Research Article

STUDY OF KATA KOLOK: HOW THE DEAF PEOPLE OF BENGKALA EXPRESS THEIR BASIC NEEDS

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This research focuses on sign language, namely, kata kolok, which is used by the local deaf community in Bengkala village, Buleleng, Bali. It looks specifically into customs, culture and their religious life. The aim of this research is to contribute to the references for the sign language system used by the Kolok community in Bengkala village. The data obtained are primarily qualitative, specifically the meaning of 'words' in the form of sign language. The data were collected by interviewing, observing, and video recording the Koloks with the support a native sign language translator. The data were analysed using the content analysis. This research is intended to generate a Kata Kolok dictionary and comprehensive documentation and effective information dedicated to signers or sign language users. The result of this research is to acquaint linguists with signs expressing basic needs.

INTRODUCTION

This research is centred on a deaf community in the village of Bengkala, Buleleng. The community has its own sign language system, which has developed naturally and uniquely in this village. Based on the needs of communicating with one another, *Kata Kolok* has established itself in a natural way, where a sign is agreed upon to express a special meaning. Every member of the community has contributed to the *Kata Kolok* signing system; thus, a number of signs already exist in Bengkala.

The objective of this research is to investigate how the *Koloks* communicate. There is an urgent need to communicate among the villagers, consisting of 1200 signers, including 43 deaf native signers. This has inspired the author to conduct research in order to preserve *Kata Kolok* as a mother language in nonverbal form, namely, *natural sign language.*

Balinese people still live in a traditionally structured society, respecting the norms of the Hindu religion. Therefore, the *Kolok* community has never been excluded by Bengkala villagers. *Koloks* are involved in all social activities according to their potential, which reflects appreciation for the *koloks* and psychologically supports their confidence and initiatives that allow *koloks* to participate in the same activities as ordinary villagers. Special attention is also paid to their educational needs by a government subsidised inclusive elementary school giving all the deaf students an opportunity to interact with those capable of hearing.

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The author would like to find the relationship between language as a means of communication and language acquisition; in this case how the *kolok* society in Bengkala creates meaning regarding several aspects of their daily lives. A question to be answered in this research is: what are the signs and meanings that describe living conditions?

The main purpose of this research is to identify *Kata Kolok* signs and meanings, especially those related to the basic needs so that academic as well as socio-cultural benefits can be obtained. The academic benefit is to enrich the knowledge of sign language or natural sign language and to conduct language preservation. The socio-cultural benefit is that it features the unique *Kolok* community, where the deaf are all respected and encouraged according to their potential. Furthermore the general public are called upon to show empathy and respect for other, less fortunate human beings, appreciate and support them.

Concepts and Theoretical Framework

There are three terms for the deaf used in this research, namely, *Kolok, Kata Kolok* and *Inget. Kolok* is the Balinese term for deaf people: it means 'deaf' or 'deaf people' or 'mute', 'without sounds', or 'unhearable'. In Bengkala, the name of the deaf person is preceded by the word '*kolok'*, for instance *Kolok Sudarma, Kolok Pindu,* and *Kolok Santia. Kata Kolok* derives from Balinese roots, '*kata'* (/katè/), means to speak or utter, and 'kolok' (/kolok/), meaning 'deaf people'. Thus, *Kata Kolok* means sign language used by deaf. *Inget* is the Bengkala term for the people able to hear. *Inget* derives from the Balinese word means 'remember' or 'aware'.

This study uses some theories as references to answer the research questions. The first is Peirce's theory of the sign triangle consisting of three elements, has described by Martin and Ringham (2006); the second is the semiotics theory of Halliday (1978). Both are used to express the relationship between a sign and meaning. Johnston and Schembri's (2016) theory about sign language linguistics is applied to discover the relationship between sign and meaning, human behaviour and the environment in *kolok* society, as also can be found in their book, *Australian Sign Language, An Introduction to Sign Language Linguistics*; they stated that sign language is not invented by individuals. Sign language is created conventionally by a community and is passed from one generation to the next. Sign language is neither used universally by deaf people around the world, nor is it the same as gestures and mime used by hearing people. It uses the same or similar expression as spoken language and is organized by similar grammatical rules. Sign language users acquire new vocabulary and adapt to changes and developments. It is acquired by children and appears to be processed by the brain in the same manner as spoken language.

There are eight academic works on *Kata Kolok,* which are known by the author. Six researches of them are on linguistics. The first is a study on *Kata Kolok* as a natural sign language by Sutjaja (2013), research on colors and space in *Kata Kolok* by Connie de Vos (2011, 2012), study on *Desa Kolok* by Marsaja (2008), and *Kata Kolok* from the perspectives of possessive and existential meaning construction by Pamela Perniss and Ulrike Zeshan (2008). The other two are research on genetics by Winata, *et. al* (1995) and Liang, *et. al*. (1998).

