

Language and Thinking Relationships in Ketemuq-Meretuq Culture in Batu Samban Village

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: June 6, 2025 Revised: June 12, 2025 Published: June 15, 2025	<i>This article aims to add to the reader's understanding of culture in a society, where the inherited doctrine of belief has become an unconsciously ingrained belief in Sasak society. The Sasak community's belief in the existence of ketemuq in the era of generation Z has not completely disappeared. Some people argue that this belief is included in the myth but not a few people still carry out the process. This article was created to illustrate that a small habit in a society can have a good or bad impact on that society, the language in ketemuq-meretuq gives suggestions in the minds of people who believe in it. Belief can be a suggestion for a person's mentality, and have an impact on life.</i>
Keywords Language; Culture; Myth	

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INTRODUCTION

Society is a group of people who live in an environment and settle. Talking about society will certainly not be separated from customs (traditions) and beliefs that have been passed down from ancestors. The Sasak community is included in a society that is still thick with many traditions that are still being practiced today. In fact, the millennial generation has arrived at a time of rapid technological development, but all of that does not undermine the cultural values that exist in society.

Culture is related to a mindset, perspective, and the way people see reality to be addressed with beliefs and beliefs. Culture can be formed from myths, legends, epics, history, or people's belief in a prominent figure. Some examples of cultural manifestations can be seen through ceremonies carried out by the community, such as religious ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, birth ceremonies, and death ceremonies, and other ceremonies that the community believes have a good impact and have been carried out for generations. The culture of one region to another must be different, back to its geographical location. It can be said that the ceremonies that are often carried out by the community are inseparable from Sasak beliefs, including their beliefs that have not been separated from animism and dynamism. Animism is a belief in the existence of spirits that have supernatural powers, while dynamism is a belief in inanimate objects that are believed to have magical powers. Although the Sasak people are now familiar with technology, they still believe in the existence of magical powers.

The Sasak community in the West Lombok region, especially in Batu Samban village, has several beliefs, one of which is the myth of ketemuq. Myths include a culture, this is because people have beliefs and make it one of the traditions in everyday life. Some people who are initially sick, complaining of sudden illness after traveling to a place or area that is felt to have

a waiter will not go to the doctor to check their condition, the person will choose to go to a shaman or belian to find out the cause of feeling sick. This is part of the community's belief that they believe they have been accosted by the dead or spirits (jinn).

The culture of *ketemuq* and *meretuiq* is interesting to discuss, especially in terms of language, culture and people's beliefs about dead beings. Things like this myth may look like lies to some people, but it will be different if you hear and see how people who believe in the *ketemuq* myth experience it. Because every simple thing can have a lesson in it. The author tries to reveal and discuss how this belief should be researched and used as an example of myths in Islamic society today. *Ketemuq* belongs to a belief that does not use big rituals in its ceremony, but this activity has become an activity that cannot be separated from the community and has become a habit that is believed to be true.

The culture of *ketemuq* and *meretuiq* has never completely faded away, previous research has been conducted by Zulkifli (2021) making a thesis that specifically examines the tradition of *peretuiq* which is still believed in Kuripan village, West Lombok. This further strengthens the researcher to discuss *ketemuq* and *meretuiq*. A real case that has happened in Batu Samban regarding *ketemuq* and *meretuiq*, where someone suddenly felt nauseous and vomited, after being taken to the doctor and given medicine but did not recover, and after that the person was taken to a shaman and did *peretuiq* and finally recovered. This case did not happen once or twice, it has become commonplace, where a person who is believed to be addressed by someone who has died will get sick and will recover after doing *peretuiq*. The myths and beliefs of the community have formed a habit for the community, and *meretuiq* has been made a culture by the community as a way of treating *ketemuq*. This proves that people's thoughts always run not far from their language and culture. Every activity forms a new understanding for the community, but *ketemuq* and *meretuiq* do not experience a shift, the community still believes in the existence of spirits that are able to greet and make someone sick, even though in medical science it is clearly very opposed, no medical science agrees to the existence of this, but they also do not deny a big change in the health of someone who was originally sick then healthy because of doing *peretuiq*.

