

(Research/Review) Article

Adults' Versus Elders' Perceived Understanding of The Endangered Lexicons of The Kepus Pungsed Ritual in Menyali Village

Ni Made Manda Risva Pebbyanti^{1*}, I Gede Budasi², I Ketut Trika Adi Ana³

¹ Ganesha University of Education 1; email: manda.risva@student.undiksha.ac.id

² Ganesha University of Education 2; email: gede.budasi@undiksha.ac.id

³ Ganesha University of Education 3; email: adi.ana@undiksha.ac.id

* Corresponding Author: manda.risva@student.undiksha.ac.id

Abstract: The Kepus Pungsed ritual, a Balinese Hindu life-cycle ceremony performed in Menyali Village, embodies a set of culturally and spiritually significant lexicons that function as a medium for transmitting traditional knowledge. This study aims to (1) describe the level of perceived understanding of the Kepus Pungsed ritual lexicons among adults, (2) describe the level of perceived understanding among elders, and (3) determine whether there is a significant difference between the two groups. This research employed a quantitative comparative cross-sectional design. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 36 ritual lexicons administered to 100 respondents, comprising 50 adults and 50 elders in Menyali Village. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis through the Mann-Whitney U test. The findings reveal a substantial generational gap in perceived understanding. Adults demonstrate a low level of perceived understanding, with 76% categorized as very low and 24% as low. In contrast, elders show a high level of perceived understanding, with 72% categorized as very high and 28% as high. The inferential analysis confirms that there is a statistically significant difference between adults and elders in their perceived understanding of the ritual lexicons. These findings indicate that the lexicons of the Kepus Pungsed ritual are in a vulnerable state due to the decline in comprehension among the younger adult generation. This study highlights the urgency of strengthening intergenerational transmission and suggests the integration of cultural and linguistic elements, particularly through English language education, to support the preservation and revitalization of endangered ritual lexicons.

Keywords: Balinese Language; Cultural Preservation; Endangered Lexicons; English Language Education; Kepus Pungsed Ritual.

1. Introduction

Language plays a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage, particularly within traditional rituals that embody unique linguistic elements. In Bali, rituals are an inseparable part of religious and social life, with each ritual containing specific lexicons that hold deep cultural and spiritual meanings. One such ritual is the Kepus Pungsed in Menyali Village, a Balinese Hindu ritual marking the separation of a newborn's umbilical cord. This ritual is conducted as a form of purification and a spiritual introduction of the infant to the universe. Within this ritual, unique lexicons are used by elders and religious leaders to convey symbolic meanings related to the baby's life journey. In recent years, the transmission of these lexicons has faced significant challenges.

The endangerment of ritual lexicons is part of a larger phenomenon of language shift occurring in many indigenous communities worldwide. According to Annet (2024), indigenous languages are rapidly disappearing due to globalization, urbanization, and gaps in intergenerational language transmission. In Bali, this issue is evident in the decreasing use of the Balinese language, particularly its refined form (Basa Alus), among younger generations. Studies by Suparwa (2008) indicate that many Balinese youth avoid using their native language due to its complexity and fear of misusing it. This avoidance extends beyond everyday conversation and affects the usage of specialized lexicons in rituals, including Kepus Pungsed. Despite the persistence of Balinese rituals, there has been limited empirical data on whether the lexicons within these rituals are still actively understood and used by different generations. Budasi (2020) suggests that although some ritual lexicons continue to be spoken, their meanings are often not fully comprehended by younger participants.

This condition raises concerns about whether these lexicons are actively learned and passed down or merely recited without perceived understanding. Previous research, such as Budasi et al. (2021), has documented the lexicons of Balinese rituals such as Tabuh Rah;

Received: March 17, 2026;
Revised: April 16, 2026;
Accepted: May 28, 2026;
Published: May 30, 2026;
Current Version.: May 30, 2026



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors.
Submitted for possible open
access publication under the
terms and conditions of the
Creative Commons Attribution
(CC BY SA) license
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)

however, these studies have not provided concrete data on the extent to which these lexicons are understood across age groups. The lack of comprehensive studies on intergenerational comprehension has highlighted a critical gap in linguistic research. While it has been established that ritual lexicons are unique and culturally significant, there has been insufficient evidence to determine whether they experience the same level of endangerment as everyday Balinese language. Moreover, no previous study has systematically measured whether a significant difference exists between adults and elders in their perceived understanding of the Kepus Pungsed ritual lexicons.

