

Degradation of Balinese Kitchen Utensil Lexicon: An Ecolinguistics Perspective

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Abstract - This study examined the degradation of the Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon by analyzing its use across spatial and temporal dimensions in urban Denpasar. Data were collected through documentation and a structured questionnaire administered to respondents selected using a multi-stage clustered sampling technique, with Denpasar identified as the primary research cluster. Participants were grouped by age into adolescents (12–25 years), adults (26–45 years), and elderly individuals (46–65 years). The analysis adopted an ecolinguistics framework that interpreted linguistic change through three key parameters: environment, diversity, and interaction, interrelation, and interdependence. A mixed qualitative–quantitative approach was employed to examine patterns of lexical recognition and use across generations. The findings revealed that the lexicon of Balinese kitchen utensils was largely retained among elderly respondents, who demonstrated high levels of familiarity and practical experience. In contrast, adolescents exhibited significant lexical degradation, as most were unfamiliar with the terms and had not actively used them in everyday practice. This generational disparity indicated an ongoing domain-specific language shift, driven by changes in domestic practices and material environments in urban Balinese households.

Keywords: Balinese language, ecolinguistics, kitchen utensils, language degradation, lexicon

1. Introduction

Language is a fundamental component of cultural identity, shaping how communities interact, maintain traditions, and respond to social change. In Indonesia, regional languages increasingly experience pressure as a result of urbanization, globalization, and the expanding dominance of Indonesian in both formal and informal domains of communication (Marlina & Pasaribu, 2020). This linguistic pressure is particularly visible in urban centers such as Denpasar, Bali, where modernization has transformed occupational structures, social interaction patterns, and everyday domestic practices. Studies on Balinese language shift consistently indicate that such transformations do not lead to an immediate or total abandonment of the language, but instead result in selective and domain-based erosion. In urban Denpasar, especially among adolescents, Balinese is increasingly displaced by Indonesian in daily interaction due to rational language choice, the perceived complexity of *angguh-ungguh* (speech levels/honorific registers), and shifting cultural orientations, while its use is largely retained in ritual and symbolic contexts (Arissusila, 2021). Empirical evidence supports this trend, as a survey of 52 adolescents in Denpasar shows Indonesian as dominant in domestic, educational, and workplace domains, while Balinese is increasingly marginal (I. G. A. C. S. Putra et al., 2022). At home, 40% reported exclusive use of Indonesian compared to 27% for Balinese; in schools, Indonesian alone (39%) or in combination with Balinese (40%) prevailed; and in workplaces, 71% used Indonesian exclusively. By contrast, Balinese demonstrated greater vitality in religious contexts, with 52% reporting balanced use of Indonesian and Balinese, and 17% using Balinese exclusively.

The decline of regional languages in Indonesia has therefore become a critical issue, with evidence suggesting that more than half of these languages are endangered as a consequence of ongoing sociocultural and economic change (Samiaji, 2024). In Bali, language shift frequently manifests as functional compartmentalization rather than complete language loss. Younger generations tend to prefer Indonesian for practical and politeness-related reasons, whereas Balinese remains confined to religious and ceremonial domains, indicating a narrowing of its functional scope (Terezawati et al., 2025). Comparable patterns are also observed in studies of specific lexical domains. The erosion of traditional Balinese fishing vocabulary in Karangasem has been linked to technological modernization and changing production practices, leading to the disappearance or replacement of domain-specific terms (Aryani, 2019). From an ecolinguistic perspective, intergenerational shifts in Balinese personal naming practices further demonstrate how environmental change, urbanization, and global cultural flows reshape linguistic choices across time (Putri et al., 2022).

Within this broader landscape of language shift, the lexicon associated with Balinese kitchen utensils constitutes a particularly revealing yet underexplored domain. Traditionally, Balinese kitchens employed a rich and specialized set of utensils whose terminology was embedded in daily culinary practices, domestic rituals, and intergenerational interaction. However, linguistic change cannot be separated from ecological change, as transformations in domestic technology, housing design, and lifestyle priorities alter the material and social environments in which language is used. Lexical degradation in this domain thus reflects a form of *domain-specific language shift*, whereby erosion occurs not across the entire language system but within specific areas of everyday life that are most directly affected by modernization (Fill & Mühlhäusler, 2001; Halliday, 2001). In this sense, the Balinese kitchen emerges as a critical ecological site where material transformation and linguistic erosion intersect.

In Balinese culture, the kitchen is commonly called *paon* and represents both a functional and symbolic domain within the household. Etymologically, *paon* derives from the Javanese *pawon*, itself rooted in *awu* ‘ash’, with the affixes *pa-* and *-an* denoting “a place for ash.” While *paon* serves as the everyday term, related forms such as *pawaregan* ‘place of satiety’ and *peratengan* ‘place of cooking’ highlight its ritual and cultural significance. Traditionally, the *paon* was constructed on the southern side of the compound in accordance with *Asta Kosala Kosali*, the Balinese architectural system that assigns spatial functions and orientations to domestic structures. Its orientation was further emphasized through the *bungut paon* ‘clay or brick stove’, which faced south with its opening to the north, ensuring that cooks faced south as an act of reverence to Dewa Brahma, the God of Fire. The *bungut paon* was not only a practical element but also held symbolic value, for example in purification rituals (*pengelukatan*), where individuals cleansed themselves by warming their hands near the flames or by using water from the kitchen to neutralize negative energies (*bhuta kala*) after returning from funerals or communal gatherings. Such practices, however, are increasingly regarded as mythological by younger generations (Dewi, 2021).

