



Article

# Adjectives as Cultural Mirrors: Exploring Semantic Nuances in Bengkulu Malay

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## A B S T R A C T

This study delves into the intricate semantic nuances of adjectives within the Bengkulu Malay Language (bMB), positing that they function beyond simple denotative descriptions to profoundly reflect speakers' attitudes, emotions, and ingrained cultural identity. Recognizing the critical role of semantics in analyzing the distinctions between literal and connotative meanings, the research employed a rigorous qualitative descriptive methodology. Data were meticulously extracted from written bMB texts, specifically drawing its primary data from the comprehensive book "Pernak-pernik Bahaso Kito Bengkulu". The analysis is conducted using distributional techniques to analyze the context of the sentences. The investigation successfully identified and classified 166 unique adjectives, categorizing them into three significant dimensions of meaning nuances: 56 adjectives exhibiting emotional nuances, 55 reflecting social nuances, and another 55 imbued with cultural nuances. This detailed classification underscores that bMB adjectives are not merely linguistic labels but critical linguistic tools that embody the community's local wisdom, communal values, and the deep, symbiotic relationship between language and culture. The findings carry substantial implications, contributing significantly to linguistic and semantic theory by providing empirical evidence for the rich connotative potential of regional languages. This research underscores the crucial role of semantic analysis in understanding and preserving the Bengkulu Malay language, a vital component of Indonesia's rich linguistic and cultural heritage, and advocates for its continued study and preservation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental element in human life, not only serving as a tool for communication but also as a means for transmitting values, shaping identity, and expressing emotions and culture (Chaer, 2009; Lyons, 1995). Language use should not be viewed merely as a cognitive activity but also as a social practice inherent in community life (Habiburrahim, et al., 2020). Through language, humans construct reality, convey judgments, and assert their social position within society. In this regard, the language relativity hypothesis proposed by Sapir (1949) and Whorf (1956) emphasizes that language shapes the way humans perceive

reality. Language is not neutral; it reflects the thought patterns, value systems, and cultures of its speakers. Thus, understanding a language means understanding the worldview and thought processes of its speakers.

Halliday (2014) notes that language serves three primary functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual, which enable speakers to construct meaning, establish social relationships, and convey coherent messages. Therefore, language can be understood as a social practice deeply intertwined with ideology, customs, and local wisdom. Fishman (1999) emphasizes that the sustainability of a society is closely linked to the vitality of the

language it uses. Language is not merely a means of communication, but also a marker of cultural existence. Ahdiati and Kusumanegara (2020) stress that language reflects the cultural values upheld by its speakers. This is particularly relevant in the study of regional languages, including the Bengkulu Malay Language (BMB), which holds a wealth of cultural expressions and serves as a representation of its speakers' identities.

In the context of meaning studies, semantics plays a significant role. Semantics not only explains lexical meanings denotatively but also connotatively, reflecting emotional, value-based, and societal attitudes (Lyons, 1995; Palmer, 1981). According to Wijana (2008), denotative meaning refers to the literal sense of a word, free from emotional interpretation. For example, the word *flower* literally refers to the "blooming part of a plant." In contrast, connotative meaning is more emotive, imaginative, and evaluative, influenced by the collective values of society. A commonly used example is the difference between the words *woman* and *girl*. While both have the same denotative meaning, *woman* is perceived as more refined, whereas *girl* can be seen as coarser. Moreover, connotation often emerges in everyday discourse and literature, as it is tied to societal judgments based on collective experiences (Allan, 2006). For instance, the word *envelope* in the sentence "just give the envelope so the matter is settled" has a negative connotation, referring to the practice of bribery. Similarly, expressions like *rats in suits* or *loan sharks* carry negative connotations associated with corrupt or exploitative behaviors. Some current studies also found that connotative meanings are rich in symbolic content which reflects the cultural and social context, as well as enhancing the aesthetic power of communication (Meriska et al., 2024; Prasetya & Agan, 2022). Among the content words that frequently bring the connotative meaning is the adjective. This is because adjectives inherently possess a descriptive capacity that extends beyond mere denotation, imbuing language with emotional depth and cultural resonance (Fauziyah et al., 2024).

