing in a limited environment, but faces pressure from evolving socio-cultural changes.

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Keywords: Sasak Polite Language; Noble Family; Language Defense; Local Wisdom

1. Introduction

Language is the main communication tool that plays an important role in the exchange of information and arrangement of social relations in society. It cannot be separated from the culture of the people who use it, because language is an integral part of cultural identity and heritage whose existence must be protected so that they do not become extinct over time. One form of language that needs to be preserved is the local language, which is part of the national cultural wealth. Indonesia has a variety of regional languages, spread from Sabang to Merauke, each of which has its own characteristics and cultural values. One of the most widely spoken regional languages in West Nusa Tenggara is Sasak, which is spoken by the Sasak tribe on Lombok Island.

In the Sasak society, language use is closely related to social status, with different levels of speech reflecting social stratification. The noble class, known as *mènak*, traditionally uses a refined or polite style of language called *alus*, which serves as a marker of noble identity and social prestige. This refined language includes certain lexical elements and speech forms that distinguish nobility from commoners, who typically use the more common Sasak *jamaq* language in everyday interactions^[1].

The Sasak people use a linguistic system known as *undag bangse/bahase*, or language levels, which allows speakers to adjust their language based on age, social relationships, and status^[2]. The Sasak language is spoken by the people of Lombok Island at three levels: ordinary, middle, and main^[3].

The Sasak tribe, as users of the Sasak language, has a social stratification that affects the use of language in everyday life. Based on social status, the Sasak Tribe is divided into two main groups: a noble group (*menak*) and an ordinary community group (*jajarkarang* or *bulu ketujur*). Mahyuni (2016) and Mugni (2016) revealed that the noble group is further divided into two levels, while the ordinary community group has only one level^[4,5]. Traditionally, Sasak society is divided into four social classes: *raden terkemuka* or nobles, *menak* and *perwangse*, ordinary nobles, and *jajarkarang* or *bulu ketujur*. Sociologically, the Sasak language can be di-

vided into three types: rough, plural (ordinary), and fine^[6]. The noble group (*menak*) traditionally uses subtle language or “*alus*” as their daily language, which reflects both social status and high cultural values in Sasak society.

Article 36, Chapter XV of the 1945 Constitution emphasizes that local language is one of the elements of local wisdom that must be maintained and developed. Local wisdom itself includes a variety of knowledge, views, values, and practices that are passed down from generation to generation or obtained from current experiences and interactions with other cultures^[7]. This shows that local languages, including Sasak, are not only a means of communication but also a manifestation of local wisdom that needs to be revitalized for the sustainability of the community’s culture.

The Sasak language is a regional language used by the Sasak tribe as the main medium of communication on Lombok Island, which is the indigenous population with the majority in the region^[5]. However, in the Industrial 4.0 era, technological advances and the influence of global culture have led to a decrease in the use of the Sasak language, especially the Sasak subtle language. Asyhar (2020) revealed that Refined Sasak is increasingly abandoned by its own speakers, especially among the younger generation^[8]. In addition, Sasak is not widely taught in schools in Lombok; although there are some schools that make it local content, many other schools choose to teach English as local content. This condition causes the subtle Sasak language to become increasingly marginalized and lose its function as a mother tongue among millennials. The use of subtle language not only reflects social status but also embodies local wisdom, connecting people to their heritage and traditions^[2,9].

The decline in the use of Refined Sasak also occurs in Padamara Village (**Figure 1** map of Padamara village), where many of the younger generations from the aristocracy no longer use the language in daily communication, both in the family and community. In fact, Halus is still used in religious events and traditional activities, but its preservation has not received serious attention in the village. In fact, the aristocrats in Padamara tend to teach Indonesian as their mother tongue to their children, so Refined Sasak is at risk of gradual extinction.

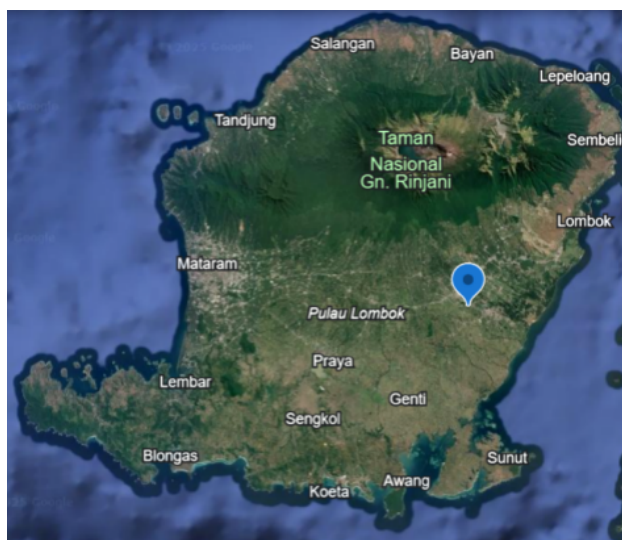


Figure 1. Map of Padamara, East Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. Scale 1 cm = 100 km.

Source: <https://earth.google.com/web/search/Desa>.

