
Educational Values of Taboo Expressions in the Sasak Speech Community: An Ethnography Study

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the form, meaning and perception of the community related to taboo things or expressions in Muncan Village. This research is an ethnography research using descriptive qualitative method design. The sample of this research is 10 people of Muncan Village from experts in culture to ordinary people. The data collection process in this research is by using observation and interview. In the process of analyzing the data is done by identifying, classifying, and explaining the meaning and perception of the community. The results of this study show that there are 57 taboos believed by the community. Therefore, it can be concluded that the people of Muncan Village still believe in many taboo things or expressions that they should not violate or do. In other words, taboo expressions and things in today's modern era are still believed to be things that should not be said or done in Muncan Village.

Keywords: Sasak Culture, Sociolinguistics, Taboo Expressions

INTRODUCTION

Taboo language plays a significant role in sociolinguistic studies, as noted by Sumarsono in Supriyadi (2013). It refers to expressions that are disapproved by a community due to moral or belief-related reasons and may cause hurt or offense to its members. However, there are individuals who challenge these prohibitions and use taboo language as a form of "free speech" movement. This presents a need for further research on taboo language, particularly in everyday life. Every region has its own set of taboo expressions, which may not be understood by outsiders. For instance, in the Sasak community, there are many taboo expressions that may cause misunderstandings when newcomers are present. This can lead to irritation or unintended consequences, highlighting the importance of further research on taboo language. This study was conducted in Muncan Village, which was selected as the research target due to several considerations. The village is located in the Kopang sub-district of Central Lombok, where it remains relatively isolated and the people's way of thinking is still in line with their traditional culture. The author of the study is a native of Muncan Village, which is believed to have influenced their understanding of the community's character, language, and thoughts. Additionally, the village

has a unique characteristic in that it is home to many descendants of aristocrats, who still hold fast to beliefs that are considered taboo in modern society. Researchers believed that these factors could potentially impact the daily behavior and thinking of the villagers.

Sociolinguistics, as Yule (2010:254) explains, is a field of study that examines language in relation to social and cultural phenomena in society. It typically delves into the intersections of language, society, and the social sciences, including psychology, anthropology, and sociology. The perspective put forth by Yule aligns with that of Trudgill, who posits that the study of sociolinguistics is closely tied to cultural phenomena and can influence the way individuals speak or communicate, as these are shaped by social context (Trudgill, 2000:32). According to Holmes (2013), sociolinguists aim to describe the various ways in which language is used in different social contexts. Additionally, they investigate the use of language to convey messages, which necessitates social interactions among community members. These interactions can reveal the relationships among the individuals involved, highlighting the significance of sociolinguistics in explaining social connections. Sociolinguistics pertains to the use of language in a society. Dialects, which are variations of a language that differ

systematically from other varieties, are a key aspect of sociolinguistics. Although dialects are mutually intelligible, when speakers are unable to understand one another, they become separate languages. Geographical regions often play a role in determining whether dialects or languages are distinguished. For instance, Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish are recognized as distinct languages due to their different grammars and the countries in which they are spoken, despite the fact that speakers of these languages can generally comprehend one another. Hindi and Urdu, on the other hand, are considered mutually intelligible languages when spoken, but their written systems are different. Conversely, Mandarin and Cantonese are two mutually unintelligible languages when spoken, despite having the same written system.

According to Allan and Burridge's account as presented in Nadia (2013:14), Captain James Hook is credited with the introduction of the term "taboo" in 1777. The concept of word taboos was derived from the Polynesian culture and subsequently integrated into the English language. The term "taboo" is derived from the Polynesian words "tapu" or "tabu," which signify something that is forbidden or prohibited. Taboo refers to something that is avoided and prohibited from being discussed. Allan and Burridge (2006:1) posited that taboo originates from a social restriction on one's behavior, which can lead to uneasiness, harm, and injury. As a result, people in society are expected to avoid taboos that have a vulgar connotation. To provide a clearer explanation for this phenomenon, the term "taboo language" refers to words and phrases that are typically considered inappropriate in certain contexts. Social anthropologist Edmund Leach identified three main categories of taboo words and phrases in English.

Terms related to sex and excretion, such as "bugger" and "shit", Phrases associated with the Christian religion, such as "Christ" and "Jesus.", and Expressions that involve animal abuse or comparing a person to an animal, such as "bitch" and "cow." (Murphy, Corpus, and Sociolinguistics: Investigating Age and Gender in Female Talk, 2010). Taboo words, as identified by Batistella (2005:72), may be classified into four categories: epithets, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity. Epithets: The classification of epithets includes various types of derogatory terms, such as bitch and fag.