Adjectives, as a class of words, are crucial in semantic studies because they describe properties, express emotional nuances, and convey social judgments (Castillo, 1997). Kridalaksana (2008) states that adjectives provide information about nouns, especially their characteristics or states.

Further, Alwi et al. (2010) emphasize that adjectives are not only descriptive but also evaluative, carrying value-laden meanings. A word can be categorized as an adjective if it meets certain criteria, such as indicating a property or state (e.g., *beautiful*, *old*, *charming*), being followed by an intensifier (*very beautiful*, *oldest*), functioning as a predicate (*the house is big*), capable of being in comparative or superlative forms (*more foolish*, *most charming*), and having opposites in meaning (*old* ↔ *young*, *beautiful* ↔ *ugly*, *foolish* ↔ *intelligent*).

In the context of BMB, the identification of adjectives is also based on these five indicators (Alwi et al., 2010; Kridalaksana, 2008). Semantic analysis of adjectives can be conducted using various approaches. First, distributional analysis examines the position of a word in a sentence; for example, in the sentence *the child is foolish*, *foolish* can directly follow the subject without an additional verb. Second, morphosyntactic analysis looks at the formation of adjectives through affixation, such as *keelokan* derived from *elok*. Third, semantic analysis checks the lexical meaning, such as *old*, which denotes age. Fourth, pragmatic or cultural analysis highlights the social and cultural context; for instance, in BMB, *elok* not only means 'beautiful' but also 'polite' or 'appropriate' according to customary norms.

An example of further analysis can be seen in the words *foolish*, *beautiful*, and *sweet* in Indonesian. *Foolish* is defined as "slow to understand; lacking knowledge or education" (<https://kbbi.web.id/bodoh>), a lexical meaning that refers to poor comprehension. However, in social interaction, it carries a negative connotation. *Beautiful* means "elegant; attractive (especially about women's faces)" and "beautiful in form and creation" (<https://kbbi.web.id/cantik>), which in a social context carries a positive nuance related to visual appeal and aesthetics. Meanwhile, *sweet* refers to "the taste of sugar," extended to mean "attractive; charming" and "very pleasing or warm" (<https://kbbi.web.id/manis>), emphasizing a positive emotional dimension related to warmth, kindness, and personal charm.

Several studies demonstrate that adjectives are not merely neutral linguistic elements but also serve as tools for social, emotional, and cultural expression (Lubis, 2022; Putrayasa, 2021; Wierzbicka, 2020). Even in digital communication,

emotional adjectives can trigger interpersonal engagement and connection, though they may also cause ambiguity (Diani, 2018; Hidayat, 2019; Keshtiar & Farsani, 2015; Prihantoro, 2015). However, studies on adjectives in BMB are still limited, despite the language's unique lexical features that are important to understand. This study seeks to explore the semantic nuances of adjectives in Bengkulu Malay. Using a qualitative descriptive approach rooted in semantics, the study aims to identify and analyze these nuances in depth. A key innovation of the research is the classification of adjectives into three primary dimensions: emotional, social, and cultural nuances. The findings are expected to make a significant contribution to semantic studies, enhance the understanding of regional linguistic variations, and support the preservation of Bengkulu Malay as an integral part of the nation's cultural heritage.

## II. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to provide an in-depth and nuanced understanding of adjective meanings in the Bengkulu Malay Language (bMB). This methodology was chosen for its suitability in exploring the intricate semantic layers and cultural embeddedness of linguistic phenomena, allowing for rich interpretations rather than mere statistical generalization. The research design focused on identifying, classifying, and interpreting the semantic nuances of bMB adjectives, particularly their emotional, social, and cultural dimensions.

