



ADULTS VERSUS ELDERS' PERCEIVED UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENDANGERED LEXICONS OF THE *METATAH* RITUAL IN MENYALI VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

The *Metatah* ritual, a Balinese Hindu life-cycle ceremony practiced in Menyali Village, contains ritual lexicons that reflect cultural and spiritual knowledge passed down through generations. This study aimed to (1) identify the level of adults' perceived understanding of the endangered lexicons of the *Metatah* ritual, (2) identify the level of elders' perceived understanding, and (3) examine whether there was a significant difference between both groups. This study employed a quantitative comparative cross-sectional design involving 100 respondents consisting of 50 adults and 50 elders. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire containing 35 ritual lexicons and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through the Mann-Whitney U test. The findings showed a clear generational gap in perceived understanding. Most adults were categorized into very low (52%) and low (48%) levels, while elders were categorized into very high (90%) and high (10%) levels of perceived understanding. The statistical analysis also revealed a significant difference between adults and elders in their perceived understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons ($p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that the ritual lexicons of the *Metatah* ceremony are experiencing lexical vulnerability due to weakening intergenerational transmission.

Keywords: *endangered lexicons; Metatah ritual; perceived understanding; adults and elders; Menyali Village*

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in religious and cultural traditions across the world. It is not only a tool for communication, but also a medium through which values, beliefs, and identities are expressed and preserved. In many communities, language is deeply connected to ceremonial practices, helping to shape how traditions are passed from one generation to the next. In Bali, this connection

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between language and culture is especially strong, as seen in the various rituals that reflect the island's rich spiritual and cultural heritage Mudana (2018). One of the most meaningful rituals in Balinese Hindu tradition is the *Metatah* ritual, which marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. This ritual continues to be performed in many areas, including Menyali Village, where the local community still uses the Balinese language, the Menyali dialect, in their daily life. In Menyali, the *Metatah* ritual is carried out with deep respect, and the specific ritual lexicons used in the process are considered an important part of the village's cultural identity.

In carrying out various cultural and religious traditions, Balinese people use a special lexicon that is only used in certain contexts Budasi (2023). In the context of the *Metatah* ritual, the lexicon used is a fundamental part of the ceremony to help ensure that the ritual is performed correctly and its meaning is fully understood. The *Metatah* ritual is believed to purify individuals by reducing Sad Ripu, six negative human traits: Kama (lust), Lobha (greed), Krodha (anger), Mada (arrogance), Moha (confusion), and Matsarya (jealousy) Budhawati (2013). This ceremony also teaches discipline and self-control, shaping individuals to become responsible members of society. In Menyali Village, this tradition is still carried out with deep cultural and spiritual meaning. Throughout the ritual, a special lexicon is used to describe the various elements, objects, and actions in the ceremony. These lexicons have significant cultural value because they help maintain and convey the wisdom contained in the ritual. However, preliminary studies show that the adult generation in Menyali Village has limited understanding of these lexicons, which threatens the continuity of tradition and weakens cultural identity Budasi & Suryasa (2021). Although these lexicons still exist, the adult generation is increasingly less familiar with them. The elder generation tends to demonstrate stronger perceived understanding and familiarity with these terms, while the adult generation appears to feel less confident in understanding or using them appropriately within the ritual context. In response to this phenomenon, concrete efforts are needed to preserve and maintain these lexicons by examining the extent to which community members perceive their understanding of the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual. That way, the lexicon can continue to be understood and passed on to future generations.

Understanding the lexicons used in traditional rituals such as *Metatah* is very important in preserving cultural values and maintaining the continuity of ancestral heritage. Lexicon refers to a collection of vocabulary, expressions, and terms used by the community in everyday communication and in the context of traditional ceremonies. This lexicon not only carries literal meaning but also contains deep cultural values. Mondal (2017) explains that lexical meanings are formed through semantic relations, where words are understood based on their relationship with other terms within a semantic network. In traditional rituals, this semantic network allows lexicons to function as carriers of cultural knowledge, symbolic meanings, and social values rather than as isolated vocabulary items.



The *Metatah* ritual, which is an important part of the life cycle in the Balinese Hindu tradition, involves various symbolic stages expressed through certain traditional terms. Andriningsih (2020) explains that elements of the *Metatah* ceremony reflect not only ritual procedures but also social, spiritual, and communal values embedded in the terms used during the ritual. However, along with generational changes and shifting social dynamics, the adult generation's perceived understanding and familiarity with these ritual lexicons appear to be gradually decreasing. Therefore, it is important to examine how adults and elders perceive their understanding of these ritual lexicons in order to better understand the continuity of endangered cultural language across generations.

Previous research on ritual lexicons in Bali shows that each community has a different language tradition. Research by Budasi (2021) entitled "*Cultural Views of the North Balinese Community on Ngidih Marriage Reflected from its Lexicon*," identified 62 cultural terms in the nine stages of the Ngidih ceremony. Another study by Putri and Santika (2020), "*Emotional Lexicon in Male and Female Communication: A Study of Balinese Language in South Kuta*," showed differences in emotional expression based on gender that enrich the language variation of the Balinese community. Meanwhile, research by Angelita (2023) entitled "*Procedures and Lexicons in the Ngerorod Wedding Ceremony in Sidetapa Village, North Bali*," found 27 unique terms in the stages of the ceremony, each with contextual cultural meaning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The Relation Between Language and Culture

From an ethnolinguistic perspective, language is not simply an abstract system of signs but a cultural resource through which communities express, preserve, and transform their worldview. Lut and Starenkova (2022) emphasize that language functions as a cultural phenomenon, shaping the development of society while also serving as the principal medium for transmitting traditions and values across generations. In their view, culture provides the framework within which language emerges, but language simultaneously acts as the vehicle through which culture is continually reproduced and renewed.

Building on this, Mahadi and Jafari (2012) argue that language and culture are inseparable, as language is molded by cultural contexts while also influencing patterns of thought and perception. Drawing on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, they emphasize that linguistic structures condition how individuals conceptualize reality, while culture gives meaning to the words and expressions that communities use. This means that understanding a language cannot be separated from understanding the culture that sustains the language itself.

The relationship between language and culture is also closely connected to how individuals perceive and understand linguistic expressions within their cultural environment. In sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic contexts, understanding is not merely related to the ability to recognize words literally, but also involves



individuals' perceptions of meaning, function, and cultural significance. Gordon and Chen (2016) explain that perceived understanding refers to an individual's perception of being understood or of understanding something based on personal interpretation and social interaction. This perspective highlights that understanding is not only cognitive, but also subjective and experience-based. In cultural and linguistic contexts, perceived understanding may develop through repeated exposure, participation, and interaction within a community. Therefore, individuals who are more actively involved in cultural activities are likely to develop stronger perceived understanding toward the language and symbolic expressions embedded in those traditions.

Endangered Ritual Lexicons

In linguistics, the term *lexicon* refers to the complete inventory of words, expressions, and idiomatic phrases known and used by speakers of a language. The lexicon extends beyond dictionary entries because it also includes morphological forms, collocations, and mental associations stored in the mind. In this sense, the lexicon functions as part of a speaker's mental grammar, enabling individuals to comprehend and produce language effectively. Lexical semantics research further explains that the lexicon is not merely a static collection of vocabulary, but rather a dynamic semantic network in which meanings interact and form interconnected systems of linguistic knowledge Stringer (2019).