Based on these conditions, the maintenance of the Subtle Language for the nobles in Padamara Village is very important as a form of maintaining local wisdom amid globalization and changing times. Therefore, this study aims to examine the forms of maintenance of the Sasak Subtle Language among noble families, identify the difficulties they face in maintaining the language, and identify the forms of Subtle Language that are still maintained. Thus, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of the maintenance of subtle languages in Padamara Village and, at the same time, become the basis for efforts to revitalize local languages in the context of current social and cultural developments.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Local Language

Language is an important tool for humans to express thoughts, communicate, and shape culture. Herniti (2017) states that language initially emerged as a means of creating inner impressions and then developed into a means of communication and thinking^[10]. Language allows humans to live in society and to understand the world around them. In this process, humans organize sounds into words and form phrases, clauses, and meaningful sentences.

Chaer (2012) defined language as an arbitrary system of sound symbols used by people to cooperate, communi-

cate, and identify themselves^[11]. Language works through a system of rules and patterns that, if violated, can disrupt communication. According to Badudu (1985), language is also the main supporter of the nation's culture^[12]. In modern life, the diversity of languages used in communication reflects a nation's cultural diversity.

Another opinion expressed by Wardhaugh in Alwasilah (1989) is that language is an arbitrary vocal symbol in human communication, while Gaynor in the same source states that language is communication through sounds used by groups of people with meaningful symbols^[13]. Effective communication is achieved only if the speaker and listener understand each other's intentions and master the language rules used.

Local languages, in the Indonesian context, are spoken by people within a certain geographical area and support local culture^[14]. Indonesia has more than 700 regional languages, indicating extraordinary linguistic richness. Eight regional languages are categorized as major languages: Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Minangkabau, Bugis, Batak, Banjar, and Balinese^[15]. Meanwhile, there are 13 regional languages with more than one million speakers, including Sasak with approximately 2.1 million speakers^[14].

In its position towards Indonesian, regional languages such as Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese are still maintained by the community and respected by the state. In accordance Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution, regional languages are a part of a protected national culture. However, most regional languages are now facing the threat of extinction, because they are rarely used actively and appropriately by their speakers. Thus, language, both as a means of general communication and in the form of local languages, plays a central role in social life, culture, and national identity^[7]. The preservation of local languages is important for maintaining Indonesia's cultural wealth and national identity.

2.2. Language Preservation

Language maintenance and language shift are two sides of the language dynamics process: a language can survive if it is not displaced by other languages, and conversely, a displaced language is a language that cannot be maintained in the long term by a community of speakers^[16]. Language maintenance occurs when people collectively choose to continue using a language that has become part of their lives.

According to Pateda (2001), language maintenance is an effort to keep a language in use and appreciated, especially as a group identity^[17]. Fasold also mentions preservation as a decision to continue the collective use of language by a community that uses the language^[5]. This can be achieved through education, literature, and mass media. In a bilingual or multilingual society, language maintenance is closely related to language loyalty, which encourages people to maintain their language and rejects the dominance of other languages^[18].

Downes suggests several factors that influence language maintenance^[19].

Family plays an important role in instilling the use of language according to its realm.

Associations, which show pride in the language if it is still widely used;

Communication intensity, for example through media consumption in the language;

Social and cultural activities, such as arts and customs;

Desire or expectation, such as parents consciously teaching their children the local language.

These factors also play a role in the preservation of the Sasak language in Lombok, particularly in noble families. The role of family, association, and inherited cultural values contributes to maintaining the existence of the Sasak language amid social change and the influence of the languages.

2.3. Levels of Sasak Language

Sasak has a language-level system that differentiates vocabulary based on the relative social status between speakers and interlocutors, similar to systems in Javanese, Balinese, and Korean. There are three main levels: low, middle, and high, as well as an additional dimension of respect for third parties who are not direct interlocutors^[20]. For example, second-person pronouns can be *you* (low), *side* (middle), *pelinggih* (high), or *dekaji* (respectful); while the word “eat” can be *mangan*, *bekelór*, *madaran*, or *majengan*.

All levels, except the lowest, are referred to as *bahasa alus* (refined/polite), used in official situations or when speaking to people of higher social status, especially the *mènak* (traditional noble class, ±8% of the Sasak population). This system applies across almost all dialects of Sasak, with the *alus* form tending to be consistent across dialects, although

low variety shows more variation.

2.4. Sociolinguistics

This research is based on the study of sociolinguistics, a branch of science that discusses the relationship between language and society, especially language variations that are influenced by social factors. The classic formulation in sociolinguistics, “Who speaks what language, to whom, when, and to what end”^[21], shows how the social context determines the form and choice of language in communication^[22]. With these guidelines, individuals can adjust language or language varieties according to the situation and interlocutor.

These situational adjustments give birth to variations in language style, depending on who, when, and where the communication takes place. In practice, this leads to individuals being able to use more than one language or language variety. This ability raises further questions about whether the original language or local dialect will survive or be displaced.

According to Colder^[13], a language community is a group of people who can understand each other when speaking, even though they use different languages, as long as there is mutual understanding. In the context of this study, this is reflected in the speakers of Lombok, who can adapt linguistically when interacting with native Surabaya speakers. Although there are differences between Sasak and Arek, communication continues thanks to mutual respect and asking questions when not understanding, so that linguistic adaptation can take place well.

2.5. Demographics of the Sasak Community in Padamara Village, Sukamulia District, East Lombok

(1) Population and Area

- Total population: 4,321 people
- Area: 195 hectares
- It consists of 5 hamlets: Dayen Rurung, Lauq Rurung, Timuq Rurung, Dasan Tangar, Dasan Baru (<http://digilib.uinsa.ac.id/18462/6/Bab%203.pdf>).
- Number of family heads: 1,376 families^[23].

