SOUTHEAST ASIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE STUDIES (SALLS)

Contextual Meaning and Local Wisdom Values in Banjar-Maintenance Pamali

Rahma Cahyaningrum[a]
Muhammad Wildan Suyuti[b]
Prima Hariyanto[c]
Nurul Khairumi[d]
Muhammad Fuad Izzatulfikri[e]
[a,b,d] Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia
[c] Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional
[e] Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: muhwildansuyuti@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT
Pamali is a form of Indonesian oral tradition that expresses prohibitions and is transmitted across generations. Previous studies of Banjar pamali have addressed its Islamic origins, its role in preserving culture, and types such as pregnancy and religion, but they have rarely traced how the contextual cues within an utterance lead to the local wisdom values it carries. This study addresses that gap by analyzing pamali utterances of the body-maintenance type, a type that has received little attention, through the personal and purpose contexts of contextual meaning theory and linking them to local wisdom values. Twelve utterances were selected from the book *Pamali Banjar* because they match the topic and are still practiced and believed by the Banjar community today. They were collected through documentary reading and note-taking, coded using explicit contextual cues and four decision rules, and triangulated with native speakers and cultural observers. Five utterances carry explicit address terms, directed at children (two) and at everyone (three), while seven utterances serve the purposes of strengthening religious observance and teaching manners. These contexts correspond to four local wisdom values: religious education, cultural preservation and creativity, discipline, and politeness. The study contributes a replicable procedure for linking contextual meaning to local wisdom values and shows that Banjar pamali functions as a guide for behavior rather than a mere prohibition. The findings can support character education and local language learning in Banjar communities.

Keywords: banjar language, contextual meaning, local wisdom values, pamali body maintenance

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Introduction

Culture refers to ideas realized in social life to achieve order. According to Parsons and Kroeber (in Koentjaraningrat, 1985), culture is an abstract and complex ideal form consisting of ideas, notions, values, norms, and beliefs that live in the minds of community members. Geertz (in Ndun & Bani, 2021) states that culture refers to a set of ideas encoded in symbols that a society uses as a guide for action. Furthermore, Koentjaraningrat (1985) classified seven principal elements of culture present in social life: (1) language, (2) systems of knowledge, (3) social organization, (4) systems of living equipment and technology, (5) systems of livelihood, (6) religious systems, and (7) systems of art. Among the cultural elements proposed by Koentjaraningrat, language is the system that serves as the medium for exchanging community members' thoughts.

Language is a means of conveying meaning. Language refers to a system of meaningful vocal expressions, with words and sentences as its instrumental units, which play a role in the process of exchanging information, thoughts, and experiences (Sedyawati, 2015; Syahputra et al., 2022). In addition, the languages of different regions each have distinctive characteristics linked to their cultures. Wierzbicka (1997) reinforces this with the concept of *cultural keywords*, arguing that every culture has certain key words such as *pamali* in Banjar society that function as windows for understanding that society's core values and worldview. According to Chaer (in Devianty, 2017), language has unique characteristics closely connected to the culture of its users. Furthermore, Duranti (1997) defines language not merely as a neutral communication tool, but as a *cultural resource*, with speech acts constituting a *cultural practice*. From this perspective, pamali utterances are not simply verbal prohibitions but an active cultural practice that shapes the social reality of Banjar society. Language is not only a communication tool but also transforms into a strong marker of cultural identity and a medium of non-formal education, as seen in phenomena such as coded speech or local language varieties that persist as symbols of social cohesion (Suyuti, 2024). Devianty (2017) further explains that language in culture has four functions: (1) a means of cultural development; (2) a means of cultural cultivation; (3) a channel for the preservation and continuation of culture; and (4) a channel and means for cultural inventory. A concrete manifestation of language's function in developing and preserving culture can be found in oral tradition.

Oral tradition generally refers to something transmitted orally from generation to generation. Oral tradition is a cultural process that occurs over at least two generations, or approximately fifty years (Hidayatullah, 2019). Oral tradition may contain verbal, partly verbal, or non-verbal elements (Sibarani, 2015). One cultural form of oral tradition containing verbal elements is pamali. Pamali is a belief containing moral values manifested in the form of prohibitions. Pamali has become deeply rooted in Indonesian culture and is represented in various local languages, such as the Banjar language.

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According to Akhlak, Arifin, and Rijal (2019), pamali is a traditional expression believed in by the Banjar people that contains certain meanings and noble values. Banjar pamali is divided into several types, such as those related to pregnancy, housework, fortune, religion, the supernatural realm, marriage, and body maintenance (Balai Bahasa Banjarmasin, 2006). Pamali is often regarded as something that must not be done because it can lead to certain consequences. From an anthropological perspective, phenomena such as pamali can be explained through Douglas's (1966) notion of *Purity and Danger*, in which prohibitions or taboos function to safeguard social order. Something is considered 'dangerous' or pamali not solely for medical or logical reasons, but because it is regarded as 'out of place' (*matter out of place*) and threatens the conceptual order upheld by society. For instance, pamali is often associated with matters resulting in death or illness. Yet behind such utterances usually lie local wisdom values, that is, ideas that become guidelines for the life of a particular community. In a broader context, the values within the pamali tradition can even be conceptualized as cultural capital that plays a strategic role in shaping collective awareness of environmental conservation and sustainable development (Nashar & Wiyanarti, 2025).