In relation to cultural traditions, ritual lexicons represent highly specialized lexical elements that carry symbolic, spiritual, and social meanings. These lexicons are commonly used within ceremonial contexts and often reflect local wisdom and inherited cultural knowledge. Within the Balinese Hindu tradition, ritual lexicons are essential because they function not only as ceremonial terminology but also as representations of philosophical beliefs, sacred values, and communal identity. In the context of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village, these ritual lexicons are used to refer to ceremonial stages, ritual objects, sacred offerings, spiritual actions, and symbolic activities performed throughout the ceremony.

However, although these ritual lexicons continue to exist within the implementation of the *Metatah* ritual, their sustainability is increasingly vulnerable due to limited intergenerational transmission. A previous study conducted by Natih (2025) identified 35 ritual lexicons used throughout the procedural stages of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village. These lexicons represent various ritual objects, actions, offerings, and ceremonial concepts that contain deep cultural and spiritual meanings. Nevertheless, the study also indicated that many of these lexical items are becoming increasingly unfamiliar to younger generations, particularly adults who are less intensively involved in ritual activities compared to elders. As a result, several ritual lexicons may be categorized as endangered lexicons because their meanings, symbolic values, and ritual functions are gradually weakening within contemporary cultural understanding. The identified ritual lexicons are presented in the following table.



Table 2. 1 Ritual Lexicons in the *Metatah* Ritual Identified by Natih (2025)

No	Lexicon	Description	Cultural Meaning
1.	<i>merajah tunggir</i>	Drawing sacred symbols on the back of the participant's neck according to gender identity.	Symbolizes spiritual balance and mental purification. The sacred symbols represent feminine and masculine energies that guide participants toward positive behavior and spiritual readiness.
2.	<i>pemangku</i>	A Balinese Hindu spiritual leader who leads religious ceremonies.	Represents a mediator between humans and God who maintains the sacredness of the ritual and delivers prayers for blessings and protection.
3.	<i>mapasupati</i>	A ritual to purify the tools and objects used in the <i>Metatah</i> ceremony.	Symbolizes the spiritual activation of ritual tools so they gain sacred power, protection, and positive energy.
4.	<i>sayut pasupati</i>	A red-colored offering used during the <i>mapasupati</i> ritual.	Represents the creative and purifying energy of Dewa Brahma that blesses and sanctifies ritual equipment.
5.	<i>Bale petatahan</i>	The bed used during the tooth-filing process.	Symbolizes readiness to leave negative traits behind and begin a better stage of life.
6.	<i>kwangen</i>	A cone-shaped prayer offering made from banana leaves and flowers.	Represents the beauty, purity, and holiness of God while reminding people to honor the divine name.
7.	<i>rurub</i>	A yellow cloth with sacred symbols used to cover the participant's body during the ritual.	Symbolizes spiritual protection against negative energies and harmful influences.
8.	<i>sekar tunjung</i>	A lotus flower bud placed on the participant's forehead and blessed with mantras.	Represents emotional purification, calmness, and spiritual focus during the ritual.
9.	<i>caket</i>	A metal cutting tool placed under the pillow during the ritual.	Symbolizes protection from spiritual disturbances and negative energies.
10.	<i>menatah</i>	The symbolic filing of six upper teeth using purified tools.	Represents the removal of <i>Sad Ripu</i> or six negative human traits before entering adulthood.
11.	<i>sangging</i>	A religious figure responsible for performing the tooth-filing process.	Represents spiritual guidance that helps participants leave negative behavior behind and become more mature.
12.	<i>pedangal tebu</i>	A square-shaped sugarcane support used to prevent the teeth from closing.	Symbolizes sweetness, kindness, sincerity, and positive attitudes toward others.



No	Lexicon	Description	Cultural Meaning
13.	<i>carang kayu dapdap</i>	A wooden support made from <i>dapdap</i> wood used during tooth filing.	Represents spiritual protection because the <i>dapdap</i> tree is believed to have strong magical power against evil forces.
14.	<i>pahat mapati cakra</i>	A carving tool used symbolically during the tooth-filing process.	Symbolizes the removal of negative characteristics within humans.
15.	<i>kikir lalung</i>	A tool used to file the participant's teeth.	Represents self-improvement and the elimination of harmful attitudes to achieve wisdom and balance.
16.	<i>asab tala</i>	A red stone used to sharpen the teeth.	Symbolizes the purification and refinement of character and thoughts before adulthood.
17.	<i>untun tilap</i>	A stone used to rub the participant's teeth.	Represents cleansing oneself from negative human traits and harmful behavior.
18.	<i>nyuh gading</i>	Yellow coconut water used by participants to rinse their mouths.	Symbolizes blessings from Dewa Siwa to remove negativity and support a better life.
19.	<i>banten biyakala mijian</i>	An offering placed under the bed and stepped on after the ritual.	Represents self-purification and the neutralization of harmful spiritual forces.
20.	<i>sungkem ring guru rupaka</i>	The act of kneeling and bowing to parents.	Symbolizes respect, gratitude, and asking for parental blessings before adulthood.
21.	<i>mapetik rambut</i>	A ritual of cutting hair from several parts of the head.	Symbolizes cleansing impurities, balancing positive and negative aspects, and preparing spiritually for adulthood.
22.	<i>seet mingmang</i>	A ritual tool made from arranged alang-alang grass.	Represents spiritual strength used to destroy negative characteristics within humans.
23.	<i>amput-amput</i>	Alang-alang grass waved over the participant's body.	Symbolizes cleansing negative thoughts, emotions, and spiritual burdens from the body and mind.
24.	<i>perajahan</i>	Drawing sacred symbols on parts of the participant's body using betel leaf branches, honey, and sandalwood powder.	Represents spiritual purification and positive blessings related to speech, emotions, behavior, and usefulness to others.
25.	<i>katik base mecarang tiga</i>	A betel leaf branch used for drawing sacred symbols on the participant's body.	Symbolizes harmony, preservation, and balance as represented by Dewa Wisnu.
26.	<i>natab</i>	A ritual movement of directing both hands toward the body.	Represents receiving sacred blessings and spiritual energy from the ritual.
27.	<i>banten byakala petatahan</i>	An offering placed in front of the participant for purification.	Represents cleansing, protection, and the removal of negative spiritual influences and impurities.
28.	<i>mejaya-jaya</i>	A ritual celebrating victory and blessings.	Symbolizes victory over negative traits and readiness to live responsibly as an adult.