Levi-Strauss (2005) cited in Suwito, et al. (2015) understands tradition as a form of knowledge in a society that is manifested in habits to solve certain problems or to celebrate certain things. This knowledge usually has truth, either mystically or rationally by being able to answer the problems faced. The way people deal with problems that are considered mystical is by performing some simple rituals. Language is the most complete human symbol system so that language can be used as a symbol of a culture. Every part of human life is surrounded by language, language will develop with culture. Likewise, the process in *meretuiq* cannot be separated from language, mantras or readings read by the community to avoid *ketemuq* or *matra* when *meretuiq* is included in a community culture that is maintained.

The appropriate theory in this study is Frazer's theory of animism and Shapir-Whorf's theory which states that language, thought and are two things that cannot be separated and influence each other. Thought gives birth to behavior, and gives birth to habits and becomes culture. People who believe in *ketemuq-meretuiq* do these activities and believe in the benefits of these activities and this cannot be separated from language and culture. The interesting thing in *ketemuq-meretuiq* is the language used in its activities, this is the basis for the author to see the extent to which language is able to give suggestions and beliefs to the community, especially in *ketemuq* and *meretuiq* activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative research, Sugiyono (2016) states that qualitative research methods are methods based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research on natural object conditions, where the researcher is the key instrument. Because the author will present

information about the *ketemuq* - *meretuq* culture. The qualitative research method used in this research is ethnography where data search is carried out through observation and interviews with the community and seeing firsthand the activities carried out by the shaman / buyer and the patient who feels affected by *ketemuq*.

The location or place of research is in Batu Samban, Lembar village, West Lombok Regency. The reason the author chose this location, firstly because the community in Batu Samban is close to the hills and coastline, secondly because the author lives there, and thirdly the author saw firsthand how the conditions of the community were still strong in their belief in the existence of *ketemuq* and *meretuq*. This is also reinforced by the environmental conditions in Batu Samban whose beliefs are still strong, for further research. The informants in this study were patients who were often affected by *ketemuq*, midwives, shaman/belian, and religious leaders in Batu Samban Village. The data source of this research is every activity that can be recorded and monitored by the author when the *meretuq* activity has taken place.

Data collection techniques are carried out in natural settings (natural conditions) because data collection techniques are mostly obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2016). Therefore, it is hoped that the data collection techniques chosen are expected to assist the author in obtaining the best possible data. Then the data is analyzed by collecting the data that has been obtained, then the data is combined by adding several references from the literature study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Batu Samban community has long embraced Islam, and is a religious community, there is also a *pesantren* in it, but in reality there are still elements that have a touch of animism in the beliefs of this community. In various daily lives there are many traditions that are mixed with a touch of Islamic teachings. This mixing makes religion and culture inseparable.

Batu Samban is a village located close to the Lembar harbor, the interesting thing that makes the author try to trace the *ketemuq-meretuq* tradition is how the myth of the beginning of this village exists. There are many large stones in this area, and there is one stone that still stands firmly on the edge of the road, where people before passing it must touch the stone so as not to suffer from pain, or *ketemuq*. This belief has been formed since long ago although some people today no longer do it, but in some other places it is still often done and this forms a habit or culture of the Batu Samban community. *Ketemuq-meretuq* belongs to a taboo culture in most communities, but it is quite interesting to research, it is useful to provide an understanding to today's society about how language and culture influence each other's minds. Based on the research that has been conducted, there are several results of the discussion as follows.

1. Ketemuq

Ketemuq comes from the Indonesian word *bertemu*, which is absorbed into the word *ketemuq*. *Ketemuq* in the belief of the Sasak community is a tradition about the belief in the existence of greetings from the dead that cause a person (patient) to feel pain, dizziness, and nausea. Some other opinions from sufferers (patients affected by *ketemuq*) say they feel pain in accordance with the situation before the person died.