### Data Source and Collection

The primary data source for this study was the book "Pernak-pernik Bahasa Kito Bengkulu" (Saleh, 2017). This book was systematically utilized to form a corpus representative of the language's written usage. The data collection primarily utilized note-taking techniques, where adjectives and their contexts were meticulously extracted from the source material. This involved careful reading and identification of words that function as adjectives within sentences and phrases, noting their immediate linguistic environment.

### Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was conducted using a distributional technique (Sudaryanto, 2015), which focuses on the contexts in which words appear to ascertain their meanings and nuances. The analysis

started by identifying the adjectives in Bahasa Melayu Bengkulu. Once identified, each adjective was subjected to further semantic analysis to distinguish its denotative (literal) meaning from its connotative (emotional, associative, or cultural) meanings. This involved examining the pragmatic and cultural contexts of their usage. The identified adjectives were then assessed for their specific semantic nuances. This step involved applying specific analytical indicators to determine whether an adjective primarily conveyed an emotional, social, or cultural nuance. The results of this assessment were meticulously categorized into an analysis table, providing a structured overview of the adjectives and their identified nuances. This categorization facilitated a comprehensive understanding and allowed for the drawing of conclusions regarding the semantic nuances of adjectives in bMB.

### Validity Measures

To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, triangulation was employed. This involved cross-referencing findings through multiple sources or perspectives, such as examining various textual occurrences of an adjective within the source book and comparing interpretations to established linguistic theories. This multi-faceted approach enhanced the reliability of the semantic classifications and interpretations presented in this study.

## III. RESULT

The research findings show that 166 adjectives in Bengkulu Malay (bMB) were successfully collected and analyzed based on their semantic nuances. These were classified into three main categories: 56 adjectives with emotional nuances, 55 adjectives with social nuances, and 55 adjectives with cultural nuances. This distribution highlights the balance of adjective vocabulary reflecting the diverse ways in which the Bengkulu Malay community expresses emotional experiences, evaluates social behavior, and internalizes cultural values through language. The classification of these adjective nuances demonstrates that bMB serves not only as a communication tool but also as a psychological, social, and cultural representation of its speakers. The presence of adjectives with emotional nuances emphasizes the language's sensitivity to inner expressions, social nuances reflect norms and judgments in community

interactions, and cultural nuances act as a vehicle for the transmission of values and collective identity. Therefore, adjectives in bMB can be understood as a holistic reflection of the community's life.

### 1. Adjectives with Emotional Nuances

Adjectives with emotional nuances are those used by speakers to express feelings, inner attitudes, and affective responses toward objects, events, or individuals. These adjectives not only describe objective qualities but also carry subjective meanings that reflect the emotional state of the speaker. A total of 56 data points were found, as reflected in Table 1.

Adjectives with emotional nuances in bMB exhibit a variety of meanings closely linked to the speaker's emotional expressions. For example, words like *abai*, *lupo*, and *pane* convey emotions such as neglect, laziness, or indifference, reflecting negative internal attitudes that emerge in daily interactions. On the other hand, words like *amuk*, *galak*, *bingal*, and *maung* emphasize emotions of anger or aggression, describing emotional outbursts when the speaker faces conflict-ridden situations. These words not only describe traits but also represent collective emotions within the speaker's cultural context.

