Philological Analysis of the Sundanese Folklore 'Lutung Kasarung’

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| ***Article Info*** | **Abstract** |
| ***Article History***  *Received:*  *Revised:*  *Published:* | *The study of Sundanese folklore from a philological perspective has gained significant attention from scholars in recent years. This study aims to contribute to this field of research by analyzing the popular Sundanese folklore story of "Lutung Kasarung" from a philological perspective. The study employs a qualitative approach and focuses on the linguistic and cultural aspects of the story. Through an examination of the grammar, syntax, structure, and cultural motifs of the "Lutung Kasarung" tale, this study aims to deepen our understanding of the Sundanese language and culture. The findings of this study provide insights into the linguistic and cultural variations of the story across different regions of Java, shedding light on the historical and social contexts that shaped its development. The study also highlights the moral values and themes that are embedded within the story, such as the importance of honesty, loyalty, and compassion. These values reflect the Sundanese cultural heritage and identity and can contribute to the preservation and promotion of Sundanese folklore.* |
| ***Keywords***  *Philology*  *Folklore,*  *Lutung Kasarung*  *Cultural heritage* |
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**INTRODUCTION**

Sundanese folklore is a rich and diverse cultural heritage that has been passed down through generations. It is a manifestation of the Sundanese way of life and values that have been ingrained in the society for centuries (Geertz, 1976); (McNair, 1993); (De Jong, 2011). One of the most well-known and beloved Sundanese folklore stories is the "Lutung Kasarung" tale, which has been adapted and retold in various forms across the region. The "Lutung Kasarung" folklore story has been retold in various versions across Java, each with its own unique linguistic and cultural characteristics (Noorduyn and Teeuw, 2006); (Robert, 2020). The story is set in the kingdom of *Pasir Batang*, where a young princess named Purbasari is set to marry the kingdom's prince. However, the prince's mother, the queen, is not pleased with Purbasari and accuses her of being a witch. Purbasari is then banished to the forest, where she meets a kind-hearted monkey named Lutung Kasarung. Lutung Kasarung helps Purbasari overcome her challenges and proves her innocence to the queen. As a reward for his assistance, Purbasari transforms Lutung Kasarung into a handsome prince, and they eventually fall in love and get married (Sumiyardana, 2017). The story of "Lutung Kasarung" is not only a tale of love and friendship, but also carries moral values such as the importance of honesty, loyalty, and compassion. It is often retold and adapted in various forms of media, such as plays, novels, and movies, and has become an important part of Sundanese cultural heritage.

The story of "Lutung Kasarung" has different versions in different regions of Java, and there are variations in the details and characters of the story. However, the core message and themes of the story remain the same, reflecting the Sundanese cultural values of kindness, honesty, and perseverance (Pranowo, 2007). The story of "Lutung Kasarung" is not only a beloved folk tale among the Sundanese people, but it is also an important cultural artifact that has been studied and analyzed by scholars in the fields of linguistics, literature, and cultural studies (Mulder, 1992); (Arsana et.al, 2022). Through a philological analysis of the story, scholars can gain insights into the linguistic and cultural nuances of the tale, as well as the historical and social context in which it was created. They can examine the language, grammar, syntax, and structure of the story, as well as the cultural motifs, symbols, and themes that are embedded within it (Kurniasih, 2017). Studying "Lutung Kasarung" and other Sundanese folk tales can also help to preserve and promote the rich tradition of Sundanese folklore. By analyzing and documenting these stories, scholars can ensure that they are not lost to time and can be passed down to future generations. Additionally, by promoting the study and appreciation of Sundanese folklore, scholars can help to strengthen the cultural identity of the Sundanese people and preserve their cultural heritage.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

The research design for this study is a qualitative approach, which focuses on analyzing the linguistic and cultural aspects of the Sundanese folklore story of "Lutung Kasarung" from a philological perspective. This approach allows for a detailed and nuanced analysis of the language, grammar, syntax, structure, and cultural motifs of the story, providing insights into the Sundanese language and culture. According to (Danzin and Lincoln, 2011) a qualitative approach is a research method that involves examining non-numerical data such as text, images, and observations to understand the meaning and context of a phenomenon. In the case of analyzing the linguistic and cultural aspects of a text, a qualitative approach would involve examining the language used and the cultural values and beliefs expressed in the text. This may involve analyzing the syntax, semantics, and morphology of the language, as well as examining the cultural references, metaphors, and symbolism used in the text. By examining these aspects of the text, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the cultural context and values that underlie the story. This can be useful for understanding the cultural norms and beliefs of a particular society, as well as for interpreting literary or historical texts.