The research method of this study is qualitative together with an ethnographic approach. The first step is to conduct field orientation and determine the research problems. The orientation was accomplished while the author was observing the environment, nature and social conditions in Bengkala village. The author introduced herself to the village government and local teachers-in particular those in charge of the inclusive school-and chose a local research assistant and some interview subjects. Having gained a general overview of Bengkala society, *kolok* and *inget,* the research terms were set. At the same time, material was accumulated and evaluated. Next the research methods and techniques were established to collect data following the ethnographic approach proposed by Spradley (1997). The data targeted religion, customs and culture and were obtained from the *kolok* community, *kolok* and *inget*. Video recordings illustrating the sign language activities of the *kolok*, were taken and edited.

Having collected the data, the next step was data analysis. The *content analysis* method was used to condense the appropriate data to answer research questions. Following the process of analysis and elicitation, the result was obtained: the *Kata Kolok* document categorising and identifying the signs and their meanings. This document provided a conclusion that synchronized the data analysis as well as the academic and socio-cultural benefits.

The research objective is a series of video recordings containing monologs and dialogs. This was achieved by direct observation and the author's involvement in the social life of the Bengkala people. The video recordings were translated into spoken language by a research assistant, and then converted into thousands 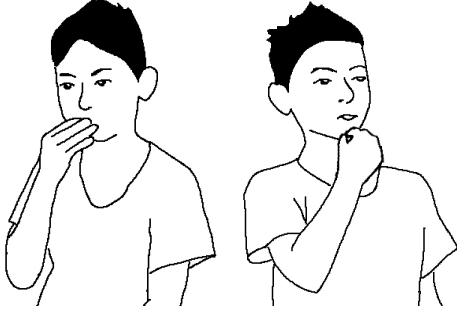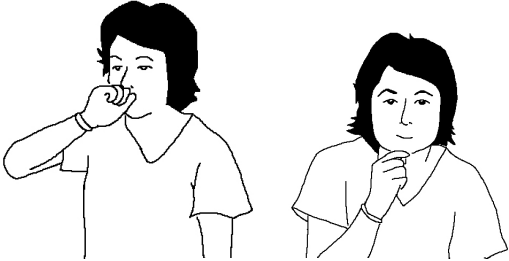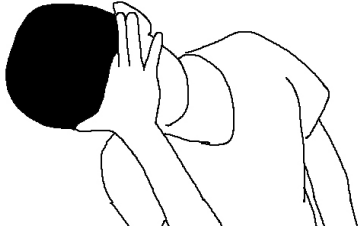of individual pictures. The translating processes were also recorded and then transcribed. The pictures were edited until resulting in the pictures containing the correct signs. Afterwards, the pictures were adjusted to the transcriptions so that the proper concordances were obtained. The data were ready to be analysed using content analysis and are conducive to long-term research.
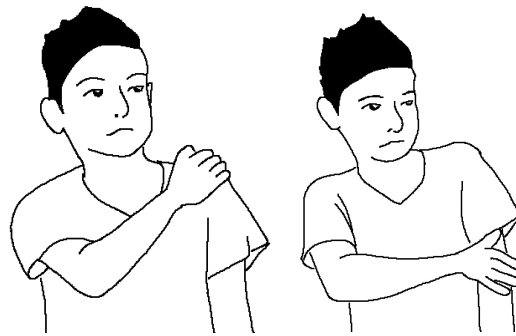
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

New theoretical findings are that sign and meaning acquisition for deaf people exists because of the urgent need for communication so that the information or message can be transferred properly. The meaning to be conveyed is already on one's mind and then translated into language, while the person creates body gestures and facial expressions according to what he/she is thinking. The sign concept conveyed is based on the following:

1. Set movements are descriptive of a certain meaning. For example, the sign for hoeing is taken from the movement of the activity of hoeing the soil. For the meaning of water, the sign is taken from the movement of water or waves. The sign for angry corresponds to the facial expression of an angry person.
2. Making signs by denoting a part of the meaning. For example, the sign for cat is taken from a movement indicating the cat's whiskers. Another example is making the sign for the *Galungan* ceremony by pointing at the centre of the throat. This sign is actually the same as the sign for 'pig' because the *Galungan* ceremony is associated with slaughtering pigs for cooking traditional meals, for offerings and feasts. One more example is the sign denoting the movement of chicken beaks for 'chicken'.
3. Making signs in an arbitrary way. For example, for the meaning of 'good', the sign is to make a fist, fold the elbow so that the fist is close to the cest, and then make an up- and downward movement as if it were a lever. For the meaning of 'want', all fingers are grouped together and put below the lower lip of the mouth, and then the mouth slowly sucks in air.
4. There are variations such as homosign and polysemy in *Kata Kolok* signs and meanings. The phenomena indicate that the *kolok* society is flexible and open to new information so that some efforts are made to enrich their signs and meanings with the purpose of maintaining the communication among the social members.
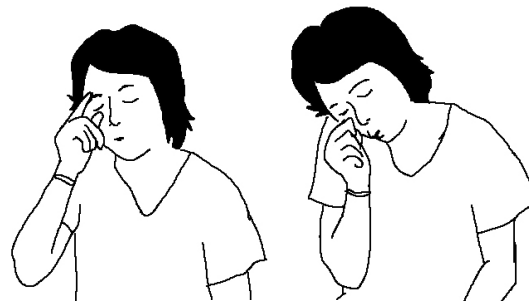
From the methodological point of view, the new findings are the method and technique of data collection, method and technique of data analysis and also the method and technique of data presentation. The data collection was conducted by new ethnography or cognitive anthropology; whereas in the application, the developmental research sequence, which consists of five principles, namely: single technique, assignments identification, gradually moving forward, original research and problem-solving. This research added two more steps namely: introspective and picking-momentums. The data collections, all video recordings were conducted voluntarily since every *Kolok* member was gladly willing to give his/her recording. So, in order to ease them in the video taking, there were short briefings before the recording. They were told what was required for a monolog, or what was required for a dialog.