**Table 1. Adjectives with Emotional Nuances bMB**

No	Lexicon	Emotional nuances	No	Lexicon	Emotional nuances
1	<i>abai</i>	Depicts indifference or negligence	26	<i>kanji</i>	Negative emotion toward a stingy person.
2	<i>angit</i>	Shows discomfort or disgust due to smell.	27	<i>kecik</i>	Can have a loving (positive) or belittling (negative) nuance.
3	<i>alim</i>	Shows respect or piety (admiring/positive emotion).	28	<i>keselap</i>	Panic/shock emotion due to losing control.
4	<i>amuk</i>	Expresses anger or uncontrolled emotion.	29	<i>kerutut</i>	Disgust/negative emotion due to aging/wrinkling.
5	<i>angkuh</i>	Depicts arrogance, causing feelings of belittling others.	30	<i>kepirat</i>	Fear/shock due to a sharp glare.
6	<i>babo</i>	Disgust/negative emotion towards dirty conditions.	31	<i>koit</i>	Negative emotion due to an unfortunate situation.
7	<i>banyau</i>	Shows indifference or displeasure, evoking disappointment.	32	<i>kuyu</i>	Sadness, gloom, or lack of enthusiasm.
8	<i>belit</i>	Frustration due to someone twisting facts.	33	<i>layau</i>	Pity for something weak/wilting.
9	<i>bile</i>	Hatred/disgust towards something repulsive.	34	<i>lelet</i>	Frustration due to slowness.
10	<i>bingal</i>	Annoyance or anger toward ignorance/foolishness.	35	<i>leke</i>	Disgust/negative emotion due to dirt/filth.
11	<i>bungkuk</i>	Conveys sympathy or pity (physical → emotional compassion).	36	<i>lembok</i>	Gentle feeling, can evoke affection.
12	<i>cangut</i>	Frustration due to someone being overly fussy/whiny.	37	<i>lolo</i>	Negative emotion due to losing composure/neglect.
13	<i>calak</i>	Cynical emotion due to trickery or deceitful behavior.	38	<i>lupo</i>	Frustration/disappointment due to forgetfulness.
14	<i>dekil</i>	Disgust/negative reaction to something extremely dirty.	39	<i>malis</i>	Shame.
15	<i>gahuk</i>	Negative emotion of being overly whiny/spoiled.	40	<i>maung</i>	Anger/stubbornness.
16	<i>galak</i>	Shows angry or temperamental emotion.	41	<i>meruyan</i>	Sadness/complaining about fate.
17	<i>ganau</i>	Anxiety due to disturbing sounds/yelling.	42	<i>mengot</i>	Frustration due to stiffness/stubbornness.
18	<i>gepuk</i>	Frustration/anger from being hit or harsh treatment.	43	<i>muak</i>	Boredom/disgust/negative emotion of dislike.
19	<i>geletek</i>	Laughter or emotional reaction due to something funny.	44	<i>ngicu</i>	Frustration due to being nosy/spying.
20	<i>gilo</i>	Negative emotion: crazy → evokes fear or pity.	45	<i>pane</i>	Laziness/apathetic.
21	<i>hampo</i>	Disappointment due to emptiness/no results.	46	<i>petang</i>	Melancholic nuance (dusk → sadness/loneliness).
22	<i>ibo</i>	Feelings of sympathy or pity.	47	<i>pendek</i>	Anger or offense when mentioned.
23	<i>jelling</i>	Anger/vengeance expressed through a sharp glare.	48	<i>pekak</i>	Pity/annoyance due to not being heard.
24	<i>jelingus</i>	Cynical emotion, gaze filled with hatred.	49	<i>rengé</i>	Spoiled/fussy behavior.
25	<i>juling</i>	Evokes emotional reaction between pity or mockery.	50	<i>senjo</i>	Admiration/positive emotion (handsome, beautiful).
			51	<i>silu</i>	Shyness/embarrassment.
			52	<i>tadengak</i>	Frustration due to arrogance.
			53	<i>tekepor</i>	Negative emotion towards a very obese body.
			54	<i>tuo</i>	Respect (positive) or pity (negative).
			55	<i>tengkak</i>	Frustration due to arrogance.
			56	<i>was-was</i>	Anxiety/worry.

