Valuing Language and Culture: An Example From Sasak

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Abstract

No one disputes that possession of language is one of the most distinctive of all human cultural attributes. The most fundamental argument has to do with the nature of language as social practice. An attempt to divorce language from its cultural context is to ignore the social circumstances which give it resonance and meaning. In the case of Sasak, language use reinforces the existing status differential and social value of language associated with the group. This perspective is employed, in this paper, to tackle the issue of Sasak language and culture.

Keywords: culture, linguistic determinism, linguistic relativism, nature of language

Introduction

Base Sasak 'Sasak language' is closely related to languages on both its neighbouring islands: *Samawa,* spoken in the western part of Sumbawa Island, and *Balinese* spoken in Bali Island, to the east and west of Lombok respectively. Sasak is an expressive language with a tradition of epics and other traditional discourses, such as a language for marriage ritual ceremonies *sòròng serah* 'language for disputes', and folklore such as the story of *Cupak Gurantang* 'The Story of the Unwise Brother in One Family', and *Rengganis* 'The Story of a Local Brave and Wise Queen'. Sasak has also functioned as a central symbol of identity or 'core value' (Smolicz, 1999, Smolicz, et al, 2001) for Sasak people for centuries. Sasak in itself is multi-dialectal. In addition to this, Sasak has speech levels. The speech levels in Sasak is determined by degrees of formality and respect and are clearly defined as in both Javanese and Balinese. As a detailed survey of the literature on the relation between language and culture is impossible within the limits of this space, this paper discusses a relatively small number of writers whose ideas have been considered relevant to the case of Sasak.

Theoretical Frameworks

Everybody appears to agree that the possession of language is one of the most crucial human cultural symbols. Discussing language and culture is often symbolized as two sides of one coin as the two notions cannot be easily separated. The relation between language and culture has been expressed by the twin notions of *linguistic determinism* and *linguistic relativism*. *Linguistic determinism* relates to the influence of language on thought and culture. *Linguistic determinism* has strong and weak versions. The *strong* version argues that language actually determines thought and culture, i.e. that each culture is 'at the mercy' of its language. The *weak* version claims that language and culture are closely inter-related. This *weak* version of *linguistic determinism* has been widely accepted, while the strong version has been challenged by researchers. *Linguistic relativism* is the notion that each language has its own way of looking at the world. Both notions, *linguistic determinism* and *linguistic relativism*, originated in the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), who combined knowledge of various languages, including South East Asian Languages, with a philosophical background.

Humboldt asserts that as language actually determines thought, it is impossible without language. Thus the question arises, if there was no thought before language, how did language arise in the first place? Humboldt answers this by adhering to the theory that language is a platonic object, comparable to a living organism, which suddenly evolved entirely of its own accord. Central to Humboldt's ideas about human language is the notion of *geisteskraft* 'mental power', which is responsible for language and linguistic diversity, as well as for culture and cultural diversity. For Humboldt, language is a kind of human action or labour. As such, it is produced by states that are internal to the mind, such as feelings, desires, beliefs, thoughts, and decisions. These internal

mental states are active powers or forces that bring about the external phenomenon of culture, including human language (Losonsky, 1999).

Humboldt further argues that the 'mental powers' that are responsible for language or any other human activity are inexplicable. For this reason, he develops the idea of relating language and thought in the concept of *Weltanschauung* 'world-view'.

> The reason 'the bringing-forth of language is an inner need of human beings' and language is 'a thing lying in their own nature' is that 'language is indispensable for the development of their mental powers and the attainment of a world-view' (Losonky, 1999: xi).

This emphasizes language people speak 'governs' their view of reality. It is also evident that what one says represents knowledge and experience, which are gained and shared with other people in one's community.

Boas (1911) was greatly influenced by Humboldt's strong commitment to *linguistic determinism*. However, Boas developed this idea and used it to tackle the phenomena of language from a socio-anthropological perspective. This he did by conceptualizing language and culture as one 'single whole'. Boas's idea of the inseparability of language and culture has been central to socio-anthropological linguistic inquiry since the nineteenth century. The notion of 'world view' has been transmitted from Humboldt via Boas, Sapir, and Whorf to others. Through this notion, linguistic systems can be studied as guides to understanding a particular cultural system.