No	Lexicon	Description	Cultural Meaning
29.	<i>melukat</i>	A purification ritual using holy water.	Represents physical and spiritual cleansing to achieve peace, purity, and positive energy
30.	<i>mesosolan</i>	A blessing ritual involving a duck and chicken.	Symbolizes wisdom, careful thinking, diligence, and responsibility in adult life
31.	<i>pucacang urip</i>	A headband made from alang-alang grass worn by the participant.	Symbolizes the return of the soul and spiritual strength after the tooth-filing ritual.
32.	<i>banten piotonan petatahan</i>	An offering used to honor God and ancestors during the Balinese birthday ritual.	Represents prayers for safety, blessings, protection, prosperity, and long life.
33.	<i>nunas tirta</i>	The act of requesting holy water for purification.	Symbolizes divine protection, purification, and spiritual readiness for adulthood.
34.	<i>nunas bija</i>	The act of requesting sacred rice grains for purification.	Represents planting seeds of purity within thoughts, speech, and behavior.
35.	<i>mapelabain sad rasa</i>	The act of tasting six flavors derived from the essence of nature.	Symbolizes understanding life experiences through patience, discipline, wisdom, self-control, and inner peace.

The existence of these ritual lexicons demonstrates that language functions not only as a communication system but also as a carrier of cultural memory, spiritual philosophy, and inherited local wisdom. However, when specialized ritual terms are no longer fully understood or actively transmitted across generations, their cultural vitality becomes threatened. In this context, the phenomenon may be understood as lexical endangerment, in which specific lexical elements gradually lose their functional, symbolic, and philosophical significance within the community.

In the context of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village, the decreasing familiarity of adults with ritual lexicons compared to elders may indicate an early stage of lexical endangerment. Although the ritual itself continues to be practiced, the weakening understanding of ritual lexicons among younger generations reflects a gradual disruption in cultural transmission. This condition suggests that the preservation of ritual language is closely connected to how communities maintain, understand, and pass down cultural knowledge across generations. Therefore, examining adults' and elders' perceived understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons becomes important in identifying the current vitality of these endangered lexical elements within the community.

Generational Classification of Adults and Elders

In social and developmental studies, adults and elders represent distinct phases of human life, each with its own characteristics, responsibilities, and cultural

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roles. Erikson (1982) conceptualizes adulthood as the stage of generativity versus stagnation, in which individuals are expected to contribute to the continuity of society through nurturing, productivity, and cultural transmission. In traditional communities, this contribution is often manifested through active involvement in cultural and religious practices, including ritual preparation and performance. Within this framework, adults are positioned as key actors in the transmission of cultural knowledge. In the Balinese context, adulthood is closely linked to marriage, after which individuals are socially obligated to participate in communal and ritual activities (*mebraya*). Through these responsibilities, adults are expected to understand and apply ritual lexicons used in ceremonies such as the *Metatah* ritual. Elders, in contrast, are situated in Erikson's stage of integrity versus despair, where individuals draw upon accumulated life experiences and function as cultural bearers who preserve and embody traditional knowledge.

In addition to psychological perspectives, age classification is also commonly categorized based on developmental stages proposed by the Indonesian Ministry of Health. According to Depkes RI (2009) classification, the human life span is divided into several stages, namely: infancy (0–5 years), childhood (5–11 years), early adolescence (12–16 years), late adolescence (17–25 years), early adulthood (26–35 years), late adulthood (36–45 years), early elderly stage (46–55 years), late elderly stage (56–65 years), and elderly over 65 years old. Referring to this classification, the present study categorizes participants aged 26–45 years as adults and participants aged 46–65 years as elders. This categorization is considered relevant because individuals within these age ranges generally occupy different social, cultural, and generational positions within the community.

From a linguistic and cultural standpoint, Crystal (2014) emphasized that adults often face greater exposure to globalization and social change, which can affect their use and understanding of traditional language. Elders, however, are usually more deeply connected with cultural and ritual practices, making them stronger in preserving ritual language and traditional expressions. Language retention is often higher among older generations who have spent most of their lives in community-based cultural contexts. Adults, by contrast, are more likely to adapt language use to modern contexts, which may reduce their command of ritual lexicons. Other scholars also underline that generational differences are not only biological but also cultural. Eisenlohr (2002) noted that elders typically hold a respected role in communities, particularly in oral traditions, where they act as knowledge keepers. Adults, while actively participating in rituals, are sometimes positioned as learners or transmitters of culture to the younger generation. This creates a natural dynamic in which elders pass on traditions, while adults negotiate between traditional expectations and modern lifestyles.

Adults and elders play complementary roles in the intergenerational transmission of culture. Adults represent the transitional generation, balancing modernity and tradition, while elders function as custodians of cultural knowledge and ritual language. This theoretical framework provides a strong rationale for



investigating the differences in comprehension of *Metatah* ritual lexicons between these two groups.

The *Metatah* Ritual

The *Metatah* ritual is one of the central rites of passage in Balinese Hinduism and embodies a profound intertwining of spiritual doctrine, moral formation, and communal identity. This ritual is not merely a physical act of tooth filing, but a symbolic process representing self-purification and the control of negative human traits (*Sad Ripu*). Ernawati (2013) explains that for Balinese Hindu participants, *Metatah* holds deep spiritual meaning as a transition toward maturity, self-discipline, and readiness to assume social and religious responsibilities within the community. Through this ritual, individuals are not only purified spiritually but are also formally integrated into the moral and social order of Balinese society. From an implementation perspective, *Metatah* is carried out through a structured sequence of ritual stages guided by religious specialists such as the *sulinggih* (high priest) and the *sangging* (tooth filer). The lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual ranging from terms related to offerings (*banten*), ritual stages such as *natab* and *ngajumangin*, to ceremonial tools and actions form an integral part of ritual communication.

However, Sumarni (2021) notes that although the *Metatah* ritual is still widely performed due to religious devotion and social obligation, many participants particularly from the younger and adult generations do not fully understand the philosophical meanings and specific ritual lexicons involved. This condition indicates that ritual practice is increasingly procedural, with limited linguistic and symbolic comprehension. In addition, contemporary adaptations such as mass *Metatah* ceremonies further influence ritual engagement. Asih (2023) observes that mass *Metatah* rituals, while increasing accessibility and reducing economic burden, often involve procedural simplification that may limit participants' exposure to detailed ritual explanations and traditional terminology. These changes, combined with modernization, formal education systems that prioritize national language use, and the declining role of oral transmission, contribute to decreasing lexical understanding across generations.

This condition highlights the importance of language revitalization efforts in maintaining the continuity of ritual language and cultural knowledge. Hermes (2012) emphasizes that revitalization should involve active cultural practices and intergenerational participation rather than mere documentation. Similarly, Alejan (2021) explains that the survival of traditional language depends on the collaborative involvement of elders and younger generations in transmitting cultural knowledge. In addition, Hinton (2018) notes that digital media and educational innovation can support the preservation of endangered linguistic elements in modern society. These perspectives suggest that preserving the lexicons of the *Metatah* ritual requires continuous cultural engagement, community



participation, and adaptive strategies that allow ritual language to remain meaningful and relevant across generations.

Therefore, the *Metatah* ritual functions not only as a site of cultural expression but also as a linguistic archive at risk. The survival of its ritual lexicons depends on sustained intergenerational transmission, active participation, and conscious efforts to preserve ceremonial language. Without such efforts, the erosion of lexical knowledge may weaken the ritual's role in maintaining Balinese Hindu identity and cultural continuity amid modern challenges.