This research addressed that gap by focusing specifically on generational differences in comprehension. A preliminary observation conducted in Menyali Village indicated that while the Balinese language is still used in daily life and rituals, the specific lexicons associated with rituals such as Kepus Pungsed were not equally understood, particularly by the younger adult generation. This observation aligned with previous findings in similar contexts, where lexicons were identified but their level of comprehension remained unmeasured. For example, Budasi et al. (2021) found that 29.58% of the lexicons in the Tabuh Rah ritual were no longer understood by the general public. However, that study did not investigate comprehension differences between age groups, leaving uncertainty about how ritual lexicons are transmitted across generations. From a theoretical perspective, this study was grounded in the concept of language sustainability and endangerment.

According to Tong and Cheung (2011), language and cultural identity are inherently linked, meaning that the decline of ritual lexicons could signify a weakening of traditional knowledge and cultural heritage. When these lexicons are not actively learned and transmitted, the ability to perform traditional rituals within their authentic linguistic and cultural framework may be compromised. The urgency of this study was further underscored by the continuing decline of the Balinese language, which parallels the risk of losing the linguistic depth of ritual practices. Ritual lexicons such as those used in the Kepus Pungsed ritual represented a highly endangered domain of the Balinese language, as they are context-specific, rarely used in daily interactions, and highly dependent on oral transmission across generations. In the case of Kepus Pungsed, when adults demonstrated weaker comprehension compared to elders, this condition signaled a critical stage of endangerment in which younger generations were no longer able to fully access or transmit ritual knowledge.

Documenting and evaluating the current state of ritual lexicons thus became essential to ensure the long-term survival of both linguistic and ritual traditions. This perspective aligns with broader frameworks of linguistic ecology, where endangered lexicons are viewed not merely as words but as repositories of spiritual meaning and cultural values. By examining the degree of perceived understanding of Kepus Pungsed ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village, this research provided empirical evidence of whether intergenerational erosion was occurring. To achieve this objective, the present study employed a quantitative approach, focusing on measuring comprehension levels to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between these two groups. This method enabled the collection of measurable data that not only identified the current stage of endangerment but also informed strategies for revitalization and cultural preservation. Furthermore, the selection of Menyali Village as the research site carried strong ethnographic significance.

Menyali is widely recognized for its enduring practice of Balinese Hindu rituals and for maintaining a rich repertoire of traditional lexicons, making it an ideal context for investigating endangered ritual language. As noted earlier, endangered lexicons are most vulnerable when intergenerational transmission is disrupted, and Menyali provided a living setting in which both adults and elders continued to participate in ritual practices. This condition made it possible to observe whether comprehension gaps were emerging between generations and to assess how these gaps might signal the degree of endangerment affecting the ritual language. Eriani (2025), has documented the lexicons used in the Kepus Pungsed ritual and provided important insights into their meanings and cultural functions.

However, that study was primarily descriptive and focused on lexical identification, without examining the extent to which these terms were actually understood across different generations. Building upon this foundation, the present research advanced the discussion by systematically measuring the level of comprehension among adults and elders. In doing so, this study not only complemented prior documentation but also directly addressed the crucial issue of intergenerational knowledge transfer, which determines the sustainability of the ritual's linguistic and cultural vitality. The findings of this research contributed significantly to the documentation and preservation of endangered ritual lexicons in Bali. By providing

empirical evidence on comprehension differences between adults and elders, the study served as a foundation for cultural preservation strategies that focus on strengthening intergenerational transmission.

This research, therefore, addressed these gaps by employing a quantitative approach to (1) describe adults' perceived understanding of the Kepus Pungsed ritual lexicons, (2) describe elders' perceived understanding of the Kepus Pungsed ritual lexicons, and (3) assess whether a statistically significant difference in perceived understanding existed between the two groups in Menyali Village. By generating empirical data, the study contributed to a deeper perceived understanding of language transmission within ritual contexts and provided meaningful insights into the sustainability of Balinese ritual lexicons.