Several previous studies have examined pamali. Yayuk (2018) studied the representation of the *batiyanan* (pregnancy) myth in Banjar society. Her findings show that the *batiyanan* myth is represented through indirect speech functioning as advice, prohibition, satire, and threat. Research on Islamic teachings within Banjar pamali was also conducted by Hidayatullah (2019). His findings indicate that most Banjar pamali originate from Islamic teachings in the form of eating and drinking etiquette, sleeping etiquette, farming etiquette, and teachings in accordance with the pillars of Islam.

Another pamali study was conducted by Qusyaeri and Azhari (2019) on Islamic values within Sundanese pamali related to da'wah. Their findings show that the da'wah values contained in Sundanese pamali include creed (aqidah), morals (akhlak), and Islamic law (Shariah). Furthermore, Aisyah (2020) explored the meaning and function of pamali among the Paser people in Long Ikis District, Paser Regency. Her findings reveal that pamali among the Paser people carries implicit meaning that not only instills fear but also contains educational value and serves as a form of self-protection. Research on the educational value of pamali was also conducted by Sugara and Perdana (2021) on the pamali tradition in Kampung Adat Kuta. They found two values within this pamali tradition: a moral value in the form of discipline and environmental concern, and a social value in the form of humility and politeness. Finally, Jeferson (2022) discussed the meaning, function, and structure of pamali among the Meratus Dayak community in Hampang District, Kotabaru Regency. His findings state that pamali among the Meratus Dayak community contains textual and implicit meanings functioning as moral, cultural, religious, and health education. In addition, a study on the linguistic dimensions of mythological entities in the Nusantara also shows that the construction of naming and supernatural narratives functions as a complex mechanism of social control,

encompassing economic morality and the relationship between humans and nature (Suyuti & Hendrokumoro, 2025). Similarly, in other regions such as the Tanimbar Islands, community understanding of pamali has been shown to correlate positively with attitudes toward tourism development, where education about pamali serves as an effective strategy for avoiding cultural conflict (Risakotta & Solissa, 2024).

The studies above share the same object, namely pamali utterances, but they differ in focus and approach. Yayuk (2018) examined the speech functions of the *batiyanan* myth, and Hidayatullah (2019) traced the Islamic origins of Banjar pamali. More recent Banjar studies treat pamali as a cultural system: Fithriani et al. (2024) examine its role in preserving local culture and identity, and Wahyudin et al. (2025) show that it works as a value system that shapes discipline and obedience in pesantren. Studies of other communities (Qusyaeri & Azhari, 2019; Aisyah, 2020; Sugara & Perdana, 2021; Rismaya & Machdalena, 2021; Jeferson, 2022; Lanya et al., 2026) describe the meanings, functions, and character values of pamali. Among the studies reviewed here, none uses contextual meaning as an analytical bridge, that is, none shows how the cues that situate an utterance (to whom it is addressed and for what purpose) lead to the local wisdom values it carries. In addition, the Banjar studies reviewed here concern pamali on pregnancy and religion, or pamali as a general cultural system, whereas pamali on body maintenance, one of the types listed by Balai Bahasa Banjarmasin (2006), has received little attention. This study therefore differs from earlier work not only in its object (Banjar body-maintenance pamali) but also in its approach: it uses personal and purpose contexts to explain why a prohibition is directed at certain people and for certain ends, and then relates these contexts to explicit local wisdom values.

This study focuses on one problem: how the contextual meaning of Banjar body-maintenance pamali reveals the local wisdom values that the utterances carry. Specifically, the study aims to (1) identify to whom body-maintenance pamali in the Banjar language is directed, (2) determine the purpose behind the delivery of the utterances, and (3) explain which local wisdom values these contexts reflect. The significance of the study is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it offers a contextual-meaning-based procedure for reading the values of pamali and a first description of Banjar body-maintenance pamali from this perspective. Practically, its findings can serve as material for character education and local language learning, and they document pamali that remain believed and practiced in Banjar society today.

Literature Review

This study uses the theory of contextual meaning, a semantic approach. Contextual meaning is meaning that arises from the relationship between an utterance and its context (Pateda, 2010). The concept is rooted in Malinowski's (1923) notion of *context of situation*, which asserts that an utterance cannot be understood in isolation from the total situation surrounding it. In the case of pamali, meaning lies not only in the structure of the prohibitive sentence but also in the social and cultural situation underlying its utterance.