Empirical Review

Exploring the unique words and phrases used in cultural ceremonies is essential for understanding and preserving our linguistic heritage. Darmawan (2023) conducted research on the Makepung tradition in Kaliakah village, Jembrana regency. This descriptive qualitative study identified 54 specific lexicons associated with the tradition, employing methods such as observation, interviews, and documentation. The study applied analytical techniques including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. It highlighted the intricate linguistic details within the Makepung tradition, emphasizing the significance of cultural preservation through detailed linguistic analysis.

In a separate study, Putri & Santika (2020) examined emotional lexicon variations in Balinese language use between genders in South Kuta-Bali. Their research utilized diverse methods such as observations, interviews, recordings, and note-taking. Findings indicated distinct patterns in the use of augmentatives and euphemisms, with women predominantly employing augmentatives in informal contexts. This study contributes to our understanding of how language reflects and shapes social dynamics, particularly in informal communicative settings.

Similarly, Angelita (2024) focused on the Ngerorod wedding ceremony in Sidetapa Village, employing observational methods and interviews with key informants such as village administrators and priests. Their study aimed to document and analyze the lexicons specific to this ceremonial context, utilizing tools like cameras and interview guides. The systematic qualitative approach involved data reduction, detailed display techniques, and verification through triangulation, providing a comprehensive view of language use in cultural rituals.

One relevant reference for this study is the work of Budasi (2021), whose research provides a strong model for studying endangered ritual language. He integrates linguistic analysis with cultural context, documenting traditional terms while also analyzing their meanings within local customs..

On previous research on traditional language use has offered important contributions, but many of them do not specifically explore endangered lexicons within the actual context of ceremonies like *Metatah*. Moreover, there is often little attention paid to how adult and older generations differ in their understanding of these ritual terms. This highlights the need for studies that not only document the lexicons used in rituals but also examine how well these words are remembered,



understood, and transmitted across generations. Therefore, the present study focuses on the *Metatah* ceremony in Menyali Village, aiming to explore how traditional lexicons are interpreted and retained by both adult and elders.

These empirical investigations underscore the importance of documenting and analyzing lexicons within diverse cultural and educational frameworks. They enrich our understanding of linguistic heritage preservation and enhance educational practices by examining specific ceremonies and instructional strategies. Such studies offer valuable insights into the intricate relationship between language, culture, and educational contexts, fostering a deeper appreciation for linguistic diversity and cultural identity.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this research will be developed in connection with earlier studies that explored generational differences in the comprehension of ritual lexicons. As Ghasemi (2025) explains, a hypothesis will function as a central component of research because it provides a tentative explanation that directs the process of inquiry. It will not be regarded as a mere assumption or casual guess, but rather as a logical statement that reflects the expected relationship between variables. Within this study, the hypothesis will serve as the basis for examining whether age groups adults and elders will show differences in their understanding of the ritual lexicons used in the *Metatah* ceremony in Menyali Village. The hypotheses of this research will be stated as follows:

- 1) Null Hypothesis (H_0): There will be no statistically significant difference in the perceived understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village.
- 2) Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There will be a statistically significant difference in the perceived understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative comparative approach with a cross-sectional survey design to examine the perceived understanding of ritual lexicons used in the *Metatah* ceremony among adults and elders in Menyali Village Cohen (2018). The design aimed to compare comprehension levels between two generational groups adults (26–45 years) and elders (46–65 years) in order to identify whether significant differences existed in their understanding of the lexicons.

The comparative element of the design was central to determining whether significant differences existed between the two groups in their comprehension of ritual lexicons. Descriptive statistics were used to present the level of understanding



within each group, while inferential analysis was conducted to test intergenerational differences.

The researcher chose Menyali Village, located in the Sawan District of Buleleng Regency, Bali, as the setting for this study. This village is in the northern part of Bali and is known for its strong connection to Balinese Hindu culture. One of the main reasons this village was selected is because it still actively carries out the *Metatah* ritual, a traditional ritual that marks the coming of age for Balinese adult. This ceremony is special not just for its spiritual meaning, but also because it uses traditional words and phrases called ritual lexicons that are now rarely used in everyday life.

The target population of this study consisted of members of the Balinese Hindu community residing in Menyali Village, Sawan District, Buleleng Regency, Bali, who are associated with or have experience in the *Metatah* ritual. Based on the most recent demographic records provided by the village administration Badan Pusat Statistik Buleleng (2025), Menyali Village has a total population of 5,404 individuals, consisting of 2,719 females and 2,685 males. Within this population, adults and elders represent important generational groups, as they are the primary age categories most closely engaged with cultural traditions and ritual practices such as *Metatah*.

For the purposes of this research, the population is further specified into two generational categories: adults, defined as individuals between the ages of 26 and 45, and elders, defined as individuals between the ages of 46 and 65. The classification of these age ranges refers to the categorization of adult and elder as outlined by Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2009), which distinguishes age groups based on developmental and social roles. The detailed distribution is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1 The Population in Menyali Village by Age Group

Age Group (Years)	Population (n)
26-29	426
30-34	389
35-39	408
40-45	474
<i>Total Adults (26-45)</i>	<i>1.697</i>
46-49	397
50-54	315
55-59	268
60-65	230
<i>Total Elders (46-65)</i>	<i>1.210</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2.907</i>



Based on the data presented in the table, the population of Menyali Village consists of 1,697 adults and 1,210 elders, resulting in a total of 2,907 individuals relevant to this study.

According to Arikunto (2013), when a population exceeds 100 individuals, a researcher may take approximately 10–15% of the total population as the sample, depending on feasibility and research conditions. Based on this guideline, the initial sample size in this study was calculated as 10% of the total population of adults and elders in Menyali Village, which amounted to 2,907 individuals. Consequently, the projected sample size was 291 respondents.

In this study, data were gathered through a structured questionnaire, which served as the main instrument to assess the level of understanding of adults and elders in Menyali Village toward the ceremonial lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual. This method was selected to support the quantitative and comparative design of the research, as it enables systematic, objective, and measurable data collection across age groups. The lexicons included in the instrument represent essential traditional terms used throughout the stages of the *Metatah* ceremony and were selected based on their cultural significance and frequent use in ritual communication. The questionnaire consisted of 35 items, each representing one ritual lexicon.

Table 3. 2 Aspect of Lexicon Comprehension Measured by the Questionnaire

Scale	Description
(1) Do Not Know	The respondent has never heard of the lexicon.
(2) Have Heard Of It	The respondent has heard the term but cannot explain its meaning clearly.
(3) Know	The respondent knows the term and its basic meaning.
(4) Understand	The participant understands the meaning, usage, and ritual context of the lexicon.

After the questionnaire responses were collected, each answer was converted into numerical scores to represent the participants' level of understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons. These scores were then summed to obtain the overall comprehension score for each respondent. This process allowed the data to be analyzed in a structured and measurable way.