2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review

Language, Culture, and Ritual Context

Language and culture are fundamentally interconnected, as language functions not only as a communication tool but also as a carrier of cultural meanings, values, and collective knowledge. In ethnolinguistic perspectives, linguistic expressions reflect culturally embedded worldviews, particularly in traditional communities where rituals serve as important cultural practices. In the context of the Kepus Pungsed ritual, language operates as a symbolic system that conveys spiritual beliefs, cosmological concepts, and social values that cannot be fully understood without cultural familiarity. Thus, understanding ritual lexicons requires not only linguistic competence but also deep cultural awareness and participation.

Furthermore, theoretical frameworks such as Sapir's linguistic relativity and Geertz's interpretive theory reinforce that meaning is constructed within shared cultural systems. Ritual language, therefore, represents a dense layer of symbolic meaning shaped by interpretive frames developed through socialization. The continuity of such language depends on intergenerational transmission and sustained cultural practice. When cultural engagement declines, the associated linguistic elements, particularly ritual lexicons, become vulnerable to reduced comprehension and eventual loss, highlighting the inseparable nature of language and culture in sustaining traditional knowledge systems.

Endangered Lexicons and Language Shift

Endangered lexicons emerge as part of the broader phenomenon of language endangerment, where specific vocabulary gradually loses relevance due to limited use, declining transmission, and shifts toward dominant languages. Ritual lexicons are particularly vulnerable because they are restricted to ceremonial contexts and are often mastered only by certain members of the community. In the case of the Kepus Pungsed ritual, these lexicons carry deep symbolic meanings related to spirituality, social harmony, and cosmology, making them crucial components of cultural identity. However, reduced participation in rituals and changing sociolinguistic environments contribute to their gradual decline. Previous studies have shown that lexical erosion is closely linked to weakened intergenerational transmission and shifting language attitudes.

Research on Balinese language use indicates that younger generations tend to simplify or replace traditional vocabulary, resulting in a decline in nuanced understanding. While earlier studies have explored language maintenance and attitudes, they often lack a specific focus on ritual lexicons and empirical measurement of comprehension. Therefore, examining endangered ritual lexicons through a comparative and data-driven approach is essential to better understand the processes of lexical loss and to support cultural preservation efforts.

Age, Ritual Knowledge, and Empirical Gap

Age classification plays a crucial role in understanding differences in cultural and linguistic knowledge, as individuals at different life stages possess varying levels of experience, cognitive development, and social involvement. Adults are typically engaged in productive and social responsibilities, while elders are often regarded as custodians of cultural knowledge due to their prolonged exposure to traditions and rituals. Theoretical perspectives on human development suggest that elders tend to retain deeper and more comprehensive knowledge, particularly in domains requiring long-term participation, such as ritual practices. Empirical studies on Balinese language and culture further indicate a generational gap in lexical comprehension, with younger groups demonstrating lower mastery of ritual vocabulary compared to elders.

Previous research often focuses on general language use, attitudes, or documentation of lexicons without systematically measuring intergenerational differences in perceived

understanding. This creates a research gap that necessitates a focused investigation combining documentation and quantitative analysis. Accordingly, the present study addresses this gap by examining the perceived understanding of *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders, providing a more comprehensive and evidence-based insight into the dynamics of lexical endangerment and cultural transmission.

3. Proposed Method

This study employed a quantitative comparative cross-sectional design to examine differences in perceived understanding of *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village, Bali, a setting selected due to its continued practice of the ritual within a living cultural context. The population consisted of 2,907 Hindu community members, from which a final sample of 100 respondents (50 adults and 50 elders) was obtained using convenience and quota sampling, despite an initial target of 291 participants, with the reduced sample size acknowledged as a limitation. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising 36 validated lexicon items measured on a 4-point rating scale, and the results were interpreted using the Theoretical Ideal Reference Assessment (PAIT) based on ideal mean and standard deviation. Instrument validity was ensured through expert judgment using Aiken's V (0.83–1.00), while reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.921, indicating excellent internal consistency. Data collection was conducted via Google Forms with direct assistance when needed, following systematic stages of preparation, implementation, and verification. Finally, data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS, beginning with a Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test, followed by an Independent Samples T-Test for normally distributed data or a Mann–Whitney U Test for non-normal data to determine significant differences between the two generational groups.