In addition to anger and irritation, adjectives also reflect feelings of disgust, disappointment, or boredom. Words like *angit*, *babo*, *dekil*, *leke*, and *muak* express negative emotions arising from sensory experiences, especially unpleasant smells, tastes, or physical conditions. These terms demonstrate how sensory perceptions are embedded in emotional expressions. However, not all of these adjectives carry negative connotations; some, like *alim*, *senjo*, and *lembok*, reflect positive emotions such as respect, beauty, and affection. Thus, these adjectives play a dual role, serving as indicators of emotional judgment and reflections of local cultural values.

Emotional adjectives play a crucial role in conveying emotions because language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a medium for expressing a range of emotions, including joy, admiration, disappointment, anger, and disgust. Therefore, emotional adjectives serve as symbolic tools to project the speaker's psychological state onto their interlocutor.

The following analysis shows the adjectives used in different contexts.

#### ***Abai***

- (1a) *Kau ko abai nian, kan ilang pitis kito.*  
“You are so careless, that's why our money is gone.”
- (1b) *Penyakit ko jangan diabaikan.*  
“This illness should not be ignored.”

The word “*abai*” in the Malay language of Bengkulu carries several meanings and emotional nuances. In sentence (1a), for example, the word “*abai*” means “careless” or “negligent,” and it is used to express feelings of anger or regret about someone's actions. This usage conveys a sense of disapproval and disappointment toward the person's behavior. In this context, “*abai*” reflects a more negative emotion, where the speaker is frustrated by someone's lack of attention or responsibility. On the other hand, in example (1b), the word “*abai*” is used to mean “to disregard” or “to take something lightly,” and it is employed to give advice or a reminder to someone. Here, “*abai*” carries a tone of concern or caution, urging the listener not to underestimate the importance of something. This usage conveys a more thoughtful or advising emotion, where the speaker is trying to ensure that the listener pays attention to an important matter, as neglecting it could lead to negative consequences. Thus, the word “*abai*” in

Bengkulu Malay can be understood as having a flexible meaning, depending on the context. It can reflect either frustration and anger or concern and guidance, showing the word's ability to carry both negative and more neutral or advisory emotional tones.

#### ***Belit***

- (2a) *Ati-ati dekeknyo, nyo banyak belit.*  
“Be careful with him, he is very cunning.”
- (2b) *Sapi tu mati dibelit tali.*  
“The cow died tangled in the rope.”
- (2c) *Nyo tebelit utang dimano-mano.*  
“He is entangled in debt everywhere”.

The word “*belit*” in the Bengkulu Malay language carries several meanings and nuances. In example (2a), the word “*belit*” means “cunning” or “sly” and is used to warn someone to be careful. It conveys a sense of caution, suggesting that the person or situation could be deceptive or tricky, requiring the listener to remain vigilant and aware. The emotional tone here could be one of suspicion or alertness, as the speaker advises against underestimating the situation. In example (2b), the word “*dibelit*” is derived from “*belit*” by adding the prefix “*di-*.” In this case, the word means “tangled” or “entangled” in a physical sense. It refers to a situation where something, such as a rope or a string, physically wraps around or constricts something else. This usage indicates a more literal, tangible form of entanglement. Finally, in sentence (2c), the word “*belit*” is given the prefix “*te-*” to form a verb, resulting in the word “*terlilit*.” Here, “*terlilit*” takes on a figurative meaning, referring to the state of being burdened with many debts. This metaphorical use of the word describes someone who is financially entangled or overwhelmed, where the “*tangling*” symbolizes the burden of debt that is difficult to escape. Thus, the word “*belit*” in Bengkulu Malay is highly versatile, shifting between literal physical entanglement and figurative expressions, such as cunning or debt, depending on the context and the morphological changes it undergoes.

#### ***Dekil***

- (3a) *Alangkah dekilnyo kau ko, la duoari idak mandi.*  
“Your body is very dirty, how long has it been since you last showered?”
- (3b) *Baju ko la dekil nian, maro dicuci.*  
“This shirt is already worn out, it hasn't been washed.”