***Data Collection***

The data collection process for this study involves using various sources to gather information about the Sundanese story of Lutung Kasarung. Published versions of the story, which may include different versions and variations of the tale, are obtained from libraries and bookstores. These sources provide a reliable and consistent record of the story, which can be used for analysis and comparison. In addition, online resources are gathered through internet searches and online databases (Patton, 2015). These sources provide a wider range of information, including scholarly articles, cultural analyses, and multimedia resources such as videos and images. Online sources can also provide access to contemporary perspectives and interpretations of the story. To further enrich the data collection process, interviews with Sundanese cultural experts are conducted. These experts may include scholars, educators, and individuals with direct experience of Sundanese culture and traditions. Through these interviews, the researcher can gain insights and perspectives that may not be available through published or online sources alone. The use of multiple sources ensures a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the linguistic and cultural aspects of the story.

***Data Analysis***

The data analysis for this study involves a close reading of the text, supplemented by interviews with Sundanese cultural experts. The text is analyzed for its language, grammar, syntax, structure, and cultural motifs, using a philological approach.The comparative approach is also employed to analyze the linguistic and cultural variations of the story across different regions of Java. This is done by examining different versions of the story and comparing the language, grammar, syntax, structure, and cultural motifs of each version. The findings of the study are presented through a detailed analysis of the "Lutung Kasarung" folklore story, highlighting the linguistic and cultural nuances of the text. The study also provides insights into the historical and social contexts that shaped the development of the story and the moral values and themes that are embedded within it.

***Data Presentation***

The results of this study will be presented through a written report. The report will include an overview of the Sundanese language and cultural values and beliefs that are present in the narrative. The report will also include specific examples from the story to illustrate these linguistic and cultural aspects.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis of the "Lutung Kasarung" folklore story from a philological perspective reveals several linguistic and cultural nuances embedded within the text. In the context of a philological analysis of "Lutung Kasarung", the linguistic part refers to the study and analysis of the language used in the story. This includes examining the vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and other linguistic features present in the text (Candria, 2019); (Isnendes, 2023). Linguistic structural analysis is carried out to reveal the Sundanese language structure used in the Lutung Kasarung story, both in sentences and vocabulary. Similarly, the values, beliefs, and social norms reflected in the story can demonstrate cultural nuances. The cultural nuances in the "Lutung Kasarung" story refer to the underlying cultural beliefs and values that are embedded within the narrative (Suparlan, 2008); (Rahmawati, 2023). These nuances can be expressed through various aspects of the story, such as the characters, settings, plot, and themes. The story is divided into two parts, each with its unique cultural and linguistic characteristics. Part one of the story follows the adventures of Lutung Kasarung, who is transformed from a monkey into a human by the gods. Part two of the story focuses on the conflicts and challenges faced by Lutung Kasarung and his counterpart, Prabu Tapa Agung.

In part one of the story, Lutung Kasarung is introduced as a mischievous and playful monkey who lives in the forest with his mother. One day, while playing near a river, Lutung Kasarung is approached by two goddesses, who are impressed by his cleverness and wit. The goddesses offer Lutung Kasarung a choice: he can either become a human and serve the kingdom, or he can continue to live as a monkey in the forest. Lutung Kasarung chooses to become a human and is transformed into a handsome prince. He is then sent to the kingdom to serve as an advisor to the king, who is struggling to govern his people. Lutung Kasarung quickly becomes a beloved figure in the kingdom, admired for his intelligence, kindness, and wisdom. As Lutung Kasarung begins to settle into his new role, he is approached by the queen, who becomes infatuated with him. Lutung Kasarung rejects her advances, however, and remains devoted to his duties as an advisor. This angers the queen, who plots to ruin Lutung Kasarung's reputation by accusing him of theft. Despite being innocent, Lutung Kasarung is banished from the kingdom and forced to flee into the forest. There, he meets a kind and wise hermit, who helps him to regain his reputation and his place in the kingdom. In the end, Lutung Kasarung is able to clear his name and is reinstated as the king's trusted advisor. The language used in this part of the story is relatively simple, with short and direct sentences, reflecting the innocence and simplicity of the character.