No	Meaning	Signs:
1	**hungry** Sign: right hand is press against the stomach. Interpretation: 'I am hungry'	
2	**wanting to eat** Signs: the fingers of the right hand are bundled together pointing to the mouth, , five fingers pointing to the mouth (sign for 'to want to'). Interpretation: 'I want to eat.'	
3	**thirsty** Sign: the throat is stroked by a downward movement of four fingers. Interpretation: 'I am thirsty.'	
4	**wanting to drink** **Signs**: the right hand imitates holding a glass and followed by a drinking movement, , five fingers pointing to the mouth (sign for 'to want to'). Interpretation: 'I want to drink.'	
5	**healthy** Sign: both fists are raised shoulder high, as if to cheer someone or something accompanied by a smile. Interpretation: 'I am healthy.' This sign is also use for indicating happiness.	
6	**sick** Sign: thumb and index finger are pressed against the forehead indicating headache or generally discomfort. Interpretation: 'I feel sick.'	

7 **washing oneself**
Signs: the right hand is placed on the left shoulder followed by an up and down movement along the left arm indicating washing.
Interpretation: 'I am washing my self.'

8 **tired/sleepy**
Sign: thumb and index finger touch the right eye making an opening and closing gesture.
Interpretation: 'I am tired.'

9 **exhausted**
Sign: the right hand touches the throat, quickly exhaling and inhaling indicating lack of air.
Interpretation: 'I am exhausted.'

10 **going home**
Signs: the right hand makes a kind of a waving sign, then two hands meet to form a roof, five fingers pointing to the mouth (sign for 'to want to').
Interpretation: 'I want to go home.'

The recordings were taken based on time and space availability, whenever an idea emerged during the observation time, the recording could be directly executed. Once all videos had been recorded, the field research assistant interpreted the videos and again the interpreting process was recorded. The recordings were then transcribed into written text.

The method and technique of analyzing data, is a combination of *content analysis* as well as *domain and taxonomy analysis*, whereas all video recording data, with the help of technology, are converted into thousands of photos.

All photos are sorted and lined based on the right shape and the chronology. The shortening process is done based on the most proper signing, and then the photos are arranged in rows consisting of two columns each. After structuring the photos, each column is paired with the transcription so the concordances are obtained. The next step is to analyze the data content; identifying the genre of particular texts, identifying the communicator and the communicant, and making paraphrases (who is speaking to whom, about what, when and how) and finding out the meaning of the text. Furthermore,

there are categorizations of meaning and signs by using the domain and taxonomy method. Based on the result, the general typology of *Kata Kolok* is discovered; it normally begins with the verb. Besides, there are several polisemy and homonimy of *Kata Kolok* expressions instead of meaning variations. The method applied for presenting the data analysis is formal and informal. The technique used is verbal technique; by using text in written transcription and also visual; by using photos. The innovation in method and technique is creating the concordance photos and transcriptions up to be the big corpora and afterwards, it was again divided according to the genres of each content. The data presentation is supported by multimedia device.

The following table explains the application of meanings and signs related to process and quality which are related to the basic needs.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of this research leads to the following conclusions: first, the meaning and signs in *Kata Kolok* are obtained by means of simple descriptions and established conventionally among the Bengkala villagers. The signs are created by deaf people, the *Koloks,* and then those signs are understood and agreed upon by the non-deaf villagers. In this article, the meanings and signs described are related to the needs of the people. *Kata Kolok* is a special sign language; this research found several cases of a single meaning explained through a single sign, cases of expressions explained through a single sign, and even some cases of one meaning explained through multiple signs. The signs are very natural, mostly imitating the movements of daily activities. Ecolinguistic aspects also enrich the collection of signs and meaning. For example, the agricultural environment contributes to the richness of signs and meanings related to fields, cattle, and poultry as well as several related aspects of the social life of Bengkala village, such as the religious system, customs and culture, norms, education, architecture and a sustainable ecological system.

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