Boas, for instance, using his research knowledge of American Indian languages, has shown that the way languages classify the world is arbitrary. Hence, each language has its own way of building up a vocabulary that divides up the world and establishes categories of experience (Duranti, 1997, 2003). This claim can be examined by using the classic example of the generic term *snow* for which Inuit has no equivalent. Inuit *aput* is used to express snow on the ground; *qana* indicates falling snow, *piqsirpoq* means drifting snow, while *qimuqsug* shows a snowdrift. This suggests the difficulty of distinguishing between language and culture and the usefulness of Agar's (1994:109) term 'languaculture' to cover the overlap.

Humboldt and Boas's ideas were further developed by Sapir (1949) who views language as a purely human property through which we communicate ideas by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. Sapir asserts:

> Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation. (Sapir, 1949: 162).

Central to Sapir's linguistic relativism is his idea of connecting language with cultural psychology. For Sapir, the individual is unconscious of this connection and subject to it without choice. Sapir (1949: 515) also argues that culture is an abstraction and does not have a life of its own. An individual's biography is crucial to culture – both its transmission and experience depend on psychological processes including self-awareness and conscious choice. The more we refine social categories, the closer we get to the psychological:

> 'The true locus of culture is in the interactions of specific individuals and…the world of meanings which each one of these individuals may unconsciously abstract for himself from participation in these interaction'.

It is in this light that Sapir perceives psychology and culture as two levels of abstraction from the same stratum of human experience (Kirmayer, 2001). This position was echoed a decade later by Whorf who asserts:

> We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds - and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way - an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, but its terms are absolutely obligatory; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees. (Whorf 1940, pp. 213-14; his emphasis)

The premise later known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis describes the importance of the relationship between language and thought. Whorf further argues that linguistic relativity:

> "holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated" (p. 214).

The hypothesis argues mainly that a certain language orients its speakers to particular ways of knowing, understanding, believing and viewing the world (Searle, 1979). This emphasizes the dependent of one's mind on one's particular culture is not always understood by other speakers from other languages and cultures.

In his studies of Hopi Indians, Whorf claims that the Hopi do not make a distinction in their language between the past, present, and future tenses as English does. In English, it seems natural to differ between 'he runs', 'he is running', and 'he ran'. In Hopi these are all rendered as *wari* 'running occurs' (statement of fact). This indicates that in Hopi, the marks they put on have nothing to do with time, but with validity. In other words, Hopi emphasizes the evidence of what they say rather than paying attention on when the event happened.

Whorf (1956:67) argues that the Hopi 'has no general notion or intuition of time as a smooth flowing continuum in which everything in the universe proceeds at an equal rate, out of future, through a present, into a past'. In addition, Whorf imagined that the scientists of the day and the Hopi must see the world very differently. Whorf also noticed that the Hopi language is capable of accounting for and describing correctly all observable phenomena of the universe. Another characteristic of Hopi according to Whorf (1956) is that there is just a single word – 'masa'ytaka' - for everything that flies, including insects, aeroplanes and pilots.

From the perspective of the research I am undertaking, there are some criticisms of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which need to be considered, of both the strong version – each culture is at the mercy of its language – and the weak version – language and culture are closely inter-related. On the one hand, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is criticized by Fishman (1985, 1994), for instance, for its overt relativism. He notes that it seems to be based only on a limited number of languages, and on monolinguals: one culture equals one language. It is evident that even within one language we still find variation. This suggests that even people within one language and culture may have different ways of conceptualizing their world. This fact is not taken into account by the hypothesis. Thus, 'language itself is not as fixed, by any means, as Whorf assumed… All in all, we are far more valiant, nimble, experienced and successful strugglers and jugglers with language - and – communication problems than Whorf realized (p.464). In addition, Sapir-Whorf's hypothesis, according to Fishman (1985), does not have a general conceptual approach to differences between languages. For instance, he does not provide a concept of 'dimensionality with respect to interlanguage differences' (p.467).