Other derogatory references include those related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, appearance, and disabilities, such as nigger, midget, and retard, motherfucker, and tit-man (Batistella, 2005:72). According to Jay (in Doyle, 2006:2-3), an epithet is a short yet powerful outburst of emotionally charged language that is triggered by frustration or anger, such as son of a bitch. Profanity can be categorized as religious cursing, as it typically involves the use of sacred terms in a profane or disrespectful manner (Batistella, 2005:72). Specifically, according to Jay in Doyle (2006:2-3), profanity is characterized as the use of religious terms in a profane, secular, or indifferent manner, with the aim of expressing emotional responses rather than vilifying religion or its associated concepts

Profanity: According to Batistella (2005:72), profanity can be categorized as religious cursing because it usually includes the foul-mouthed use of what is considered to be sacred. Being more detail, Jay in Doyle (2006: 2-3) describes profanity as the expression involving the use of religious terms in a profane, secular or uncaring manner. The aim of the speaker is not to vilify God or anything connected with religion but it may be used to express emotional response to certain motives. Vulgarity: Vulgarity and obscenity are commonly referred to as words or expressions that pertain to sexual anatomy and excretory functions in a crude manner. The distinction between vulgarity and obscenity typically depends on the level of prurience. Vulgarity often conveys the unvarnished language of the street (Jay & Doyle, 2009:1). According to Jay (Mercury, 1995:30), vulgarity is employed to debase or diminish the person or object being referred to or described. Obscenity: Obscenity refers to language or expressions that are deemed offensive, repulsive, and repugnant to moral standards (Jay, in Doyle, 2009). Additionally, according to Batistella (2005), profanity refers to words or expressions that are associated with sex, sexuality, or body functions, which are typically used in a vulgar or offensive manner. Furthermore, according to Wardhaugh (2006), taboo words serve various functions, such as attracting attention, expressing contempt, provoking, or mocking authority. These words are typically avoided or disregarded in certain situations due to their offensive or inappropriate nature.

METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive method. Using descriptive qualitative methods, this research described the type, meaning, and perception of taboo expressions in the Sasak speech community. The descriptive research design employed here is a means for exploring the forms and types of taboo expressions using words, sentences, and phrases as descriptions. Qualitative research here means that this research utilized participant-observation, interview, note taking, recording, and note taking as the technique for collecting data. This research utilized a qualitative research approach, this approach is a valuable method for studying taboo expressions because of its ability to look closely at the complex nature of human communication. This study was conducted in Kopang, a district located in Central Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Province. However, this study focused on Muncan Village because the majority of the Sasak people who used and believed in taboo resided in this village, and it was chosen because this village still adheres to or is close to its cultural and belief systems.

The data were acquired from three aspects of taboo language, which were informants, based on the following criteria:

- 1) They were capable of speaking the Sasak language and understanding their culture and beliefs.
- 2) The informants were aged between 30 and 60 years.
- 3) They exhibited good articulation, were in good health, and spoke fluently.

To explore taboo expressions, the writer gathered and transcribed utterances and natural short conversations or phrases that were produced by the speaker related to taboo expressions in the Sasak language. The data in this study were collected using the following techniques:

- a) Observation: To observe and collect data, the author took the role of the participant. As the observer, the writer involved themselves in every activity of the people when they had a short conversation or phrase with each other.
- b) Interview: To collect the data, the writer also used interview techniques to ask directly about things related to taboo language. When in observation does not find inappropriate the data, the writer used interview to find out directly the

taboo language in Muncan village, how the taboo language is used, types of taboo and perception of taboo language.

- c) Recording and Note Taking: The writer collected the data by recorded the short conversation or clause among the informants when they do conversation related to taboo expressions. And collect the data by recorded the conversation between the writer and interviewer.

In order to acquire the necessary data, the author employed interview techniques to directly inquire about information regarding the taboo language. When inappropriate data were not obtained, the author utilized interviews to gain insight into the taboo language used in Muncan village, the manner in which it is employed, the various types of taboo, and the perception of the taboo language. The author also collected data through recording and note-taking. The author recorded short conversations or clauses among the informants when they engaged in conversations related to taboo expressions.

