

---

## Taboo Words Used in Jinengdalem Village Related to *Tri Hita Karana*: A Descriptive Qualitative Study

---

**Putu Reynald Ridana Pratama**  
Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha  
[reynald@undiksha.ac.id](mailto:reynald@undiksha.ac.id)

**I Gede Budasi**  
Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha  
[gede.budasi@undiksha.ac.id](mailto:gede.budasi@undiksha.ac.id)

**Putu Adi Krisna Juniarta**  
Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha  
[adi.krisna@undiksha.ac.id](mailto:adi.krisna@undiksha.ac.id)

### *Abstract*

*This study aims to identify instances of taboo phrases used in relation to the three harmonious concepts of life which in Balinese called Tri Hita Karana. In Jinengdalem Village, the research was carried out. As a result, the study design used a descriptive qualitative approach. Using three informants chosen according to a predetermined set of criteria, the researcher served as the primary instrument, equipped with an interview sheet. In-depth interviews were conducted as part of the data gathering. As the primary sources data, three informants were selected during these sessions. Pitana (2010) proposed the Tri Hita Karana concept, which is comprised of three domains: Parahyangan, Pawongan, and Palemahan. This concept served as a basis for the analysis of the data-related objective. Based on the concept of Tri Hita Karana, the results of the study show that there are 43 taboo words, which are separated into three domains: 5 connected to Parahyangan, 30 related to Pawongan, and 8 related to Palemahan.. This result suggests that the Balinese taboo words are still used by the people of Jinengdalem Village as a way to preserve their cultural legacy.*

---

**Keywords:** Taboo words, *Tri Hita Karana*, Balinese language, Jinengdalem Village

---

## INTRODUCTION

Language plays a central role in shaping the identity, culture, and social interactions of a society, involving both spoken and written forms (Suyanto, 2011). However, the phenomenon of "language death" threatens many traditional languages and local cultures, especially in the face of globalization, technological advances, and rapid social changes. The decline in the use of taboo language, especially among the younger generation in the modern era, is a real example. Global languages dominating media, technology, and daily interactions gradually replace traditional taboo languages, creating the potential for misunderstandings due to different regional contexts (Wardhaugh, 2006). Taboo has meaning as a different view of the use of words, belief systems, actions, norms, and objects in a specific context. Taboo, as defined by Douglas (2002), involves something forbidden such as religion, sacredness, and ambiguity. Violations of established rules, unconventional language usage, or inappropriate actions in specific social circles result in "impropriety" arising from taboo behaviors or words, surpassing local traditions (Laksana, 2009). The Balinese language, which is

extensively used as the primary language in Bali and is a source of pride for its people, has different linguistic nuances and ethical implications depending on the district. Nonetheless, because diverse populations speak different languages, using a common language can result in misconceptions (Wardhaugh, 2006). It is clear that enforcing taboo terms in Balinese society is difficult, especially when it comes to the youth. "*De mesu peteng pedidian, amah leak nyaan!*" is an example of a phrase that uses the term "*leak*," which is another name for "*butha kala*" in Hinduism and denotes a magical and sacred power (Juliawan & Dewi, 2022). According to Pitana (2010), this phrase is associated with the *Tri Hita Karana* principle of Balinese Hinduism, which includes the concepts of *Parahyangan* (connection with God), *Pawongan* (social relations), and *Palemahan* (connection with the environment). The term warns against traveling alone at night in order to prevent potential misfortunes linked to the evil energies symbolized by the "*leak*" representations. However, due to the impact of foreign cultures and technology improvements, Bali's younger generation could find it difficult to completely understand the significance of such forbidden expressions, which reflects the features of language death as described by Crystall (2000). The Balinese language is still widely used in Jinengdalem Village, particularly when harsh language is used, which is typically frowned upon by Bali's general populace. For instance, while speaking with parents, phrases such as "*nah nyaan gen kal medem malu*" which translates to "yes, I'll go to sleep later," employ the harsh word "*medem*" for "sleep" rather than the more courteous term "*sirep*." A generational divide in cultural transmission is the reason for the decrease in the use of forbidden terms in Jinengdalem Village. The ecolinguistics principle that language should be preserved as a valuable resource is in conflict with this (Stibbe, 2020). In particular, revitalization initiatives for the Balinese language in Jinengdalem Village are essential to preventing language death, since they highlight the value of preserving taboo terms for the sake of future generations. The researcher believes that taboo words in Jinengdalem Village are an important part of the local culture and should be preserved based on the description given above. Because it is a component of the whole, this study is crucial and must be done right away to stop the erasure of taboo terms from the language. As a result, the study "Taboo Words Used in Jinengdalem Village Related to *Tri Hita Karana*" is conducted.

## METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method by applying interview techniques to comprehend the phenomena of subjects' experiences, including behavior, perception, motivation, and actions, naturally (Creswell, 2014). The research focuses on Jinengdalem Village, Buleleng Regency, with the primary participants originating from the local community who typically communicate in the Balinese language. A deep interview approach was chosen to facilitate the collection of information regarding the use of taboo words in the Balinese language in Jinengdalem Village. Both Balinese and Indonesian languages are utilized during interviews based on the initial observation that the research subjects are native Balinese speakers. Every piece of information gathered will be entered into a tabular format. The interactive model developed by Miles & Huberman (1994) is followed in the data analysis process, which emphasizes the interdependencies between different stages of the analysis process to establish an all-encompassing analytical domain. Tabu words were analyzed descriptive qualitative, based on the concept of *Tri Hita Karana* according to Pitana (2010) which includes three domains, namely: *Parahyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*. Using qualitative descriptive techniques, the analysis's findings are displayed in tabular form.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Two theories were applied in order to make the data visible. The definition of forbidden words in Jinengdalem Village is based on Douglas's (2002) approach. In addition, the *Tri Hita Karana* theory originates from Pitana (2010), which was used to categorize the relationships between all banned words in Jinengdalem Village that were categorized as *Parahyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*.

**Table1. Taboo words related to Tri Hita Karana in Jinengdalem Village**

Parahyangan	Pawongan	Palemahan
<i>bhatara bagus, ratu gede, duwe, dewayu manik, leluhur. (5)</i>	<i>kaki, dadong, cai, ake, bape, meme, bangke, megama, kapilara, cungkik, curekan, cening, komel, degag, langgiana, meboros, keponggor, mekele, mecebur, mesaki, naskleng, bangkaan, pletan, tidik, cicing, bojog, leak, dakin teli, gondong, buduh. (30)</i>	<i>memedi, celeng, nasbedag, cicing, bojog, ubuan, punyan gede, klebutan. (8)</i>

The table indicates that a total of fourty-three (43) taboo terms have been established. In the sociological context of Jinengdalem Village, all of the aforementioned facts are employed. As seen in the above table, there are five (5) *Parahyangan*. *Pawongan* indicated in the above table has thirty (30) pieces. As seen in the above table, there are eight (8) for the *Palemahan*. Consequently, further details will be discussed below.

### 1. Taboo words related to Parahyangan aspect of Tri Hita Karana

In the context of Tri Hita Karana, there are five (5) taboo languages related to the relationship between humans and God or Parahyangan in the village of Jinengdalem. "*bhatara bagus*" carries great meaning, symbolizing the idea of protection and holiness. Drawing from the root word "*bhatr*," which means guardian, "*bhatara*" represents the proactive role of Sang Hyang Widhi in being the defender of creation. "*bhatara bagus*" is more than just a term; it denotes a significant phase associated with blessings and spiritual protection. "*ratu gede*" holds a connection to natural forces like mountains, rivers, and the sea, vital sources of life for the Balinese community. In religious ceremonies such as Yadnya and Ngaben, "*ratu gede*" becomes the focal point of worship, believed to bestow blessings and divine protection. Thus, "*ratu gede*" assumes profound significance as a central deity in the Hindu faith of Bali, particularly within the community of Jinengdalem Village. "*duwe*" The term "*duwe*" in Jinengdalem Village signifies the divine manifestation of Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, particularly in snakes found within the temple. Hindus in the village believe that encountering a snake in the temple represents the deity taking an animal form, emphasizing the divine connection. Beyond this, snakes are revered for their perceived power and influence, symbolizing sacred forces in the spiritual and cultural beliefs of the community. "*dewayu manik*" in Jinengdalem Village is a term associated with divinity, derived from "*dewa ayu*" meaning God and beautiful. It is considered a manifestation of God, often linked to Dewi Sri, the goddess of prosperity and fertility in Hindu beliefs. "*leluhur*" is a crucial link between humans and God in Jinengdalem Village. The Hindu community believes in the protective and influential role of ancestors, honoring them through ceremonies

like *Ngaben*, which signifies their spirits' return to the universe for reincarnation. Ancestors receive reverence through worship, offerings in kawitan temples, sacred places, and daily activities.

