

Here and there in Sasak, eastern Indonesia

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*Abstract*¹

This paper explores the main means of encoding spatial relationships in the Sasak language, spoken on the island of Lombok, eastern Indonesia. Sasak has a complex system of absolute (cardinal) reference terms and spatial deictic (shifter) terms that shows a large degree of variation among the various dialects spoken across the island. So, different sources on Sasak give the translation for ‘south’ as *barat* ~ *bat* ~ *daya* ~ *daye* ~ *lauq* ~ *bòngkòt* and for ‘west’ we find *barat* ~ *bat* ~ *daye* (which overlap with some of the ‘south’ terms). The distal demonstrative ‘that’ appears as *nó* ~ *enó* ~ *inó* ~ *senó* ~ *sinó* ~ *ónó* ~ *nónó* ~ *sie* ~ *siaq* ~ *siaqng* ~ *tie* ~ *tiaq* ~ *tiaqng* ~ *setiaq* ~ *setó* ~ *iku* ~ *siku* ~ *nike*. Drawing on cross-dialectal and corpus-based research, we describe the attested spatial reference systems and outline the geographical distributions of variation, presenting examples from spoken texts in the Sasak corpus of their use. We also make some comparisons with published descriptions of spatial reference in neighbouring Balinese.

Keywords: Sasak, Indonesian languages, deixis, cardinal reference, spatial deictics

1. Background — Sasak language and culture

The Sasak language (*base sasaq*)² is spoken on the island of Lombok in eastern Indonesia, to the east of Bali, by approximately three million speakers (see Austin 2003). It is an Austronesian language closely related to Samawa, spoken on the western half of neighbouring Sumbawa Island, and to Balinese, spoken by around 300,000 people in western Lombok, as well as about three million speakers on Bali (Mbate 1990). Adelaar (2005) classifies it as a member of the Malayo-Sumbawan subgroup within Western Malayo-Polynesian.

Sasak shows a considerable degree of geographical variation, with striking lexical and grammatical differences between varieties at the village level, leading to mutual unintelligibility in some cases (Teeuw 1951, 1958; Mahsun 1999; Asikin-Garmager 2017;

¹ I am pleased to offer this paper in honour of Ketut Artawa, who I first came to know when he was a PhD student in Linguistics at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. It was Ketut who got me started doing research on Sasak and assisted with my first fieldwork with Khairul Paridi and the late Nur Ahmadi at Udayana University in 1994. We have remained in contact for the past 32 years and I have learned much from him about similarities and differences between Balinese and Sasak languages. Earlier versions of the material in this paper were presented at Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics (2002), SOAS University of London (2008), and Dusseldorf University (2016). I am grateful to audiences at these talks for questions and helpful feedback. Thanks are also due to Anthony Jukes, Simon Musgrave, Yon Mahyuni, Syahdan, Sudirman, Mahsun, Lalu Hasbollah, Lalu Dasmara, Ispan Junaidi, the late Nur Ahmadi, and students at Universitas Mataram for data and discussions. I alone am responsible for errors.

² Our transcription follows usual Indonesianist practice with glottal stop represented as *q*, and the vowels including front mid-close *é* and mid-open *è*, back mid-close *ó* and mid-open *ò*, while *e* represents schwa (phonetically [ɜ] is word-final (stressed) position in most dialects). Abbreviations used in the glossed examples are: 1pl – first person plural pronominal clitic; 1sg – first person singular pronominal clitic; 2 – second person pronominal clitic; 3 – third person pronominal clitic; applic – applicative; compar – comparative; cont – continuous aspect; disc – discourse particle; link – linker; loc – locative; real – realis mood; rel – relativiser.

Austin 2003). Sasak socio-linguistic ideology holds that there are five dialects of Sasak named for the shibboleth terms for ‘like that-like this’, namely *Ngeno-ngene*, *Meno-mene*, *Nggeto-nggete*, *Kuto-kute*, and *Meriq-meriku*. However, this does not exhaust the actually observed forms, such as *Menu-meni*, and it is clear that geographical variation of lexicon and morpho-syntax must be described at the village level (Austin 2012, 2013a, b), as Asikin-Garmager (2017) also notes. In examples quoted below from the Sasak corpus we identify the village where the instances were recorded.