To interpret the results more systematically, this study applied the *Theoretical Ideal Reference Assessment* proposed by Nurkencana and Sunartana (1992). This framework is useful for classifying questionnaire scores into meaningful categories based on the ideal mean (MI) and ideal standard deviation (SDI). By using this approach, the level of understanding can be interpreted objectively rather than relying on raw scores alone. The ideal mean and ideal standard deviation were calculated using the following formulas:

$$MI = \frac{1}{2} (\text{ideal maximum score} + \text{ideal minimum score})$$

$$SDI = \frac{1}{6} (\text{ideal maximum score} - \text{ideal minimum score})$$



Based on these calculations, the respondents' scores were grouped into five levels of interpretation: Very High, High, Moderate, Low, and Very Low. These categories provide a clearer picture of how well the ritual lexicons are understood across participants. The detailed classification is presented in the following table.

Table 3. 3 Interpretation Criteria

Mean Score Interval	Category
$104.9 \leq X$	Very High
$96.3 \leq X < 104.9$	High
$87.7 \leq X < 96.3$	Moderate
$79.1 \leq X < 87.7$	Low
$X < 79.1$	Very Low

These criteria were used to classify the level of understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons among adults and elders in Menyali Village.

In this study, the research instrument was carefully evaluated to ensure its appropriateness in measuring the intended concept. As stated by Creswell (2014), validity refers to how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure, while reliability concerns the consistency of the results. Therefore, the validation process focused on two key aspects: content accuracy and measurement consistency.

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument accurately measures the construct it is intended to assess. In questionnaire-based research, content validity is particularly essential to ensure that each item adequately represents the conceptual domain being examined. As noted by Azwar (2015), content validity may be established through expert judgment, in which specialists evaluate whether the items are relevant, representative, and aligned with the intended construct.

In this study, content validity was employed because the instrument was specifically developed to measure participants' understanding of 35 ritual lexicons used in the *Metatah* ceremony. The instrument, consisting of multiple-choice questions, was evaluated by two experts with academic backgrounds in linguistics and Balinese cultural studies. Each item was rated using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (least relevant) to 4 (most relevant), to assess the degree of relevance and appropriateness of the items.

The experts' ratings were subsequently analyzed using Aiken's V index, which quantifies the level of agreement among expert judges concerning item relevance. The Aiken's V coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 indicating stronger content validity. The calculation was conducted using Microsoft Excel to determine whether each item met the acceptable validity threshold. Through this procedure, the instrument was ensured to be conceptually aligned with the research objectives and capable of accurately measuring the comparative understanding of ritual lexicons among adults and elders.



$$V = \frac{\Sigma s}{n(c - 1)}$$

Description:

V = validity indeks of Aiken

S = r – lo

lo = lowest validity assessment number

C = highest validity assessment number

n = number of rates

r = number given by rater

The content validity criteria presented in Table 3.4 were applied as the basis for determining whether each questionnaire item met the required validity standards.

Table 3. 4 Content Validity Criteria

Content Validity Criteria	Interpretation
$0.8 > V \leq 1$	Valid
$0.4 \geq V \leq 0.8$	Moderate Validity
$0 > V \leq 0.4$	Invalid

The content validity of the 35 lexicon items related to the *Metatah* ritual was determined using Aiken’s V coefficient. Two experts evaluated each item based on a four-point relevance scale, ranging from 1 (Least Relevant) to 4 (Most Relevant), to assess how accurately each lexicon represented the construct of ritual lexicon comprehension. Since the rating scale ranged from 1 to 4 and involved two expert judges, the denominator in the Aiken’s V formula was calculated as $n(c - 1) = 2(4 - 1) = 6$. The validity index for each item was computed individually to ensure a precise evaluation of its relevance and alignment with the research objectives.

The analysis revealed that the Aiken’s V values for all 35 items ranged from 0.83 to 1.00. Referring to the established validity criterion ($V > 0.80$), every item met the threshold for strong content validity. This indicates a high degree of consistency and agreement between the experts regarding the appropriateness of the selected lexicons. Therefore, the instrument was considered sufficiently representative and suitable for measuring participants’ understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons in the context of this study.

Questionnaire Reliability

The reliability of the 35-item questionnaire measuring respondents’ comprehension of the ritual lexicons was examined using Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The questionnaire applied a four-point Likert scale (1 = *Do Not Know*, 2 = *Have Heard Of It*, 3 = *Know*, 4 = *Understand*), which was designed to capture respondents’ level of understanding in a clear and graded manner. Prior to administering the

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questionnaire, two experts conducted content validation to ensure that all items were relevant, clear, and aligned with the study’s objectives. Reliability analysis using Cronbach’s Alpha is appropriate for this study because it evaluates the degree to which all items measure the same underlying construct, independent of the comparison between adults and elders. The interpretation of Cronbach’s Alpha values will follow the guidelines provided by George & Mallery (2003), as presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3. 5 Reliability Test Measurement

Cronbach’s Alpha	Interpretation
> 0.90	High Reliability
0.80 – 0.89	Good Reliability
0.70 – 0.79	Fair Reliability
0.60 – 0.69	Questionable
0.50 – 0.59	Poor
< 0.50	Unacceptable

The reliability analysis of the 35 item questionnaire resulted in a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of 0.913, which falls within the High Reliability category. This finding indicates that the items have strong internal consistency and collectively measure the construct of ritual lexicon comprehension very reliably. Moreover, the corrected item-total correlation values of all items were above the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.30, confirming that each item contributes positively to the overall internal consistency. The “Cronbach’s Alpha if Item Deleted” analysis further showed that removing any item would not improve the overall reliability coefficient, and in fact, any deletion slightly reduced the alpha value. This demonstrates that all 35 items are appropriate, relevant, and consistent in measuring the respondents’ comprehension of the ritual lexicons. Based on these results, the instrument is considered highly reliable and suitable for use in assessing both adults’ and elders’ understanding of the ritual lexicons in the context of this study.

In this study, The data for this study were gathered through a structured questionnaire consisting of 35 items designed to capture participants’ understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons. The use of this instrument enabled the collection of uniform responses and supported systematic quantitative analysis, thereby contributing to the overall reliability of the findings, as emphasized by Creswell (2014). All instructions were delivered in the participants’ preferred language to maintain clarity, thereby ensuring the accuracy and comparability of the collected data. The detailed procedures of data collection are presented in Table 3.6.

Table 3. 6 Data Collection Procedure

No.	Procedural Stage	Description
1.	Preparation Phase	a. Developing and refining the questionnaire derived from 35 verified ritual lexicons related to the <i>Metatah</i> ceremony.



No.	Procedural Stage	Description
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Conducting validity and reliability tests to confirm the accuracy and consistency of the instrument. c. Adding demographic items to categorize participants into adult and elder groups. d. Establishing communication with village authorities (<i>kelian adat</i>) in Menyali Village to gain formal approval and community support.
2.	Implementation Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sharing the Google Form link with respondents. b. Visiting participants who could not attend the venue to assist with data completion in a comfortable home setting. c. Giving clear verbal instructions on how to use the 4-point comprehension scale effectively. d. Monitoring the process directly to prevent bias and ensure independent responses.
3.	Data Compilation and Verification Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Gathering all completed responses from Google Forms and reviewing for completeness and consistency. b. Automatically coding each response using the export system (1 = Do Not Know, 2 = Have Heard Of It, 3 = Know, 4 = Understand). c. Transferring the dataset to Microsoft Excel for organization, then importing it into SPSS for further statistical analysis. d. Conducting a cross-check of data accuracy to minimize recording errors and maintain data integrity.