## 2. Taboo words related to Pawongan aspect of Tri Hita Karana

In Table 1, it can be seen that there are thirty (30) taboo words in the village of Jinengdalem that fall under the *Pawongan* aspect in Tri Hita Karana. "*kaki*" particularly an older man (either a father or grandfather) who comes from a family without caste or from a Jaba family. "*dadong*" specifically an elderly woman (mother or grandmother) originating from a family without caste or from a Jaba family. "*cai*" it is equivalent to "you" in English. As a sign of familiarity, friends frequently use it. Nonetheless, it is deemed rude to use it to address an elderly person. "*ake*" this phrase means "i" in English. As a sign of familiarity, friends frequently use it. Nonetheless, it is deemed rude to use it to address an elderly person. "*bape*" particularly if the father is from a Jaba or caste family. "*meme*" particularly if the mother is from a Jaba or caste family. "*bangke*" can be understood as carrion or an animal's corpse. "*bangke*" can also be used as an expletives or insult in certain situations. "*megama*" itself is connected to sexual activity, which is the collective term for human reproductive actions. "*kapilara*" people with special needs or disabilities are frequently referred to by this term. It is best to avoid using this word, though, as it can insult certain people. "*cungik*" this term is used for someone with a cleft lip, but it should be avoided as it's considered rude. "*curekan*" pertains to an ear condition caused by excessive earwax, affecting clear hearing. Using this term directly towards someone may be offensive and disrespectful. "*cening*" adults frequently use it to call or summon youngsters who are not members of their own household. "*komel*" is used to describe someone with unclean habits, such as infrequent bathing and wearing dirty clothes, but it's avoided in direct use to prevent offense. "*degag*" is a taboo term that denotes impolite or disrespectful language, especially when used by a child towards their parents or older individuals. "*langgiana*" refers to disobedient behavior towards parents, often involving actions like touching their head or crossing over them while they sleep.

Avoid using the term "*mecebur*" as it refers to experiencing a caste demotion due to marriage, and using it may offend individuals who have undergone such demotions. In Jinengdalem Village, the term "*mekele*" signifies a leader, and it is taboo to address a village leader by their name, adhering to the tradition of using "*mekele*" to refer to them. "*meboros*" represents the prohibition of hunting animals in Jinengdalem Village due to the belief that every animal is a manifestation of God. "*kepongor*" is a term used for someone who unlawfully cuts down trees without permission, considered taboo in Jinengdalem Village due to the potential harm it poses according to local beliefs. "*mesaki*" is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, referring to animals mating or engaging in sexual activities and considered impolite by the community. "*naskleng*" is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, originating from "*nas*" (head) and "*kleng*" (male genitalia), and is considered impolite due to its coarse connotations. "*bangkaan*" is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, typically used to express frustration or dissatisfaction with a situation or someone's actions, and is considered coarse and potentially offensive. "*pletan*" is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, referring to male genitalia, and is avoided due to its coarse and impolite connotations. "*tidik*" is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, expressing strong disapproval or frustration similar to "*mampus kau*" and is avoided due to its coarse and potentially offensive nature. "*cicing*" is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, originally meaning "*dog*" but used disrespectfully when expressing anger

towards someone, contributing to its taboo nature in the community. “*bojog*” is a taboo term in Jinengdalem Village, originally meaning “*monkey*” but used disrespectfully when expressing anger towards someone, contributing to its taboo nature in the community. “*leak*” in Jinengdalem Village denotes a shaman or paranormal figure with supernatural abilities, and its usage is considered taboo due to its connection with sensitive spiritual beliefs and practices in the Balinese community. “*dakin teli*” is a term used by women during moments of anger or arguments, referring to female genital feces, considered vulgar, impolite, and disrespectful, thus deemed taboo in the village of Jinengdalem. “*gondong*” refers to someone with a neck disease (mumps) and is commonly used in daily life in the context of swearing, making it considered taboo in the village of Jinengdalem due to potential negative consequences. Referring to someone as “*buduh*” in the village of Jinengdalem is taboo due to its connotation of “crazy” or a mental disorder, and it is avoided to prevent offense.