On the other hand, Sapir-Whorf hypothesis does continue to fascinate researchers because of its contribution to the notion of cultural specificity. One of the supporters for this, for instance, is Wassman and Dasen's (1998). In their study on Balinese, they found the differences between the way the Balinese people orient themselves spatially and to the orientation of Westerners. They found that the use of an absolute reference system based on geographic points on the island in the Balinese language correlates with the significant cultural importance of these points to the people. They investigated how language affects the thinking of the Balinese people and their findings indicate moderate linguistic relativity.

Despite some of the empirical problems encountered by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, this affirms that language is not the sole property of an individual alone, but it is societal (Johnson, 2000, Searle, 1998). Searle further argues:

> There is a real world that exists independently of …our experiences, *our thoughts*, *our language*. We have direct perceptual access to *that world* through our senses, especially touch and vision. Words in our language … have reasonably clear meanings. Because of their meanings, they can be used to refer to and talk about real objects in the world. Our statements are typically true or false depending on whether they correspond to how things are, that is, to the facts in the world' [italics my own]

The above statement indicates the important relation between language and culture, which also implies that persons act as cultural bases for:

> 'formulating and exploring subjective experience, as well as persons are recognizable as elements of social life, as occupying social statuses and participating in social groups and events' (White and Kirkpatrick, 1985: 9).

Employing a different approach from those of Sapir-Whorf's subsequent supporters, Geertz (1960, 1973) asserts that culture should be viewed as the collectivity of individuals' ways of behaving and calls this the *cultural public*. This description emphasizes the public nature of culture because meaning is public property. To understand the symbolic actions of a particular community we have to understand its cultural values. Geertz implies that ideas about language should be viewed as part of cultural systems and linguistic ideologies. Geertz also wants to show that the link between language and culture is one between structuring experiences in a particular way (culture) and encoding experiences in language. It is evident that to be able to understand the modes of expressions or symbol systems used by a particular language community we have to understand both the 'context of culture' and the 'context of situation' (Malinowski, 1923). In other words, the existence of a particular word

to mean a particular thing might be applicable only to a particular culture (Gumperz and Hymes, 1972).

Thus far, we have seen that language is embedded in the culture of the people who speak that language. The example of Hopi shows that Hopi has been a cultural resource and a social practice, not just the medium of culture but part of culture. It is impossible to distinguish whether it is the power of language which influences culture, or the power of culture which influences language. Both culture and language are almost impossible to distinguish and are embedded in the identity of its speakers.

Sasak Language and Culture

Although social stratification is not universal, some societies such as India and Bali are rigidly divided into hereditary castes. There is cultural similarity between Bali and India (Brown, 1988) and it is largely due to borrowing, either directly or by way of Java. Brown also argues that in the case of India, as it is in Bali, genealogy is the core of its historical tradition. Therefore, still according to (Brown, 1988), Balinese caste system appears to have been influenced by Indian culture. In the Sasak case, the caste system is borrowed from the Javanese kingdom (Cederroth, 1981, 1983. 1996a,b).

There is a lack of comprehensive historical research on matters related to the sociological nature of the Sasak community. This leads to a difficulty in finding a reliable chronology for the existing system. We may assume, however, that since the Balinese kingdom (*Karang Asem*) conquered Lombok in the 17th century and prevailed for two and half centuries, the pattern of hereditary transmission of social rank in Sasak seems to follow that of the Balinese. Balinese are extraordinarily concerned with caste. The class system has legitimized itself by claiming hereditary links to prestigious figures of the kingdom in Sasak.

If the above assumption is true, the stratification system in Sasak, as it is in Bali, could be categorized as 'closed', that is one in which social inequalities are considered essential. Brown (1988) remarks that *closed* societies exhibit:

> 'a contrasting syndrome of concomitants: a racialist conception of human nature, reduced individualism, hagiography in place of biography, iconography in place of realistic portraiture, non-uniform education, hypertrophied religious and ritual concerns, little political or social science, less fanatic divination, and perhaps a lesser concern with natural science. These traits are all reflections of the hereditary transmission of social rank' (p.9).