This belief that has been formed for generations has been ingrained, from grandmothers, mothers, and back to children. They instill the value of being more careful in every behavior and action. Every time they travel to sacred places, pass through a place that is rarely visited, even when they are in a family house that has a deceased person in it, they are required to maintain their behavior. They believe that the greeting of spirits, dead people or jinn exists because they feel disturbed, or happy by meeting the one being greeted (patient).

People believe that there is no guarantee when and where *ketemuq* can happen, so they are required to take care of themselves and behave well, which is why parents will usually scold their children if they play and shout when in sacred places, or those that are felt to have waiters. The development of technology does not make people's belief in *ketemuq* fade, in fact it still exists and survives.

Interviews with several respondents revealed that some of the reasons why they believe in *ketemuq* and *meretuq* are as follows.

The first case experienced by Ana was a few months after her grandmother died, it was known that she did not live in her grandmother's house, and after some time returned to visit the house and suddenly she experienced nausea and stomach pain that was very twisted, and occurred suddenly, her mother estimated that she experienced *ketemuq* and took her to *meretuq* as a result the pain healed instantly. It is believed that the pain she felt was exactly the same as that experienced by her grandmother when she was about to die.

The second case was experienced by Tuaq Bahron, he had lived in his current neighborhood for a long time, but suddenly felt pain in his body, and kept vomiting. Then a check-up was carried out and the results showed that he had been met by his brother-in-law who had passed away. What is slightly contradictory is that usually a person who is met is the result of a commotion, or is visiting the place for the first time in a long time, but this is different. *Ketemuq* and *meretuq* are still taboo and logically unbelievable but the author who heard the story was also a little surprised by the explanation, where the belief that when *ketemuq* and *peretuq* can make the patient recover without having to go to the doctor.

In **the third case**, Muhar said he was sweet-blooded, because every time he entered or came to a new place, he would feel met by spirits. He is liked and then greeted and then experiences strange pain all over his body, therefore if he is going to travel he always *besepeq*, reads letters in the Qur'an and brings garlic. She believes this will help her provide an antidote to being accosted by spirits.

Some of these cases may not be accepted by the mind and the medical world, even after giving an interview to one of the religious leaders, they stated that spirits have a different realm from humans, and cannot possibly be able to greet humans. However, the beliefs that occur and are experienced by the community cannot be denied, they experience pain and will heal only by doing *peretuq*.

2. Besepeq

The Sasak community's belief in *ketemuq* gave birth to a way of maintaining behavior, someone who passes by the house of a dead person, or places that are felt to have a waiter is accustomed to making expressions asking permission to pass a place. Denandjaya (1991) quoted by Juwita, et al. (2014) states that superstition involves beliefs and practices (habits) that are passed down through speech, and the speech is explained by conditions consisting of signs or causes (couse) superstition not only includes beliefs, but also behavior, experiences, tools, expressions and rhymes. This is also the case in the beliefs of the Sasak people.

Besepeq includes speech that is explained by signs. People usually when passing or visiting places that are felt to have a watcher will start saying excuse me by saying:

"poq banggaq dendeq sapaq".

The sentence is expressed when passing the road, when the pronunciation of 'poq' must be followed by spitting on the ground. This is believed by the community to be a way to avoid the greeting of the place, of course, it must still be done by maintaining good attitude and behavior. Language is born from the maturity of the mind, every word, sentence spoken can

provide confidence in life and society, especially the Sasak community which is still thick with animism and dynamism cultural beliefs.

3. Stage of Implementation of the Meretug Process

People who feel sudden pain, such as headaches and nausea, will start to check their condition with a shaman. The shaman here is not someone who uses mystical objects, this is just a term for a person who is considered capable of treating the pain suffered by the patient. The process of seeing a shaman is referred to as *meretug*.

The Batu Samban community usually calls the person who will be *meretug* as *papug*. *Papug* here is *papug* nine this is because people who are able to *meretug* are only specialized for women, and continue to be passed down from generation to generation, but not everyone can do it. This is referred to as a kind of belief that the person has been chosen to be able to do *peretug*.