(2) Gender Composition

Table 1 and Figure 2 present the gender composition.

Table 1. Gender Composition.

Hamlet	Male	Female	Total
Dayen Rurung	521	538	1,059
Lauq Rurung	384	425	809
Timuq Rurung	304	331	635
Tangar Dasan	423	451	874
Dasan Baru	469	475	944
Total	2,101	2,220	4,321

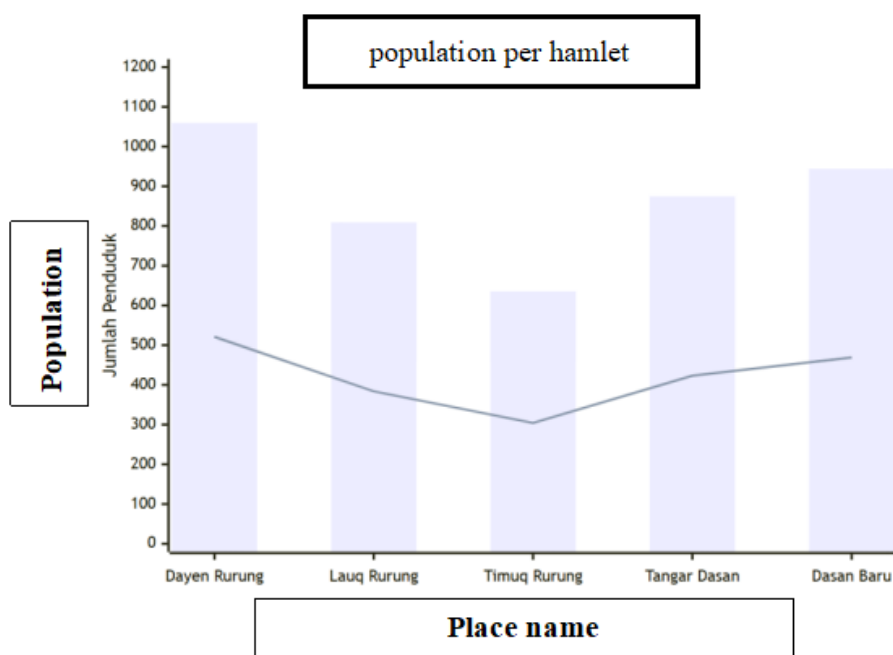


Figure 2. Gender Composition.

(3) Religion

- 100% of the population of Padamara Village is Muslim.

(4) Livelihood

The majority of the community works in the agricultural sector and farm laborers, with details:

- Farmers: 1,180 people
- Farm laborers: 1,027 people
- Traders: 110 people
- Civil servants/TNI/Police: 101 people
- Driver/driver: 25 people
- Private employees: 105 people
- Carpenter/stone mason: 50 people
- Craftsmen: 66 people
- Teachers: 45 people

- Others: 22 people^[24]

The data above can also be seen in **Figure 3**.

(5) Education

The education level of the community is quite diverse, but there are still residents who have not graduated from elementary school to high school. There are also some graduates of Diploma 1, Diploma 2/D3, S1, and S2, although the number is relatively small.

(6) Social and Cultural Structure

- The people of Padamara Village are dominated by the lineage of Kedatuan Batu Dendeng, who still uphold the customs of their ancestors^[1].
- Kinship relations and the use of Sasak lexicon such as *amaq*, *inaq*, *mamiq* are still very strong in everyday life.

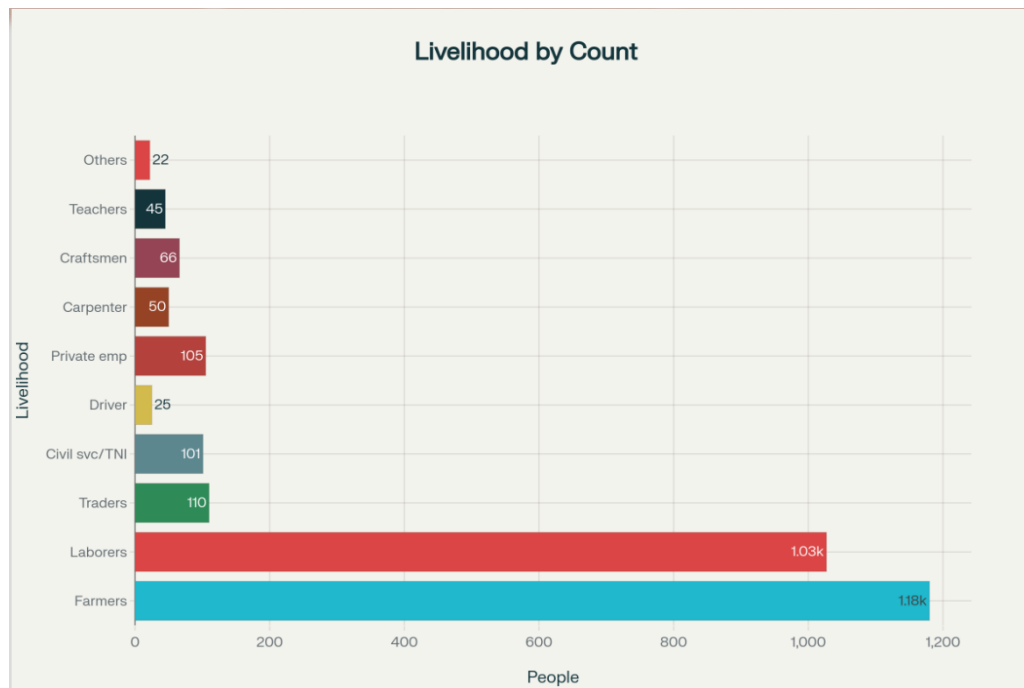


Figure 3. Community Works in the Agricultural Sector and Farm Laborers.

3. Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach with a type of ethnographic research^[25], examining the maintenance of refined language among Sasak nobles in Padamara Village, Sukamulia District, East Lombok. This approach was chosen because it can describe linguistic practices in depth in the context of natural community culture. According to Creswell, ethnography, as a research strategy, allows researchers to explore social phenomena in cultural communities through direct interaction and in-depth observation.

The research location is Padamara Village, which is known to maintain the use of subtle language (*base alus*) in daily communication in the nobility (Figure 4). The subject of the research is the Sasak noble community who inherited the title “Lalu” for men and “Baiq” for women. The data sources in this study consist of primary data in the form of informants’ speeches and actions, and secondary data from village documents and records.

In an ethnographic study of the preservation of the Sasak subtle language in noble families in Padamara Village, informants were selected using a purposive approach with a snowball technique. That is, the researcher deliberately chose a noble family that was considered relevant as the main data source, and the next informant was recommended by the

previous informant until the number considered sufficient was fulfilled^[1].

The number of informants in this relevant research is 10 people from noble families who live both in and outside the interior of Padamara, Suradadi, and Rakam villages. They were chosen because they fulfill the criteria of being a noble Sasak family who still maintains the use of the subtle Sasak language in daily life. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, questionnaires, and tests of Sasak subtle language skills, especially for children of aristocrats who are currently studying. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique, which selects sources with certain considerations^[26].

Data collection was conducted using three main techniques: non-participant observation using the *simak bebas libat cakap* method to listen to the use of subtle language without being directly involved in the interaction^[27]; semi-structured interviews to extract information from informants regarding practices and obstacles in language preservation, and documentation study of archives or supporting records regarding social structure and the use of subtle language in the village^[28].

Data analysis was carried out in three stages: data reduction by sorting out relevant data based on the research focus^[29]; data presentation in the form of descriptive and

systematic summaries, and drawing conclusions/verification through consistency testing and clarifying data across sources.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study used source and method triangulation techniques, namely, comparing data from several informants and using various data-collection techniques. Data validity was tested based on four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability^[30], the research results can be scientifically accounted for.

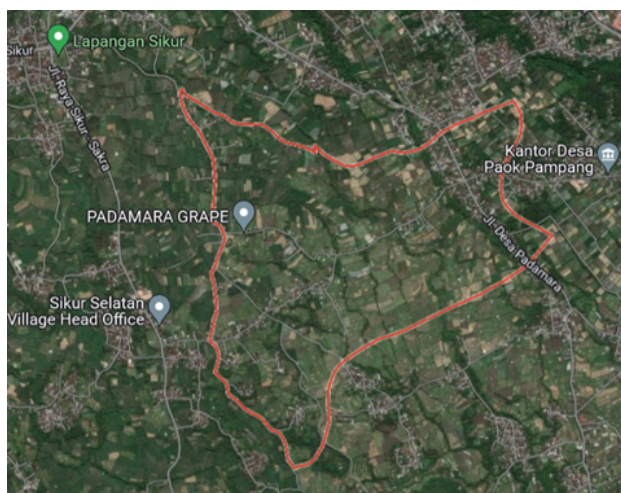


Figure 4. Map of padamara village.

Scale 1 cm = 100 km.

4. Results

This research focuses on the preservation of refined language among the Sasak Nobles in Padamara Village. Data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews of informants' daily language practices from the nobility. The findings are grouped into several main aspects that reflect the form of maintenance of subtle language, the factors that influence its sustainability, and the form of subtle language maintained by the nobles in the village.

4.1. Forms of Sasak Language Maintenance Among Noble Families in Padamara Village

Based on the results of the findings, researchers found the form of maintenance of the Sasak Subtle Language

among noble families in Padamara Village. The forms of maintenance include the maintenance of the Refined Sasak language in the family, neighboring, and public domains. The following is a description of the maintenance of the Refined Sasak language among noble families in Padamara Village.

4.1.1. Preservation of Sasak Subtle Language in the Family Domain

Noble families always use subtle language when communicating with their husbands or wives. This can be seen in the data from the conversation between husband and wife among the nobles in Padamara Village, as follows: S: "*Ke-lambi kemeje puteq wik side diaper leq napi taoq de koloq.*" (Where did you put the white shirt you washed yesterday?)

I: "*Look in the big closet... I have ironed it.*"
(Try looking in the big closet in the room because I ironed it yesterday).

S: "*Miq silaq de mendaran...Nasiq kandoq sampun jari.*" (Sir, let's eat...The rice and side dishes are ready).

I: "*Nggih mangkin...araq niki phone.*"
(Yes...wait a minute, there's a phone call)

The data above can also be seen in **Figure 5**.

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the use of subtle language between husbands and wives among aristocrats is still limited in the use of Refined Sasak. When once in a while the person concerned uses limited subtle vocabulary, such as "nggih" (yes), "tiang" (me), "sampun" (already) and others. This can also be seen in the following data from a conversation between a mother and son among the nobility in Padamara Village:

A: "*meme tiang bekedek ojoq balen riki ng-gih?*" (My mother gave me permission to play at Riki's house, right?)