Beyond its spatial and ritual dimensions, the kitchen embodied nourishment, transformation, and cosmological order, functioning as a locus of cultural transmission where domestic life intersected with religious belief and communal identity. The lexicon associated with this domestic space, which includes terms such as *jalikan* ‘a furnace-like hearth’, *semprong* ‘a bamboo pipe used for fire ignition’, and *saang* ‘firewood’, encodes semiotic values that articulate communal labor, ecological intimacy, and ritual symbolism. As modern appliances increasingly replace traditional tools and orientations, these terms lose both their practical relevance and their embedded cultural meanings. The erosion of the *paon* lexicon exemplifies how material and spatial transformations precipitate linguistic attrition and cultural displacement within Balinese domestic life.

Figure 1 illustrates a comparative layout: the left side presents a traditional Balinese house compound in which the kitchen is constructed as a freestanding unit, separated from the main living area to allow for ventilation and fire safety. The right side depicts a modern urban house where the kitchen is integrated into the central household structure. This architectural reconfiguration reflects broader lifestyle transformations and an increased emphasis on efficiency and hygiene, while simultaneously reshaping the semiotic environment in which traditional culinary practices and their associated lexicon once operated.



Figure 1. A visual comparison between a traditional house layout (left) and an urban house layout (right). Source: (Widrayani, 2024) [left] and Personal Photograph [right].

Figures 2 and 3 present the *paon* from exterior and interior perspectives. Figure 2 shows its open-air structure with thatched roofing (*alang-alang*) and bamboo or stone walls, reflecting ecological adaptation and integration with the environment. This spatial arrangement reflects both functional and ecological considerations, allowing ventilation and integration with the surrounding environment.



Figure 2. Balinese Traditional Kitchen from Outside
Source: <https://valbali.blogspot.com/> (Unknown, 2010)

Figure 3 depicts the interior, where indigenous cooking technologies remain central. The *jalikan* is accompanied by clay pots, bamboo steamers, woven baskets, and metal vessels, underscoring the continuity of local craftsmanship. At the heart of the kitchen lies the *bungut paon*, which historically served dual purposes: as a practical site for food preparation and as a locus of ritual purification. The flames symbolized spiritual cleansing, reinforcing the kitchen's role as a space where material practice and symbolic meaning converge.



Figure 3. Inside a Balinese Traditional Kitchen
<https://balipustakanews.com> (Reda, 2021)

Recent studies in villages such as Batuan Sukawati (P. A. W. Putra & Yulianasari, 2020) reveal that while some structural aspects of the *paon* remain intact, materials and designs have evolved. For instance, traditional thatched roofs (*alang-alang*) have been replaced by tiled roofing to meet modern safety and maintenance standards. These evolving practices highlight the tension between continuity and change: the traditional *paon* persists as a medium of cultural preservation and intergenerational transmission, even as modern adaptations reshape its material and symbolic environment.

Building on this tension, Figure 4 presents a modern Balinese kitchen, typically found in urban or semi-urban households. The kitchen is visually cleaner, more organized, and dominated by the use of gas or electric stoves, which offer increased efficiency and convenience. In contrast to traditional kitchens that rely on firewood combustion, which produces smoke and soot and requires labor-intensive preparation, modern kitchens are defined by their emphasis on hygiene, efficiency, and the minimization of physical exertion. This juxtaposition highlights a clear shift in domestic priorities and material practices, illustrating how modernization alters not only infrastructure but also cultural attitudes toward labor, time management, and spatial aesthetics in everyday life.



Figure 4. Balinese Modern Kitchen
Source: Personal photograph

These contrasting kitchen environments highlight a broader sociocultural shift driven by processes of modernization and globalization. Modern kitchens prioritize cleanliness, convenience, and time efficiency, often at the cost of traditional knowledge, communal interaction, and cultural expressions embedded in language. From an ecolinguistic perspective, this transition reflects a reconfiguration of the linguistic ecology, in which globalized domestic technologies and lifestyles reshape the material and social environments that once sustained traditional lexical practices. As such, the shift from *jalikan* to gas stoves, or from *bungut paon* to standardized countertops, not only alters material practices but also accelerates the erosion of specific lexical items and their associated symbolic and cultural functions within the Balinese language.