The process of *meretug* is quite simple, some of the things that need to be done during the ritual are as follows:

1. The patient (*ketemuq* sufferer) goes to the *papug* and tells the events before he felt sick, for example what places he had visited, or if the patient is unable to go, it will usually be represented by parents or closest family.
2. The patient prepares water and selawat money to give to the *papug* (the money given does not have to be much, it can be as sincere as possible).
3. the *papug* will start taking a few strands of his own middle hair, and twisting them.
4. While twisting or twisting the hair *papug* reads some prayers/recitations or commonly referred to as mantras.
5. Then if a "tuk" sound is heard from the hair the *papug* will infer or inform that the patient is being addressed by spirits or the dead in one of the places visited.
6. The water that was prepared is recited and the patient is asked to drink half the water.
7. If there is *apuh* (betel lime) the *papug* will pulverize the *apuh* and the results of the lump will be attached to the patient in the navel area.
8. If there is no *apuh*, it will be replaced with the mother's saliva and rotated in the navel while reciting selawat three times.
9. Then the last step is that the patient is asked to gargle with the water of the selawat student and spit the water out of the yard while **besepoq**, then recite alfatihah and selawat.

When *peretug* is performed and there is no "tuk" sound from the hair, it is believed that the patient is indeed sick and not because of the greeting of spirits. The community believes that the hair will make a sound every time it is pulled if it has really been addressed by spirits. People also believe that if they have done *peretug* then the pain they feel will disappear and when asking patients, they really don't feel the pain like before they came to *meretug*.

Based on the results of interviews with several informants who have experienced *ketemuq*, they on average said that after doing *meretug* the dizzy head became better, and no longer nauseous as before. There was even a feeling of relief afterwards. There were also those who, after being *meretug*ed and without drinking water, suddenly felt better. This is still a question mark, even medicine cannot explain this scientifically, based on this it is included in the type of patient psychology and assumes that this is based on the patient's belief so that it becomes healed. The readings in *meretug* are as follows:

"Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, Allahumma Salli Ala Saidina Muhammad, (surat Al-ikhlas), ye teketemuq sik pedare"

Some people when going to meretug never knew what the papug read when starting to twist their hair, they just assumed that the papug was reading a mantra. But it turns out that after the researcher asked it was a recitation of the Koran combined with a statement into the Sasak language. When asked by the author the papug simply said that "selapug sak serah leq Allah Taale, pokokn Allah sak beng te ketaoq mun pedare ni wah sak ketemuq tie" (All is left to Allah SWT, the point is that God told him that he was greeted by the deceased). Twisting the hair is an intermediary, if it sounds "tuk" it means it is a sign that Allah gave to the papug. The belief of the Sasak people has never been separated from the verse of God.

Eller (2007) cited in Fitriani (2015) states "when we think about religious behavior, we think about rituals, amazing, colorful, and symbolic activities that express religious beliefs that lead to religious behavior or power". This opinion is in accordance with how people view *ketemuq* and *meretug* culture.

Some people consider that believing in *ketemuq* and *meretug* as a form of violating the rules in Islam. But if followed up again this goes back to how individual people respond to this. Because in *meretug* activities do not use strange rituals, do not use sacrifices, and do not associate with Allah, even in every implementation it cannot be separated from the verses of the Qur'an. It can be said that this is included in the combination of religion and culture learned by the Sasak community in Batu Samban village for generations.

Based on the above, we can conclude that the use or function of *meretug* is as an alternative suggestion for people who still have strong beliefs in the supernatural as a path to finding medicine or healing through the *meretug* ritual while still incorporating religious elements in it.

4. The Relationship between Language, Mind and the Beliefs of Meretug and Ketemuq

It cannot be denied that in the daily life of the community it will not be separated in language, even in terms of *ketemuq* and *meretug*, this has an impact on providing good steps for the community to maintain speech and behavior in everyday life. People believe in the existence of the supernatural and take better care of their words and behavior. According to Frazer, there is a big difference between the occult and religion. Occultism is all systems of human behavior and attitudes to achieve a purpose by mastering or using the supernatural powers and wonders that exist in the surrounding nature. Conversely, religion is all systems of human behavior and attitudes to achieve a purpose by relying on the abilities and powers of supernatural beings.

