



International Journal Linguistics of Sumatra and Malay (IJLSM)

Journal homepage: <https://talenta.usu.ac.id/lsm>



Balinese Verbs: ‘Mapetik’ and ‘Matatah’ Meaning ‘to cut’ Convey Ritual Values

I Nengah Sudipa^{*1}, Ni Made Ayu Sulasmini², Ni Luh Supartini³

^{1,2,3} Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional (IPBI), Denpasar, Indonesia.

*Corresponding Author: nengah.sudipa@ipb-intl.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received 24 April 2025 Revised 11 June 2025 Accepted 20 June 2025 Available online 30 June 2025 ISSN: 2986-3848	The aim of this writing is to discuss Balinese verbs conveying the meaning ‘to cut’ related to the sacred Hindu rites. They are referred to as the rituals of cutting hair ‘mapetik’ and tooth-filing ‘matatah’. The source of the data was from the conversations with Balinese people encountered during the ritual period. The data was collected by active participation, combined with observation and note-taking techniques. The collected data was analysed by metalanguage approach: mapping the meaning through language. Metalanguage manages to subtly map not only the meaning through entity, process, instrument(s), and the result, but the ritual values as well. The result showed that the rites with their conveyed values rely on the meaning of the respective verbs.
How to cite: Sudipa, I.N., Sulasmini, N.M.A., & Supartini, N.L. (2025). Balinese verbs: ‘Mapetik’ and ‘Matatah’ meaning ‘to cut’ convey ritual values. <i>International Journal Linguistics of Sumatra and Malay (IJLSM)</i> , 4(1), 01-13.	Keywords: Action Verb, <i>Mapetik</i> , <i>Matatah</i> , Metalanguage



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International.
<http://doi.org/10.32734/ijlsm.v4i1.20610>

1. Introduction

Balinese traditions are full of ceremonies, called *Panca Yadnya* (*Panca*=5; *Yadnya*=sacrifice, sincere gift, offering). There are basically five kinds of ceremony including (1) *Dewa Yadnya*, a ritual ceremony for God(s) is usually conducted in temples and other holy places throughout Bali, and *Hindhu* transmigrating areas in Indonesia; (2) *Pitra Yadnya*, a ritual for ancestors is usually performed in cemetery and surrounding village grounds to purify the soul after the cremation ceremony; (3) *Manusa Yadnya*, a ritual for Human Beings is conducted along the life–stages of person, from birth through to death. (4) *Rsi Yadnya*, a ritual for teachers is usually conducted when the Guru is pensioned or in everyday life to respect the teachers who have given formal and informal educations for human beings (5) *Bhuta Yadnya*, a ritual for environment is among others: usually conducted when people finish building a house with the purpose of purifying the environment. This ceremony is mainly intended to keep balance spiritually between the life of human being and surrounding environment (Bali Province, 2009).

Manusa Yadnya is the rituals for human beings conducted since the baby is born. The baby must undergo such a ceremony when three days, 42 days, 105 days, and 210 days old according to the Balinese Calendar (Rawi, 2017). Balinese Calendar having 6 months for one circle (different from the Western Calendar having 12 months) counts that one month equals to 35 days respectively. The total number of days for 6 months is 210 days (derives from 6x35 days). When the baby is 105 days old the rite is called *telu bulanan* ‘three months

ceremony, when the baby is 210 days, it is referred to as *otonan* ‘six months ceremony’. The Balinese family must perform the ritual ceremony (whether on 105 or 210 days) for the newly baby-born in the forms of touching the earth and hair-cutting ‘*mapetik*’ for the first time. The ceremony is mainly intended to demolish the baby’s bad influence in order that the baby manages to grow well. When the human beings grow up, usually after being puberty and usually before getting marriage, they must undergo what is called *matatah* ‘tooth filing’ ceremony. This sacred ceremony is also aimed to minimize the influence of six bad-behaviours as human beings. Both *mapetik* and *matatah* are words that not only belonging to the Balinese action verbs meaning ‘to cut’, but conveying ritual value as well. Such value is so important to explore that every verb can be appropriately used to map it. In order to map the value implied in both verbs, qualitative (Creswell, 2009) and metalanguage (Allan, 2001) approaches were applied. This article, furthermore aims at exploring what aspects of values are conveyed, by looking in more detail at the religious goals and steps of doing such rituals using both Balinese action verbs: *mapetik* and *matatah*.