The word “*dekil*” in the Bengkulu Malay

language conveys multiple meanings and emotional nuances. In example (3a), the word “dekil” is used to describe someone who has not bathed for several days, and it carries an emotional nuance of anger. It signifies disgust or irritation toward the individual’s unkempt state, suggesting that their negligence in maintaining personal hygiene is a source of frustration for the speaker. The use of “dekil” here implies a strong disapproval and evokes a sense of unpleasantness related to the individual’s appearance or condition, emphasizing the lack of cleanliness. In example (3b), the word “dekil” is used to describe something dirty or grimy, such as worn and soiled clothes. Here, “dekil” conveys a negative emotional tone linked to filthiness or dirtiness, but it is applied to an object or item, such as clothing, rather than a person. The emphasis is on the poor condition of the item, often reflecting neglect or wear, and it highlights the social value placed on cleanliness. The emotional undertone in this usage is one of displeasure or disgust, suggesting that the object is unfit for use due to its dirty state.

### **Galak**

(4a) *Anjing iko galak nian.*

“This dog is very aggressive.”

(4b) *Guru kelas lima itu galak nian, kami takut segalonyo kek nyo.*

“The fifth-grade teacher is very angry, we are all afraid of him.”

(4c) *Mak nyo galak nian makan durian.*

“Her mother really likes to eat durian.”

The word “galak” in the Bengkulu Malay language also carries several meanings and emotional nuances. In example (4a), the word “galak” is used to describe a ferocious animal, typically a wild or dangerous creature. In this context, “galak” implies aggression and a hostile demeanor, often associated with unpredictable animals that can pose a threat. The emotional nuance here reflects fear or caution, as the term evokes the sense of a dangerous presence. In example (4b), “galak” is used to describe someone who is easily angered or short-tempered. Here, the word conveys an emotional tone of irritation or anger, and it refers to a person who may react impulsively or aggressively in situations, much like a wild or untamed animal. The emotional nuance in this context is negative, suggesting that the person’s temper is something to be avoided or handled with care. In example (4c), “galak” is used to

express enthusiasm or strong liking for something. Unlike the previous examples that carried negative emotional tones, this usage of “galak” conveys a more positive emotion, such as excitement or passion. It reflects a person’s eagerness or intense interest in an activity or object, and the tone here is more enthusiastic and approving. Thus, the word “galak” in Bengkulu Malay serves as a versatile term, capable of describing both aggressive behavior (in animals or people) and strong emotional responses, such as liking or enthusiasm. It illustrates how a single word can shift in meaning depending on the context, carrying both negative connotations (in relation to aggression and anger) and positive connotations (in relation to excitement or passion).

## **2. Adjectives with Social Nuances**

Adjectives with social nuances are those whose use not only serves to describe traits or states but also reflects social norms, status, and evaluations within a community. These adjectives carry evaluative meanings closely tied to social relationships, whether in the form of respect, honor, or degradation. Therefore, this type of adjective is not semantically neutral but is rich in social values that are alive within the speaker community. A total of 55 data points were found as reflected in Table 2.

Adjectives with social nuances in BMB reflect how society evaluates and labels individuals or phenomena in daily interactions. For example, words like *akur*, *elok*, and *semenggah* carry positive values because they are associated with harmony, appropriateness, and appearance in line with social norms. These words demonstrate that society rewards behaviors such as mutual respect, politeness, and suitability in social interactions. Conversely, terms like *hino*, *jahanam*, and *kere* represent negative social judgments, insulting someone’s social status, behavior, or economic condition.