I: "*nendeq ngonek-ngonek ntan bekedek nggih*"
(Don't play for too long, okay?)

A: "*Nggih me, mangkin niki tiang lampaq ng-gih.*" (Yes mom, I'm leaving right now)

I: "*Niki kadu de belanje.*" (This is for shopping)



Figure 5. Conversation between a married couple of the aristocracy.

Based on the conversation in **Figure 6**, the mother uses subtle Sasak language such as “Niki” (This), “Nggih” (Yes), “Mangkin (Now). The use of subtle language used by this noble mother is a form of Sasak language learning given by the mother to her child to use subtle Sasak language. Because the use of Sasak language is also a reflection of the respect of young people to their elders and vice versa. This can also be seen from the data from the conversation between brother and sister among the nobles in Padamara Village as follows:

A: “*Kak singgaq kelambi bireng niki geh?*”
(Kak borrow this black shirt?)
K: “*jaq kadu napi?*” (What do you want to use it for?)
A: “*I’ll use it to play with my friends.*” (I want to use this to play with my friends)
K: “*Don’t let it get dirty.*” (Don’t get this shirt dirty)



Figure 6. Percakapan Ibu ke Anaknya menggunakan Bahasa Sasak halus.

Based on the results of the conversation between the brother and sister among the nobility (**Figure 7**), it can be seen that the conversation is also limited to the usual vocabulary used for the nobility. This reflects manners and also a form of respect for fellow family members, be it between brothers and sisters or with other members in the family realm. Therefore, the researchers concluded that the form of preservation of the subtle Sasak language among aristocrats

is the form of preservation of the subtle Sasak language in the family realm. This form is done through the use of subtle Sasak language between family members, whether it is communication between husband and wife, mother and child, and brother and sister. The use of this form is still limited to the use of Refined Sasak. When once in a while they use limited subtle vocabulary, such as “nggih” (yes), “tiang” (me), “sampun” (already) and others.



Figure 7. Conversation Between Brother and Sister Among Aristocrats.

4.1.2. Preservation of Refined Sasak Language in the Neighborhood Domain

Nobles sometimes use Refined Sasak when communicating with neighbors, depending on the neighbor they are talking to. If the aristocrats have neighbors who are both from the aristocracy, they are obliged to use Refined Sasak as the language used, but if communicating with non-aristocratic neighbors, they will use Ordinary Sasak Language or (Rough). This can be seen from the data from the conversation between the nobles in Padamara Village, as follows:

BS1: “*Miq mbe de lumbar?*” (Sir, where are you going?)

BS2: “*Niki jaq tiang lumbar hospital.*” (This is me going to the hospital).

BS1: “*Sai sick miq?*” (Who is sick sir?).

BS2: “*Pisaq sampun tiang.*” (my misan)

BS1: “*Hopefully I’ll be healthy.*” (Hopefully given health)

Based on the following conversation (**Figure 8**), it can be seen that noble people use the Sasak Subtle language in communicating with neighbors who are also from the nobility by using the vocabulary “Lumbar” (where), “Niki” (this), “tiang” (me) and “Icanin” (given). This is done as a form of respect for the interlocutor who is also equally from the nobility. However, the use of refined language by aristocrats and non-aristocratic neighbors is quite different. This can be seen from the following data from a conversation between an aristocrat and a non-aristocrat neighbor in Padamara Village:

BS: “*Miq tumben kesenggitan, jaq de buy what?*” (Sir, it’s rare to see you here, what do you want to buy?).

BNS: “*Araq surya cigarettes?*” (Do you have solar cigarettes?)

BS: “*Sebungkus miq?*” (One pack, sir?)

NBS: “*Aoq se pack doang.*” (Yes, just one pack)



Figure 8. Conversation between a nobleman and a neighbor who is a nobleman.

Based on the results of conversations between aristocrats and non-aristocratic neighbors (Figure 9), it can be seen that aristocrats do not use Refined Sasak when communicating. When speaking with non-aristocrats, the aristocrats often use the Sasak Kasar (ordinary) language with the vocab-

ulary “Aaq” (yes), “Ape” (what), and “Araq” (there is). This is done by the nobility in an effort to blend in with the non-aristocracy and not differentiate between them. Therefore, the aristocrats rarely use the Refined Sasak language when communicating with neighbors who are non-aristocrats.



Figure 9. Conversation between a nobleman and a neighbor who is not a nobleman.

4.1.3. The Preservation of Refined Sasak Language in the Public Domain

When communicating in public places, nobles always use Refined Sasak to show themselves that they are people from the nobility. Therefore, to reflect on themselves as aristocrats, they should give a good example to the community through good language. This can be seen in the data from the conversation, as follows:

A: “*Ampure, where is the beketoan (bertanya) pole? Mbe taoq Puskesmas saq rapet ga tahu puskesmas yang dekat?*”
(Sorry, may I ask? Where is the nearest Puskesmas)

B: “*The health center is close by, at the junction in front of the village.*” (The nearest health center is at the T-junction in front of the market and slightly further north).

A: “*oh nggih, matur tampiasih, tiang lampak juluk nggih*” (oh yes thank you very much, I’ll go ahead)

B: “*Nggih silak*” (Yes, let’s go).