2. Materials and Methods

Verbs in Balinese - like in other languages - are divided into three categories (Givon, 1984). They are (1) state verb: *ngelah* ‘to have’, *makeneh* ‘think’; (2) process verb : *engkes* ‘becoming smaller’; and (3) action verb : *ngetep* ‘to cut’. The action verb of *ngetep* implies the cutting meaning with several variants. Variants relating to cutting part of the human body, animals and plants are: *nyukur*, *nguris* are used for cutting the hair, moustache and beard, *munggal* is used for cutting one’s neck, *munggel* for cutting the tip-top of a building, *munggul* for cutting upper part of a plant, and *mukang* is used for cutting both human and animal’s leg or foot.

This article uses data dealing with Balinese action verbs implying the cutting meaning. The data was collected from the oral sources, conversations in Balinese language especially encountered during the ceremony time. The research location is in a small village named *Pesangkan* belonging to Karangasem regency. Karangasem is one of the regencies in Bali province-Indonesia, located in the eastern part of the island. Generally, most people in this research area are still using Balinese language for their everyday lives, moreover when conducting ritual ceremony, they speak refined Balinese. It is rather different from the other areas of regencies in Bali using Balinese. Balinese language in other regencies is mostly used on certain occasions, e.g. when speaking with priests, or with the elders and in certain places, e.g. in temple or other holy places. The oral language data was collected by direct participation when the rites took place in 2015, as well by the technique of observation (Cargil, et al. 2013, p.37). The direct participant and observation techniques were applied in order to obtain clarity when the data was considered bias. In order to have good and complete file for such data, the note taking technique was used and it turns out that it is very useful.

The collected data was further analysed by metalanguage approach. According to Allan (2001, p. 8) the language which a linguist uses to describe and analyse the object is called the metalanguage.

A metalanguage is just another language, often an artificial and not a natural one. One important practical constrain on a metalanguage is that (mostly) it needs to be understood by human beings who normally communicate in a natural language of which they have fluent command.

The metalanguage approaches - through the mapping - manage to analyse the meaning of cutting not only relying on the entity of the object to cut, but on the process of the action as well. Apart from the process, this approach is able to reveal the meaning from the result and instruments required to do the

cutting (Wierzbicka, 1996, p.426). The action may be done repeatedly, such as: *nyahcah*, *nektek* for any items including meats, spices and so on. If it is seen from the result of the cutting action, the verb: *nyigar* is to cut an entity to be two equal parts; *neptep* is to cut the end part of a feather, repeatedly and resulting very small items. Moreover, the things discussed above can be added that metalanguage manages to show whether the action of cutting needs instrument, e.g knife or only bare-hand, like *ngémpos* ‘cut and release something with only fingers’; *ngiis* ‘cut slowly with very sharp knife’. If such verbs are thoroughly observed, they are only used for the daily human activities.

In order to reveal the ritual values about *mapetik* and *matatah*, the mapping in terms of qualitative method was applied. The mapping (Saeed, 2106, p.166) is seen as structured and as having key features such as systematicity, asymmetry, and abstraction. Such values cover the stages of the processions, the instruments and facilities which are required, the person(s) who will be in charged, how do the community members witness the rites. The findings as the results of the analysis are furthermore presented chronologically and descriptively (Soedaryanto, 2015).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Action Verbs of Cutting Related to the Human Activity

Balinese action verbs expressing the meaning of *cutting* are varied depending on the entity of the cutting object, the way how to cut it, the instrument required, and the result of the cutting action. This sub- section deals with the cutting procedures merely to show the human daily activities. The followings are the Balinese sentences from the conversation with the villagers collected in the research location and then verified by the informant. The sentences as the primary data are glossed and translated into English.

3.1.1. *Munggal, Munggel, Munggul.*

- (1) *Ipidan liu anak munggal jelema*
 TIME many people CUT one's neck human beings
 'In the past, a lot of people *cut* human beings'

The verb *munggal* is used to cut the entity of neck of human being and animals. The sharp big knife is required to implement the cutting action. Since the action is quickly done, the body and the head is at once separated into two parts.

- (2) *Tukang-é munggel candi-né padidian*
 Worker-DEF CUT top part of gate -DEF alone
 'The worker *cut* the gate by himself'

The verb *munggel* is used for cutting the top part of a building and the instrument required is big tool(s) or bare strong hands. The entity becomes two parts, the upper part is smaller than the lower one.

- (3) *Nyén bani munggul punya-n kayu-né*
 Q dare CUT edge of tree-POSS wood-DEF
 'Who dare to *cut* the tree'

The verb *munggul* is specifically used to cut the top of a tree. The top part of the tree is soon separated because the action is quickly done using a very sharp knife.