Building on this foundation, the present study extends the discussion on eco-lexicons by examining how contemporary sociocultural dynamics, particularly those associated with urbanization and globalization, influence the traditional lexicon of Balinese kitchen utensils. While previous research has largely addressed macro-level factors contributing to regional language decline, domain-specific lexical ecologies embedded in everyday cultural practices have received comparatively limited scholarly attention. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the retention, transformation, and obsolescence of Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon within urban communities in Denpasar. By foregrounding both spatial reconfiguration and generational differences in language use, the research seeks to answer three key questions: (1) What Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon remains in use today? (2) How is the existence and usage of Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon evolving within Denpasar's urban communities? (3) How does domain-specific language shift occur in the Balinese kitchen lexicon from an ecolinguistic perspective?

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transforms linguistic ecology, social interaction, and cultural meaning, accelerating the erosion of specific lexical items and the values they once embodied within Balinese domestic life.

2. Method

This study employed a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the erosion of the Balinese lexicon related to traditional kitchen utensils. The mixed design was chosen to provide both descriptive numerical evidence and interpretive depth. The quantitative component was descriptive, presenting frequency and percentage distributions of respondents' knowledge and use of traditional kitchen terms across age groups, as illustrated in Diagram 1. This allowed generational differences in lexical vitality to be visualized clearly. The qualitative component complemented these findings by exploring participants' lived experiences, symbolic perceptions, and cultural practices associated with the *paon* through open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Participants were recruited in Denpasar using convenience sampling, stratified by age to capture generational variation in lexical competence: adolescents (12–25 years), adults (26–45 years), and elderly (46–65 years). A total of 320 respondents participated (125 adolescents, 105 adults, 90 elderly). This stratification was based on sociolinguistic reasoning, namely that age influenced language competence and exposure to traditional domestic practices, making it a key variable in assessing lexical retention and erosion.

The Google Form questionnaire link was distributed by the Kepala Lurah of Panjer through community communication channels, ensuring broad access among residents. Respondents completed the questionnaire independently, covering adolescents, adults, and elderly groups. The instrument consisted of closed-ended multiple-choice items to capture quantitative data on lexical recognition and use, and open-ended narrative prompts to elicit qualitative insights into symbolic perceptions and cultural practices. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted online via telephone and Google Meet, lasting approximately 30–45 minutes. These interviews allowed respondents to elaborate on their lived experiences and cultural meanings associated with the kitchen utensil in greater depth.

Prior to full distribution, the questionnaire was piloted with 20 respondents outside the main sample to refine wording and ensure technical functionality of the Google Form. Completed responses were checked for completeness and logical consistency, with incomplete or contradictory entries excluded from analysis. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation of questionnaire results, interview narratives, and secondary documentation. Member checking was conducted with selected participants, who reviewed summaries of their interview responses to confirm interpretive accuracy. Coding reliability was enhanced by involving two independent coders in the thematic analysis, followed by reconciliation of discrepancies through discussion.

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were processed in Google Sheets to calculate frequencies and percentages of lexical recognition, which were presented in diagrams to illustrate generational differences. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically to identify recurring symbolic perceptions and explanatory factors related to lexical use and obsolescence. Secondary sources, including *Isi dan Kelengkapan Rumah Tangga Tradisional di Daerah Bali* (Widia et al., 1984), which documented traditional household structures and utensils, and *Kumpulan Satua (Dongeng Rakyat Bali)* (Suwija et al., 2019), a collection of Balinese folktales that illustrated ecological knowledge and cultural significance, were consulted to contextualize the findings within Balinese domestic traditions.

The data analysis applied Haugen's ecolinguistic parameters—environment, diversity, and interrelation—to interpret patterns of lexical change. The environmental dimension examined how modernization and globalization reshaped domestic practices; the diversity dimension captured generational variation in lexical retention; and the interrelation dimension explored how cultural meanings and ecological knowledge were transmitted or disrupted across generations. This sequential explanatory design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) allowed quantitative findings to be elaborated through qualitative insights, thereby linking lexical erosion to broader sociocultural and ecological transformations in Balinese

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents and interprets the findings of the questionnaire concerning the knowledge and use of traditional Balinese kitchen terminology across three age groups. The analysis is grounded in an

ecolinguistic perspective, allowing the data to be read not merely as indicators of lexical familiarity, but as evidence of broader sociocultural, semiotic, and ecological transformations affecting the Balinese language in the domestic domain.

To provide contextual grounding, Table 1 presents a categorized lexicon of traditional Balinese kitchenware based on material composition (bamboo, wood, metal, pottery, glass, and stone) and functional grouping, including kitchen utensils, cookware, tableware, kitchen appliances, storage and organization, and kitchen furniture. This categorization reflects the material culture embedded in traditional Balinese culinary practices and serves as an analytical reference for examining patterns of lexical retention and loss across generations.