Traditionally, Sasak people were divided into four social classes: *Radèn* 'prominent nobles', *mènak* and *perwangse* 'ordinary nobles', and *jajarkarang or bulu ketujur* 'commoners'. This caste system is relevant to both the marital system and language use in Sasak. With regard to the marital system, there is a clearly different treatment of *mènak* 'nobles' and *non-mènak* 'non-nobles'. For instance, a female from a noble family has a different *ajikrame* 'bride price' from that of commoners. Even among the nobles themselves, the *ajikrame* is potentially variable because it is determined by the inherited ancestral quality of one's *kance-kancean/turas-turasan* 'nobles group' Of course the *ajikrame* between nobles and commoners varies significantly.

The *mènak* 'noble' group, in general, is further divided into *mènak utame* and *mènak tinggi* 'prominent *mènak*', *mènak biase* 'ordinary *mènak*'. The *mènak utame/tinggi* are those whose ancestors were kings and the family of the kings in the past Sasak kingdoms. The Sasak people perceive them as the upper class community members. They are entitled *Radèn* or *Radèn Nune* for the males, and *Radèn Dénde* for the females. Such titles are prefixed to one's name, as in *Radèn Rahmat* for male, and *Radèn Dénde Rani* for female. One should marry within one's internal group if the title is to be preserved. The failure to do so may prevent the titles from being used by their descendents. In the past, the system was managed very strictly among the members of this community group as there was significant social sanction applied for those who failed to maintain the system, the so-called *susut* 'downgraded'.

Mènak biase were considered the middle class of Sasak society during the kingdom period, when their ancestors were ministers or high level employees in the kingdom circle. People from this group hold the titles *Lalu* and *Baiq* for the unmarried males and females respectively, and *Mamiq* 'father' and *Mamiq Bini* 'mother' plus the first child name for the married couples.

The *perwangse* group bears no specific title for unmarried people or married people without children. But, when they have children, they bear the title *Bape* for males and *Inaq* for females. *Jajar Karang* or *Bulu Ketujur* are those whose ancestors were courtiers during the kingdom era. They do not hold any titles in relation to nobility. In some places they are addressed as *loq* and *laq* plus their first name for unmarried males and females respectively. The married couples with children are addressed as *amaq* 'father' and *inaq* 'mother' plus their first child's name. *Jajar Karang* is also extended into *Pengayah* 'labour group' or *Sudra* group in Balinese system. These stratification systems are represented and validated in the event of *sòròng serah* 'customary marriage' in the form of *aji krame adat* 'customary law prices'. During my stay in the village, I noticed that such solemn events are managed in a simpler form compared to how they were managed in

the past. For instance, the symbols used which was normally using *kòtaq* 'traditional glory box' for holding *kèrèng berut* 'traditional weavings' can be replaced by any modern boxes or luggage. This certainly indicates a change in perception of the Sasak people to their traditional values.

There have been cases where a male commoner cannot marry a noble woman, but a noble man has no obstacles to marrying a female commoner. This leads to the fact that intermarriage between noble females and non-noble males is rare and if it should happen, it often creates conflict with a high social price. The failure to follow the rules leads noble women to be 'estranged' from their family *(tetèh)*. Interestingly, this kind of family is considered to be *keluarge kuat tegel/jauq/gawéq adat* 'holding a strong tradition'. Another interesting phenomenon is that the aspect of *adat* sometimes does not apply for those who are not Sasak. For instance, a noble Sasak woman may marry a non-Sasak male (eg. Javanese, Sundanese) without risk of being *tetèh* 'estranged' from the girl's family.

Equally important from the standpoint of social stratification, the vagueness of the history of the Sasak community seems also to apply to the language (Sasak). Sasak itself is a complex language in (a) dialect diversity; and (b) speech level systems. Sasak has traditionally been classified into five dialects: *menó-mené, ngenó-ngené, meriyaq-meriku, kutó-kuté, and nggetó-nggeté.* However, this classification does not seem to accommodate the reality of the actual variation existing in Sasak, because there are also other dialects such as *menu-meni* and *menung-mening*. For instance, *menu-meni* speakers do not always agree to be in the category of *menó-mené* speakers, although the reason for this is hard to tell. Therefore, I would follow. Teeuw's position referred to in Clynes (1995) as well as by Austin (2000), who both argue that Sasak indicates a more complex pattern of dialectal divergence than is indicated by traditional classifications. The table below gives an indication of Sasak regional dialectal variation.