Additionally, some adjectives carry social nuances that reflect sarcasm or mockery, illustrating the mechanisms of social control. Words like *dongok*, *lancang*, *nyinyir*, and *lodor* are used to evaluate behavior deemed inappropriate by society, whether due to ignorance, audacity, or unpleasant, noisy, or sloppy traits. Similarly, words like *bancau*, *gerot*, or *marang* are used to mock actions that are perceived as unserious or embarrassing in

**Table 2. Adjectives with Social Nuances bMB**

No	Data	Social nuances	No	Data	Social nuances
1	<i>arat</i>	Refers to close relationships, social proximity between individuals.	26	<i>kalut</i>	Social chaos, an uncontrollable situation.
2	<i>abis</i>	Used in social interaction to indicate the end of something.	27	<i>keruh</i>	Unclear condition, used in social contexts or atmosphere.
3	<i>andam</i>	Shows neatness, often related to social norms of politeness in society.	28	<i>kencang</i>	Used in physical/social evaluation (strong, fast).
4	<i>akur</i>	Depicts harmonious, obedient, or agreeable behavior within a social group.	29	<i>kere</i>	Social term for poverty.
5	<i>bantut</i>	Social nuance of failure or stagnation in communal life.	30	<i>kisid</i>	Social sarcasm regarding sly or deceitful behavior.
6	<i>bancau</i>	Social sarcasm, referring to a lack of seriousness.	31	<i>koreng</i>	Physical condition affecting social judgment.
7	<i>berang</i>	Social emotion of anger towards others.	32	<i>lambek</i>	Social judgment about laziness, sluggishness.
8	<i>betah</i>	Indicates comfort within a social environment.	33	<i>lancang</i>	Indicates socially inappropriate behavior.
9	<i>bintit</i>	Relates to physical conditions that affect social perceptions.	34	<i>lecap</i>	Relates to shabby or untidy appearance.
10	<i>bulek</i>	Nuance of agreement in deliberation (unanimous consent).	35	<i>lengo</i>	Social sarcasm about oily people (physical/behavioral).
11	<i>ceker</i>	Social sarcasm, referring to people with a certain posture or attitude.	36	<i>lepai</i>	Social judgment on loose/inconsistent attitude.
12	<i>ceriat</i>	Agile, quick, considered positive in social interaction.	37	<i>lodor</i>	Filthy behavior, negatively evaluated socially.
13	<i>dongok</i>	Nuance of belittling others, foolish or ignorant.	38	<i>luyak</i>	Old/fragile, used in social evaluation.
14	<i>elok</i>	Relates to social judgment: beautiful, appropriate, polite.	39	<i>marang</i>	Social sarcasm about embarrassing behavior.
15	<i>gedang</i>	Large in size, used in social evaluation of objects/bodies.	40	<i>mewet</i>	Relates to being talkative in social interactions.
16	<i>gaan</i>	Indicates luxury or social grandeur.	41	<i>medit</i>	Stingy, a negative social trait.
17	<i>gerot</i>	Social sarcasm related to movement or behavior.	42	<i>mengas</i>	Indicates caring, a socially positive nuance.
18	<i>getil</i>	Refers to flirtatious behavior in social interaction.	43	<i>naas</i>	Bad luck in social perspective.
19	<i>gesang</i>	Life, related to social continuity.	44	<i>nyinyir</i>	Social trait of being overly critical or negative.
20	<i>goyah</i>	Unstable, used in social or political contexts.	45	<i>pander</i>	Refers to spoiled or dependent behavior.
21	<i>hino</i>	Derogatory term, low status in social norms.	46	<i>pening</i>	Social confusion in a particular context.
22	<i>jahanam</i>	Social curse, indicating badness or negativity.	47	<i>pedar</i>	Sarcasm about something stale or outdated (physical/social).
23	<i>jegil</i>	Sarcasm about facial expressions considered impolite.	48	<i>penak</i>	Weak, fearful, evaluated in social interactions.
24	<i>jijik</i>	Social rejection of something/individual.	49	<i>repas</i>	Tired or exhausted in social activities.
25	<i>jeri</i>	Fear in social relationships.	50	<i>semenggah</i>	Appropriate, suitable in social manners.
			51	<i>suak</i>	Annoying, disliked in social interactions.
			52	<i>tembai</i>	Social nuance regarding a fat body.
			53	<i>togai</i>	Social sarcasm about certain behaviors or physical traits.
			54	<i>tiris</i>	Leaking, also used as a metaphor in social contexts.
			55	<i>tesadai</i>	Abandoned, indicating a low social position.

social spaces. The presence of these terms indicates how the community uses language to admonish, criticize, or mock the behavior of its members.