Table 1. Lexicon of Balinese Traditional Kitchenware

Kitchen Group	Name of Kitchenware
Kitchen Utensils	<i>siut kayu</i> ‘wooden ladle’, <i>siut besi</i> ‘iron ladle’, <i>tiuk</i> ‘knife’, <i>blakas</i> ‘cleaver knife’, <i>kikihan</i> ‘grater’, <i>sinduk kayu</i> , ‘wooden spoon’ <i>sinduk besi</i> ‘iron spoon’
Cookware (pots & pans)	<i>Cublukan</i> ‘pot for water or cooking’, <i>dandang</i> ‘large cooking pot’, <i>payuk besi</i> ‘iron pot’, <i>pangedangan</i> ‘earthenware cooking vessel or food container’, <i>payuk tanah</i> ‘earthenware pot’, <i>kukusan</i> ‘steamer (usually bamboo)’, <i>penggorengan besi</i> ‘iron frying pan’
Tableware (dining items)	<i>ingka</i> ‘serving plate or tray’, <i>sok kasi/nasi</i> , ‘bamboo rice container’ <i>kencéng</i> ‘iron water jar’, <i>caratan</i> ‘clay jug’, <i>lumur</i> ‘glass’
Kitchen Appliances	<i>semprong</i> ‘bamboo pipe for fire ignition’, <i>saang</i> ‘firewood’, <i>talenan</i> ‘wooden chopping board’, <i>penyeluhan</i> ‘scraping tool’, <i>jalikan</i> ‘furnace-like hearth’, <i>lesung</i> ‘mortar for pounding rice’, <i>cobék alu</i> ‘stone mortar and pestle’, <i>bungut paon</i> ‘clay or brick stove’
Storage & organization	<i>genjo</i> ‘water container (often clay)’, <i>jun</i> ‘clay large jar’, <i>gebeh</i> ‘clay vessel for water storage’, <i>lenggatan</i> ‘bamboo rack or shelf’
Kitchen furniture	<i>dampar</i> ‘wooden stool’, <i>taban</i> ‘wood-and-bamboo food platform’

The classification in Table 1 informed the design of the questionnaire, which aimed to capture patterns of recognition and use of traditional kitchen lexicon among respondents from different age groups. The results are summarized in Figure 5, which illustrates generational variation in familiarity with and practical engagement in traditional kitchen practices.

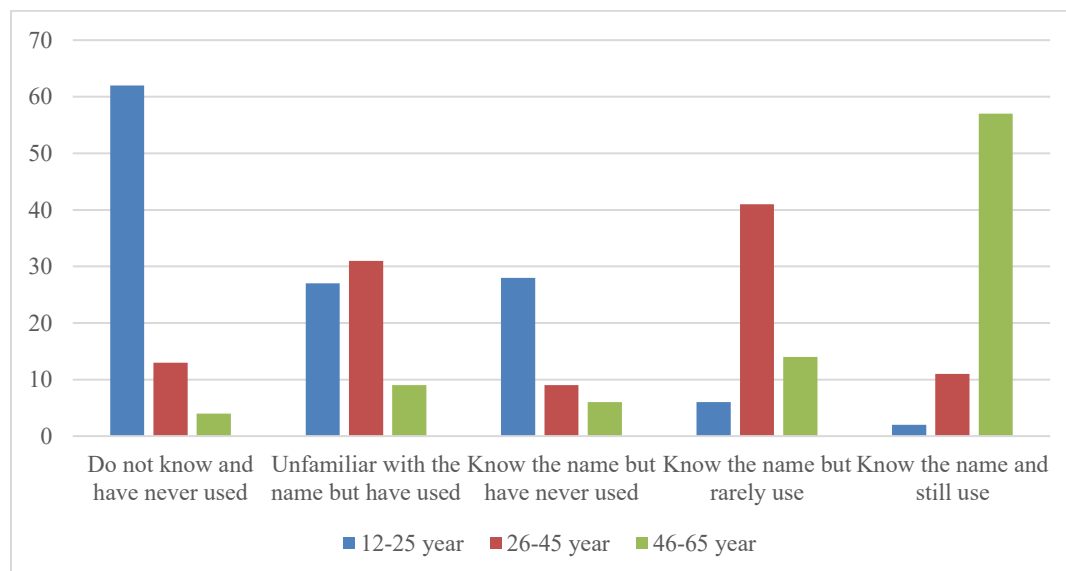


Figure 5. Respondent Knowledge of Traditional Kitchen Terms by Age

Figure 5 reveals a clear generational pattern in the recognition and use of traditional Balinese kitchen terminology. Younger respondents (12–25 years) demonstrate generally low levels of familiarity and minimal direct experience with traditional kitchen utensils. Most participants in this group reported limited knowledge and little to no practical engagement with traditional cookware and appliances, particularly items such as *jalikan* ‘earthen stove’ and storage tools like *sok kasi* or *sok nasi* ‘woven rice container’, which are now rarely encountered in contemporary urban kitchens.

However, these findings must be interpreted with caution due to the potential influence of hidden prestige variables. Recognition of traditional vocabulary does not necessarily correspond to actual practice. Respondents may claim familiarity with certain terms because of their symbolic or cultural prestige, even though they rarely or never use them in daily life. Consequently, the recognition data presented in Figure 4 should be regarded as indicative rather than definitive, and must be complemented by qualitative analysis to capture the realities of lexical use in contemporary practice.