After collecting the data, the next step is data analysis. In conducting this research, the following procedures were used: First, transcribing the recording to identify the forms of taboo expressions used, this method was done to find out more clearly the result of the recording when conducting interviews with the community and transcribing the recording into a writing. Second, categorizing the word classes, forms, types of taboo expressions that exist in the conversation, after that the researcher calculates the several types of taboo expressions to find out the types of taboo that should not be spoken or are still considered taboo. In Sasak society still believes in such things as prohibitions to do or say to others, for that researcher classify the type of taboo. Third, describing the meaning of taboo in conversation, the prohibition to say a word or sentence that is considered taboo has a meaning behind why it is not allowed to do or say things that are considered taboo. This is explained in the third step to explain the meaning behind the taboo expressions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

In everyday conversation, speakers use taboo expressions to subtly inform someone

about the prohibition of something. For example, the taboo expression associated with coarse language, "bawi ni laik maeh" (pig here you are) refers to calling someone by the name of an animal. As for some types or types of taboo expressions that researchers found include religious taboos, sexual taboos and bodily functions.

Religious Taboos: Words and phrases related to religious beliefs and practices that are considered sacred and thus inappropriate for casual use. The people of Muncan Village generally believe in many religious-related things that should not be done, for example, "*mateq motor ntan lamun liwat lq makam tie, dorong ntan motor*", meaning please turn off the motorbike when passing a grave, and push the motorbike. This belief is related to religious values and the history of one of the graves in Muncan Village, and it is believed that if we break the rule when we have been told by the community, there will be an event or bad thing that will happen to us. This is done to honour the hero who is buried there, the hero died when the Hindu kingdom entered Lombok. Another example is "*nendek tauq bale tie lasengan, ye ruen ndek wah te selakarang*", meaning do not stay in a house that has not been prayed for. People believe that when someone lives in a new house or a house that has not been prayed for, unwanted things will happen, such as trance and others. This triggers the belief that when we want to live in a house, we must first pray for the demons or jinn in our house to leave or disappear. There are many more beliefs about taboo expressions or things that are considered taboo by the people of Muncan Village.

Sexual Taboos: Expressions involving sexual organs, activities, and relationships that are deemed offensive or inappropriate in public discourse. Sexual expressions that people often say in various places to express dislike for someone, anger, or familiarity with friends. Even so, this is still considered taboo by the people of Muncan Village because it is considered inappropriate when calling or expressing words or sentences related to sexual matters. For example, "*marak ruen pepepek ruen muen e*" means your face is like a woman's genitals. In this context, someone says to another person as pepepek, which means female genitalia, which is considered taboo by the community because it is considered inappropriate to say such things. Another

example is, "*sexy gati ruen, mbe taokn jari ubek nane*", meaning it looks very sexy, where is the prostitute now. Ubek in Sasak means prostitute, someone saying ubek to another person in this context is as if a person who looks sexy or whose clothes are slightly revealing is thought to be a prostitute or selling themselves. This is very taboo in Muncan Village because negative thoughts do not have to be thrown directly as if insulting or insinuating that she is a prostitute just by dressing sexy or indeed her sexy body verbal descriptions.

In addition, researchers also classified the types of taboo words according to Batistella. Based on the theory described by Batistella, Types of Taboo Words, Batistella (2005: 72) suggests four types of taboo words are epithets, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity.

Epithets

- a. "aro wah kepaq, kenoak e" (Don't be a man, you're a cripple). In this context, the word "kepaq" is considered taboo by the people of Muncan Village because when calling people by the title according to the disease or physical disability they suffer, it should not be said. This triggers the sufferer to become sicker or is like a prayer for ourselves, for this reason the perceptions community still considers this a taboo, and it is considered inappropriate to call someone with the deficiencies they have.
- b. "ane gamak dakoq nendek keq muni" (You'd better shut up, you dumb fuck). In this sentence the word "dakoq" means mute, a mute person in this context is prohibited from speaking because his voice is not clear, a word or sentence like this is still taboo to say to someone who is indeed mute or someone who indeed when speaking his voice is not clear and cannot be understood by the interlocutor. This is considered taboo because it is directly related to a person's lack of speech. Don't let it become a prayer and turn back on yourself. People's perceptions of expressions that offend someone and are related to everyone's shortcomings are still believed not to be spoken and are still considered taboo by the people of Muncan Village.
- c. "colak bae ruen maten e, inik bae tao begitak" (Your eyes are deformed, so you

can't see). In this sentence, the word "colak" means eye disease or discolouration of the edges of the eyeball to white, and looks like a defect in the eyeball. In this context, saying the word "colak" is considered taboo by the people of Muncan village because when calling people by a title according to a disease or physical defect, it should not be said. This triggers the sufferer to become even more ashamed of their disability and for this reason the community still considers this taboo. People's perceptions of expressions that offend people and relate to people's shortcomings are still believed not to be spoken and are still considered taboo by the people of Muncan village.