3.1.2. *Murak, ningkag, mukang*

- (4) *Antosang malu, tiang enu murak siap-é*
 Wait TIME 1st Person being CUT one's chest chicken-DEF
 'Please wait a moment, I am still *cutting* the chicken'.

The verb *murak* is used to cut the chest of the body into two parts, mostly the body's upper part of chicken, duck, pig, goat or bull. The action is slowly and carefully done because the result is used for certain purposes, such as for frying meat, *satay* and others.

- (5) *Indayang tulungin ningkag kucit-é*
 Please help CUT one's stomach pig-DEF
 'Please help *cut* the pig'

The verb *ningkag* is used to cut into pieces the part of animal's stomach. The small sharp knife is required to do the action which is done very carefully. The care is very much needed because the action is to separate between the body flesh and the large intestine of the chicken, pig or duck.

- (6) *Silih tiuk-é ané mangan lakar mukang kambing-é*
 Borrow knife-DEF which sharp PREP CUT one's foot goat-DEF
 'Can I borrow your sharp knife to *cut* the goat'
- (7) *Nyén mukang sampi-né dadi dadua*
 Q CUT one's leg bull-DEF become two
 'Who *cut* the bull into two parts'

The verb *mukang* is only used to express the cutting of the leg or foot of animals. This needs a very sharp knife to do the action and get good results. The entity becomes small parts.

3.1.3. *Nugel*

- (8) *Lantang buin baat kayu-né, déh tiang nugel*
 Long and heavy wood-DEF AUX 1st person CUT
 'The wood is long and heavy, may I *cut* it'
- (9) *Tiang ka tukang-las mangkin lakar nugel besi'*
 1st person PREP iron-smith now PREP CUT iron
 'I am going to iron-smith now to have it *cut*'
- (10) *Katos tiing-é, kéweh tukang-é nugel aji blakas*
 hard bamboo-DEF difficult worker-DEF CUT PREP knife
 'The bamboo is hard for the carpenter to *cut* by big-knife'

The verb *nugel* is widely used to cut wood in example (8), iron (9) and bamboo (10). The purpose of this action is to make it better, softer and smoother and resulting the refined performance. In doing this action, a sharp knife or saw is required. This action is usually slowly done in order to have good result.

3.1.4. *Ngiis, ngeeb*

- (11) *Adéng-adéng ngiis poh apang tusing metatu lima-né*
 Slowly CUT mango in order to NEG injured hand-DEF
 'Be careful to *cut* mango in order not to hurt the hand'

The verb *ngiis* is used to express the cutting special items such as: mango, and other Balinese soft- cakes. The activity with the verb *ngiis* is usually carefully done because of using a very sharp- small knife and the result is that such *meat, onion, chilli* become very refine-small.

- (12) *Sesai ia ngeeb tabia anggona basa*
 TIME 3rd person CUT chilli make spicy
 'Everyday he *cuts* the chilli to make the spicy'

Meanwhile, the verb *ngeeb* is only related to the entity of: meat, chilli, onion. This activity is sometimes done repeatedly since the expected result is very tiny.

3.1.5 *Nyukur, nguris*

The verb *nyukur* and *nguris* are used to elaborate the meaning of *cut* for: hair, beard and moustache. The verb *nyukur* needs scissors but the verb *nguris* requires sharp, small and thin knife to do the action. Both actions are done repeatedly since the result is making the hair tidy and moustache clean.

- (13) *Dueg ia nyukur, bok-né rapi buin bagus*
 Clever 3rd person CUT, hair-DEF tidy and good
 ‘He is clever in *cutting* the hair (by scissors), making tidy and handsome’
- (14) *Paakang ka meka-né yén lakar nguris kumis apang alus*
 Closer PREP mirror-DEF if PREP CUT moustache make smooth
 ‘Please close to the mirror if you want to *cut* the moustache to make it smooth

3.1.6 *Ngalap, ngémpos*

The verb *ngalap* and *ngémpos* are closely related to the cutting and picking activity for: fruit, flower. The former can be done with or without instrument, the latter is done only by bare hand.

- (15) *Sedina-dina anak-é dini ngalap*
 TIME person –DEF here CUT and PICK flower
 ‘Everyday the people here *cut and pick* flowers’

This example shows that the cutting and picking activity is done with bare hand, especially using fingers because the entity (flower) is not so far from the doer.