The following table presents a concise summary of the methods implemented for data collection throughout the research process. It outlines the key stages involved, including preparation, implementation, and data verification. Each stage is designed to ensure that the data are collected systematically and consistently across all participants. Further details regarding the specific data collection techniques are provided in Table 3.7.

Table 3. 7 Data Collection Techniques

Research Objective	Instruments	Subject	Data
To analyze whether there is a significant difference in the comprehension of ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village	Questionnaire	Adults (26–45 years) and Elders (46–65 years) of Menyali Village	Responses to 35 lexicon-based questions.

The responses from the questionnaire were examined using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods to address the research questions concerning the understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons among adult and elder groups in Menyali Village. Prior to conducting inferential analysis, a normality test



was performed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test in SPSS version 26.0 to assess whether the data fulfilled the assumptions required for parametric procedures. If the data were normally distributed, an Independent Samples t-test was applied to compare the comprehension scores of adults (26–45 years) and elders (46–65 years), with the aim of identifying any statistically significant differences between the two groups. However, if the assumption of normality was violated, the Mann–Whitney U test was utilized as a non-parametric alternative to maintain the validity and robustness of the analysis.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The findings of this study present the results of the analysis carried out to answer the three research questions regarding the perceived understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons in Menyali Village. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 35 items. This chapter begins by describing the level of perceived understanding among adults and elders based on descriptive statistical analysis. It then compares the two groups to identify differences in their levels of perceived understanding. Finally, statistical testing is conducted to determine whether the observed difference between adults and elders is significant.

The Level of Perceived Understanding of *Metatah* Ritual Lexicons among Adults in Menyali Village

This section outlines the level of adults’ perceived understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons in Menyali Village. The data were gathered from 50 adult participants who completed a questionnaire consisting of 35 ritual lexicon items. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify the overall pattern of comprehension, and the results were interpreted based on the *Theoretical Ideal Reference Assessment* proposed by Nurkencana and Sunartana (1992) classification criteria. A summary of the adults’ statistical results is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1 Descriptive Statistics of Adults’ Score

Statistics		
Scores of Adults		
N	Valid	50
	Missing	0
Mean		78,06
Median		78,00
Mode		78
Range		20
Minimum		66
Maximum		86



Based on Table 4.1, the adult respondents obtained a mean score of 78.06, with both the median and mode at 78, indicating that most scores are centered around the same value. The lowest score recorded was 66, while the highest was 86, resulting in a range of 20 points. This shows that the scores are relatively concentrated within a moderate spread, with some variation among respondents. Overall, these results indicate a relatively consistent level of perceived understanding among adults. The frequency distribution is further presented in the Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2 Frequency Distribution of Adults' Perceived Understanding Scores

Adults		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	66	1	2,0	2,0	2,0
	67	1	2,0	2,0	4,0
	69	1	2,0	2,0	6,0
	71	1	2,0	2,0	8,0
	72	1	2,0	2,0	10,0
	73	1	2,0	2,0	12,0
	74	3	6,0	6,0	18,0
	75	1	2,0	2,0	20,0
	76	3	6,0	6,0	26,0
	77	5	10,0	10,0	36,0
	78	8	16,0	16,0	52,0
	79	7	14,0	14,0	66,0
	80	4	8,0	8,0	74,0
	81	4	8,0	8,0	82,0
	82	3	6,0	6,0	88,0
	83	1	2,0	2,0	90,0
	84	2	4,0	4,0	94,0
	85	1	2,0	2,0	96,0
	86	2	4,0	4,0	100,0
	Total	50	100,0	100,0	

Based on Table 4.2, the distribution of scores shows that most adult respondents are concentrated around the middle range, particularly between scores of 77 to 80. The highest frequency is found at score 78, with 8 respondents (16%), followed by score 79 with 7 respondents (14%), indicating that these scores represent the most common level of perceived understanding among adults. Lower scores such as 66 to 73 appear with minimal frequency, each representing only 2% of respondents, while higher scores above 83 are also relatively limited. The cumulative percentage further shows that more than half of the respondents (52%) scored up to 78, reflecting that the majority of adults demonstrate a moderate level of perceived understanding. Overall, the distribution pattern indicates that adults' perceived understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons tends to cluster around an average level, with fewer respondents at the extreme low and high ends.



Table 4. 3 Adults' Perceived Understanding Levels

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	0	0%
High	0	0%
Moderate	0	0%
Low	24	48%
Very Low	26	52%
Total	50	100%

As presented in Table 4.3, the distribution of perceived understanding levels among the adult group, categorized according to the criteria established in Table 3.3, indicates that 26 respondents (52%) fall into the *Very Low* category, while 24 respondents (48%) are classified under the *Low* category. No respondents are categorized into the *Moderate*, *High*, or *Very High* levels.

This distribution demonstrates that the overall level of perceived understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons among adults remains predominantly within the lower categories. Although a portion of respondents has reached the *Low* category, the slight difference between the two groups suggests that comprehension is still limited and has not progressed to a more adequate level. This pattern reflects a tendency toward partial retention rather than strong mastery, indicating that the transmission of ritual lexicon knowledge within the adult group is still relatively weak.

The Level of Perceived Understanding of *Metatah* Ritual Lexicon among Elders in Menyali Village

This section presents a descriptive statistical overview of elders' perceived understanding of the lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village. The analysis aims to describe the general pattern of elders' comprehension based on the distribution of scores obtained from the structured test instrument.

Table 4. 4 Descriptive Statistics of Elders' Score

Statistics		
		Elders
N	Valid	50
	Missing	0
Mean		109,02
Median		109,00
Mode		107
Range		21
Minimum		97
Maximum		118

Based on the statistical results, the elder group consisted of 50 respondents. The descriptive data show that elders obtained a mean score of 109.02, with a median of 109.00 and a mode of 107, indicating that most scores are clustered



around a relatively similar central value. The lowest score recorded was 97, while the highest reached 118, resulting in a range of 21 points. This suggests that, although there is some variation in responses, the scores are generally distributed within a relatively consistent range. Overall, these findings indicate that elders demonstrate a high and stable level of perceived understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons. The concentration of scores around the central values reflects a strong retention of knowledge within this group. To further illustrate how the scores are distributed, a frequency analysis is presented in the table 4.5.