From an ecolinguistic perspective, this pattern indicates a domain-specific language shift, in which lexical erosion occurs not across the Balinese language as a whole, but within the domestic kitchen domain. Rather than reflecting complete linguistic loss, the findings suggest a gradual transition from active lexical use to passive recognition among younger speakers, signaling a weakening of intergenerational transmission within everyday household practices.

In contrast, respondents from the older age group (46–65 years) exhibit substantially higher levels of recognition and continued use of traditional kitchen utensils, particularly those made from bamboo, wood, and coconut shells. This group demonstrates sustained engagement with traditional cooking practices, suggesting that they continue to function as custodians of both material culture and the linguistic knowledge associated with it. The adult group (26–45 years) occupies an intermediate position, showing moderate levels of recognition but limited use, which reflects a transitional stage in which traditional knowledge is acknowledged but no longer routinely practiced.

Beyond their functional roles, traditional kitchen utensils such as *jalikan*, *semprong*, and *bungut paon* historically operated as cultural semiotic resources within the *paon*. These items mediated social interaction, embodied ritual knowledge, and facilitated intergenerational learning through daily practice. Their declining presence in contemporary kitchens therefore signifies not only material replacement, but also the erosion of symbolic meanings encoded in both culinary practices and language. As these tools disappear from everyday use, the lexical items associated with them lose their semiotic grounding, accelerating their marginalization within the Balinese linguistic repertoire.

The observed generational differences also reflect a broader reconfiguration of the linguistic ecology of the Balinese kitchen driven by modernization and globalization. The increasing dominance of standardized kitchen technologies, including gas stoves, electric appliances, and modular kitchen layouts, reflects a prioritization of efficiency, hygiene, and convenience. These globalized domestic practices reshape the material and social environment of the household, displacing the ecological conditions that once sustained traditional utensils and their associated lexicon. Consequently, the domestic space no longer functions as a primary site for the transmission of traditional culinary knowledge and language.

The findings indicate that lexical erosion in the kitchen domain is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but reflects a deeper reconceptualization of cooking culture in Balinese society. Traditional terms such as *bungut paon* or *jalikan* encoded ritual, ecological, and communal meanings, whereas their replacement by “gas stove” or “countertop” signals a shift toward modern values of efficiency, hygiene, and convenience. In this sense, linguistic change parallels cultural change: as the physical form of kitchen utensils evolves, the associated lexicon diminishes, and with it the symbolic values embedded in Balinese cooking traditions. From an ecolinguistic perspective, this demonstrates how material transformation directly reshapes linguistic ecology, while from a cultural linguistics perspective, it reveals how language loss entails a reconfiguration of cultural conceptualisations of domestic life.

3.1 Balinese Kitchen Utensil Lexicon Remaining in Use Today

This subsection examines the shift of the Balinese kitchen lexicon as a domain-specific language shift, following Fishman’s (1991) framework, which emphasizes the weakening of minority languages when their functional domains are replaced by dominant socio-technological systems. The findings indicate that lexical retention is strongly correlated with continued functional use. Items such as *siut kayu* ‘wooden rice-stirring spoon’ and *siut besi* ‘metal rice-stirring spoon’ remain widely recognized and used across age groups, particularly among elderly respondents (46–65 years). Their persistence reflects what

Fishman terms intergenerational functional continuity, where language survives because the associated practices remain embedded in daily routines. Respondents emphasized durability, health considerations, and habitual use since childhood as key reasons for maintaining these utensils, suggesting that emotional attachment and embodied memory play a significant role in lexical preservation.

In contrast, utensils such as *kikihan* ‘traditional grater’ and *blakas* ‘cleaver knife’ exhibit clear signs of domain restriction. Among younger respondents (12–25 years), both recognition and usage are markedly low. These items are largely confined to ceremonial cooking contexts, particularly *mébat* ‘a communal ritual food preparation practice’. As Fishman (1991) argues, when a language variety or lexical set becomes limited to ritual or symbolic functions, it enters a vulnerable stage of shift, no longer supported by everyday communicative necessity.

This domain contraction is further reinforced by perceptions of safety, efficiency, and hygiene. Younger respondents frequently described the *kikihan* as unsafe and impractical compared to electric graters, aligning with broader modernization narratives in domestic technology. Figure 5, which contrasts a traditional *kikihan* with a modern grater, visually reinforces this shift by foregrounding differences in design, material, and perceived risk. From an ecolinguistic perspective (Haugen, 1972), such material transformations alter the linguistic ecosystem, reducing the environmental relevance of traditional lexemes and accelerating lexical attrition.