### 3. Taboo words related to Palemahan aspect of Tri Hita Karana.

In Table 1, it can be seen that there are 8 taboo words in the village of Jinengdalem that fall under the *Palemahan* aspect in *Tri Hita Karana*. “*memedi*” is used to describe a ghost known for abducting or making small children disappear during forest play or in the evening. Additionally, it doubles as a term for someone who abruptly comes and goes, carrying an impolite connotation and classifying it as a taboo term in the village of Jinengdalem. “*celeng*” originally means farm pigs, but in daily usage, it is metaphorically applied to someone whose activities are limited to eating and sleeping, potentially considered offensive. Consequently, this word is deemed taboo and avoided in Jinengdalem village. “*nasbedag*” initially refers to the head of a foal but is commonly used to express anger or frustration, making it offensive language and taboo in Jinengdalem village. “*cicing*” in the *Palemahan* dialect refers to a pet dog, but it is considered coarse and inappropriate for young children, leading to its classification as taboo language in Jinengdalem village, where the term “*kuluk*” is preferred for addressing dogs. “*bojog*” in the *Palemahan* dialect refers to a monkey, distinguishing it from the *Pawongan* dialect where the term carries a different meaning. “*ubuan*” in the context of animals refers to livestock or animals raised by humans, encompassing species like pigs, cows, and goats, distinct from pets that include animals like dogs, cats, and birds kept by humans. “*punyan gede*” in the context of nature refers to a large tree, considered sacred in the Hindu community, particularly in the village of Jinengdalem, believed to house a spiritual presence, prohibiting any activities in its vicinity. “*klebutan*” in the realm of nature denotes a spring that gracefully emerges from the earth, embodying the natural beauty and purity of water sources.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions above, it can be concluded that the identified data, in the form of taboo words related to the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, amounts to forty-three (43). All of these taboo words are closely linked to the three domains of *Tri Hita Karana*, namely; five (5) for *Parahyangan*, including *bhatara bagus*, *ratu gede*, *duwe*, *dewayu manik*, *leluhur*. Additionally, there are thirty (30) for *Pawongan*, including *kaki*, *dadong*, *cai*, *ake*, *bape*, *meme*, *bangke*, *megama*, *kapilara*, *cungik*, *curekan*, *ceping*, *komel*, *degag*, *langgiana*, *meboros*, *kepongor*, *mekele*, *mecebur*, *mesaki*, *naskleng*, *bangkaan*, *pletan*, *tidik*, *cicing*, *bojog*, *leak*, *dakin teli*, *gondong*, *buduh*. Meanwhile, eight (8) are associated with *Palemahan*, such as *memedi*, *celeng*, *nasbedag*, *cicing*, *bojog*, *ubuan*, *punyan gede*,

*klebutan*. It is crucial to note that these taboo words are still actively used in the language of Jinengdalem Village, reflecting the continuity and perpetuation of cultural values embedded in the *Tri Hita Karana* concept.

From this research, it is recommended that future studies interested in updating knowledge about taboo words can adopt diverse approaches, explore various theories, approaches, or issue formulations, and utilize varied data sources. The hope is that subsequent research efforts will provide a more in-depth contribution to academic development in the study of taboo words and the preservation of cultural heritage in the Jinengdalem community.

## REFERENCES

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). SAGE Publications.  
<http://libgen.rs/book/index.php?md5=A000CDF97760A63A36F28A042A568EE5>
- Crystal, D. (2000). *Language Death*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Douglas, M. (2002). *Purity and danger: An analysis of concept of pollution and taboo* (Vol. 2). Psychology Press.
- Juliawan, I. N., & Dewi, P. E. R. (2022). Hitaning bhuwana gumi bali aga melalui tradisi muhu-muhu di desa adat tenagan pegriingsingan. *Subasita: Jurnal Sastra Agama dan Pendidikan Bahasa Bali*. 3(2), 21-30.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55115/subasita.v3i2.2768>
- Laksana, I. K. D. (2009). *Tabu bahasa: Salah satu cara memahami kebudayaan Bali [Taboo language: One way to understand Balinese culture]*. Denpasar: Udayana University Press.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *An expanded sourcebook: Qualitative data analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). SAGE Publications.  
<http://libgen.rs/book/index.php?md5=F3B942234A4F871DABBBCE6AC7CA928E>
- Pitana, I. (2010). Tri Hita Karana—the local wisdom of the Balinese in managing development. In *Trends and issues in Global Tourism 2010* (pp. 139-150). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Stibbe, A. (2020). *Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Routledge.
- Suyanto, B. (2011). *Sosiologi: Teks pengantar dan terapan. [Sociology: Introductory and applied texts]*. Jakarta: Kencana
- Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An introduction to Sociolinguistics* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Blackwell Publishing.  
<http://library.lol/main/F88AAEAB63AD4537B772C1A4421D81DC>