4. Results and Discussion

The Level of Perceived Understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* Ritual Lexicons among Adults in Menyali Village

This section presents the level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons among adults in Menyali Village. The data were obtained from 50 adult respondents who completed the questionnaire consisting of 36 ritual lexicons. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and interpreted using the Theoretical Ideal Reference Assessment (PAIT) criteria. The descriptive statistics of the adults' scores are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Adults' Scores.

Statistics		
Score of Adults		
N	Valid	50
	Missing	50
Mean		91,40
Median		91,00
Mode		90 ^a
Range		18
Minimum		83
Maximum		101

Based on Table 4.1, the mean score of the adult respondents was 91.40, with a median of 91 and a mode of 90. The minimum score obtained by the respondents was 83, while the maximum score was 101, resulting in a range of 18 points. These results indicate that the respondents' scores were distributed within a relatively narrow range, suggesting a moderate level of variation among participants. The closeness between the mean, median, and mode also reflects a fairly symmetrical distribution of scores, without extreme deviations. To provide a more detailed picture of how the scores were distributed, the frequency distribution of adults' scores is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Adults' Scores.

Score of Adults					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	83	1	1,0	2,0	2,0
	85	4	4,0	8,0	10,0
	86	1	1,0	2,0	12,0
	87	3	3,0	6,0	18,0
	88	4	4,0	8,0	26,0
	89	4	4,0	8,0	34,0
	90	7	7,0	14,0	48,0
	91	7	7,0	14,0	62,0
	92	1	1,0	2,0	64,0
	93	2	2,0	4,0	68,0
	94	4	4,0	8,0	76,0
	95	4	4,0	8,0	84,0
	96	1	1,0	2,0	86,0
	98	2	2,0	4,0	90,0
	99	2	2,0	4,0	94,0
	100	2	2,0	4,0	98,0
	101	1	1,0	2,0	100,0
Tot al	50	50,0	100,0		

Based on Table 4.2, the distribution of scores shows that most respondents obtained scores within the range of 88 to 95. The highest frequencies were observed at scores of 90 and 91, each with 7 respondents (14%). This indicates that a considerable number of participants clustered around the central values, reinforcing the earlier finding that the data distribution is relatively concentrated. Only a small number of respondents achieved the lowest (83) and highest (101) scores, suggesting that extreme levels of perceived understanding were rare among the participants. Overall, the distribution reflects a tendency toward lower-to-middle score ranges rather than higher levels of perceived understanding. Furthermore, the respondents' scores were categorized using the Theoretical Ideal Reference Assessment (PAIT) criteria to determine the level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons. The distribution of the respondents based on the interpretation categories is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Level of Perceived Understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* Ritual Lexicons among Adults.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	0	0%
High	0	0%
Moderate	0	0%
Low	12	24%
Very Low	38	76%
Total	50	100%

As shown in Table 4.3, 38 respondents (76%) were categorized as having a Very Low level of perceived understanding, while 12 respondents (24%) were categorized as having a Low level of perceived understanding, the interpretation categories are based on the Interpretation Criteria of PAIT (see page 27). None of the respondents fell into the Moderate, High, or Very High categories. These findings indicate that the overall level of perceived

understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons among adults in Menyali Village tends to be low, as the majority of respondents are concentrated in the Very Low category. When viewed alongside the frequency distribution, this result becomes more evident, as most scores are clustered below the threshold required to reach higher interpretation levels. This pattern suggests that although some adults are familiar with certain lexicons, their overall comprehension remains limited and has not reached a more advanced level of perceived understanding.

The Level of Perceived Understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* Ritual Lexicons among Elders' in Menyali Village

This section presents the level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons among elders in Menyali Village. The data were obtained from 50 elder respondents who completed the same questionnaire consisting of 36 ritual lexicons. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and interpreted based on the PAIT criteria. The descriptive statistics of the elders' scores are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Elders' Scores

Statistics Score of Elders		
N	Valid	50
	Missing	50
Mean		121,34
Median		121,00
Mode		117
Range		16
Minimum		113
Maximum		129

Based on Table 4, the mean score of the elder respondents was 121.34, with a median of 121 and a mode of 117. The minimum score obtained by the respondents was 113, while the maximum score was 129, resulting in a range of 16 points. These results indicate that the respondents' scores were distributed within a relatively narrow range, suggesting a consistent level of perceived understanding among the participants. In addition, the close proximity between the mean and median indicates a balanced distribution of scores without substantial skewness. To provide a more detailed overview of the score distribution, the frequency distribution of elders' scores is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Elders' Scores.