'I came to your house yesterday, but your wife told me that you had gone to the airport'.

The Table 1 indicates that variants of lexical items

emerge in several varieties. The adverb of time 'yesterday', for instance, is **rubin** in *ngenó-ngené* and **tebin** in *nggetó-nggeté*, as well as *kutó-kuté* and **uiq** in the remaining varieties. The same applies to the 1st person pronoun which varies between **kami** in *ngenó-ngené* and **kung** in *kutó-kuté* but **aku** or **ku** in some others. A significant variation also occurs in the verbal **léto** 'come', for both *meriaq-meriku* and *menó-mené*, and **litó** in *menu-meni,* **ketóq** in *kutó-kuté*, and **dateng** in *ngenó-ngené,* while **rateng** in *menung-mening*. The preposition equivalent to 'to' is **aneng** in *ngenó-ngené*, **ngaro** in *kutó-kuté*, **timpaq** in *nggetó-nggeté,* and **òjòk/jòk** is for others.

Variation is also found in the 2nd person possessive pronoun, which appears in both morphologically free and bound (clitic) forms: free in 'your house' **balén side** in *meriaq-meriku* and **balén diq** in *kutó-kuté,* and 'bound' in the rest, as in **balém**, **baleò, balénpé**. The expression for 'your wife' also varies where the word **senine** is used in five dialects, but clitics play a role in designating the meaning of the second person pronoun, as in **seninaqm** in both *meriaq-meriku* and *menó-mené*, **seninaqpé** in *ngenó-ngené*, **senineò** in both *menu-meni* and *menung-mening*. However, *kutó-kuté* and *nggetó-nggeté* have a different lexical form for 'wife' **sawa** which may connote sexual intercourse in other dialects. The verb **baraq** means 'say' in *meriaq-meriku, menó-mené, menu-meni* and *menung-mening*. However, the word **baraq** may mean 'swollen' in the other dialects. **Badaq**, **ngina**, and **òngkat** are used in *ngenó-ngené*, *nggetó-nggeté* and *kutó-kuté* respectively. Variation also occurs in the verb corresponding to 'go', where six dialects employ **laló**, but only *kutó-kuté* uses **ngaró,** in the other dialects this may mean 'flow'.

In short, it is obvious that lexical variation between the existing dialects are significant, but those dialects which deviate most from the others are *kutó-kute* and *nggetó-nggeté*. These latter two are spoken in the northern and eastern part of Lombok respectively.

In relation to dialect diversity, Sasak also incorporates a 'speech style' which seems to have been borrowed from both Javanese and Balinese (Clynes, 1995). In many

Table 1. Table of Lexical Items in Seven Sasak Regional Varieties

Variety	Yesterday	I	come	to	house	Your	But	your wife	say	You	have	go	to	airport
Meriaq-meriku	Uiq/z	aku	Léto	ò/jòk	balén	side	laguq/z	Seninakm	baraqke	Side	uah	laló	jòk	bandara
Ngenó-ngené	Rubin	kami	Dating	Anéng	balén	-pé	Laguq	Seninaqpé	bebadaq	Épé	wah	laló	anéng	bandara
Kutó-kuté	Tebin	kung	Ketóq	Ngaró	balén	-diq	Laguq	Sawandiq	òngkat	Diq	uah	injah	ngaró	bandara
Menó-mené	Uiq	aku	Letó	Jòk	balé	-m	Laguq	Seninaqm	baraqke	Side	uah	laló	jòk	bandara
Nggetó-nggeté	Tebin	ku	Dateng	Timpaq	balén	-pé	Laguq	Sawanpé	ngina	*	sawéq	laló	timpaq	bandara
Menu-meni	Uiq	kò	Litó	Ojòk	balé	-o	Laguq	Senineò	baraqkò	Side	uah	Laló	òjòk	bandara
Menung-mening	Uig	kò	Rateng	Jòk	balé	-o	Laguq	Seninengò	baraqkò	Side	uah	laló	òjòk	bandara