Based on the results of conversations between aristocrats and people in public places in Figure 10, it can be seen that aristocrats use Refined Sasak when communicating. When speaking with people in public places, the aristocrats often use Refined Sasak with the vocabulary of “Ampure”

(sorry), “Tiang” (I), and “Matur Tampiasih” (Thank you). This is done by the nobility as an effort to show respect and

courtesy to people in public places. Refined Sasak should be a polite language and reflect respect for others.

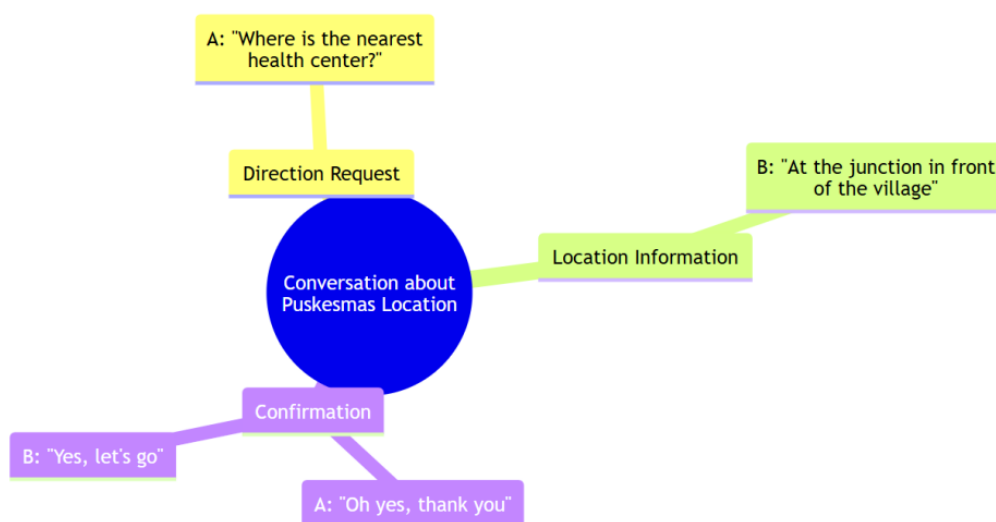


Figure 10. Conversations between nobles and people in public places.

4.2. Forms of Difficulties Faced by Noble Families in Padamara Village in order to Maintain Sasak Subtle Language

A language is categorized as endangered if it is used less frequently in daily activities, so that it loses its social or communicative function. Based on these findings, researchers found a form of difficulty faced by noble families in Padamara village to maintain the Sasak Subtle Language. Difficulties include globalization, language domination, and marriage with different ethnicities. The following is a description of the difficulties faced by noble families in Padamara village in maintaining the Sasak Subtle Language.

4.2.1. Globalization

Globalization presents great challenges for the whole world, including the nobility of the Sasak tribe. With globalization, the existence of foreign languages has become increasingly popular. However, globalization greatly affects the existence of the Sasak Language, especially the Sasak Smooth Language. One of them is the resilience of the Sasak Smooth Language, which is currently experiencing a decline, as well as the emergence of slang terms, alay language, and others. This is an obstacle faced by the nobles in maintaining the Sasak Smooth Language, as stated by informants in the study:

“The obstacles we face are of course the current era which is very rapidly developing. Now many people use foreign languages such as English, which makes Refined Sasak increasingly abandoned by its own speakers” (Participant A, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

Today is the modern era, so many old things are abandoned by others, especially the use of the Refined Sasak language, which is rarely able to understand it”. (Informant K, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“The obstacles faced are mainly the times. The rapid development of the current era has made the speakers of the Refined Sasak language less and the Lalu and Baiq (nobles) increasingly use their Indonesian language when communicating with their families” (Informant Y, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

Based on the results of the interview, the difficulty faced by noble families in Padamara Village in maintaining the Sasak Subtle Language is globalization. The current globalization greatly affects the existence of the Sasak Language, especially the Sasak Smooth Language. This is because the emergence of globalization, which is very rapid in this era, allows the use of foreign languages such as English, which

makes Refined Sasak increasingly abandoned by its speakers.

4.2.2. Marriage with Different Ethnicity

In Sasak custom, a noble woman who marries a non-noble family (jajarkarang) must leave her noble status. The person concerned is no longer considered a family, and during marriage, is not allowed to come to the family home. However, if they divorce, the person concerned is accepted. Even noble families deliberately send a third party to influence their daughters to divorce. However, it is now widely opposed by the younger generation of Sasak. This was expressed directly by several participants as follows:

“So the difficulty is that many of the nobles are married to people who are not nobles so they will not use the subtle Sasak language when speaking or speaking in everyday life.” (Informant A, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“If the nobles marry someone who is not noble then their titles such as Lalu and Baiq are taken away and sometimes they don’t use the Refined Sasak language anymore”. (Informant K, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“The difficulty lies if there are noble people and non-aristocratic people acting. Of course, they will no longer use Refined Sasak when communicating at home” (Informant Y, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

Based on the results of the interview, the difficulty faced by noble families in Padamara village to maintain the Sasak Subtle Language is marriage with different ethnicities. Based on this custom, the marriage of Sasak aristocrats and non-aristocrats will be an obstacle in maintaining the Sasak Subtle Language because if marriage occurs, communication will no longer use Subtle Language as a daily language in the house.