Score of Elders		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	113	1	1,0	2,0	2,0
	115	2	2,0	4,0	6,0
	116	5	5,0	10,0	16,0
	117	6	6,0	12,0	28,0
	118	1	1,0	2,0	30,0
	119	1	1,0	2,0	32,0
	120	5	5,0	10,0	42,0
	121	5	5,0	10,0	52,0
	122	2	2,0	4,0	56,0
	123	5	5,0	10,0	66,0
	124	5	5,0	10,0	76,0
	125	3	3,0	6,0	82,0

126	2	2,0	4,0	86,0
127	3	3,0	6,0	92,0
128	3	3,0	6,0	98,0
129	1	1,0	2,0	100,0
Total	50	50,0	100,0	

The distribution of scores indicates that most respondents achieved scores between 116 and 124, with noticeable concentrations at scores of 117, 120, 121, 123, and 124. The highest frequency was observed at score 117 (6 respondents or 12%), followed by several scores with 5 respondents each (10%). This pattern shows that the respondents' scores are clustered within the upper range, indicating a strong and consistent level of perceived understanding. Only a few respondents obtained scores at the lower (113) and upper (129) extremes, suggesting minimal variation across participants. Furthermore, the respondents' scores were categorized using the PAIT interpretation criteria to determine the level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons. The distribution of the elders' perceived understanding levels is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The Level of Perceived Understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* Ritual Lexicons among Elders.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	36	72%
High	14	28%
Moderate	0	0%
Low	0	0%
Very Low	0	0%
Total	50	100%

As shown in Table 6, 36 respondents (72%) were categorized as having a Very High level of perceived understanding, while 14 respondents (28%) were categorized as having a High level of perceived understanding (see page 27). None of the respondents fell into the Moderate, Low, or Very Low categories. These findings indicate that the elders in Menyali Village generally demonstrate a high level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons, as the majority of respondents are concentrated in the Very High category. When examined together with the frequency distribution, it becomes clear that the respondents' scores consistently fall within the upper range, reinforcing the conclusion that elders possess strong familiarity and comprehension of the ritual lexicons. This pattern suggests that the knowledge of *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons is still well maintained among the elder group.

The Comparison of Adults' and Elders' Perceived Understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* Ritual Lexicons in Menyali Village

To provide a clearer comparison between the levels of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons among adults and elders in Menyali Village, a figure is presented to visually summarize the distribution of respondents across the PAIT categories.

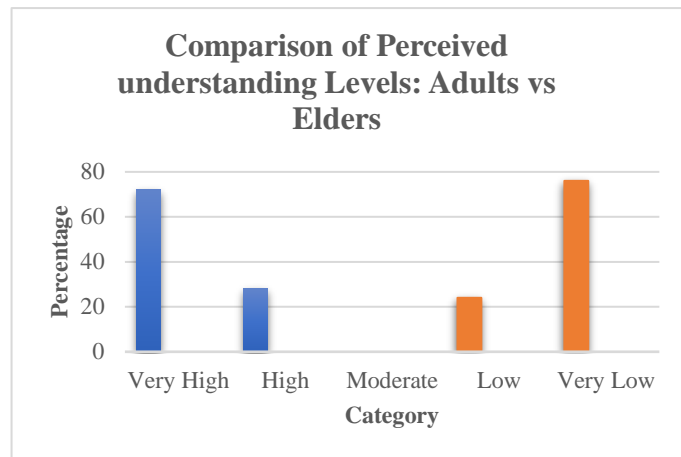


Figure 1. Comparison of Perceived understanding Levels.