senses the Balinese and the ancient Javanese share a common culture. However, again, Balinese and Javanese accounts of the past have 'more in common with myth, legend and parable than with history' (Brown, 1988: 97). In this respect, the example of language use is given in correspondence with the stratification of the society. Parallel to this stratification are three speech levels: *jamaq, tengaq* and *utame* 'ordinary', 'medium' and 'prominent' respectively. The examples below illustrate the three styles in use to mean the same, as in 'what did you say?".

> Utame: *Napi   manik   dekaji?*
>   What   say   you
>   What did you say?'
>
> Tengaq: *Napi   baseng   pelungguh?*
>   What   say   you
>   'What did you say?'
>
> Jamaq: *Ape   uning   side?*
>   What   say   you
>   'What did you say'?

In terms of class and ethnicity as a set of markers by which one group differentiates itself from another, Sasak people then could be identified according to class by the language they speak. Gidden and Held (1982), and Gidden (1990, 1993) argues that any apparent difference is suitable material for an ethnic label of one group by another. So far, language use functions to mark and demarcate caste in Sasak community. *Alus* has been claimed to be the property of *mènak* by the Sasak community as it was mainly used in the *mènak* environment. There is a local expression which supports this claim, i.e. *Dengan mènak dòang tao napakang base alus, sèngaq ie jari baseng bilang jelo* 'Only the *mènak* people speak proper *alus* as they use it in their everyday interaction'.

Mènak 'nobles' as a referent group in Sasak community certainly enjoy some superiority over *non-mènak* 'commoners'. Here, the notion of group affiliation is important for the Sasak people. Language use reinforces the existing status differential and social value of language associated with the group. For the subordinate group (non-nobles), feelings of inadequacy to properly use high speech markers arise. So, the safest strategy for certain educated speakers to avoid being categorized as not respecting the listeners to switch to Indonesian (Syahdan, 1996).

Inequalities are justified in terms of social strata and language use conventions. Thus, the status of any group in Sasak is shown through its ability to show politeness in the form of the use of lexical items considered polite. Nothofer (2000) indicates that the repertoire of polite vocabulary varies between *mènak* 'nobles' and *non-mènak* 'non-nobles'. This is understandable because the distinction in social status leads Sasak people to be

diverse in the use of language in their everyday encounters. For example, a *mènak* speaker is brought up to use *alus* 'high' style during conversation with his family members, and non-*mènak* speakers to just use the *Sasak jamaq* 'ordinary Sasak' in their daily encounters. The mastery of *alus* for *non-mènak,* therefore, depends on both their role and their level of mobility in society. This applies equally to those non-*mènak* with formal education and a middle class occupation, and with *hajj* status.

It is apparent that there is a tendency nowadays where the notion of caste is not considered as important as it once was. This trend applies in both the marital system and in language use in the Sasak community. The power of caste consciousness is threatened daily by both modern values and the egalitarian teachings of Islam. In what remains, caste seems to be based on the achievements of a particular family. For instance, noble families tend to accept the difference in blood relationships, but emphasize more the differences in education and religion. Furthermore, the more educated and the more religious a Sasak family is, the more tolerant they will be in bridging kinship differences. The notion of caste has therefore shifted to resemble what we commonly understand as class, that is, from blood heredity to socioeconomic status and education as well as religious attainment.

Conclusion

The Sasak community has its own peculiar cultural values which tend to be different from others. Based on social stratification, this community might be categorized as a 'closed' society, as social inequalities are significant to demarcate social boundaries. The inequality of social rank is transmitted hereditarily and maintained through the language they speak. The massive influences of modern values as well as education and religious awareness, however, seem to influence the Sasak perception towards their cultural identity. A shift in Sasak perception is certainly relevant to account for the daily language use of the Sasak community. Sasak cultural values also recognize and apply other universal values, but Sasak also has its cultural values which are specific and sensitive to Sasak people. The specific nature of Sasak cultural values is manifested in language use.

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