- (16) *Yén ngalap juuk pastika nganggo joan*
 If CUT and PICK orange AUX use stick
 ‘If (you) *cut and pick* orange, (you) must use stick’

This example indicates that the activity is done using instrument, as a long small- bamboo stick to reach the entity (orange) since the entity is considered far away from the doer. Without such a stick, the entity cannot be reached and therefore the action of cutting is never carried out.

- (17) *Makejang ngémpos biu-né wiréh suba nasak*
 All CUT and PICK banana-DEF since already matured
 ‘All people *cut and pick* the bananas because they are already matured’

The verb *ngémpos* requires only bare hand, fingers to do the cutting quickly. Since the entity is not so far that the doer can easily cut and pick it. The result shows that the entity is separated each other.

3.1.7 *Nyibak, nyebit*

The verbs *nyibak* and *nyebit* ‘to cut’ is usually referred to the entity of bamboo only:

- (18) *Beli-né nyemak tiuk lakar nyibak tiing ngaé pagehan*
 Brother-DEF take knife PREP CUT bamboo make fence
 ‘The brother took a knife to *cut* the bamboo to make fence’

The verb *nyibak*, the cutting process is done only one time and the bamboo as the object of cutting becomes two equal parts.

- (19) *Pekak* *Pageh* *negak* *padidian* ***nyebit*** *tali*
 Grandfather Name sit alone CUT rope

‘The grandfather *Pageh* sits by himself to *cut* it into rope’

The next process, after *nyibak* is usually expressed by the verb *nyebit* in order to make the cut- bamboo into more refine smaller results. The cutting process expressed by the verb *nyebit* takes several times and repeatedly to have it well small form.

3.1.8. *Nyigar, nués, nérés*

- (20) *Kénkénang* ***nyigar*** *kain-é* *apang* *luung?*
 Q CUT linen-DEF PREP be good
 ‘How (you) *cut* this linen to be good?’

The verb *nyigar* is closely associated to the cutting of a piece of linen, paper to be two equal parts using a sharp knife or scissors. This action is done only one time and the result is a very fine parts of linen or paper.

- (21) *Cenik-cenik-é* *suba* *dueg* *jani* ***nués*** *busung* *ngaé* *canang*
 Children-DEF already clever now CUT leaf make offering
 ‘The children have been clever now to *cut* the coconut leaf to make an offering’

The verb *nués* is closely related to the entity like leaves: banana leaf, young yellow coconut leaf. This cutting action must be done very carefully since the expected result is very rigid and having full of art-sense. The leaf is cut in such a way that the result can be seen as an art-craft for the purpose of making offering or ritual decorations having religious nuance.

- (22) *Sing* *makelo* *dagang-é* *di* *peken* ***nérés*** *don,* *suba* *biasa*
 NEG TIME seller-DEF PREP market CUT leaf, already habit
 ‘It does not take long for the seller in the market to *cut* the banana leaf, it is her daily habit’

The verb *nérés* has the similar entities to be cut, namely: linen, paper or leaf but the action is done very quickly, it is usually done by the linen seller at the shop due to having a lot of buyers to serve. In order to show a quick service, the linen is cut within a minute. Other situation may be worth explaining to exemplify the verb *nérés*, look at the seller of banana leaf in a traditional market to serve the customer, this seller usually cuts the leaf very quickly since a number of people are waiting to serve in a short time (informant I Nengah Alit)

3.1.9. *Nguék, ngesét, nyénsét, ngebés, mésbés.*

- (23) *Guru-né* ***nguék*** *koran* *ané* *suba* *sing* *manguna*
 Teacher-DEF CUT newspaper which already NEG useful
 ‘The teacher *cut* the unused newspaper’

The verb *nguék* is always related to the entities as: paper, clothes, handkerchief for the purpose of making them as disposal or rubbish because they are not useful anymore. This action can be done either by hand or by using a knife as a small sharp instrument.

- (24) *Sing* *dadi* *cening* ***ngesét*** *pipis,* *diastun* *cening* *gedeg*
 NEG allow 2nd person CUT money, CONJUNC 2nd person angry

‘You are prohibited to *cut* the note (money), although you’re angry’

The verb *ngesét* is likely having the similar objects of the verb *nguék*, however, the emotional state is different. Someone will do *nguék* if he has good purpose for the object, however *ngesét* happens when someone is in an angry manner or losing temper.