The figure reveals a striking contrast between the two groups. Adults are predominantly concentrated in the lower categories, with 76% categorized as Very Low and 24% as Low, while none fall into the Moderate, High, or Very High levels. In contrast, elders demonstrate a significantly higher level of perceived understanding, with 72% categorized as Very High and 28% as High, and no respondents in the lower categories. This visual representation reinforces the findings from the descriptive and frequency analyses, highlighting a substantial generational gap in the comprehension of ritual lexicons. The clear divergence in distribution indicates that while the knowledge of *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons remains well preserved among elders, it is considerably diminished among adults, suggesting a shift in cultural transmission and a potential risk to the continuity of this linguistic and cultural knowledge across generations.

Analysis of Significant Differences in Ritual Lexicon Perceived Understanding

To answer the third research question, namely whether there is a statistically significant difference in the perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village, inferential statistical analysis was conducted. Prior to determining the appropriate statistical test, assumption testing was performed, including tests of normality and homogeneity of variance. The normality of the data distribution was examined using both the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests. The results of the normality tests are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Test of Nromality.

Tests of Normality							
	Participan t	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statisti c	df	Sig.
Comprehensio n	Adults	,156	50	,004	,963	50	,115
	Elders	,131	50	,032	,961	50	,101

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Shapiro–Wilk test showed significance values of 0.115 for Adults and 0.101 for Elders. Both values are greater than the significance level of 0.05, indicating that the data are normally distributed according to this test. However, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test produced significance values of 0.004 (Adults) and 0.032 (Elders), both of which are below

0.05, suggesting that the data deviate from normal distribution according to this test. Because the two normality tests produced inconsistent results and the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test indicated non-normal distribution in both groups, the data were considered not fully satisfying the assumption of normality. Therefore, a parametric statistical test was not considered the most appropriate procedure for further analysis. The homogeneity of variance was then tested using Levene’s Test, and the results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Test of Homogeneity.

		Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Comprehension	Based on Mean	,002	1	98	,963
	Based on Median	,014	1	98	,905
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,014	1	94,204	,905
	Based on trimmed mean	,000	1	98	,997

All significance values are greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference in variance between the adult and elder groups. In other words, the assumption of homogeneity of variance is satisfied. Although the homogeneity assumption was met, the inconsistency in the normality test results led to the decision to apply a non-parametric statistical test. Therefore, instead of using the Independent Samples t-test, the Mann–Whitney U test was employed. This test does not require normally distributed data and is appropriate for comparing two independent groups. Before examining the significance value, the rank distribution of the two groups was analyzed. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Ranks of Perceived Understanding of the Lexicons.

	Group	Ranks		
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Perceived understanding of the lexicons	Adults	50	25,50	1275,00
	Elders	50	75,50	3775,00
	Total	100		

Table 9 shows that the mean rank of the elder group (75.50) is substantially higher than that of the adult group (25.50). This indicates that elders consistently obtained higher comprehension scores compared to adults. The considerable difference in mean rank suggests a notable generational difference in the perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons. The final statistical result is presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Mann-Whitney U Test.

Test Statistics ^a	
	Perceived understanding of the lexicons
Mann-Whitney U	,000
Wilcoxon W	1275,000
Z	-8,626
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
a. Grouping Variable: Group	

The Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.000, which is lower than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This result indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in the perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village. The negative Z value (-8.626) further indicates that the direction of the difference favors the elder group, which is consistent with the higher mean rank obtained by elders. Based on the results of the Mann–Whitney U test, it can be concluded that elders demonstrate significantly higher perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons compared to adults. This finding confirms the existence of a generational difference in ritual lexicon comprehension, where elders retain stronger and more comprehensive knowledge than the adult group.

The findings of this study reveal a clear and statistically significant difference in the perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village. The result of the Mann–Whitney U test shows a significance value of 0.000, which is lower than the threshold of 0.05, indicating that the difference between the two groups is statistically meaningful. In addition, the rank analysis demonstrates a substantial gap, where elders achieved a much higher mean rank (75.50) compared to adults (25.50), confirming that the elder group possesses a considerably stronger level of comprehension. This statistical evidence is further supported by the descriptive findings, which show that adults are predominantly categorized at a very low level of perceived understanding (76%), while elders are largely positioned in the very high category (72%). These contrasting results indicate a pronounced generational gap in the mastery of ritual lexicons within the community.