Table 4. 5 Frequency Distribution of Elders' Perceived Understanding Scores

Elders		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	97	1	2,0	2,0	2,0
	99	1	2,0	2,0	4,0
	102	1	2,0	2,0	6,0
	103	1	2,0	2,0	8,0
	104	1	2,0	2,0	10,0
	105	4	8,0	8,0	18,0
	106	4	8,0	8,0	26,0
	107	6	12,0	12,0	38,0
	108	5	10,0	10,0	48,0
	109	4	8,0	8,0	56,0
	110	4	8,0	8,0	64,0
	111	2	4,0	4,0	68,0
	112	5	10,0	10,0	78,0
	113	4	8,0	8,0	86,0
	114	2	4,0	4,0	90,0
	115	1	2,0	2,0	92,0
	116	2	4,0	4,0	96,0
	117	1	2,0	2,0	98,0
118	1	2,0	2,0	100,0	
	Total	50	100,0	100,0	

Based on Table 4.5, the distribution of scores indicates that most elder respondents are concentrated within the higher score range, particularly between 105 and 113. The highest frequency is observed at score 107, with 6 respondents (12%), followed by scores 108 and 112, each with 5 respondents (10%). This pattern suggests that these scores represent the most common level of perceived understanding among elders. Lower scores, such as 97 to 104, appear with relatively low frequencies, each contributing only a small percentage of respondents, while the highest scores above 115 are also limited in number. The cumulative percentage shows that more than half of the respondents (56%) achieved scores up to 109, indicating that the majority of elders are clustered around a high level of comprehension. Overall, the distribution demonstrates that elders' understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons tends to be concentrated in the upper

range, with relatively few respondents at the lower and extreme ends, reflecting a strong and well-maintained level of knowledge within this group.

Table 4. 6 Elder’s Perceived Understanding Levels

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	45	90%
High	5	10%
Moderate	0	0%
Low	0	0%
Very Low	0	0%
Total	50	100%

As presented in Table 4.6, the distribution of perceived understanding levels among the elder group, categorized based on the criteria established in Table 3.3, shows that the majority of respondents, 45 individuals (90%), fall into the *Very High* category, while the remaining 5 respondents (10%) are classified under the *High* category. No respondents are categorized into the *Moderate*, *Low*, or *Very Low* levels. This distribution indicates that the overall level of perceived understanding of the *Metatah* ritual lexicons among elders is predominantly concentrated in the upper categories. The dominance of the *Very High* classification reflects a strong mastery and deep comprehension of the ritual lexicons. This pattern suggests that elders play a crucial role in preserving and maintaining cultural knowledge, as their perceived understanding remains consistently high across the group. Based on the differences in the levels of understanding between the two groups, the comparison is further illustrated through a bar chart to provide a clearer visual representation of the disparity.

Figure 4. 1 The Level of Perceived Understanding Between Adults & Elders

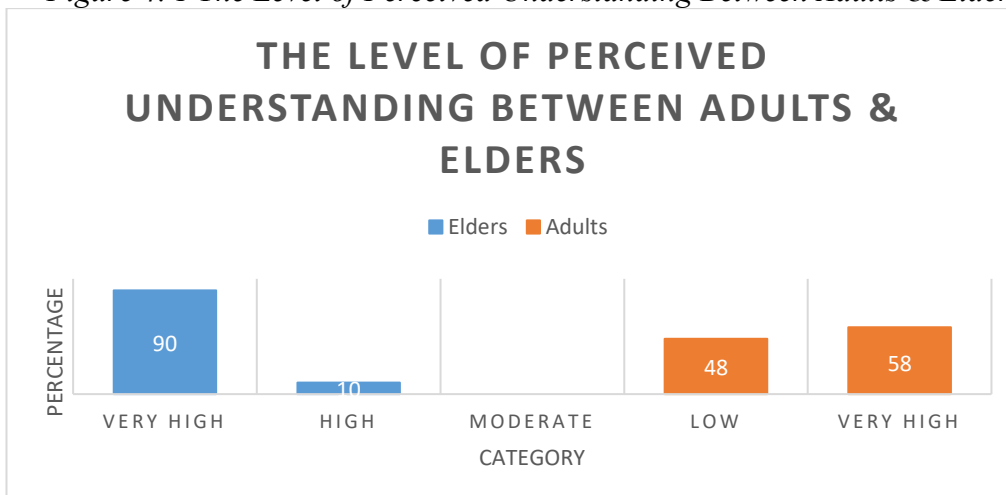


Figure 4.1 illustrates a clear and contrasting distribution of understanding levels between adults and elders across all *Theoretical Ideal Reference Assessment* categories. The adult group is entirely concentrated in the lower categories, with 26 respondents (52%) classified as *Very Low* and 24 respondents (48%) as *Low*, while



no participants fall into the higher categories. In contrast, the elder group shows an opposite pattern, with 45 respondents (90%) categorized as *Very High* and 5 respondents (10%) as *High*, and no representation in the lower levels.

The Significant Difference in the Perceived Understanding of *Metatah* Ritual Lexicons between Adults and Elders in Menyali Village

To address the third research question concerning whether a statistically significant difference exists in the perceived understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons between adult and elder groups in Menyali Village, inferential statistical analysis was employed. Prior to selecting the appropriate statistical test, assumption testing was conducted to ensure that the data met the required criteria for further analysis. In this study, the assessment of data distribution was carried out through normality testing using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests. The results of these normality tests are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4. 7 Normality Test

Tests of Normality							
	Participant	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Comprehension	Adults	,143	50	,012	,953	50	,044
	Elders	,078	50	,200*	,982	50	,617

Based on the Shapiro-Wilk test, which is commonly used for moderate sample sizes, the adult group obtained a significance value of 0.044, which is below the 0.05 threshold. Similarly, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test for the adult group produced a significance value of 0.012, also below 0.05. These results indicate that the comprehension scores of the adult group deviate from a normal distribution. In contrast, the elder group demonstrated significance values of 0.200 in the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and 0.617 in the Shapiro–Wilk test. Both values exceed the 0.05 level, indicating that the comprehension scores of the elder group are normally distributed.

Since one of the groups did not meet the normality assumption, the overall assumption of normal distribution was not fully satisfied. Although the sample size in each group consisted of 50 participants, the presence of non-normal distribution in the adult group required careful consideration in selecting the appropriate inferential test. Following the normality analysis, the homogeneity of variances between the adult and elder groups was examined using Levene’s Test. The results of the homogeneity test are presented in the table below.

Table 4. 8 Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Comprehension	Based on Mean	,323	1	98	,571
	Based on Median	,322	1	98	,572



	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,322	1	96,917	,572
	Based on trimmed mean	,338	1	98	,563

The Levene’s Test based on the mean produced a significance value of 0.571, which is higher than 0.05. Similar results were also found in the median-based and trimmed mean analyses, with all significance values remaining above 0.05. These findings indicate that the variance between the adult and elder groups is homogeneous, meaning that the variability of scores in both groups is statistically comparable.

However, the assumption of normality was not fully satisfied because the adult group showed a non-normal distribution. Therefore, the Independent Samples t-test was considered less appropriate for further analysis. Based on these results, the Mann–Whitney U test was employed to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed in the perceived understanding of *Metatah* ritual lexicons between adults and elders in Menyali Village. The results of the analysis are presented in the following Table.

Table 4. 9 Perceived Understanding of The Lexicons Ranks

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

The Ranks table shows that the total number of respondents was 100, consisting of 50 adults and 50 elders. The adult group obtained a mean rank of 25.50 with a sum of ranks of 1275.00. Meanwhile, the elder group achieved a considerably higher mean rank of 75.50 with a sum of ranks of 3775.00. In the Mann–Whitney U analysis, a higher mean rank indicates a higher level of the measured variable. The substantial difference in mean ranks suggests that elders demonstrate a markedly higher level of comprehension of *Metatah* ritual lexicons compared to adults.