Pateda (2010) classifies context into eleven categories: personal context, situational context, purpose context, the formality of speech, mood, time, place, object, the instruments of speaking and hearing, and linguistic context. This study focuses on personal context and purpose context. Personal context concerns the people to whom an utterance is directed and leads the speaker to choose words that the interlocutor can understand, while purpose context concerns what the utterance is meant to achieve, such as informing, requesting, or commanding (Pateda, 2010). The two contexts answer, respectively, the questions of to whom a pamali is directed and for what purpose it is uttered. A comparable concern with addressees appears in Rismaya and Machdalena (2021), who classify Sundanese food pamali in Sumedang into pamali for children, for women, and for the general public.

Local wisdom is understood as ideas and knowledge of a place that are wise, full of wisdom, good in value, and virtuous, and that are held, followed, and practiced by the members of a community (Sibarani, 2012, p. 114). Simamora and Sibarani (2022) summarize it as local cultural values that can be used to regulate the order of community life wisely. Sibarani (2012, p. 135) distinguishes sixteen types of local wisdom values: (1) welfare, (2) hard work, (3) discipline, (4) education, (5) health, (6) mutual cooperation, (7) gender management, (8) cultural preservation and creativity, (9) environmental care, (10) peace, (11) politeness, (12) honesty, (13) social solidarity, (14) harmony and conflict resolution, (15) commitment, and (16) positive thinking and gratitude.

Four of these values are relevant to the data of this study, and each is grounded in earlier research on pamali. Education is understood here in its religious form, as the transmission of religious teachings through everyday prohibitions; because Sibarani's list names education in general, this study labels the value religious education. Hidayatullah (2019) traces the Islamic origins of Banjar pamali, and Fithriani et al. (2024) show that pamali supports the integration of Islamic values with local traditions in Banjar society. Cultural preservation and creativity concerns the protection of a community's cultural identity and resources, and Fithriani et al. (2024) describe pamali as a means of preserving local culture and identity. Discipline concerns obedience to established rules and the proper conduct of daily life; Sugara and Perdana (2021) identify discipline as a moral value in the pamali of Kampung Adat Kuta, and Wahyudin et al. (2025) and Lanya et al. (2026) report that pamali shapes discipline in pesantren in South Kalimantan and in the Madurese community, respectively. Politeness (*kesopansantunan*) concerns proper manners toward others and in shared settings; Sugara and Perdana (2021) identify politeness as a social value in pamali, and Rismaya and Machdalena (2021) read pamali on eating as control of etiquette. The two contexts are linked to these values in the following way. Because local wisdom consists of values that guide the behavior of a community, and because a pamali regulates behavior, identifying whom a pamali addresses and what it is meant to achieve makes it possible to infer which value underlies the behavior being regulated. This chain, from contextual cue to regulated behavior to

value, is the analytical framework of the study.

Methods

This study is categorized as descriptive qualitative research because it explores the values contained within utterances. Qualitative research functions to explore the process of an event (Rahmawan, 2023). Data in qualitative research typically take the form of text resulting from the transcription of writing, recordings of spoken utterances, images, or numbers (Harahap, 2020). The main researcher is a native speaker of Banjar, which gives an insider's access to the meanings of the utterances; to limit the bias that this position may bring, the interpretations were triangulated with other speakers (see below).

The data source is the book *Pamali Banjar*, compiled by the Balai Bahasa Banjarmasin team (2006), which groups Banjar pamali into types such as pregnancy, housework, fortune, religion, the supernatural realm, marriage, and body maintenance. The book contains many pamali of the body-maintenance type. The data of this study are 12 utterances, coded D.1 to D.12, selected from them. Selection was based on four criteria: (1) the utterance is classified as body-maintenance pamali in the book; (2) it is a complete prohibition, consisting of a prohibited act and a stated consequence; (3) it contains at least one identifiable contextual cue (an address term, a time, or a manner of acting); and (4) it is still known, believed, and practiced by the Banjar community today. The utterances that best fit the topic and meet all four criteria were retained, and the others were not analyzed. The body-maintenance type was chosen because its prohibitions are still applied and believed by the Banjar community today, so the values they carry remain socially relevant. The unit of analysis is the single pamali utterance, including its address term, prohibited act, and consequence.

Data were collected through documentary study, using the non-participatory listening technique (reading the book without taking part in the speech event) and the note-taking technique. The instrument is the researcher, who acts as the key instrument, supported by the coding table (Table 1). The procedure consisted of three steps: the researcher read *Pamali Banjar* and recorded pamali of the body-maintenance type; the researcher selected the utterances using the criteria above and translated each into English; and the selected utterances and their interpretations were triangulated with native speakers of Banjar and cultural observers, who provided explanations of the meanings and background of the utterances.