Profanity

- a. "bawi jamak kanak tie " (Huh, just like that boy's pig). In this sentence the word "bawi" means pig, someone who is likened to an animal, in this context it. It's forbidden to say because it should not be said to others and is a dirty word. Words or sentences like this are not allowed and are still considered taboo because they relate to equating animals in speaking or calling people. The community's perception of dirty words has long been forbidden to be spoken, because it is considered inappropriate, both to express emotional feelings, touch and so on. For this reason, in the belief of the people of Muncan village, uttering such profanities is considered taboo and inappropriate to call someone with the deficiencies they have.
- b. "anak godek pade, keribut e " (You monkey boy, what a noisy). In this sentence the word "godek" means monkey. In this context someone is venting anger by calling an animal a name that is considered a dirty word when spoken to another person. This is considered taboo by the community because it is not natural or necessary to say dirty words when angry. Dirty words have long been forbidden to be spoken, because they are considered inappropriate, both for expressing emotional feelings, touching and so on. For this reason, the perception of the Muncan village community is that saying dirty words like this is considered taboo and inappropriate.

- c. "ee basong ni lain e" (Hey dog, come here). In this sentence the word "basong" means dog. In this context someone is calling an animal by name which is considered a dirty or rude word. This is considered taboo by the community because it is unnatural or inappropriate to reproach or call someone with such harsh words. the community's perception of dirty words has long been forbidden to say, because it is considered inappropriate, both to express emotional feelings, touch and so on. For this reason, in the belief of the people of Muncan village, saying dirty words like this is considered taboo and inappropriate.

Vulgarity

- a. "seksi gati ruen, mbe taokn jari ubek nane " (Where is the place to be a whore now? So sexy). The word "ubek" means prostitute, in this context people usually refer to other people who are dressed sexy or whose clothes are exposed as prostitutes. In this case, addressing someone as a prostitute is very inappropriate to say, because it does not necessarily mean that the sexy person is a prostitute. The word slut is also considered rude and vulgar to say to others, it is still very taboo. Profanity has long been forbidden to be uttered, as it is considered inappropriate, whether to express emotional feelings, touch and so on. The perception of the people of Muncan Village is that uttering profanity like this is considered taboo and inappropriate.
- b. "laa ruen susun dengan tie kebeleqn " (What a big boob the size of that woman). In this sentence the word "susu" means breasts, in this context someone calls another person sexy or their clothes are open with such an expression, when other people hear such expressions they will be annoyed or dislike it because calling breasts to a woman is very inappropriate to say. The taboo to utter male or female genitals is still believed by the people of Muncan Village and profanity has long been forbidden to be uttered, because it is considered inappropriate, both to express emotional feelings, touch and so on. For this reason, in the perception of the people of Muncan Village, saying dirty words like this is considered taboo and inappropriate.

- c. “ketat gati kadun selane nine tie, pedas ruen pepekn ne “ (So tight in the pants, it shows his cock). In this sentence the word "pepek" means the female genitalia, in this context someone calls another person sexy or his clothes open with such an expression, when someone else hears the expression would not like because the mention of the genitals to a woman is very unspoken. Taboo to pronounce male and female genitals are still believed by the Muncan Village community. Vulgar speeches or expressions are also not allowed because they can offend others and are considered unworthy of speaking like that. It is considered very taboo by the Muncan Village community because such things are not often heard or precisely the language is not allowed to be spoken.