In addition to local variation, Sasak has a system of speech levels (Nothofer 2000, 2016; Austin and Nothofer 2012; Austin 2013a) that is primarily expressed by choice among distinct members of lexical sets (with some vocabulary being ‘neutral’ and not showing speech level variation). The system differentiates three levels (low, mid, high), reflecting the discourse situation and relationships between speaker and addressee, as well as humble (speaker-reference) and honorific (non-speaker reference) terms. Table 1 gives some examples from Meno-Mene (Puyung), illustrating also that all sets are partial and none distinguishes all five possibilities (see Austin and Nothofer 2012 for further details).

Table 1: Sasak speech levels

	Low	Mid	High	Honorific	Humble
1sg	<i>aku</i>		<i>tiang</i>		<i>kaji, dèwèk</i>
2	<i>kamu</i>	<i>side</i>	<i>peinggih</i>	<i>dekaji</i>	
3	<i>ie</i>			<i>deside</i>	
‘eat’	<i>mangan</i>	<i>bekelór</i>	<i>madaran</i>	<i>majengan</i>	
‘see’	<i>gitaq</i>	<i>seréóq</i>	<i>sermin</i>	<i>cingakin</i>	
‘say’	<i>uni</i>	<i>base</i>	<i>manik</i>		<i>matur</i>
‘go’	<i>laló</i>		<i>lumbar</i>	<i>margi</i>	<i>lampaq</i>
‘give’	<i>bèng</i>			<i>ican</i>	<i>atur</i>
‘receive’	<i>terimaq</i>			<i>panggih</i>	<i>tampi</i>
‘yes’	<i>aóq</i>		<i>nggih</i>		<i>meran</i>
‘eye’	<i>mate</i>	<i>penenteng</i>	<i>penyerminan</i>		
‘head’	<i>òtak</i>	<i>sirah</i>	<i>tendes, prabu</i>		
‘body’	<i>perane</i>		<i>déwék</i>	<i>batang</i>	<i>rage</i>

Sasak people use the labels *biase* or *jamaq* for low speech style, and *alus* for all other lexical variants (not distinguishing speaker/addressee-determined speech level from reference-determined honorific/humble terms). There is also a style called *kawi*, which derives from early modern Javanese, that is used in literary contexts as well as for hyper-politeness (Austin 2013a). This complex system is generally only partially controlled by ordinary Sasak speakers, and is more fully exploited by a social minority called *mènak*, who are nobles descending from members of the Lombok royal households, which were disestablished during Dutch colonial settlement beginning in 1894. The non-low elements of the speech level system (*alus* and *kawi*) show uniformity across the whole of Lombok, regardless of the local variety of low speech, and are marked by borrowings from Balinese and Javanese (as

well as a few loans from Malay and other languages) from the 14th century onwards. For further details see Austin and Nothofer 2012, and Nothofer 2016.

Sasak exists in a diglossic relationship with the national language, Bahasa Indonesia; it is used for spoken communication and is only ever written in informal contexts such as texting, email, and on social media. Indonesian is used for all ‘high’ functions such as education, broadcasting, publishing, government bureaucracy, and interactions with non-Sasaks. There are indications of language shift taking place in urban centres such as the regional capital Mataram, with younger people being dominant in Indonesian and having a passive knowledge of their local Sasak variety. The language remains vibrant in rural contexts.

The data for this study comes from a range of sources, including published materials (Vorderman 1895; Agerbeek 1914; Goris 1938; Teuw 1951, 1958; Thoir et al. 1985; Wouk 1999; Shibatani 2008), unpublished dissertations and notes (Asikin-Garmager 2017; Khairunnisa 2022; Mahyuni 2004; Teeuw 1950), and our own fieldwork with speakers from several locations across Lombok. This has involved elicitation, observation, recording of conversations (such as Suheri, Jukes and Austin 2000b; Austin 2021) and narrative texts (such as Austin, Jukes and Suheri 2000; Suheri, Jukes and Austin 2000a), including multiple versions of the Frog Story (Mayer 1969; see Jordan 2000: Appendix for one instance). Figure 1 gives the locations of documented varieties in the corpus. Additional confirmatory data comes from unpublished BA dissertations written by students in the English Department at the University of Mataram (such as Sutarman 2010), and kindly made available to the author by the late Nur Ahmadi. It is clear from all this material that there are geographically distinguished systems of spatial reference in the various documented varieties of Sasak.