Data analysis followed four steps. First, each utterance was segmented into its address term (if any), prohibited act, and consequence. Second, contextual cues were identified following Pateda's (2010) theory. An utterance was assigned to personal context when it contained an explicit address term naming the addressee's social category (for example, *nak* 'child' or *wal* 'friend'). It was assigned to purpose context when the prohibited act and the reason given for avoiding it showed what the utterance is meant to achieve, such as relating an activity to times of worship or regulating how one eats or behaves toward others. Third, each utterance was linked to one of Sibarani's (2012) local wisdom values using four decision rules: (a) religious education, when the utterance

relates the prohibited act to prescribed worship times; (b) cultural preservation and creativity, when the utterance protects a material resource used in local craft; (c) discipline, when the utterance regulates conduct through the proper use of objects according to their function; and (d) politeness, when the utterance regulates posture, eating behavior, or the treatment of others in shared settings. Each utterance received one primary value according to its dominant function; secondary readings are noted in the discussion but not counted. Fourth, every interpretation was labeled as one of three types of evidence: the textual meaning (what the utterance literally states), a source-supported explanation (an explanation from the book, from informants, or from earlier studies), or the researcher's interpretation as a native Banjar speaker. The coded data are summarized in Table 1 and presented descriptively.

Result

The analysis of the 12 Banjar-language pamali utterances identified two types of context, namely personal context and purpose context, and four local wisdom values. Table 1 summarizes how each utterance was coded. Each utterance is analyzed under the context in which its cue is most explicit, and a dash indicates that the utterance was not analyzed under that category. In the discussion below, the textual meaning of each utterance is separated from explanations supported by sources and from the researcher's interpretation. Explanations of the cultural background of the utterances (for example, children's play, camping, and the use of areca-palm frond sheaths) come from the book *Pamali Banjar*, from informants (native speakers and cultural observers), and from the researcher's own interpretation as a native Banjar speaker. Interpretations are marked by expressions such as 'can be interpreted as'.

Table 1. Coding of body-maintenance pamali utterances by personal context, purpose context, and local wisdom value

Code	Utterance	Personal context (cue)	Purpose context (cue)	Local wisdom value
D.1	*Pamali bajalanan pas tangah hari Jumat, babahaya tahu lah*	—	Religious observance (*tangah hari Jumat* 'midday on Friday')	Religious education
D.2	*Pamali banyanyi sambil bahera wal ai, bisa patah gigi kam*	Everyone (*wal* 'friend')	—	Politeness
D.3	*Pamali baduduk di atas bantal nak ai, kena buritnya babisul*	Children (*nak* 'child')	—	Discipline
D.4	*Uy ading-ading pamali baduduk di upih pinang, kena disambar buaya*	Children (*ading-ading* 'little siblings')	—	Cultural preservation and creativity

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Code	Utterance	Personal context (cue)	Purpose context (cue)	Local wisdom value
D.5	*Pamali duduk sambil mamaguti lintuhut (nang/luh), ngitu sama lawan mahadapi api neraka*	Everyone (*nang/luh* 'young man/young woman')	—	Politeness
D.6	*Pamali guring imbah ashar, kena kam pas tuha bisa gagilaan*	—	Religious observance (*imbah ashar* 'after Asr')	Religious education
D.7	*Pamali guring tangah hari Jumat, ikam bisa panggaringan kena*	—	Religious observance (*tangah hari Jumat* 'midday on Friday')	Religious education
D.8	*Pamali makan badungkung pintar ai, kena bisa baheraan*	—	Teaching manners (*makan badungkung* 'eating while squatting')	Politeness
D.9	*Pamali makan badiri, kalo pina bangkak batis*	—	Teaching manners (*makan badiri* 'eating while standing')	Politeness
D.10	*Pamali makan bawadah tukup sanak, kalo pina kada mau pintar*	Everyone (*sanak* 'sibling')	—	Discipline
D.11	*Pamali makan pas sanja, maunya kena tangan kam gatalan*	—	Religious observance (*sanja* 'dusk')	Religious education
D.12	*Pamali malingkahi urang, bekurang darah kam diisapnya*	—	Teaching manners (*malingkahi urang* 'stepping over someone')	Politeness

Source: Author (2026)

Note. A dash indicates that the utterance was not analyzed under that category. Each utterance receives one primary local wisdom value (see Methods).

1. Pamali Based on Personal Context

Personal context concerns the people to whom an utterance is directed. According to Pateda (2010), personal context leads the speaker to choose words whose meaning the interlocutor can understand, taking into account categories such as age, sex, socioeconomic background, and educational background. In this study, personal context was identified through explicit address terms. Five of the twelve utterances contain such

terms, and they fall into two types: the context of children (D.3 and D.4) and the context of everyone (D.2, D.5, and D.10). The other seven utterances do not name the addressee's social category and are analyzed under purpose context. A comparable division by addressee is found in Sundanese food pamali in Sumedang, which Rismaya and Machdalena (2021) classify into pamali for children, for women, and for the general public.

a. Personal context of children

Two utterances of the body-maintenance type are directed at children.