4.3. Forms of Subtle Language Maintained by the Noble Family in Padamara Village

Based on the results of the researcher’s findings, the form of the Refined Sasak language that is maintained by noble families in Padamara village is the language of nobles with nobles and nobles with non-aristocrats. The following

is a description of the forms of the Refined Sasak language maintained by noble families in Padamara village.

4.3.1. Forms of Subtle Language of Nobles with Nobles

The use of Refined Sasak is a mandatory thing that must be used when nobles want to talk to people from the nobility. This is proven by the results of interviews with several informants, as follows.

“The form is normal like if we chat with the Lalu or Baiq who are here. So we have to use polite language and Refined Sasak is a polite Sasak language if we use it.” (Informant A, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“Yes, for the form, I think the first thing is that we as descendants of Lalu and Baiq use a form of Fine Language that is good and polite so that we also as aristocrats look respectable like that”. (Informant K, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“Maybe it’s like talking to the same people from the nobility who use the Sasak language which is subtle like *tiang*, *pelungguh*, *napi*, and others.” (Informant Y, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews, the Refined Sasak language, which is maintained by the noble families in Padamara Village, is the form of Refined Sasak language between nobles and nobles. The use of Refined Sasak is a mandatory thing that must be used when the nobles want to talk to people from the nobility

4.3.2. Forms of Subtle Language of Nobles with Non-Nobles

This form of subtle language is used by aristocracies when they want to talk to non-aristocratic people. This form is limited in subtle language vocabulary such as the use of pointing words “Niki” (this), “Nike” (that) and the pronoun I (pole). The use is limited because the aristocrats try to communicate with non-aristocrats, who sometimes do not understand the use of Subtle Language more clearly. Therefore, this form reflects the nobility who can blend in with the surrounding community. This is proven by the results of the interviews with several informants, as follows:

“Other forms are like chatting with people who are not the same as Baiq. So we still use subtle language but a little like *tiang*, *napi*, *sama nggih* so that they also understand what I say.” (Participant A, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“Yes, both of them are with non-aristocratic people, such as when I speak, sometimes I have to adjust to their language. I do not want them to not understand what I am saying later.” (Informant K, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

“Yes, the next form is like me with other people. Yes, just chats normally using the ordinary Sasak language.” (Participant Y, Padamara Village November 21, 2024).

Based on the results of the interviews, this form of subtle language is used by the aristocracy when they want to talk to non-aristocratic people. This form is limited in subtle language vocabulary such as the use of the pointing words “*Niki*” (this), “*Nike*” (that) and the pronoun *I* (pole). The use is limited because the aristocrats try to communicate with non-aristocrats who sometimes do not understand the use of Subtle Language more clearly.

5. Discussion

5.1. Forms of Maintenance of Sasak Subtle Language among Noble Families in Padamara Village

Language maintenance is an effort to keep a language in use and appreciated as a group identity through teaching, literature, and mass media (Harimurti Kridalaksana)^[17]. Monolingual communities tend to maintain their language patterns, whereas language maintenance generally occurs in bilingual or multilingual communities. One factor that encourages maintenance is language loyalty, which is the attitude of defending one’s own language and preventing the influence of other languages^[18].

The results show that the aristocracy in Padamara Village maintains Refined Sasak in three domains: family, neighbors, and the public. In the family, this language is used between family members such as husband-wife, mother-

child, or brother-sister, although the vocabulary is limited such as “*nggih*” (yes), “*tiang*” (me), “*sampun*” (already) and others. In the realm of neighbors, its use depends on the social status of the interlocutor. If it is a fellow noble, Refined Sasak must be used; if it is a non-noble, Sasak Biasa (rough) is used. This is because few non-noble people are confused about the vocabulary of the subtle languages used. Such language communication barriers are in line with Ismail’s opinion (2024)^[31], which states that this can occur when the sender and recipient of the message use different languages or words that are not understood by the recipient of the message.

In the public sphere, nobles use Refined Sasak as a marker of social identity and honor. This reflects the social position of the nobles who are respected as well as being an example of speech. This phenomenon is in line with Downes’s (1998) opinion that the use of subtle language shows respect for the interlocutor and humility of the speaker^[32]. Subtle language is generally used by those who are younger than those who are older in age or social status, although it can also be the other way around as a form of respect or sarcasm.

5.2. Forms of Difficulties Faced by Noble Families in Padamara Village to Maintain Sasak Subtle Language

Based on the research findings, noble families in Padamara Village face several difficulties in maintaining Refined Sasak: globalization, the dominance of other languages, and inter-ethnic marriage. Globalization has caused foreign languages to become increasingly popular, which has resulted in a decline in the use of Refined Sasak and the emergence of terms such as slang or *alay*. This condition is a challenge for the nobility to maintain their linguistic identity. This is in line with Gavrila (2022)^[33], who states that globalization threatens the existence of language due to the loss of cultural boundaries between countries and the exclusivity of the use of foreign languages which makes the younger generation prefer ‘mixed’ languages on social media.

The Sasak tribe has two forms of language, Refined Sasak and Sasak Biasa (rough). The use of both depends on the speaker’s social status. Rough language is more dominant than the daily language of the Sasak people, while

smooth language is limited to nobility. The dominance of Rough Language is a major obstacle in the preservation of Refined Sasak, as also emphasized by Rahmatika (2020)^[34], that the dominance of one language can threaten the survival of other languages used by minority groups.