Figure 1. Locations of Sasak data corpora (blue = Ngeno-ngene, pink = Meno-mene, lilac = Meriaq-meriku, green = Nggeto-nggete, green-orange = Kuto-kute, yellow = Menu-meni)

2. Spatial reference

2.1 Typology

Cross-linguistic research reveals that languages show variation in the frame of reference that speakers use to describe and refer to locations in space of a figure (object or entity) in relation to a ground. Three types of systems are found (Pederson et al. 1998; Levinson 2001, 2003; Aryawibawa et al. 2018), namely:

1. *absolute* – based on arbitrary fixed bearings such as compass directions, e.g. ‘north’, ‘south-west’, or geographical features, e.g. ‘upriver’, ‘seawards’;
2. *relative* – based on perspective relations between a perceiver, the figure, and the ground, such as ‘behind (me)’, ‘to the left of (you)’;
3. *intrinsic* – based on location of the figure in relation to a part of the ground, such as ‘below (the table)’, ‘in front of (the house)’.

Speakers may use all three systems, but it is well known that some speech communities show preferences for absolute reference rather than relative or intrinsic specifications. This is true in Sasak, and Austronesian languages more generally, and is discussed and illustrated in 2.3.2 below.

2.2 Austronesian and Balinese

Adelaar (1997: 55) points to the reconstruction of two absolute geographical directional terms for proto-Austronesian: **laSud* ‘towards the sea’, and **Daya* ‘towards the interior’, and two terms based on the names of monsoon winds: **habaRat* ‘north-west monsoon’, **timuR* ‘south-east monsoon’ (see also Blust 2013; Blust and Trussel 2013). Adelaar (1997: 56) notes that:

In Bali, **laSud* and **Daya* also developed into terms for cardinal directions, but here we know for certain that their meanings are still largely dependent on the relative position of the sea and the interior. The terms for ‘west’ and ‘east’ are not derived from Austronesian monsoon names.

This gives the following terms in Balinese: *ke-lod* ‘towards the mountains’, *k-aja* ‘towards the sea’, *k-auh* ‘west’ and *k-angin* ‘east’. The island of Bali is traversed by an east-west mountain range. In north and south Bali the direction terms such as *ke-lod* ‘towards the mountains’ show an opposite correlation to compass directions on the North-South axis, while the East-West terms remain constant. In east Bali the northern system is rotated 90 degrees clockwise to keep the basic orientation of the geographical direction terms in relation to mountains and the sea, but these now lie on an East-West axis (Adelaar 1997: 56). Thus, we find the relationships shown in Table 2.³

³ Wassman and Dasen (1998) show that the degree of rotation varies village-by-village in northern and eastern Bali, and that this has non-linguistic implications (see also Aryawibawa et al. 2018).

Table 2: Balinese absolute direction terms

	North Bali	South Bali	East Bali
<i>-lod</i> ‘to mountain’	North	South	East
<i>-aja</i> ‘to sea’	South	North	West
<i>-auh</i>	West	West	North
<i>-angin</i>	East	East	South

2.3 Sasak spatial reference

To date, there seem to be only two published mentions of location specification in Sasak. The first is a paragraph in Adelaar (1997: 57) that says:

a system similar to the Balinese seems to exist on Lombok ... For Sasak, Goris (1938) gives *baret* ‘west’ and *timuq* ‘east’. He glosses *daya* ‘down the mountain; south for northerners, north for southerners’ and *lauq* ‘towards the sea; south for southerners, north for northerners.

In a footnote, Adelaar (1997: 57fn5) indicates that he is aware that other published sources provide conflicting information, but he is unable to sort it out:

Agerbeek (1914) and Nazir Thoir et al. (1985) give the same set of terms for cardinal directions but the meanings they attribute to each term are different. Agerbeek has *barat* ‘west’, *timuq* ‘east’, *daye* ‘north’, and *lauq* ‘south’ [i.e. as for Goris (1938) – PKA], whereas Nazir Thoir et al. have *baret* ‘north’, *timuq* ‘south’, *daya* ‘west’, and *lauq* ‘east’. It is not clear in which part of Lombok they collected their data.