(D.3)

Pamali baduduk di atas bantal nak ai, kena buritnya babisul

('It is forbidden to sit on a pillow, child, or your bottom will grow a boil')

(D.4)

Uy ading-ading pamali baduduk di upih pinang, kena disambar buaya

('Hey little siblings, it is forbidden to sit on an areca-palm frond sheath, or you will be snatched by a crocodile')

Data D.3 is directed at children, as marked by the word *nak* ('child'). Data D.4 also refers to the context of children, as marked by the reduplicated lexical unit *ading-ading* ('younger siblings'). The textual meaning of D.3 is a prohibition against sitting on a pillow, with a boil on the bottom as the consequence. The textual meaning of D.4 is a prohibition against sitting on an areca-palm frond sheath, with an attack by a crocodile as the consequence. Both utterances can be interpreted as related to children's play: children commonly play on beds and may accidentally sit on a pillow, whose function is to support the head while lying down, and areca-palm frond sheaths are commonly used by children in a dragging game that carries a risk of falling. Thus, both utterances can be seen as a means of controlling children's behavior.

b. Personal context of everyone

The following is pamali data of the body-maintenance type whose meaning is generally directed at people at large.

(D.2)

Pamali banyanyi sambil bahera wal ai, bisa patah gigi kam

('It is forbidden to sing while defecating, friend, or your teeth may break')

(D.5)

Pamali duduk sambil mamaguti lintuhut (nang/luh), ngitu sama lawan mahadapi api neraka

('It is forbidden to sit while hugging one's knees (young man/young woman), that is the same as facing the fire of hell')

(D.10)

Pamali makan bawadah tukup sanak, kalo pina kada mau pintar

('It is forbidden to eat using a lid as a plate, sibling, or you will not be able to become smart')

The utterances in data D.2, D.5, and D.10 depict a general context, meaning that they

can be directed at anyone, whether male or female. In data D.2, the word *wal*, an abbreviated form of *kawal* ('friend'), is found. The textual meaning is a prohibition against singing while defecating, with broken teeth as the consequence. The link between the act and the consequence is not apparent on the surface. The consequence can be interpreted as a threat that uses a painful outcome to discourage the act, but this is the researcher's interpretation.

In data D.5, the abbreviated forms *nang*, from *anang* ('young man'), and *luh*, from *galuh* ('young woman'), are found. The researcher rendered *anang* and *galuh* as 'young man' and 'young woman' for easier understanding. Because both forms appear, the utterance is directed at everyone, whether male or female. The textual meaning is a prohibition against sitting while hugging one's knees, which is likened to facing the fire of hell. One possible reading is that the prohibition derives from the image of people who hug their knees to keep warm in front of a campfire, with the campfire likened to the fire of hell. The utterance can also be interpreted as discouraging people from sitting with raised legs in front of many people, because this posture is considered impolite.

Meanwhile, in data D.10, the word *sanak*, an abbreviated form of *dangsanak* ('sibling'), is found. In terms of the person addressed, this utterance can also refer to either males or females. The textual meaning is a prohibition against eating with a lid as a plate, whether the lid of a pot, bowl, plate, or other cooking or eating utensil, with the consequence that the person will not become smart. There is no literal correlation between the prohibition and its consequence. Non-literally, it can be interpreted that the lid symbolizes a closed heart that is difficult to open to input from others. This symbolic reading is the researcher's interpretation and is not stated in the utterance.

2. Pamali Based on Purpose Context

The classification of contextual meaning can also be viewed in terms of purpose context. According to Pateda (2010), purpose context functions to inform, make a request, or command another person to perform a certain action. In this study, purpose context was identified from the prohibited act and the reason given for avoiding it. Contextually, the Banjar pamali in the data have two purposes: strengthening religious observance (D.1, D.6, D.7, and D.11) and teaching manners (D.8, D.9, and D.12).

a. Purpose context of strengthening religious observance

The following is Banjar pamali data of the body-maintenance type aimed at strengthening religious observance.

(D.1)

Pamali bajalanan pas tangah hari Jumat, babahaya tahu lah

('It is forbidden to go for a walk at midday on Friday, you know it is dangerous')

(D.6)

Pamali guring imbah ashar, kena kam pas tuha bisa gagilaan

('It is forbidden to sleep after the Asr [afternoon] prayer, or when you are old you may go insane')

(D.7)

Pamali guring tangah hari Jumat, ikam bisa panggaringan kena
('It is forbidden to sleep at midday on Friday, or you may fall ill')
(D.11)
Pamali makan pas sanja, maunya kena tangan kam gatalan
('It is forbidden to eat at dusk, or your hands may break out in an itchy skin condition')

The utterances in data D.1, D.6, D.7, and D.11 show a contextual meaning aimed at strengthening religious observance. Data D.1 and D.7 share the lingual phrase *tangah hari Jumat* ('midday on Friday'). For Muslims, this time is designated for the Friday prayer, which is obligatory for men. The textual meaning of the two utterances is a prohibition against walking (D.1) or sleeping (D.7) at that time. The religious reading is the researcher's interpretation based on the time cue: the utterances themselves do not mention worship. The reading is consistent with Hidayatullah's (2019) finding that most Banjar pamali originate from Islamic teachings, and it implies that other activities should be avoided because the time is meant for worship.