- (25) *Bah, anak belong nyétsét baju, sing nawang apa né!*
 Ah child stupid CUT shirt, NEG know what DEF

‘Alas!, the stupid boy *cuts* the shirt, how silly he is!’

The verb *nyétsét* has similar object to cut with the two previous verbs (*nguék* and *ngesét*), however, the action expressed by the verb *nyétsét* is done not only once but repeatedly until the object comes into pieces.

- (26) *Nyén ngebés muncuk kertas-é?*
 Q CUT tip paper-DEF
 ‘Who *cut* the writing paper?’

The verb *ngébés* is expressing the cutting action for the tiny part of the entity: paper and leaf. The purpose of this action could be making the entity looking better.

- (27) *Sambil ngeling Luh Ayu mésbés rok kanti sing dadi anggo buin*
 TIME cry Name CUT skirt till NEG able wear again
 ‘While crying Luh Ayu *cut* skirt resulting it can’t be worn anymore’

The verb *mésbés* as the verb structure implying *més-bés* shows the repeated action. The action of cutting a tiny part of the object repeatedly is shown by the verb *mésbés*. This results, due to the repeated action, the entity comes into pieces.

3.1.10. *Ngabas, ngampad, nektek, nyahcah, nastas.*

This verb group expresses the repeated actions for cutting with a special instrument in Balinese:

- (28) *Sabilang semeng I Laba biasa ngabas padang malun umah-né*
 TIME Name usually CUT grass PREP house-POSS
 ‘Every morning I Laba usually *cuts* the grass in front of his house’

The verb *ngabas* is related to the tip-end of the grass, top part of a tree, bushes and fence, especially having shady leaves. This verb indicates the action done using knife, lawn-scissors and resulting the end of the tree, grass comes into pieces.

- (29) *Yén suba manyi, tiang lakar ngampad somi*
 If already harvest, 1st person PREP CUT *padi* tree
 ‘If the harvest ends, I will *cut* the old *padi* trees’

The verb *ngampad* is closely related to the *padi*-tree, especially the bottom part of the trunk. The trunk must be removed as soon as possible because the next planting season soon comes, therefore this action is hard and quickly performed. The result shows that the trunk and the root are separated, the root is left behind on the earth after being cut by a special knife.

- (30) *Makelo I Rai nektek tiing di abian*
 TIME name CUT bamboo PREP garden

‘It took a long time, I Rai to *cut* bamboo in the back-garden’

The verb *nektek* is related to wood, small tree, bamboo, done repeatedly since the required result is very small. The instruments used are usually sharp big knife and axe.

- (31) *I mémé teka uli peken lantas **nyahcah** bé padidian*
 Mother come PREP market then CUT meat alone

‘Mother as arriving from market, *cut* the meat by herself’

The verb *nyahcah* is expressing the cutting for *meat*, repeatedly done since the required result is small item. The medium sized knife is required to do the action.

- (32) *Tiang **nastas** tali-né lakar negul banten*
 1st person CUT rope-DEF PREP tie offering

‘I *cut* the rope to tie offering’

The verb *nastas* is only related to cutting the *rope* into pieces. This action is slowly and repeatedly done since the expected result is small-refined rope for certain purposes, e.g. to tie the offering items for ritual ceremony. A small and sharp knife is required to do this activity.

3.2. Action Verbs of Cutting and Filing related to the Rites

Balinese Hindu always conduct special rites for human beings when the baby is 3 days old after being released from hospital. Another ceremony is performed when the baby is around 11 days old to release physically the placenta cord. The next purified ceremony for parents is done when the baby is 42 days, for initiating the baby grows well and balance when 105 or 210 days, in order to minimize the bad life influence, the ritual is conducted for adults after puberty. These are done by inviting the priest to lead the rite.

There are variants of performing such rites throughout villages in Bali. In *Pesangkan* village, *Karangasem*, east part of Bali where the research was conducted, it was found that some uniqueness must be elaborated, especially for the ceremony of *mapetik* and *matatah*. Crystal (in Zaki, 2017, 37) explains that language plays a fundamental role in “the practical understanding, expression, presentation and furtherance of every set of religious belief” (1965, p.86). When the Balinese Hindu baby is 210 days, the hair is religiously cut called *mapetik* and be continued by firstly introducing to touch the earth. The next important ritual is tooth-filing ceremony called *matatah*. This ceremony is conducted when people have been undergoing puberty and usually before getting married. In *Pesangkan*, *Karangasem* the participants of *matatah* must be kept in the house within three days after the ceremony, they are not allowed to go out nor to work outside the house. This speciality might give different religious perspectives compared to the other villages in Bali. (Bali Province, 2009)

These kinds of ceremony are not performed uniformly, for example in *Klungkung*, the neighbouring regency of *Karangasem*, the ceremony for *mapetik* is conducted when the baby is either 105 or 210 days. In *Buleleng*, the north part of Bali island, the ceremony of *matatah* is rarely performed due to old tradition passed down from generation to generation, having no religious references to conduct such ceremony. This *matatah* ceremony is newly introduced and performed by the relatively modern families residing in *Denpasar* or outside of *Buleleng* regency (source: informant I Nengah Alit).