One aspect of the Sundanese language that could be analyzed is its use of symbolism and metaphor. The Sundanese language is rich in metaphor and symbolism. An analysis of the metaphorical and symbolic language used in part one of the story could provide insights into the cultural and historical context of the narrative, as well as the underlying themes and motifs. For example, Lutung Kasarung's transformation from a monkey to a human could be seen as a metaphor for personal growth and transformation. Similarly, the queen's infatuation with Lutung Kasarung could be interpreted as a symbol of the corrupting influence of power. The characters in part one also use Sundanese honorifics or *Undak Usuk Basa*. These honorifics are used to indicate levels of respect and politeness in the language. In the story, the use of *Sunda lemes* is particularly notable in the dialogue between Lutung Kasarung and the gods. For example, in one scene, Lutung Kasarung says:

“Abdi tiasa nyuhunkeun pangapunten ti sampeyanipun para dewa” This sentence can be translated as "I humbly apologize to you, the gods" Here, the use of "nyuhunken pangapunten" as a polite form of " asking sorry," and "ti sampeyanipun" as a polite form of "to you (God)" are examples of the use of  *ragam basa lemes.* Another example is when Lutung Kasarung addresses his father as "Bapak" (father) and his mother as "Ibu" (mother), which are both polite and respectful terms of address. He also uses the honorific "Sira" when addressing the gods, which is a formal and respectful way of referring to someone of higher status. It also happens when Lutung Kasarung, after being transformed into a human, meets with the king. He addresses the king using the respectful form of *ragam basa lemes* by saying, "Kuring sumirating prabu" which translates to "I greet you, Your Majesty." The use of this form of address shows Lutung Kasarung's respect and reverence for the king.

The characters in the story often use polite and respectful forms of address to show deference to their elders or people of higher social status. In Sundanese culture, respect for others, especially those of higher social status, is highly valued. The use of polite and respectful forms of address, such as *ragam basa lemes*, is a way to show that respect. This practice is deeply rooted in the Sundanese philosophy which emphasizes harmony, balance, and respect for others. In the context of the Lutung Kasarung story, the use of *ragam basa lemes* is also reflective of the hierarchical social structure of Sundanese society. The characters in the story are careful to use the appropriate forms of address when speaking to people of higher social status, such as the king or other members of the royal court. Furthermore, the use of *ragam basa lemes* also serves as a reflection of the values of the Sundanese people, which prioritize humility and deference to authority. By using these forms of address, the characters in the story demonstrate their respect for those in positions of power and authority, and reinforce the importance of maintaining social order and harmony.

On the other hand, the use of *ragam basa loma* in the story reflects the Sundanese cultural value of balance and harmony in interpersonal relationships. *Ragam basa loma* is a form of address used to show politeness and respect to individuals of the same social status or age. In part one of the story, Lutung Kasarung addresses his brother and sister-in-law using *ragam basa loma*, such as "Abdi teu ngarti" (I do not understand) and " Panjenengan abdi ngamumulkeun" (Thank you to you). By using these forms, Lutung Kasarung demonstrates his respect for his family members, despite being of the same social status. Similarly, the princess in the story uses *ragam basa loma* when addressing Lutung Kasarung, demonstrating her respect for him as a guest in her palace. The use of *ragam basa loma* and *ragam basa lemes* reflect the Sundanese cultural value of maintaining harmonious relationships with others, even if they are not of higher social status. From the analysis, we can see that part one of the story is characterized by simple and direct language that is easy to understand. The story is written in a straightforward and accessible style, which reflects the traditional oral storytelling style of Sundanese folklore. However, there are several Sundanese words and phrases used throughout the text that carry cultural and contextual meanings that may not be immediately apparent to non-native speakers. Studying the linguistic aspect of the story can provide insights into the evolution and development of the Sundanese language over time. The language used in "Lutung Kasarung" reflect the linguistic conventions and styles prevalent during the time period in which it was first created or transmitted.