Table 4. 10 Mann-Whitney U Test

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

The Test Statistics table further confirms this difference. The Mann–Whitney U value was 0.000, with a Wilcoxon W value of 1275.000 and a Z score



of -8.626. The Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.000, which is lower than the significance level of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). Since the p-value is smaller than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there is no statistically significant difference between adults and elders in their comprehension of *Metatah* ritual lexicons, is rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

The negative Z value indicates that the adult group obtained lower ranked scores than the elder group. This finding provides clear empirical evidence of a generational difference in the perceived understanding of ritual lexicons related to the *Metatah* ceremony. Elders possess significantly stronger comprehension, while adults show relatively lower levels of understanding. These results suggest that the transmission of ritual vocabulary across generations may not be equally sustained. The noticeable gap between adults and elders highlights the importance of strengthening intergenerational efforts to preserve and maintain the linguistic elements embedded in the *Metatah* tradition.

This study reveals clear generational differences in the perceived understanding of ritual lexicons used in the *Metatah* ceremony in Menyali Village, with elders demonstrating substantially higher levels of understanding than adults. These findings confirm the central assumption proposed in earlier chapters that ritual language competence is closely tied to intergenerational transmission, cultural participation, and experiential learning. The statistical evidence strengthens this conclusion by demonstrating that the difference between the two groups is not incidental but systematic. Although both adults and elders remain actively involved in the performance of the *Metatah* ritual, the results indicate that active participation alone does not automatically ensure equal levels of semantic mastery. Ritual engagement, therefore, must be distinguished from ritual comprehension.

The lower mean score observed among adult participants suggests that ritual lexicons are no longer fully internalized as meaningful linguistic units within this generation. This condition reflects a broader pattern of language endangerment, where specific linguistic elements gradually lose their functional roles within cultural practices (Bussmann, 2006). Importantly, this shift does not imply the disappearance of the ritual itself. Rather, it indicates a gradual weakening of semantic knowledge embedded in ritual language. Adults may still recognize or reproduce certain lexicons during ceremonial contexts; however, their understanding appears to be more procedural than conceptual. In practical terms, this means that ritual terms may be remembered as formulaic expressions, yet their deeper philosophical, cosmological, or symbolic dimensions are not always fully comprehended.

In contrast, elders' higher comprehension scores demonstrate their strong command of ritual lexicons and their associated meanings. This finding supports the view that elders function as cultural and linguistic custodians within traditional communities. Their prolonged engagement in ritual practices, repeated exposure to ceremonial discourse, and direct involvement in transmitting cultural values allow them to acquire ritual language through sustained experiential learning. As



Eisenlohr (2002) argues, ritual language is not learned solely through formal instruction but through long-term immersion in cultural contexts, where language, belief systems, and social roles intersect. Thus, elders' superior comprehension reflects cumulative cultural participation and embodied knowledge developed over decades of lived experience.

The generational gap identified in this study aligns with broader discussions on language loss and endangerment. Harrison (2010) emphasizes that language decline often begins with the erosion of specialized vocabularies, including ritual and ceremonial lexicons, before affecting everyday communication. Specialized lexical domains are particularly vulnerable because they are used in restricted contexts and rely heavily on intentional explanation. In the context of *Metatah*, the reduced comprehension of ritual lexicons among adults indicates an early stage of linguistic vulnerability rather than immediate extinction. The ritual continues to be practiced publicly and socially, yet its linguistic depth risks becoming increasingly inaccessible to non-elder generations. If left unaddressed, this condition may gradually transform the ritual into a symbolic performance in which actions are preserved while meanings become partially obscured.

Several social and cultural factors may contribute to this condition. Modern educational systems, increased bilingualism, and shifting socio-economic priorities have gradually reduced the domains in which traditional ritual language is actively used. As Atifnigar (2021) argues, when dominant languages replace indigenous or local languages in education, employment, and daily interaction, minority linguistic elements become confined to limited ceremonial functions. Domain restriction inevitably reduces frequency of use, and reduced frequency weakens retention and mastery. Over time, this process affects intergenerational transmission, particularly when adults themselves possess only partial competence in the lexicons they are expected to transmit to younger generations.

Studies on Balinese ritual practices further support this interpretation. Research on *Metatah* and other Balinese ceremonies consistently highlights the deep symbolic meanings encoded within ritual lexicons (Budhawati, 2013). These lexicons are not merely labels for ritual actions; they carry philosophical, ethical, and cosmological meanings that structure participants' understanding of identity, purification, and social harmony. When comprehension declines, the ritual risks losing part of its educative and transformative functions, even if its outward form remains intact. In this sense, linguistic weakening does not immediately erase cultural practice but may subtly reshape its interpretive depth.

The findings of this study also resonate with previous research on endangered ritual lexicons in Bali. Budasi (2023) demonstrated that ritual lexicon comprehension is unevenly distributed across social categories, reinforcing the idea that ritual language competence is shaped by experiential exposure and social positioning. Similarly, descriptive studies of ritual lexicons in Balinese traditions emphasize that lexical knowledge is sustained through active use, contextual explanation, and dialogic interaction rather than passive participation Darmawan



(2023). The present study extends these findings by providing empirical quantitative evidence that generational differentiation in ritual lexical competence is measurable and statistically significant within a specific village context.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village is currently sustained more strongly at the level of performative continuity than at the level of linguistic comprehension. Elders continue to maintain comprehensive and conceptually grounded knowledge of ritual lexicons, while adults exhibit what may be described as transitional competence an intermediate stage characterized by recognition without full semantic depth. This transitional condition does not indicate immediate cultural disappearance; however, it signals a weakening transmission chain that may place ritual lexicons in a vulnerable position if not consciously reinforced. Continued ritual performance alone is insufficient to ensure long-term linguistic vitality. Without sustained intergenerational dialogue, contextual explanation, and deliberate efforts to preserve semantic meaning, ritual lexicons may gradually shift from being lived interpretive resources to becoming fixed ceremonial formulas.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study show that adults and elders in Menyali Village demonstrate different levels of perceived understanding toward the endangered lexicons used in the *Metatah* ritual. Based on the questionnaire data, the elder group generally displayed higher levels of perceived understanding, whereas the adult group tended to show lower levels of familiarity and comprehension regarding the ritual lexicons. This distribution illustrates that the two age groups differ considerably in how they perceive and understand the endangered lexical items embedded within the *Metatah* ceremony.

The statistical analysis using the Mann–Whitney U test also verified that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. As a result, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. This indicates that adults and elders possess significantly different levels of perceived understanding of the endangered lexicons of the *Metatah* ritual in Menyali Village. The conclusion is fully based on the quantitative findings derived from the questionnaire instrument employed in this study.

Regarding the measurement process, the findings represent respondents' self-perceived understanding of the ritual lexicons according to the scale provided in the questionnaire, ranging from unfamiliarity to full understanding. Therefore, the study focuses on describing the differences in perceived understanding identified through the collected data rather than examining the specific reasons behind those differences. Overall, the findings suggest that elders continue to retain stronger understanding of the endangered ritual lexicons, while the adult generation demonstrates lower levels of comprehension, indicating that the continuity of ritual lexical knowledge across generations may gradually be weakening within the community.



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