In fact, the material in Thoir et al. (1985) is in the Nggeto-nggete variety spoken in Sembalun and neighbouring villages in north-east Lombok (Figure 1 green pin). There is thus a suggestion of rotation of axes, similar to what we noted for east Bali above; we explore this in more detail in 2.3.2 below.

The second mention of Sasak locationals is in Holton and Pappas (2024: 849) who repeat Adelaar’s information from Goris (1938), but without any mention of sources that conflict with it, or the true complexity which we describe below.

2.3.1 Lombok geography

The island of Lombok is physically dominated in the north by an active volcano Gunung Rinjani, which at 3,726-meters is the second highest mountain in Indonesia. The main population centres are located to the south of Rinjani, which is visible throughout most of Lombok and serves as a reference point for orientation and reference.

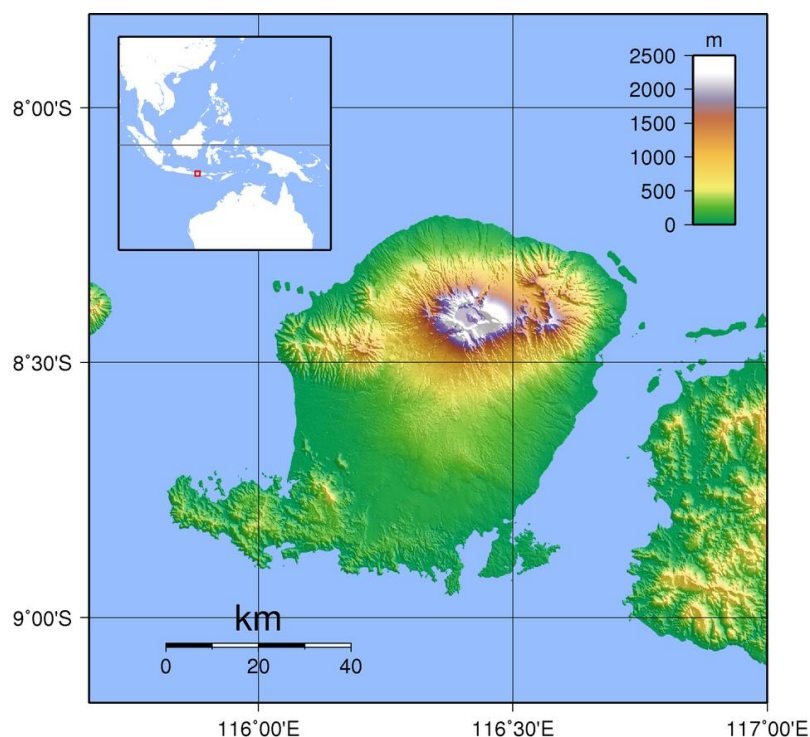


Figure 2. Lombok topography⁴

2.3.2 Frames of reference in Sasak

Locational reference in Sasak is expressed by nominal and demonstrative terms. The basic structure of Noun Phrases is a head noun followed optionally by modifiers such as possessive nouns, adjectives, and relative clauses (in that order), followed optionally by a demonstrative. We can summarise this by the following formula:

NP structure: N(-link N) (Adj) ([rel S]) (dem)

Note that compounds and genitive (possessive) structures require a linker (common in Formosan and Philippine languages, but less usual in Indonesia – see Kaufmann 2009: 201), which is *-n* or *-ng*, depending on dialect, e.g. Menu-meni (Ganti) *ime-ng inaq* ‘thumb (hand-link mother)’, *buku-ng Ali* ‘Ali’s book’. Spatial reference terms also use the linker, e.g. *muri-ng Ali* ‘behind Ali’.

As noted in 2.1 above, speakers can choose between three systems of spatial reference. In Sasak, *absolute* spatial reference is based on landmarks in the natural environment, and includes terms like Menu-meni (Ganti) *bòngkòt* ‘direction from which water flows into a wet rice field (*bangket*)’ versus *diréq* ‘direction away from a wet rice field (*bangket*) other than *bòngkòt*’.⁵ There are four terms whose reference shifts depending on the location on Lombok where specification is made (as in Balinese, see 2.2) namely *daye*, *lauq*, *timuq*, and *baret* ~ *bat*. From the available sources there appear to be four orientations of these terms with respect to compass directions, as shown in Table 3.