On the other hand, data D.6 contains the phrase *imbah ashar* ('after Asr'), while data D.11 contains the word *sanja* ('dusk'). Both refer to the same period, namely between the Asr prayer and just before Maghrib. The textual meaning of D.6 is a prohibition against sleeping after Asr, with the consequence of going insane in old age, and that of D.11 is a prohibition against eating at dusk, with the consequence of an itchy skin condition on the hands. The religious purpose can be interpreted as follows. Sleeping after Asr may cause a person to sleep through until Maghrib and thus to become negligent in worship, because the person must first prepare themselves. D.11 does not state a religious reason; its association with worship rests on the time cue *sanja* and on the researcher's interpretation. The consequences in both utterances (insanity and an itchy skin condition) can be interpreted as threats intended to make a person afraid to violate the pamali.

b. Purpose context of teaching manners

Another purpose reflected in Banjar pamali utterances is teaching manners, as seen in the following data.

(D.8)
Pamali makan badungkung pintar ai, kena bisa baheraan
('It is forbidden to eat while squatting, my dear, or you may get diarrhea')
(D.9)
Pamali makan badiri, kalo pina bangkak batis
('It is forbidden to eat while standing, or your legs may swell')
(D.12)
Pamali malingkahi urang, bekurang darah kam diisapnya
('It is forbidden to step over someone, your blood will be reduced as it is sucked out')

Data D.8, D.9, and D.12 above are pamali utterances aimed at teaching manners,

reflected in the phrases *makan badungkung* ('eating while squatting') in data D.8, *makan badiri* ('eating while standing') in data D.9, and *malingkahi urang* ('stepping over someone') in data D.12.

In data D.8, squatting while eating can be interpreted as improper because the posture resembles the one taken when defecating. In data D.9, eating while standing can be interpreted as improper because food sustains life, so sitting while eating is a way of showing gratitude for it. Both explanations are the researcher's interpretation. The consequences, *baheraan* ('diarrhea') and *bangkak batis* ('swollen legs'), can be interpreted as threats intended to make a person comply with the utterance. Data D.12 also teaches manners toward others, namely not to step over people carelessly, since doing so is considered impolite and may make the other person feel disrespected. Thus, all three utterances share the content of advising the Banjar people to maintain good conduct while eating or engaging in other activities.

3. Local Wisdom Values in Banjar Society's Pamali

Based on the analysis of personal and purpose contexts, Banjar pamali is not merely a prohibition. It contains advice aimed at regulating the order of life of Banjar society so that its members behave as they should. This aligns with Kramsch's (1998) view that language not only reflects cultural reality but also constitutes it. Through pamali utterances, Banjar society passes down and preserves its values to the next generation. Simamora and Sibarani (2022) argue that local cultural values aimed at making the order of community life wiser and more prudent are known as local wisdom. Of the sixteen values listed by Sibarani (2012), four are reflected in the data. Because Sibarani's list names education in general, its religious form is labeled religious education in this study (see Theoretical Framework). The link between context and value follows the decision rules described in the Methods: a value is assigned when the contexts show what behavior the pamali regulates and why. The purpose contexts describe what an utterance does, whereas the values are the principles underlying it. Strengthening religious observance therefore corresponds to religious education, and teaching manners corresponds to politeness. To keep the categories from overlapping, each utterance is assigned one primary value according to its dominant function, as shown in Table 1. For example, D.10 also concerns eating, but it is assigned to discipline because its focus is the use of an object according to its function rather than manners toward others. Secondary readings are noted where relevant.

a. Religious education value

Every prohibition in a society generally contains an educational value, one of which is found in Banjar pamali. In this study, religious education value is assigned to utterances that relate the prohibited act to prescribed worship times (D.1, D.6, D.7, and D.11), as shown in the following data.