3.2.1. Hair Cutting Rite.

In *Pesangkan* village at the time when the baby reaches 210 days of age the family must undergo a special ceremony called *makutang bok* or the more refined one is *mapetik*. Both lexicons are referred to the process of cutting hair (notes: *makutang* ‘cut/release’, *bok* ‘hair’). The difference is only depending on who conducts the ceremony. If the royal/high caste-family performs the ceremony, people will usually call it *mapetik*, however when it is done by the common society members, the ceremony is referred to as *makutang bok*. As the additional information, every village in Bali has different time to conduct such similar ceremony, e.g. some villages in *Klungkung* do it when the baby is 105 days old. There is no significant reason why they do the ceremony in different time, other than it being a matter of tradition passed down from their ancestors. This ceremony is also combined with the ceremony of touching the earth at the first time for the new born-baby. The main purpose of this sacred ceremony is to purify the *baby’s bad influences* before growing older. The hair-

cutting symbolizes the release of these bad influences, and the touching of the ground means that it is the time to start practicing and walking for further growing life (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The baby touching the earth for the first time

3.2.1.1 *Ngetep bok and makutang bok.*

- (33). *Da ngetep bok dini! Apang umah-é kedas*
 NEG CUT hair here! PREP house-DEF clean
 ‘don’t cut the hair here, to/in order that the house is clean’

- (34). *Buin pidan panak-né makutang bok, dumadak apang lancar*
 Q child-DEF CUT hair, hope PREP well
 ‘When is (the ceremony of) cutting hair for the child, with the hope it runs well

The lexicon *ngetep* comes from the root *getep* ‘cut’, *ngetep* is the transitive verb combining between the root *getep* with the prefix *ng-* that carries the meaning of ‘the process of cutting’. *Bok* means hair, so the phrase of *ngetep bok* means ‘cutting hair’. This action is ordinarily done by Balinese people when his or her hair is usually long enough to cut. This does not convey any religious nuance, but merely the daily common people’s activity. Lexicon *makutang* derives from the root *kutang* ‘throw away or release’ with prefix *ma-* to make the root be a derived transitive verb *makutang* ‘the process of throwing away or releasing sacredly’. This term is, therefore specially used for expressing and conveying the ritual nuance, and usually conducted by the ordinary people, not the royal one. This can be also proven by the choice of Balinese lexicons in example (34), such as: *buin* (common lexicon) instead of *malih* (refined word) means ‘when’; *panak* instead of *oka* ‘child’, etc.

Additionally, the preparation of the ceremony includes the making of offerings must be under the supervision of the traditional experts. The good time for conducting this ritual has been already determined as 210 days after the baby is born. According to the Balinese calendar, if the baby is born on *Coma* ‘Monday’ (member of 7 days); and *Langkir* (member of 30 weeks), the next *Coma Langkir* will be 7x30 =210 days later. Therefore the day is next 210 days counted from the baby born and also called *oton* ‘six months.’ (Rawi, 2017)



Figure 2. The priest is cutting the baby's hair 5 times from five sacred areas (Front, middle, back, right and left of the head)

3.2.1.2 Mapetik

(35). sareng kuda jagi **mapetik** malih tigang raina?

Q AUX CUT next three days

'how many (persons) will undergo the ceremony of *cutting hair*, next three days?

The lexicon *mapetik* is used for the Royal/high caste-family. The process and preparation are exactly similar with the *makutang bok* ceremony. If it is compared between *makutang bok* and *mapetik*, according to the informant, the former seems simpler and the latter more complex since it belongs to the royal family who is generally classified as a rich family.