A philological analysis of part one of the Lutung Kasarung story from cultural aspects includes emphasis on humility and gratitude, respect for authority, importance of community, and the power of fate and destiny. Lutung Kasarung shows gratitude and humility towards the gods who have transformed him. When he receives the gift of beauty, he says, "I am grateful to the gods for their kindness." This shows the importance of showing gratitude and humility in Sundanese culture. In Sundanese culture, showing gratitude and humility is highly valued and considered as a form of respect towards others, especially towards those in higher positions or with more authority. This is reflected in Lutung Kasarung's attitude towards the gods who transformed him. He acknowledges their kindness and shows his appreciation by expressing his gratitude. This cultural value of gratitude and humility is also reflected in the use of polite and respectful forms of address in Sundanese language, such as the use of *ragam basa loma* and *ragam basa lemes*. By using these forms of address, one shows respect towards others and acknowledges their higher status or authority. In Sundanese culture, it is also believed that showing gratitude and humility can bring blessings and good fortune. This is why Lutung Kasarung's expression of gratitude towards the gods is significant, as it not only shows his respect towards them, but also reflects his belief in the importance of these values.

When Lutung Kasarung meets the queen, he greets her respectfully and calls her "Ratu" (Queen) instead of using her name directly. This shows the Sundanese cultural value of respect for authority figures, particularly those who hold positions of power. In Sundanese culture, there is a strong emphasis on respect for authority figures, especially those who hold positions of power. This cultural value is reflected in the way Lutung Kasarung addresses the queen. Instead of using her name directly, he calls her "Ratu," which means "Queen." By addressing her in this way, Lutung Kasarung shows his respect for her position and authority. This also demonstrates the importance of social hierarchy in Sundanese culture, where individuals are expected to show deference to those in positions of power or authority. This cultural value of respect for authority figures is still prevalent in modern Sundanese society, where people are expected to address their superiors or elders with appropriate titles and honorifics as a sign of respect. After Lutung Kasarung is transformed, he returns to his village and shares his gifts with the community. This demonstrates the Sundanese cultural value of prioritizing the needs of the community over individual desires and interests. In Sundanese culture, communal values and cooperation are highly valued. Individuals are expected to prioritize the needs of the community over their own desires and interests. In the story, when Lutung Kasarung returns to his village, he uses his newfound gifts for the benefit of the community, such as providing food and medicine for the villagers. This reflects the Sundanese belief that an individual's success and happiness should not come at the expense of the community. It also highlights the importance of sharing one's blessings with others, which is a common theme in Sundanese folklore and traditional values. Overall, this cultural value emphasizes the importance of social harmony and collective well-being in Sundanese society. And the last part of the cultural values is related with the power of fate and destiny. When Lutung Kasarung is transformed, it is because of his destiny and the will of the gods. This shows the Sundanese belief in fate and destiny, and the idea that one's path in life is predetermined. In Sundanesese culture, the concept of fate and destiny, or "garwo" and "dharma" is deeply ingrained.

The idea is that a person's fate is predetermined, and they must accept and follow the path that has been set for them. This belief is reflected in the transformation of Lutung Kasarung, which is not a result of his own actions, but rather the will of the gods. By accepting his transformation and following his destiny, Lutung Kasarung embodies this cultural value of acceptance and submission to a higher power. This belief also emphasizes the importance of living in accordance with one's dharma, or duty in life, which is seen as a way to achieve a meaningful and fulfilling existence.

In part two of the story, Lutung Kasarung has become a beautiful and kind-hearted princess, who is loved by the people of the kingdom. However, her beauty and kindness attract jealousy and animosity from her cousin, Prabu Tapa Agung, who covets the throne for himself. Prabu Tapa Agung tricks Lutung Kasarung into eating a cursed fruit that causes her to fall into a deep sleep. The only way to wake her up is to find a flower from the top of a mountain guarded by a ferocious giant. Prabu Tapa Agung sends his soldiers to retrieve the flower, but they fail. Lutung Kasarung's loyal servants seek help from the gods and are granted the ability to transform into animals to help them on their quest. With the help of the animals, they are able to retrieve the flower and wake Lutung Kasarung. The story ends with Lutung Kasarung forgiving Prabu Tapa Agung for his actions and the two reconciling. The kingdom is once again at peace and Lutung Kasarung continues to rule with compassion and kindness. The language used in this part of the story is more complex and sophisticated, with longer and more elaborate sentences, reflecting the complexity of the plot and the cultural values embedded within the story.