This gap can be interpreted through Fishman's (1991) theory of language maintenance and intergenerational transmission. Fishman emphasizes that the survival of culturally bound linguistic elements, especially those associated with restricted domains such as rituals, depends heavily on consistent transmission across generations. In the context of this study, the very high level of perceived understanding among elders suggests that they have acquired ritual lexicons through prolonged exposure, direct participation, and continuous engagement in traditional practices. In contrast, the very low level of perceived understanding among adults indicates that the transmission process may not be occurring effectively. Unlike the previous assumption where younger generations still maintained a relatively high level, the present findings point to a more critical condition, where the continuity of ritual lexicon knowledge appears to be weakening significantly. This situation aligns with UNESCO's (2003) framework of language vitality, which identifies a sharp decline in intergenerational knowledge transmission as an early sign of language endangerment, particularly within specific cultural domains.

Furthermore, the findings reflect a strong indication of lexical attrition, especially in culturally specialized vocabulary. Crystal (2000) explains that lexicons related to rituals and traditional ceremonies are among the most vulnerable elements of a language, as they are highly dependent on active cultural practice. The elders' very high level of perceived understanding suggests that they remain the primary custodians of this knowledge, maintaining both the lexical forms and their contextual meanings. On the other hand, the adults' very low level of perceived understanding indicates limited exposure and reduced participation in ritual contexts. This may be influenced by several factors, such as

modernization, shifting occupational demands, formal education systems, and changing lifestyles, which potentially reduce the frequency of involvement in traditional ceremonies. As a result, ritual lexicons are no longer internalized as part of everyday linguistic competence among adults.

From a semantic perspective, the disparity between adults and elders also highlights differences in the depth of lexical comprehension. According to Budasi (2020), lexical meaning is not merely about recognizing words but also involves perceived understanding their cultural, contextual, and symbolic dimensions. Ritual lexicons, in particular, carry layered meanings that are deeply embedded in belief systems and ceremonial practices. The very high scores achieved by elders indicate that their perceived understanding likely extends beyond surface-level recognition to include interpretative and symbolic knowledge. In contrast, the very low scores among adults suggest that many of these lexicons are either unfamiliar or only minimally understood, indicating a loss not only in vocabulary but also in cultural meaning. This distinction underscores that the issue is not only quantitative but also qualitative in nature.

The findings can also be examined through an ecolinguistic perspective. Aftab (2022) conceptualizes language as part of an ecological system that interacts dynamically with its social and cultural environment. In this study, the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons function as an integral component of the cultural ecosystem of Menyali Village. The strong mastery among elders reflects a stable ecological relationship between language and cultural practice. However, the very low level of perceived understanding among adults suggests a disruption in this relationship. Sapir (1949) further explains that changes in language use often mirror shifts in cultural engagement. In this case, the reduced comprehension among adults may indicate that their interaction with ritual practices is becoming less intensive, leading to a gradual detachment from the linguistic elements embedded in those practices.

In addition, the magnitude of the statistical difference reinforces the seriousness of this generational gap. The Z value of -8.626 indicates a substantial separation between the distributions of the two groups. This suggests that the difference is not marginal but systematic and widespread across respondents. Unlike situations where both groups fall within relatively similar categories, this study presents a more polarized condition, where one group is concentrated in the very low category and the other in the very high category. Such a pattern indicates a sharp discontinuity in knowledge transmission, rather than a gradual decline. If this trend continues, there is a strong possibility that future generations will experience even lower levels of perceived understanding, potentially leading to the loss of ritual lexicons within the community.

Moreover, the findings are consistent with broader sociolinguistic phenomena in multilingual contexts, where traditional or ceremonial vocabulary tends to be less dominant among younger generations. The increasing use of Indonesian in formal education, administration, and daily communication may contribute to a shift in linguistic priorities. As a result, ritual lexicons may be perceived as specialized knowledge that is primarily associated with elders. This shift does not necessarily indicate the disappearance of the language itself but suggests a narrowing of functional domains, where certain types of vocabulary are no longer actively maintained by all members of the community.