⁴ from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lombok#/media/File:Lombok_Topography.png (accessed 2026-04-14)

⁵ Wet rice fields are surrounded by a raised bank – to allow water to flow from one field to another farmers make a small opening, which is then closed up with mud and stones when the field has the right level of water. The location of this opening and hence of the direction of water flow depends on local topography.

Table 3. Sasak absolute direction terms

	System A	System B	System C	System D
<i>daye</i>	south	north	west	west
<i>lauq</i>	north	south	east	east
<i>timuq</i>	east	east	south	north
<i>baret ~ bat</i>	west	west	north	south

System A occurs in the dialects of villages on the north coast of Lombok, such as Bayan or Gangga, while System B occurs in central (both west, e.g. Mataram, and east, e.g. Selong) and southern Lombok (e.g. Praya, Puyung, Ganti, and Penujaq) – the rotation of the N-S axis with respect to Gunung Rinjani is the same as we saw for Bali and its mountain range. System C is a 90 degree clockwise rotation of System A and is found in north-east Lombok in villages such as Sembalun (the green pin in Figure 1, see Thoir et al. 1985); note that this keeps Gunung Rinjani in the *daye* direction. System D is found in far north-east Lombok villages such as Sembelia (Teeuw 1950) and has the same orientation shift of *daye-lauq* as for System C, but flips *timuq* and *baret* (this is equivalent to 90 degree anti-clockwise rotation of System B). We have not examined exact micro-orientations village-by-village as Wassman and Dasen (1998) did for north-east Bali, so the exact village distributions of System C and System D need further research.

Note that Sasak speakers use these absolute terms on occasions when speakers of other languages might prefer relative spatial terms, such as ‘left/right’ or ‘forward/back’. As Holton and Pappas (2024: 845) note: “The Austronesian languages are well known for the prevalence of geocentric systems of spatial orientation which use geography rather than ego as a reference point”. So, for example, Austin (2021) contains several Menu-meni (Ganti) text examples describing locations within an aircraft flying from Lombok to Surabaya (east to west flight path) that employ System B terms from Table 3 to describe relative seating arrangements, such as the following (Austin 2021: 93):

- (1)
- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>nggih</i> | <i>nyingke=te</i> | <i>siq</i> | <i>andang</i> | <i>bat=ng</i> | <i>niki</i> | <i>muq</i> | <i>lauq</i> | <i>óléq=t</i> |
| yes | cont=1pl | rel | face | west=3 | this | real | south | from=1pl |
| <i>tòkòn</i> | <i>ndéq=ng</i> | <i>jaq</i> | <i>bèng=kò</i> | <i>menó</i> | <i>muq=k</i> | <i>bilin=è</i> | | |
| sit | not=3 | disc | give=1sg | like.that | real=1sg | leave.behind=3 | | |
| <i>tòkòn</i> | <i>òjòk</i> | <i>daye</i> | | | | | | |
| sit | to | north | | | | | | |

‘Yes, while we were facing forwards (lit. west), we sat in the left (lit. south) part; because she didn’t leave me (a seat) like that, I left her behind and sat on the right (lit. north).’

For all varieties of Sasak, we have been unable to identify any nouns with *relative* spatial reference (for deictic spatial nouns see 2.3.3). Terms such as *kiri* ‘left’ and *kanan ~ kawan* ‘right’ have *intrinsic* reference with respect to the ground. For example, consider a sentence in Menu-meni (Ganti) such as:

- (2) *araq kertas siq begantung léq julu-ng lawang [seri kiri]*
 exist paper rel hang loc front-link door side left
 ‘There’s a piece of paper hanging to the left of the door’

This describes a scene where the paper is hanging on the lefthand side of the door frame as one exits the door; the same sentence would also be used by a speaker standing outside the house and facing it (for whom in English the paper would be ‘to the right of the door’). Other intrinsic terms are: *julu* ‘front’⁶, *muri* ~ *mudi* ‘back, behind’, *seri* ‘side’, *atas* ‘top, above’, *bawaq* ‘below, under’, *dalem* ‘non-bounded interior’, *galuh* ‘bounded interior’, *luar* ~ *luah* ‘outside bounded space, beyond a boundary’.