(D.1)

Pamali bajalanan pas tangah hari Jumat, babahaya tahu lah

('It is forbidden to go for a walk at midday on Friday, you know it is dangerous')

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(D.6)

Pamali guring imbah ashar, kena kam pas tuha bisa gagilaan

('It is forbidden to sleep after the Asr prayer, or when you are old you may go insane')

(D.7)

Pamali guring tangah hari Jumat, ikam bisa panggaringan kena

('It is forbidden to sleep at midday on Friday, or you may fall ill')

(D.11)

Pamali makan pas sanja, maunya kena tangan kam gatalan

('It is forbidden to eat at dusk, or your hands may break out in an itchy skin condition')

The textual evidence for this value differs across the four utterances. In D.1 and D.7, the cue is the lexical item *Jumat* ('Friday'), which names the day of the congregational Friday prayer in Islam, combined with *tangah hari* ('midday'), the time of that prayer. In D.6, the cue is *ashar*, the name of the afternoon prayer itself, which makes it the most explicit religious term in the data. In D.11, the cue is *sanja* ('dusk'), a time word with no religious term in the utterance; its religious reading depends on the closeness of that time to the Maghrib prayer. The textual evidence is therefore strongest for D.6, strong for D.1 and D.7, and weakest for D.11. Beyond these lexical cues, the reading is supported by the Islamic background of Banjar society (Syakhrani & Islami, 2022) and by Hidayatullah's (2019) finding that most Banjar pamali originate from Islamic teachings, including sleeping etiquette and eating and drinking etiquette, which is consistent with the sleeping and eating prohibitions in D.6, D.7, and D.11.

Data D.1 and D.7 prohibit activities on Friday at midday. Friday is a holy day for Muslims, when men perform the Friday prayer at midday. It can therefore be interpreted that walking for leisure or sleeping at that time is considered improper while others are performing worship. This interpretation is consistent with the predominantly Islamic religious background of Banjar society (Syakhrani & Islami, 2022). However, neither utterance states a religious reason, so the religious education value rests on the time cue and on this background.

Furthermore, data D.6 and D.11 can also be read as containing religious educational value. Both share the time cue of dusk, and the researcher interprets them as expressing concern that a person will become negligent in worship if engaged in an activity at that time. The act of sleeping in D.6 refers to sleeping out of tiredness, not habit (Hidayatullah, 2019), and the act of eating in D.11 is interpreted as the habit of eating deliberately at that hour. Dusk is the time when a person can prepare for the Maghrib prayer. Thus, both utterances can be understood as a form of behavioral maintenance at dusk that should instead be directed toward worship. Because D.11 gives no explicit religious reason, this reading is more tentative than that for D.1, D.6, and D.7. A similar reading appears in Rismaya and Machdalena's (2021) study of Sundanese food pamali, in which a prohibition on eating sour food at sunset is linked to the time of the Maghrib prayer.

b. Cultural preservation and creativity value

(D.4)

Uy ading-ading pamali baduduk di upih pinang, kena disambar buaya

('Hey little siblings, it is forbidden to sit on an areca-palm frond sheath, or you will be snatched by a crocodile')

The utterance in data D.4 prohibits sitting on an areca-palm frond sheath, with the consequence of being attacked by a crocodile. In Banjar society, particularly in rural areas, areca-palm frond sheaths are useful as material for handicrafts such as baskets. They are also often used by children as a medium for a dragging game, which could damage a sheath that would otherwise be used as craft material. The pairing with the word 'crocodile', a ferocious animal capable of devouring humans, can be interpreted as a means of keeping children from sitting on the sheath. D.4 can therefore be read as reflecting the value of cultural preservation and creativity, in the sense that the pamali protects a material used in Banjar craft. This is a tentative reading and the researcher's interpretation, because the utterance itself does not mention craft. This reading is consistent with Fithriani et al.'s (2024) view that pamali helps preserve local culture and identity.

c. Discipline value

Discipline value can be understood as the basis for a particular group to live according to established rules. In this study, discipline value is assigned to utterances that regulate conduct through the proper use of objects according to their function (D.3 and D.10), as shown in the following data.

(D.3)

Pamali baduduk di atas bantal nak ai, kena buritnya babisul

('It is forbidden to sit on a pillow, child, or your bottom will grow a boil')

(D.10)

Pamali makan bawadah tukup sanak, kalo pina kada mau pintar

('It is forbidden to eat using a lid as a plate, sibling, or you will not be able to become smart')

In the subsection on personal context, D.3 was identified as directed at children. The utterance can be interpreted as arising because children sometimes play on the bed and accidentally sit on a pillow, an object whose function is to support the head while lying down. To control this behavior, parents may pair the prohibition with a boil as the consequence. A boil typically takes the form of a painful lump containing pus, and children instinctively avoid things that cause pain, so the consequence can be interpreted as a means of frightening children so that they do not sit on a pillow.