Another difficulty is marriage to individuals of different ethnicities. In Sasak customs, noble women who marry non-nobles lose their noble status; therefore, the use of Refined Sasak in the family is no longer maintained. Faridy (2018) supports this by stating that those who marry across ethnic groups admit that it is difficult to maintain the local language as a mother tongue due to environmental factors, residence, and education that do not support linguistic and cultural diversity^[35].

5.3. Forms of Subtle Language Maintained by Noble Families in Padamara Village

Based on the research findings, the nobles in Padamara Village maintain two forms of using the Sasak Subtle Language: between fellow nobles and between nobles and non-nobles. Subtle Language between nobles is a form of communication that must be used in interactions among the nobles of the Sasak Tribe. This shows respect and maintains social identity in the Sasak community structure.

Meanwhile, forms of communication between nobles and non-aristocrats continue to use the Subtle Language, but are limited to certain vocabulary such as the pointing words “niki” (this), “nike” (that), and the pronoun “tiang” (me). This is because non-aristocrats may not fully understand the Refined Sasak language, so aristocrats adjust their language use to remain communicative and blend in with the surrounding community.

This phenomenon is in accordance with Ferguson’s opinion in Sumarsono (2012)^[16], which explains the concept of diglossia from nine aspects: function, prestige, inheritance of writing tradition, acquisition, standardization, grammar, lexicon, and phonology. The use of Refined Sasak is reflected in prestigious diglossia. In this context, Refined Sasak (high variety/H) is considered superior, logical, and respectable, whereas Sasak standard or colloquial (low variety/L) is considered inferior and tends to be avoided. This attitude is recognized even by speakers who do not understand the subtle language (variety H) because of the perception that the subtle language reflects a higher social status.

6. Conclusions

Based on the results of the data analysis and research findings, it can be concluded that the maintenance of Refined Sasak among the nobles of Padamara Village reflects efforts to preserve cultural and social identity through language. Preservation is carried out in three main domains: family, neighbors, and public spaces. In the family sphere, Refined Sasak is used in inter-family communication, such as between husbands and wives, parents, children, and siblings. In interactions with neighbors, the use of subtle language is situational and depends on the social status of the interlocutor. In the public sphere, this language is consistently used as a symbol of social status and respect.

However, this preservation faces significant challenges, including the influence of globalization, which encourages a shift to foreign languages and slang, the dominance of the use of Sasak Biasa, and inter-ethnic marriages that cause changes in language practices within noble families.

The forms of Refined Sasak language use that are still maintained include communication between fellow aristocrats, who use the full subtle variety, and between aristocrats and non-aristocrats, who use a limited form of social adaptation. This finding confirms the importance of the role of the nobility in maintaining the continuity of the Refined Sasak language as part of a valuable cultural heritage and shows that the preservation of local languages requires social awareness and support across generations.

The results of this study make a real contribution in maintaining the sustainability of Refined Sasak Language as part of local cultural heritage, especially in the noble environment of Padamara Village. The information generated can be utilized by related parties, such as educators and local governments, in formulating local language preservation policies based on the socio-cultural context of the community. In addition, this research can also serve as a foundation for future studies that want to explore more deeply the changes in language attitudes among the Sasak community, as well as the influence of the times such as social media, cross-ethnic marriages, and intergenerational value shifts on the use of subtle language.

The research findings on the preservation of the subtle Sasak language among the nobility of Padamara Village have a number of very important practical implications for educators, policy makers, and the local community;

1. Implications for Educators

Integration of Local Cultural Values in the Curriculum: Teachers can integrate Refined Sasak language and local wisdom values into learning, both in primary and secondary schools. Contextualized and culture-based teaching of local languages will instill a sense of pride and identity in students from an early age.

- **Development of Local Teaching Materials:** Development of Sasak culture-based teaching materials, such as folklore or daily dialog using subtle language, can increase interest in learning and the relevance of learning for students.
- **Teacher Training:** Improving teachers' competence in teaching Sasak language, especially the subtle varieties, is essential so that they are able to model good language for students.

2. Implications for Policy Makers

Local Language Protection and Revitalization Policy: Local governments can make regulations that support the preservation of Sasak language, for example by establishing Sasak language as compulsory local content in schools.

- **Digitization and Documentation:** Digitizing classic manuscripts and documentation of the subtle Sasak language will facilitate community access and support broader language learning and preservation.
- **Alignment of Policy and Practice:** It is important to ensure local language preservation policies are actually implemented on the ground, including the provision of resources, training and incentives for schools and communities.

3. Implications for the Community

- **Strengthening the Role of the Family:** Families, particularly parents and traditional leaders, can be key agents in instilling the use of the subtle Sasak language in daily life, so that cultural values are preserved across generations.
- **Community-Based Initiatives:** Communities can organize trainings, workshops, or festivals of Sasak language and culture to raise awareness and pride, and expand the use of subtle language in public spaces.
- **Intergenerational Collaboration:** Encouraging interac-

tion between older and younger generations through joint cultural activities can strengthen the transfer of language and indigenous knowledge.

Practical Conclusions

The information from this study can be utilized to:

- Designing relevant and local culture-based curriculum and teaching materials.
- Creating concrete and measurable policies for local language preservation.
- Encourage active participation of families and communities in maintaining cultural heritage.
- Developing technological innovations (applications, manuscript digitization) to support learning and documentation of the subtle Sasak language.

Thus, efforts to preserve the subtle Sasak language not only maintain local identity and wisdom, but also strengthen social cohesion and pride of the Lombok people amid the challenges of globalization and modernity.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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