Overall, the discussion highlights that the difference between adults and elders is not merely a matter of degree but represents a substantial generational divide in the perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons. Elders demonstrate a very high and deeply rooted mastery, while adults show a very low level of comprehension, indicating a significant weakening in intergenerational transmission. This condition points to early signs of domain-specific language endangerment, particularly within ritual contexts. Therefore, efforts to strengthen cultural participation, promote intergenerational learning, and document ritual lexicons are essential to ensure the sustainability of this linguistic heritage. This study contributes to the perceived understanding of language maintenance, lexical attrition, and ecolinguistic change by providing empirical evidence of how generational dynamics influence the preservation of culturally embedded lexicons.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that there is a clear difference in the level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village. Based on the results of the questionnaire using a 4-point scale, elders generally achieved scores within the high and very high categories, while adults were mostly categorized within the low and very low levels. This pattern shows that the two groups demonstrate different levels of perceived understanding when measured through the instrument applied in this study. The inferential analysis using the Mann–Whitney U test further confirmed that this difference is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, indicating that there is a significant difference in the perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village. This conclusion is drawn strictly based on the quantitative results obtained from the questionnaire data. In relation to the measurement used in this study, the results reflect how respondents from both groups rated their level of perceived understanding according to the predefined scale, ranging from “do not know” to “understand.” The findings, therefore, represent differences in measured perceived understanding levels as captured through the questionnaire instrument, rather than explaining the underlying causes of these differences. Overall, the study concludes that there is a statistically significant difference in the level of perceived understanding of the *Kepus Pungsed* ritual lexicons between adults and elders, as evidenced by the quantitative data analysis.

References

- Aftab, R., Mahmood, A., & Abdullah, M. (2022). Language and culture: A study in the sociolinguistic perspective. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*.
- Agar, M. (1994). *Language shock: Understanding the culture of conversation*. Sage Publications.
- Annet, K. A. (2024). Language preservation: Strategies for indigenous languages. *Newport International Journal of Current Issues in Arts and Management*. <https://doi.org/10.59298/nijciam/2024/5.3.14100>
- Ardiyasa, I. N. S., & Anggraini, P. M. R. (2021). Bentuk-bentuk sesapa dalam pelaksanaan ritual saṃskāra di Desa Pedawa Buleleng Bali. *Kamaya: Jurnal Ilmu Agama*. <https://doi.org/10.37329/kamaya.v4i3.1436>
- Arikunto, S. (2013). *Prosedur penelitian: Suatu pendekatan praktik*. Rineka Cipta.
- Azwar, S. (2012). *Reliabilitas dan validitas* (4th ed.). Pustaka Pelajar.
- Budasi, I. G., Satyawati, M. S., & Anggayana, W. A. (2021). The status of lexicon used in tabuh rah ritual in Menyali Village, North Bali: An ethnolinguistic study. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2021.42.4.33>

- Budasi, I. G., Suwindia, I. G., Sedana, I. M., & Adi Ana, I. K. T. (2023). Male versus female understanding of the endangered lexicon of tabuh rah ritual. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1311.11>
- Budasi, I. G., Widarta Kusuma, I. M. A., & Suarnajaya, I. W. (2020). Lexicons of tabuh rah used in Menyali Village. *Prasi*. <https://doi.org/10.23887/prasi.v15i02.26906>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson Education.
- Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dewi, I. G. A. C. (2018). *Manak salah dalam tradisi lokal di Desa Pakraman Julah Kabupaten Buleleng*. Jayapangus Press.
- Diana, S., & Rampeng, R. (2023). Content validity analysis of chemical engineering students' needs questionnaires for English reading material based on critical thinking skills. *Klasikal: Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science*. <https://doi.org/10.52208/klasikal.v5i2.647>
- Duranti, A. (1997). *A companion to linguistic anthropology*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Duranti, A. (2009). *Linguistic anthropology: History, ideas, and issues*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Eriani, P. D. R. (2025). *Lexicons used in the procedures of Kepus Pungsed ritual in Menyali Village* (Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha).
- Erikson, E. H. (1982). *The life cycle completed*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Fishman, J. A. (1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Multilingual Matters.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. Basic Books.
- Gregory, R. J. (2016). *Psychological testing: History, principles, and applications*. Pearson Education.
- Grenoble, L. (2006). Language education for endangered language. *Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-044854-2/00665-9>
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Kádár, D. Z. (2024). *Ritual and language*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108624909>