2.3.3 Deictic locational nouns

Relative spatial reference can be achieved in Sasak by using deictic locational nouns which are anchored on the speech act participants. There is a three-term system in most varieties which distinguishes location with respect to the general area within easy reach of the speaker or of the addressee, or away from both. In addition, an entity referred to using the addressee-anchored term must be visible to the speaker, otherwise the distal term away from both speaker and addressee must be used. Here are the forms in Menu-Meni (Ganti) speech:

- té* here within speaker’s reachable area, not necessarily visible to addressee
tie there within addressee’s reachable area, necessarily visible to speaker
tó there distant from both speaker and hearer (may or may not be visible)

Examples of their use are:

- (3) *piring saq té bait*
 dish rel here get
 ‘Get this dish here!’
- (4) *piring saq tie bait-ang=kò*
 dish rel here get-applic=1sg
 ‘Get that dish there (near you) for me!’

In fast speech *saq tie* can be reduced to *setie* (see also 2.3.4 for reduction of demonstratives). Notice that there is only a two way contrast in forms derived from these roots. Thus the comparative *-qan* can be added to *té* and *tó* but not to *tie*:

- (5) *piring saq tó-qan*
 dish rel there-compar
 ‘the dish which is further over there (away from speaker and addressee)’

These two comparatives can be used in imperative utterances:

⁶ In temporal usage *julu* indicates reference to the past and *muri* to the future, eg. *julu-ng uiq* ‘day before yesterday’, *ahat muri* ‘next Sunday’.

- (6) *té-qan=ò=ké*
 here-compar=2=1sg
 ‘Come here! (lit. ‘you (get) more here to me’)
- (7) *tó-qan=ò=ké*
 there-compar=2=1sg
 ‘Get away! (lit. ‘you (get) more there from me’)

In *alus* speech there is only a two-way contrast for all dialects of Sasak (as in Javanese, from which these forms are borrowed):

<i>driki</i>	here, near speaker
<i>drike</i>	there, not near speaker

If one needs to be explicit that the place mentioned is distant from speaker and addressee this is indicated by using *drike* and lengthening the final vowel while using lip pointing and head movement.

2.3.4 Demonstratives

As we saw for locational nouns, demonstratives in southern varieties of Sasak show a three term system, as in Menu-Meni (Ganti, Tebao):

<i>ni</i>	this	within speaker’s reachable area, not necessarily visible to addressee
<i>nie</i>	that	within addressee’s reachable area, necessarily visible to speaker
<i>nu</i>	that	distant from both speaker and hearer (may or may not be visible)

In Meriaq-Meriku (Penujaq) the terms are quite distinct:

<i>iaq</i>	this	within speaker’s reachable area, not necessarily visible to addressee
<i>iku</i>	that	within addressee’s reachable area, necessarily visible to speaker
<i>étóh</i>	that	distant from both speaker and hearer (may or may not be visible)

For more northerly varieties, there is only a two way contrast, with the forms being:

<i>ni ~ né ~ néné</i>	this	near to the speaker
<i>nó ~ ónó ~ nónó</i>	that	away from speaker (near to addressee or distant from both)

Some varieties (such as Ngeno-ngene Selong) have an optional prothetic vowel *e* or *i*, thus *ené ~ iné* and *enó ~ inó*. The forms *néné* and *nónó* are characteristic of Nggeto-Nggete (e.g. Sembalun) and Kuto-kete (e.g. Bayan). Notice that there are (apparently synonymous) variant forms of all these demonstratives with an initial *se-*, which may be grammaticised from the relativiser *si ~ siq ~ saq*, giving rise to the following variants: *senó ~ senu ~ sinó ~ siaq ~ siku ~ sétóh*.⁷

In all varieties of Sasak, the *alus* (‘high’) style has only a two way contrast between *niki* ‘this, near the speaker’ and *nike* ‘that, near the addressee or distant from both’. Example (1) above contains an instance of *niki*. Here is another example in Meno-Mene (Bonjeruk):⁸

⁷ There are some examples in Sutarman (2010: Chapter 4) from Menu-Meni (Terbao) which suggest that forms like *senuq*, *seniq*, and *setie* code specificity, i.e. the referent of the noun phrase in which they occur is uniquely identifiable to the speaker. These require further checking and additional research on whether the forms beginning with *se-* in other varieties have similar or related functions.

⁸ Forms in bold are peculiar to *alus* style, while plain forms are neutral for style.