Figure 6. Comparison between a traditional Balinese *kikihan* (left) and a modern grater (right).
Source: <https://baliamera.com/> (Reezuls, 2021) (left) and <https://shopee.co.id>. (right)

Similarly, the *blakas* is predominantly recognized as a ceremonial tool rather than a functional household object. As illustrated in Figure 6, its use during *mébat* activities remains symbolically significant but socially limited. Importantly, participation in such events is no longer universal, as many adolescents and young adults are not actively involved in *sekaa truna-truni* ‘village youth organization’. This reduced participation disrupts intergenerational transmission, weakening what Fishman identifies as the home–community axis crucial for language maintenance.



Figure 7. Traditional *mébat* activity in a Balinese youth organization (Sekaa Truna Truni)
Source: <https://bali.tribunnews.com/> (Aryanta, 2019)

Overall, the data reveal that the Balinese kitchen lexicon is not uniformly disappearing but undergoing selective retention and functional reassignment. Lexical items associated with everyday cooking practices remain relatively stable, while those tied to labor-intensive, ceremonial, or technologically obsolete activities are increasingly marginalized. This pattern confirms that language shift in the Balinese kitchen domain is driven less by outright language abandonment than by reconfiguration of domains, where modern tools replace traditional practices and, consequently, their associated vocabulary.

From a broader ecolinguistic standpoint, the Balinese kitchen can be understood as a micro-ecology where linguistic vitality depends on the balance between cultural continuity, technological adaptation, and social participation. As traditional utensils gradually disappear from daily domestic practice, their associated lexemes become ecologically endangered, preserved primarily as cultural symbols rather than sustained through routine use. This domain-specific shift highlights the critical role of everyday practices in maintaining linguistic diversity within minority languages.

3.2 Existence and Usage of Balinese Kitchen Utensil Lexicon in Urban Denpasar Communities

This subsection focuses on intergenerational variation in the recognition and use of traditional Balinese kitchen terminology, drawing on quantitative data from the questionnaire and interpreted through ecolinguistic and language shift perspectives. By stratifying respondents into three age groups, namely adolescents (12–25), adults (26–45), and the elderly (46–65), the study demonstrates systematic differences in lexical retention that mirror broader sociocultural and technological transformations within Balinese households. The generational erosion of kitchen vocabulary observed in this study aligns with Aryani's (2019) findings on the decline of fishing terminology, where younger speakers demonstrated limited recognition of traditional lexemes.

Quantitatively, the results demonstrate a clear age-graded pattern of lexical knowledge, as summarized in Figure 5, which presents the percentage of respondents in each age group who recognized and reported using traditional kitchen items. The elderly group consistently shows the highest levels of recognition and active use across nearly all lexical categories, including kitchen utensils, cookware, tableware, appliances, storage, and furniture. This group functions as the primary lexical reservoir, maintaining both the terms and the associated practices through lived experience and habitual use.

In contrast, the adolescent group exhibits the lowest levels of recognition and usage, particularly for lexemes associated with traditional appliances (*jalikan*, *bungut paon*, *semprong*), storage (*genjo*, *jun*, *gebeh*), and furniture (*taban*, *dampar*). Quantitative frequencies indicate that many respondents in this group either selected “do not know” or recognized the object only visually without knowing its Balinese term. This gap signals not merely a decline in usage but a process of lexical decoupling, where objects, if encountered, are no longer linguistically encoded in the heritage language.

The adult group occupies an intermediate position, reflecting a transitional generation. While recognition rates remain relatively high for items still encountered in domestic or ceremonial contexts (e.g., *ingka*, *sok kasi*, *payuk besi*), reported usage is substantially lower than that of the elderly group. This discrepancy between recognition and use suggests a stage of passive lexical competence, where terms are understood but no longer activated in daily interaction. From Fishman's (1991) perspective, this indicates early-stage domain shift, as lexical knowledge survives cognitively but lacks functional reinforcement.

To further illustrate this pattern, Table 2 (lexical retention by age group) categorizes items into three retention levels: high (recognized and used), moderate (recognized but rarely used), and low (neither recognized nor used). Items such as *siut kayu* and *ingka* fall into the high-retention category across all age groups, while tools like *kikihan*, *blakas*, and *lesung* show a steep decline from elderly to adolescent respondents. The quantitative distribution confirms that functional frequency is the strongest predictor of lexical survival, outweighing cultural prestige alone.