The process of this rites is commenced after the preparation is completed; the priest is invited to come to the house of the family. After making a prayer for around one hour, he afterward asks the mother or sibling to bring the baby closer to him. The important activity is cutting the hair five times and putting the cut-hair in a small yellow coconut. The small yellow coconut is trusted as the holy place to store the sacred things by Hindhu followers. The five times of cutting happens in the areas of (1) front; (2) left; (3) right; (4) back and (5) the middle of the head (source: Bali Post Newspaper). Such sacred five locations symbolize the balance (front, middle, back, left and right part of the head). By these symbols, the family hope the baby will grow to have a balanced life in the future. The last stage is sprinkling the holy water and letting the baby touch the ground for the first time. The members of the community witness this throughout procession and finally have meal together, called *magibung* (Figure 3)



Figure 3. Six girls are having meal together called *magibung*.

3.2.2. Tooth-filing Rite.

This rite is usually conducted for the boys and girls who have already reached puberty. This kind of ritual belongs to one of the most important ceremonies conducted by Balinese Hindu. Linguistically, there are three lexicons might appear to express this sacred ceremony: *matatah*, *masangih* and *mapandes*.

3.2.2.1. Matatah / Masangih

- (36). Pameréntah-é nyabran warsa ngelaksanayang **matatah** massal
 Government-DEF TIME conduct FILE (tooth) together
 ‘The local government every year conducts (the ceremony of) tooth filing together (include community members free of charge)

- (37). *Yén suba bajang mara cening dadi masangih*
 If already adult TIME 2nd person allow FILE (tooth).
 ‘If your are already adult, you are allowed to have the ceremony of tooth-filing’

Tatah and *sangih* (the root words of *matatah* and *masangih*) means to refine something, make it sharp. The root *sangih* is not only used for tooth but it can be also used for other things like: knife, sword, keris, etc. e.g. *Sangih tiuké lakar anggo ngetep bawang* ‘Sharpen the knife to cut the onion!’. However, the root *tatah* is particularly used for tooth only and can not be used for other things like for *sangih*. The process of refining or filling the teeth with a sacred ceremony is called *matatah/masangih*. (Sudipa, et. al. 2015, p. 237) The best day for performing this ceremony must be chosen under the advice of the priest. In order to select the good-day, the priest usually consults the Hindu Balinese calendar. The preparation including the making offerings and inviting some relatives must be done a month prior the determined day. This ritual is usually bigger than the cutting hair ceremony. The process is commenced before dawn in order to have very fresh atmosphere. The priest assistant only does the filing against the upper six teeth. The purpose of filing these six teeth is mainly to minimize and positively control the influence of our six bad behaviours.(Yendra, 2016, p. 1) Such bad behaviours of human beings are referred to as *sad-ripu* (*sad*=six; *ripu*=enemy) including : (1) anger; (2) greed; (3) drunkenness ; (4) confusion; (5) lust and (6) jealousy.



Figure 4. The priest assistant is filing six upper teeth by a sharp file

3.2.2.2. Mapandes.

Ravindranath and Wagner (2016, p.272) stated that “.... in some societies, affiliation with a **caste**, clan or tribe may be more socially meaningful than occupation or education”. Referring to this statement, it is worth noting that Balinese as a local language has speech levels due to be the caste system, namely : *common* and *refined* speech levels. Each level is only characterized by the lexical choice, such as : the common Balinese lexicon *matatah/masangih* is replaced by the refined word *mapandes*.. The following data were depicted from parts of dialogues between two invited guests encountered in the Priest house. The lexical choices must be the refined Balinese ones to show the nuance of royal /high caste-family:

- (38). ring Geriya akéh jagi **mapandes**, lanang istri 45 diri.
 PREP castle many AUX FILE (tooth) men women 45 persons

‘in the Priest house many would attend *tooth-filling*, boys and girls are 45 people’

- (39). sadurung **mapandes** Ida Ayu Laksmi nénten dados marabian.
 TIME FILE (tooth) Name NEG able married

‘before the *tooth-filling*, Ida Ayu Laksmi (Royal name) is not allowed to get married’

The choices of refined Balinese lexicons in the above examples might be termed as *dynamic models of discourse* (Saeed, 2016, p.166). *Mapandes* has the similar meaning of the word *matatah/masangih* since both preparation and process are exactly the same. From the lexical choices, what Goddard (2015, p.71) called as cultural *key words*, it can be proven by using the more refined words rather than the common one, as in example (38) : *ring* (refined Balinese) instead of *di* (common Balinese) meaning ‘in’, *akéh* instead of *liu* ‘many/a lot of’, *jagi – laku* ‘would’, *mapandes – matatah*, ‘tooth-filing’, *lanang istri – muani luh* ‘boy and girl, and *diri-ukud* ‘person. In example (39), the more refined words were used such as : *sadurung* instead of *satondén* ‘prior’, *nénten – sing* ‘no’, *dados-dadi* ‘can, is allowed’, *marabian-ngantén* ‘get married’. As usual at the end of the ritual, both the members of family and invited community show their contented feelings and thank God by praying and enjoy the meal together in a traditional manner, also called *magibung* (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Six men in traditional dress are having meal together, sitting cross-legged around a big tray of rice and meat.