- (8) *Nggih, tapi asih, mbé eh, margin*
 nggih tapi asih mbé eh margi=n
 yes receive favour where eh go=3
- Kaq bólingk niki?*
 Kaq bóling=k niki
 older.sister older.sibling=1sg this

‘Yes, thank you, where has your daughter (lit. my elder sister) gone now?’

In some dialects of Sasak, eg. Menu-Meni (Ganti), there is a further contrast in non-*alus* speech marked by final glottal stop to indicate the speaker’s belief that the addressee can see the referent:

- (9) *lawang senu-q*
 door that-visible
 ‘that door’ (distant from speaker and addressee, visible to addressee, may or may not be visible to speaker)

When the referent is part of shared knowledge, typically by having been mentioned in previous discourse or being something which speaker and addressee are both attending to, then the third person clitic =*ng* is attached to the demonstrative as a marker of definiteness:⁹

- (10) *lawang setia-q=ng*
 door that-visible=3
 ‘that door’ (near to addressee, visible to addressee, previously spoken about or being attended to by both speaker and addressee)

Demonstratives and deictic nouns can be used in the same NP provided that their distance features do not clash, as in:

- (11) *lawang saq tó nu-q=ng langan=ò*
 door rel there that-visible=3 way=2
 ‘Your way (in) is that door over there’ (that you can see, but I can’t)

- (12) **lawang saq tó setia-q=ng langan=ò*

Notice that visibility to addressee and shared attention are not encoded in *alus* style. Thus, in Teeuw’s 1949 dialect survey he notes against an entry for *tiaq* that it is considered *kasar* ‘rough, impolite’.

⁹ Root-final *e* changes to *a* when the suffix is added.

3. Conclusions

There has been little previous work on spatial specification in Sasak, and the existing brief references fail to examine in detail the ways in which speakers may refer to the location of people or other entities in space. In addition, vocabulary lists and other sources in the literature on Sasak contain a wide range of terms, sometimes apparently conflicting, that do not properly distinguish dialect, reference semantics, and speech level. The existence of four systems of absolute spatial reference has not been noted or clarified before. In addition, if we look again at the terms for the distal demonstrative ‘that’ mentioned in the abstract above, we can identify them clearly:

<i>nó</i>	Ngeno-Ngene dialects
<i>enó</i>	Ngeno-Ngene dialects – prothetic schwa <i>e</i>
<i>inó</i>	Ngeno-Ngene dialects – prothetic <i>i</i>
<i>senó</i>	Ngeno-Ngene dialects – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative
<i>sinó</i>	Ngeno-Ngene dialects – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative
<i>ónó</i>	Kuto-Kute (Gondang)
<i>nónó</i>	Kuto-Kute (Bayan), Nggeto-Nggete (Sembalun)
<i>sie</i>	Menu-Meni dialects – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative
<i>siaq</i>	Menu-Meni dialects – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative + visibility
<i>siaqng</i>	Menu-Meni dialects – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative + visibility + 3 clitic
<i>tie</i>	Menu-Meni dialects distal
<i>tiaq</i>	Menu-Meni dialects distal + visibility
<i>tiaqng</i>	Menu-Meni dialects distal + visibility + 3 clitic
<i>setiaq</i>	Menu-Meni dialects distal – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative + visibility
<i>setó</i>	Meno-Mene dialects – reduced form of relativiser + location noun ‘there’
<i>iku</i>	Meriq-Meriku dialects distal
<i>siku</i>	Meriq-Meriku dialects distal – reduced form of relativiser + demonstrative
<i>nike</i>	all dialects, distal, alus speech style

Demonstratives are used to make deictic reference with relation to the speaker and addressee (and, in some varieties, may optionally code other dimensions such as visibility and shared attention). For nouns, we find deictic nouns, absolute reference terms (anchored on aspects of Lombok geography, especially the dominating volcano Gunung Rinjani, and the surrounding ocean), and intrinsic reference terms (anchored on some aspect of the ground specification). There do not seem to be any relative reference nouns, but rather Sasak speakers use absolute terms to describe locations in space where speakers of languages like English would use relative terms like ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘ahead’ or ‘behind’. This is reportedly quite typical of discourse use in other Austronesian languages.

We hope that this paper provides some first steps towards understanding how notions like ‘here’ and ‘there’ are encoded in the Sasak language. Additional research, especially on micro-variation at the village level, remains to be undertaken.

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