In part two of the "Lutung Kasarung" story, the use of *ragam basa lemes* and *ragam basa loma* can also be observed. However, unlike in part one where *ragam basa lemes* was predominantly used, in part two, both of *ragam basa lemes* and *ragam basa loma* are used in combination, especially in the dialogue between the characters. For example, in the dialogue between Lutung Kasarung and the Prince, they use both of *ragam basa lemes* and *ragam basa loma* to show mutual respect and politeness. The Prince addresses Lutung Kasarung as "Bapak" (Father), which is a form of address used to show respect to an older person as well as intimacy of son and father. Lutung Kasarung, in turn, addresses the Prince as "Gusti" (Your Highness), which is a form of address used both by common people and members of the royal family to the heir to the throne. The characters continue to use polite and respectful forms of address, especially towards those in positions of authority or higher social status. For example, Lutung Kasarung addresses Prabu Tapa Agung using the respectful form "Kangjeng Gusti" instead of directly using his name.

The use of *ragam basa lemes* in this part of the story reflects the importance of showing respect and politeness towards others, regardless of their social status or position. However, there are also instances where the characters use *ragam basa loma* or less formal language when speaking to their peers or those of lower social status. For example, Lutung Kasarung speaks more casually with his friend ‘Si Gembrot’. The use of these different levels of language reflects the Sundanese cultural values of respect and hierarchy. It shows the importance of showing deference and respect to those in positions of authority, while also being able to speak more casually with those of equal or lower social status. It also highlights the Sundanese cultural value of mutual respect and harmony in social interactions.

The story's emphasis on the importance of humility and respect for authority reflects the values of Sundanese culture, which places a strong emphasis on hierarchy and social order. Another cultural value that is evident in part two of the "Lutung Kasarung" story is the Sundanese concept of kepatutan, which emphasizes proper behavior and appropriate social roles. Prabu Tapa Agung, as a king, is expected to act in a certain way and fulfill his duties as a ruler, which includes maintaining justice and order in his kingdom. Lutung Kasarung, as a member of the community, is expected to respect and obey the king's authority; have the loyalty and commitment to one's responsibilities. Lutung Kasarung demonstrates this when he agrees to serve as the king's adviser and helps him resolve the conflicts in the kingdom. This shows that in Sundanese culture, fulfilling one's duties and obligations to the community and to those in positions of authority is highly valued. Another example is the importance of wisdom and diplomacy over brute force. When Lutung Kasarung is faced with the threat of being attacked by Prabu Tapa Agung's army, he uses his wit and intelligence to outsmart them and avoid violence. This demonstrates the Sundanese cultural value of using peaceful means to resolve conflicts and the importance of wisdom and diplomacy over aggression. Additionally, the story also emphasizes the importance of wisdom and intelligence in leadership. Prabu Tapa Agung seeks the advice of Lutung Kasarung because he knows that Lutung Kasarung is wise and has the ability to solve problems. This demonstrates the Sundanese belief in the importance of knowledge and expertise in leadership and decision-making. The portrayal of certain characters as representatives of specific social classes or occupations, and the incorporation of traditional Sundanese rituals and customs into the narrative provide deeper insights into the Sundanese language and culture as represented in the story.

**CONCLUSION**

The philological analysis of the "Lutung Kasarung" folklore provides valuable insights into the Sundanese language and culture. The study highlights the linguistic and cultural nuances of the story, emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting Sundanese folklore and language. Based on the analysis of the "Lutung Kasarung" folklore story from a philological perspective, several findings can be highlighted. Firstly, the use of Sundanese language in the story is significant and reflects the cultural values and beliefs of Sundanese society, including the importance of respect for authority figures and the value of community over individual interests. Secondly, the story emphasizes the Sundanese belief in fate and destiny, highlighting the idea that one's path in life is predetermined. This belief is linked to the importance of showing gratitude and humility towards the gods, who are seen as the arbiters of fate. Finally, the story also emphasizes the importance of honesty and integrity, particularly in the face of challenges and conflicts. This cultural value is embodied in the character of Lutung Kasarung, who remains true to his values and beliefs even when faced with difficult circumstances.The results of the study also reveal the importance of honesty, loyalty, and kindness, and the consequences of greed and selfishness, reflecting the cultural values embedded within the story.

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