4. Conclusion

Both lexicons *mapetik* and *matatah* convey the sacred meaning of *cutting* with ritual nuance. Any rite is intended to purify every stages of Bali Hindhu followers’ life so that their whole life can be expected to be full of happiness and prosperity. *Mapetik* is done by cutting baby’s hair from five sacred areas in the head, *matatah* is something to do with filling six upper teeth belonging to the adults. The former means to spiritually make the baby’s life always in balance, and the latter is to minimize the six bad behaviours of the adult’s life. In order to choose the day to conduct such holy-rites, *mapetik* is determined by the birth- day of the baby, however *matatah* must be under the advice of the Hindu priest referring to the Balinese calendar. These traditions are continually preserved from generation to generation as the integral part of Hindhu’s way of life in Bali. No other lexicons will be found to replace the ritual values for both *mapetik* and *matatah*.

References

- Allan, K. (2001). *Natural language semantics*. Blackwell Publisher.
 Allan, K. (Ed.). (2016). *The Routledge handbook of linguistics*. Routledge Taylor and Francis.
 Bali Province. (2009). *Panca Yadnya*. Pesraman Remaja Book Publishing.
 Cargill, M., & O’Connor, P. (2013). *Writing scientific research articles* (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
 Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Crystal, D. (1965). *Linguistics, language and religion*. Hawthorn Books.
- Givón, T. (1984). *Syntax: A functional typological introduction* (Vol. 1). John Benjamins.
- Goddard, C., & Wierzbicka, A. (2014). *Words & meanings: Lexical semantics across domains, languages, & cultures*. Oxford University Press.
- Goddard, C., & Wierzbicka, A. (2015). *The natural semantic metalanguage approach*. Oxford Source.
- Goddard, C., & Ye, Z. (2015). *Ethnopragmatics*. In F. Sharifian (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of language and culture* (pp. 66–83). Routledge Taylor and Francis.
- Ravindranath, M., & Wagner, S. E. (2016). *Sociolinguistics: Language in social environment*. In K. Allan (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of linguistics* (pp. 264–280). Routledge Taylor and Francis.
- Rawi, K. B. G. (2017). *Balinese calendar*. Bali Post Publishing Company.
- Saeed, J. (2016). *Semantics, the meaning of words and sentences*. In K. Allan (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of linguistics* (pp. 153–168). Routledge Taylor and Francis.
- Sharifian, F. (Ed.). (2015). *The Routledge handbook of language and culture*. Routledge Taylor and Francis.
- Soedaryanto. (2015). *Metode dan aneka teknik analisis bahasa: Pengantar penelitian wahana kebudayaan secara linguistik*. Sanata Dharma University Press.
- Sudipa, I. N. (2010). *Struktur semantik verba keadaan bahasa Bali*. Udayana University Press.
- Sudipa, I. N., Rajeg, I. M., Keniten, I. B. W. W., Pidada, I. B. P., & Ariana, P. (2015). *A handbook of Balinese verbs: Meanings and usages*. Swasta Nulus.
- Sudipa, I. N. (2021a). *Struktur semantik verba tindakan bahasa Bali*. Swasta Nulus. ISBN 9786236371114
- Sudipa, I. N. (2021b). *Seger-Gelem: Verba proses badaniah bahasa Bali*. Swasta Nulus. ISBN 9786236371190
- Sudipa, I. N. (2022). *Struktur semantik verba proses bahasa Bali*. Swasta Nulus. ISBN 9786022945550
- Sudipa, I. N., et al. (2022). *Mengatakan dan melakukan: Verba tindak tutur bahasa Bali*. Swasta Nulus.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1996). *Semantics: Primes and universals*. Oxford University Press.
- Yendra, I. W. (2016). *Kanda Pat Moksa: Mati tanpa raga*. Serat Ismaya.

Key-informan:

Name : I Nengah Alit, 71 years old, Head of Customary Village, address : Karangasem- Bali, interviewed April 2024

Bali Post newspaper as the Source of Information



Balinese Calendar 2017