Table 2. Lexical Retention by Age Group

Kitchen Domain	Lexical Items (Examples)	Adolescents (12–25)	Adults (26–45)	Elderly (46–65)	Retention Pattern
Kitchen Utensils	<i>siut kayu</i> , <i>siut besi</i>	High recognition, moderate use	High recognition, moderate–high use	High recognition, high use	Stable retention
	<i>kikihan</i> , <i>blakas</i>	Low recognition, rare use	Moderate recognition, rare use	High recognition, limited use (ceremonial)	Ritual-based retention
Cookware	<i>payuk besi</i> , <i>penggorengan besi</i>	Moderate recognition, rare use	High recognition, moderate use	High recognition, high use	Functional retention
	<i>kukusan</i> , <i>dandang</i> , <i>payuk tanah</i>	Very low recognition, no use	Low recognition, rare use	Moderate recognition, limited use	Declining retention
Tableware	<i>ingka</i> , <i>sok kasi/sok nasi</i>	Moderate recognition, rare use	High recognition, moderate use	High recognition, high use	Partial retention
	<i>kencéng</i> , <i>caratan</i>	Low recognition, no use	Moderate recognition, rare use	High recognition, habitual use	Age-bound retention
Kitchen Appliances	<i>talenan</i> , <i>cobék</i>	High recognition, high use	High recognition, high use	High recognition, high use	Lexical retention, material shift (material-shifted)
	<i>jalikan</i> , <i>bungut paon</i> , <i>semprong</i> , <i>lesung</i>	Very low recognition, no use	Low recognition, no use	Moderate recognition, rare use	Severe lexical erosion
Storage & Organization	<i>genjo</i> , <i>jun</i> , <i>gebeh</i>	Very low recognition, no use	Low recognition, no use	Moderate recognition, rare use	Obsolete domain
	<i>lenggatan</i>	Very low recognition, no use	Low recognition, no use	Moderate recognition, rare use	Structural loss

Kitchen Furniture	<i>taban, dampar</i>	Very low recognition, no use	Low recognition, no use	Moderate recognition, rare use	Near-extinct lexicon
Everyday Glassware	<i>lumur</i>	Object used, term unknown	Object used, term rarely used	Object and term used	Lexical replacement (Indonesian)

From an ecolinguistic standpoint, these intergenerational differences reflect changes in the linguistic environment of the home. As modern kitchen appliances, modular storage systems, and minimalist furniture become dominant, the ecological niches that once sustained traditional lexemes disappear. Consequently, younger speakers grow up in environments where the referents, and therefore the corresponding terms, are absent. This pattern substantiates Haugen's (1972) claim that language vitality is contingent upon sustained interaction between speakers and their material as well as social environments.

Importantly, the data also reveal that ceremonial exposure alone is insufficient to ensure lexical transmission. Although adolescents may encounter traditional tools during events such as *mébat* or religious ceremonies, the low frequency and limited participation reduce opportunities for sustained lexical acquisition. Quantitatively, recognition without usage remains high only for a small subset of culturally salient items, while the majority show declining familiarity. This pattern underscores the fragility of ritual-only transmission, which lacks the density required for long-term language maintenance.

Overall, the quantitative evidence confirms that lexical retention in the Balinese kitchen domain follows a generational gradient, with the elderly maintaining active competence, adults demonstrating partial retention, and adolescents experiencing significant lexical loss. Rather than indicating abrupt language abandonment, these patterns point to a gradual restructuring of linguistic competence, shaped by shifting domestic practices, technological adoption, and reduced intergenerational interaction within the kitchen space.

3.3 Domain-Specific Language Shift in the Balinese Kitchen Lexicon

The degradation of the Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon observed in this study cannot be separated from broader processes of globalization and modernization that reshape domestic life in urban Bali. From an ecolinguistic perspective, globalization operates as a restructuring force that simultaneously transforms material environments, social practices, and cultural value systems. As these ecological components shift, the linguistic elements embedded within them, particularly domain-specific vocabulary, are inevitably affected.

In Denpasar, globalization manifests most visibly through the standardization of domestic technologies and lifestyles. The widespread adoption of gas stoves, electric rice cookers, modular kitchen sets, water dispensers, and processed food products reflects the global circulation of domestic ideals centered on efficiency, hygiene, and time-saving. These technologies do not merely replace traditional tools; they redefine the ecological conditions under which language is used. As illustrated in Figure 8, the transition from traditional rice-cooking systems involving *kukusan* and *dandang* to electric rice cookers represents not only a technological substitution but also a contraction of culinary practices that once required a rich and specialized lexicon. When utensils such as *jalikan*, *bungut paon*, *kukusan*, and *lesung* disappear from everyday practice, the ecological niches that once sustained their associated lexicon are progressively dismantled.

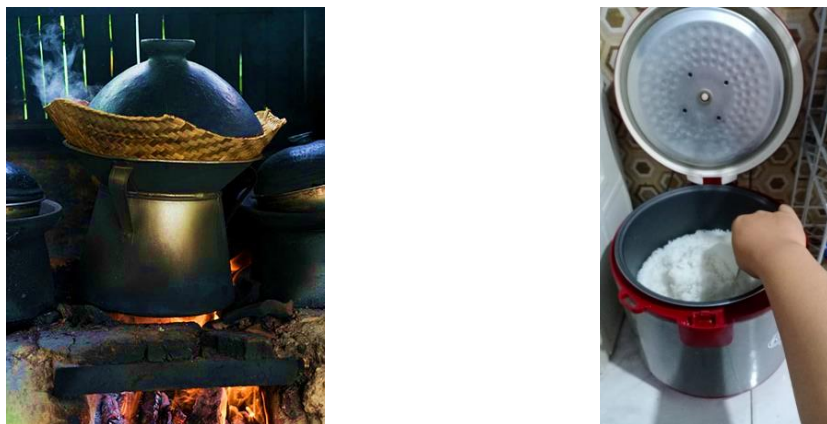


Figure 8. Comparison between a traditional rice cooking pot (left) and a modern rice cooker (right).
Source: <https://wapadiumeubud.com> (Unknown, 2024) (left) and Personal photograph (right)