Data D.10 prohibits using a lid as a plate when eating, with the consequence that the offender will not become smart. The utterance can be interpreted as advice to use tools according to their function: a lid is meant to cover something, not to serve as a plate. In addition, the lid can be read as a symbol of a closed heart that is unable to receive input

or teaching, which is then linked to the threat of not becoming smart; this symbolic link is the researcher's interpretation. Therefore, D.3 and D.10 are assigned the value of discipline, namely that a person must maintain conduct in accordance with the applicable rules and their proper portion. A secondary reading of D.10 as teaching manners is possible because it concerns eating, but its focus on the function of objects makes discipline the primary value. This reading is in line with studies that identify discipline as a value conveyed by pamali (Sugara & Perdana, 2021; Wahyudin et al., 2025; Lanya et al., 2026).

d. Politeness value

The final local wisdom value is politeness, which is assigned to utterances that regulate posture, eating behavior, or the treatment of others in shared settings (D.2, D.5, D.8, D.9, and D.12). D.2, D.5, and D.12 are shown in the following data, while D.8 and D.9 were presented in the section on purpose context.

(D.2)

Pamali banyanyi sambil bahera wal ai, bisa patah gigi kam

('It is forbidden to sing while defecating, friend, or your teeth may break')

(D.5)

Pamali duduk sambil mamaguti lintuhut (nang/luh), ngitu sama lawan mahadapi api neraka

('It is forbidden to sit while hugging one's knees (young man/young woman), that is the same as facing the fire of hell')

(D.12)

Pamali malingkahi urang, bekurang darah kam diisapnya

('It is forbidden to step over someone, your blood will be reduced as it is sucked out')

The value of politeness is reflected in data D.2, D.5, and D.12. All three relate to a person's behavior within society. Data D.2 concerns how a person should behave while defecating or in the bathroom, namely by not singing. This can be interpreted as intended to prevent a person from lingering too long in the bathroom, since singing may cause one to lose track of time, as well as to avoid disturbing others who might hear it.

Meanwhile, the utterance in data D.5 also concerns maintaining politeness within society. As explained in the personal context subsection, it may derive from the image of people who warm themselves by a campfire; raising one's legs in front of others can be interpreted as appearing improper. D.5 can therefore be read as a reminder to maintain etiquette, one instance being how one sits in front of many people.

Data D.12 prohibits stepping over someone carelessly, with the consequence that one's blood will be reduced as it is sucked out by the person stepped over. There is no explicit correlation between the act and the consequence. Implicitly, it can be interpreted as advice to maintain etiquette in social interaction, namely not to treat others carelessly, one form of which is stepping over them. It can thus be concluded that D.2, D.5, and D.12 reflect the value of politeness, as they aim to maintain proper conduct.

Data D.8 and D.9 are also assigned to politeness. Both regulate how a person eats: squatting resembles the posture taken when defecating, and standing is considered improper while eating, as discussed above. These readings are the researcher's interpretation. D.9 may also be read as expressing gratitude for food, which is another of Sibarani's values, but its focus on proper posture while eating makes politeness its primary value. In total, five utterances (D.2, D.5, D.8, D.9, and D.12) reflect the value of politeness. Rismaya and Machdalena (2021) likewise read Sumedang pamali on eating while stretching out the legs or while walking as control of eating etiquette, and Sugara and Perdana (2021) identify politeness as a social value in the pamali of Kampung Adat Kuta.

Conclusion

The analysis answers the three research questions. Banjar body-maintenance pamali is directed at specific groups through explicit address terms, namely children and everyone, while the other utterances address the hearer in general. The utterances are delivered to strengthen religious observance and to teach manners. Together, these contexts point to four local wisdom values: religious education, cultural preservation and creativity, discipline, and politeness, with politeness the most frequent. The main conclusion is that Banjar pamali is not merely a prohibition: the contextual cues within an utterance show what behavior is regulated and why, which makes the underlying value identifiable. Theoretically, the study shows that contextual meaning can serve as a bridge to local wisdom values through explicit decision rules, a procedure that can be applied to other types of pamali and other oral traditions. Practically, the findings can serve as material for character education and local language learning in Banjar communities. The study has limitations. It is based on a single source book and on a selected set of utterances of one pamali type, so the findings cannot be generalized to all Banjar pamali. Only two of the eleven contexts proposed by Pateda were analyzed, and some interpretations, especially symbolic ones, remain the researcher's readings, even though the researcher is a native Banjar speaker and the interpretations were triangulated with native speakers and cultural observers. Future research could include other pamali types, other contexts such as situational and time contexts, and data from living speakers, for example recorded utterances in family settings.

Declaration

Author Contribution

Conceptualization: R.C. and M.W.S.; Methodology: R.C. and M.W.S.; Investigation: R.C.; Data curation: R.C.; Formal analysis: R.C., M.W.S., and P.H.; Validation: M.W.S., P.H., N.K., and M.F.I.; Visualization: M.F.I.; Writing – original draft: R.C.; Writing – review and editing: R.C., M.W.S., P.H., N.K., and M.F.I.; Supervision: P.H.

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Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no financial or non-financial competing interests relevant to this work.

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Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Manuscript Preparation Process

During the preparation of this revised manuscript, the authors used a generative AI tool to assist with language editing and with drafting passages of the revision in response to the reviewers' comments. The data collection and coding were carried out by the authors. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the published article.

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