Based on this, it is not wrong if the Batu samban community believes that there are supernatural beings and *ketemuq* is a process in which the papug asks God to provide healing to the patient by way of *meretug*. The method is done by reading several sentences, and it cannot be separated from language. Their belief in the reading has an impact on their minds and gives birth to the suggestion to heal.

Fox (1986) cited by Margaretha (2017) argues that every oral tradition always includes an attitude towards language and its various uses that are crucial to understanding itself. This is in accordance with Whorf's shaper theory which states that language, thought and are two things that cannot be separated and influence each other (Widhiarso, 2005).

Based on this theory, the expressions in *besepeq* and *meretug* have a high suggestion value for people who practice the belief in the existence of *ketemuq* - *meretug*. Language is used as a reference in *besepeq* and *meretug*, this gives a sign that language is not only done for communication activities, but always and closely related in *besepeq meretug* activities. The use of language in *meretug* uses code mixes, mixing Arabic and Sasak languages, this is because

the beliefs of the Sasak people will not be separated from their religious beliefs. From that opinion it can be concluded that language, thought, and culture are born from a unity based on human belief in life experiences that have occurred and influence each other, language is a reflection of culture.

Language is a cultural product, language provides a way for someone to know the goal, even able to influence a person's mindset. The relationship between language and culture is very interesting to talk about. Both influence each other both visibly and subconsciously. Although the medical world has given an ultimatum that *ketemuq* and *meretuq* are things that cannot be medically researched, but if viewed from the other side, especially language and culture, *ketemuq* and *meretuq* are unique beliefs that continue to be ingrained, where culture cannot be separated from the use of language.

CONCLUSION

Ketemuq and *meretuq* is a belief of the Sasak people that has existed for generations. Nowadays, *ketemuq* and *meretuq* have been questioned due to the development of science and technology, especially in the field of health. But despite the fact that this is the case, it does not stop the Batu Samban Sasak community from believing in the existence of *ketemuq* and *meretuq*. *Ketemuq* and *meretuq* are two pairs of traditions that have been ingrained in the community.

The language produced during *ketemuq*, *besepoq* and *meretuq* activities cannot be separated from the cultural influence of the local community's strong belief in religion. This can be seen from the reading of the shaman (*papuq* nine) when reading prayers or commonly called *matra*, which cannot be separated from the code mix of Sasak language and Al-quran language. Some of the theories used are Frazer's theory of animism about beliefs that are still influenced by the existence of subtle forces in the surrounding nature and the Sapir-Whorf theory which states that language and thought influence each other. This research provides an understanding that the community has not separated from animist beliefs and mixed them with religious beliefs, this can be seen from the content of the *meretuq* reading done by *papuq* when doing *peretuq*. The Sapir Whorf theory is also quite compatible with this research. Sapir's main point is that Sapir considers that the language patterns revealed in language analysis reflect the patterns that exist in the minds of the speakers. According to Sapir, differences between languages occur because of differences in the way of expressing human experience, not because of differences in the experience itself. Language not only points to experiences that are mostly obtained through the help of language, but instead language determines human experience (Yunhadi, 2016). Because clearly language, thoughts can never be separated from the shadow of culture and the three of them influence each other.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on this, if explored further, this research still needs further investigation, because funds based on the medical and medical side have strongly rejected the existence of this *ketemuq*, but if it is based on the emotional and psychological aspects of society, this is very unique in terms of language and culture that affect a person's mind, because it has a great impact in providing healing to someone who suffers from pain that is felt to be due to subtle beings, namely when the sound 'tuk' is heard when *meretuq* can bring strong belief suggestions to the patient, and other language influences, not only language cannot be separated from influencing culture, language is also able to influence the minds of people in the environment.

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