The restructuring effects of globalization extend beyond cooking practices to domestic infrastructure and resource management. Traditional water storage and distribution practices, which relied on vessels such as *jun* and *gebeh*, have been largely replaced by piped water systems and modern storage tanks supplied by state or commercial providers. This shift is visually captured in Figure 9, which contrasts traditional water-carrying practices with contemporary household water storage. Such infrastructural transformations eliminate routine activities that once involved specific tools and terminologies, thereby accelerating the disappearance of the associated ecological lexicon from daily interaction.



Figure 9. Two teenagers carrying a *jun* on their heads (left) and a water tank at home used for storing water (right). Source: @sejarahbali (Instagram) and personal photograph

Taken together with the spatial transformation of kitchens shown in Figure 4, these visual comparisons demonstrate how globalization reorganizes domestic space and practice at multiple levels. Traditional kitchens characterized by open layouts and multifunctional areas are increasingly replaced by enclosed, compact, and standardized designs. These changes reduce opportunities for communal, process-oriented activities in favor of individualized and automated routines. As a consequence, language use within the kitchen becomes increasingly minimal and functional, leaving little space for the maintenance of traditional lexical forms.

Crucially, globalization introduces a dominant ideology of modernity that reassigns value to domestic practices. Traditional kitchen utensils are frequently reinterpreted as inefficient, unsafe, or

unhygienic, while modern appliances are framed as clean, practical, and superior. This ideological shift is evident in respondents' perceptions of tools such as the *kikihan* and *jalikan*, which younger participants often describe as dangerous or outdated. These evaluations are not neutral assessments of utility but reflect the internalization of global norms that privilege speed, convenience, and risk avoidance. Within this ideological framework, traditional kitchen practices—and the lexicon that accompanies them—are symbolically marginalized.

From an ecolinguistic standpoint, this process illustrates how language degradation emerges as a secondary effect of environmental transformation. The decline of the Balinese kitchen lexicon does not result from deliberate language abandonment but from the gradual erosion of the material and social environments that support its use. As globalized technologies and lifestyles dominate domestic spaces, Balinese terms are increasingly replaced by Indonesian or globally recognizable labels. The lexical shift from *lumur* to *gelas* 'glass', or the disappearance of terms such as *lenggatan* and *bungut paon*, exemplifies how globalization promotes linguistic homogenization at the micro-level of household interaction.

At the same time, globalization does not entirely erase traditional elements but often recontextualizes them. As demonstrated in the findings, traditional kitchen utensils persist in restricted domains such as ceremonial cooking (*mébat*), cultural performances, and tourism-oriented cooking classes. In these contexts, traditional tools and their associated lexicon function primarily as symbolic or representational resources rather than as components of everyday practice. This recontextualization transforms living linguistic resources into curated cultural artifacts, offering visibility but providing limited support for long-term lexical vitality.

The reconfiguration of linguistic ecology observed in this study thus reflects a broader pattern of global influence on local languages. In urban Balinese households, the kitchen is no longer a central site of intergenerational interaction and linguistic transmission but a streamlined space optimized for efficiency. Consequently, the Balinese language loses one of its traditional domains of daily use, accelerating lexical erosion even as the language continues to survive in ritual, ceremonial, or formal contexts. The degradation of the Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon is best understood as an ecological consequence of globalization-driven change. This perspective highlights the need to approach language maintenance not merely as a linguistic issue but as an ecological one encompassing material, social, and ideological environments.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the degradation of the Balinese kitchen utensil lexicon in urban Denpasar is an ecological consequence of broader processes of globalization and modernization rather than a result of deliberate language abandonment. The findings show that the replacement of traditional kitchen tools and infrastructures by modern technologies systematically removes the domains of practice that once sustained specialized culinary vocabulary. As these material and social environments disappear, the associated lexicon undergoes contraction and loss. From an ecolinguistic perspective, the transformation of domestic space through standardized kitchen layouts, electric appliances, and modern water systems has reduced communal interaction and intergenerational transmission within the kitchen. Consequently, this space no longer functions as a key ecological niche for maintaining Balinese culinary terminology. Intergenerational patterns further confirm this shift, with elderly respondents retaining higher lexical knowledge while younger generations display limited familiarity, reflecting domain-based language shift as described by Fishman. While globalization does not entirely eliminate traditional elements, it recontextualizes them into restricted ceremonial or cultural settings, where traditional utensils and their lexicon function symbolically rather than as part of everyday communication. This study therefore highlights that language maintenance cannot be addressed solely through linguistic intervention but must also consider the material and social environments that support language use. Preserving domain-specific vocabulary requires attention to everyday practices and spaces in which language is habitually embedded.

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