Obscenity

- a. “beleq jage pepekn tie “ (Probably her big vagina). In this sentence the word "pepek" means the female genitalia, in this context a person calls another person sexy or his clothes open with such expression or expression is strictly unacceptable, when someone else hears it will be disliked or angry for mentioning the genitals to a woman. Tabu to pronounce male and female genitals are still believed by the Muncan Village community. Vulgar speeches or expressions are also not allowed because they can offend others and are considered unworthy of speaking like that. The phrase is considered very taboo because such a thing is not often heard or precisely the language is not allowed to be spoken.
- b. “cewek, maeh cium sekali maeh “ (Hey girl, can I have one kiss). In this sentence the word "maeh cium" means wanting to kiss, in this context a phrase like this is usually applied to a woman who passes in front of a man and the sentence is pronounced. This is because the man might have liked to see the woman he saw and say the word or phrase. It's considered vulgar to talk to a woman they don't know. It's very taboo because it's considered unworthy to be talked about. Vulgar conversations or expressions are also not allowed because they can offend others and are deemed not worthy to speak like that. It is considered

very taboo by the Muncan Village community because such things are not often heard or precisely the language is not allowed to be spoken.

- c. “seksi gati ruen, mbe taokn jari ubek nane “ (Where is the place to be a whore now? So hot). The word "ubek" means prostitute, in this context people usually refer to other people who are dressed sexy or whose clothes are exposed as prostitutes. In this case, addressing someone as a prostitute is very inappropriate to say, because it does not necessarily mean that the sexy person is a prostitute. The word slut is also considered rude and vulgar to say to others, it is still very taboo. Profanity has long been forbidden to be uttered, as it is considered inappropriate, whether to express emotional feelings, touch and so on. the perception of the people of Muncan Village is that uttering profanity like this is considered taboo and inappropriate.

Discussions

The results of this study are taboo expressions that exist and are still believed by the people of Muncan Village, taboos related to religion, sexuality, bodily functions, nicknames, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity. This research reveals that the expression "taboo" in the Sasak language, especially those believed in Muncan Village, becomes a barrier when wanting to say or do something because it is still considered taboo by the community. The barrier here is defined as something that makes a person think first what he will do or say. Regarding the forms, meanings, and perceptions of taboo expressions in Muncan Village, various forms, meanings, and perceptions regarding taboo language have been explained. These findings cover several topics that may be difficult for non-Sasak language users to understand, but are useful for both Sasak and non-Sasak people to know the culture or beliefs that still exist about language that is considered taboo. In addition, this study supports the findings of research conducted by Nana Ari Anggraini, Mahyuni, Burhanuddin (2022), entitled " Bentuk Dan Penggunaan Bahasa Tabu Pada Anak di Lingkungan Bertais Kota Mataram " and Wawan mulyadi purnama, (2020), entitled " Analisis Bahasa Tabu Dalam Tradisi Masyarakat Lombok di Desa Geres, Kecamatan Labuhan Haji". To examine more deeply the

taboo language that exists in every region in Lombok. The similarity between the results of this study and the research conducted by Nana Ari Anggraini and Wawan mulyadi is that the types of taboo expressions or taboo language found are almost the same as this study, this shows how much the community still believes about taboo language in everyday life. Although the differences from the results of the study reveal differences in the meaning of the taboo language, because each region has beliefs about taboos and each meaning of taboos that are not allowed to be expressed has a meaning that makes each region taboo or not allowed to express or do it.

In addition, in this study there are several kinds of taboo expressions that are still believed by the people of Muncan Village, but only a few are still strongly believed such as taboos related to religion, sexuality, mantras, nicknames, profanity and others. In classifying the types of language taboos that have been found, the researcher uses the approach or theory of Batistella (2005; 72) regarding the classification of taboo words with 4 types. Language that is still a belief about taboos has a reason why it should not be said or done so as not to have an impact on someone who does it. Taboo language is still very close to Muncan village, where people still believe in things that have to do with beliefs, myths, mysticism and so on. But not only in Muncan village, especially on the island of Lombok still believe in taboo language or other beliefs, although each village has different beliefs about the taboo, the meaning and perception of the community will also be slightly different. In conclusion, in-depth research on taboos in Sasak culture not only highlights unique linguistic expressions and cultural nuances, but also provides a deeper understanding of broader social dynamics and the role of language in shaping social relations.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, taboo expressions in the Sasak language are rooted in a belief given by ancestors who have some kind, the meaning behind the language, as well as the current community's perception of how the belief in taboo language today, whether it is still believed or the reaction about a taboo language in this modern era. Understanding the cultural context and taboo language in the Sasak language

provides valuable insight as well as knowledge about language taboos or taboo expressions that exist in the Sasak tribe, especially in Muncan village. In addition to providing insight but also providing benefits about Sasak cultural society which still believes in many things that are considered taboo.

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