Furthermore, some social adjectives are linked to physical conditions or a person's state, which directly impact their social status. Words like *tembai*, *luyak*, *bintit*, and *koreng* describe bodily conditions that may become the subject of social judgment. On the other hand, words like *betah*, *mengas*, and *gesang* reflect positive attitudes that are valued, such as comfort in living, affection, and a prosperous life. Thus, adjectives with social nuances in bMB not only describe individual traits and states but also reflect the values, norms, and patterns of interaction within the Bengkulu Malay

community. In Indonesian, the use of adjectives with social nuances is particularly strong in interpersonal interactions. Social adjectives cannot be separated from the cultural context of the society.

The following examples show how the adjectives are used as social nuances.

**Arat**

(5a) *Nyo mengawinkan anaknyo bearat-arat nian.*

“Dia mengawinkan anaknya dengan acara yang sangat besar”

(5b) *Sakitnyo kini lah berambah arat.*

“Penyakitnya sekarang sudah bertambah parah.”

The word “arat” in the Bengkulu Malay language carries several meanings and nuances,

particularly in terms of social meaning. In example (5a), the word “arat” means big or grand. In this context, “arat” carries a social nuance that reflects social status, particularly in relation to someone’s ability to host a grand celebration, such as a wedding. The usage of “arat” here indicates that the wedding is not only a significant event but also a show of wealth and social prestige, where the scale of the celebration signifies the family’s high social standing. This implies that the individual or family can afford a lavish event, which can impact on how they are perceived within their community, highlighting the cultural significance of ceremonies and displays of prosperity in social relationships. In example (5b), the word “arat” takes on a different meaning, referring to worsening or exacerbating a situation, particularly in relation to someone’s health condition. In this context, “arat” indicates that the person’s health has deteriorated or become more serious, suggesting a negative change. The word is used to express that the problem or illness is no longer just a minor issue but has intensified, resulting in a more severe state. This usage of “arat” is typically associated with concern and urgency, where the person may need medical attention or intervention due to the worsening of their condition. Thus, “arat” in Bengkulu Malay reflects its flexibility in meaning, moving from a social status indicator (as in the grandness of an event) to a health-related descriptor (indicating the worsening of a condition). This dual use demonstrates the richness of language in conveying both social and physical states, deeply intertwined with local customs and cultural expressions.

### **Elok**

(6a) *Alangkah eloknyo anak gadis itu.*

“How beautiful this girl is.”

(6b) *Rumah iko elok nian.*

“This house is very beautiful.”

(6c) *Elok nian pemandangan pantai panjang.*

“The view of the Long Beach is very beautiful.”

The word “elok” in the Bengkulu Malay language has a variety of meanings and nuances, particularly in terms of social meaning. In example (6a), the word “elok” is used to describe the beauty of a person’s face or appearance. In this context, “elok” conveys a sense of aesthetic appeal, often referring to someone being physically beautiful. The word can be seen as a compliment or a social expression of admiration for someone’s

attractiveness, reflecting the cultural appreciation of beauty in personal appearance. In example (6b), the word “elok” is used to describe grandeur or magnificence, especially in relation to buildings. Here, “elok” implies that something is impressive or elegantly constructed, often associated with architectural beauty or splendor. This usage reflects the importance of physical beauty and impressive structures in social contexts, where a grand building might be admired for its aesthetic design and its symbol of status or wealth. In example (6c), the word “elok” is used to describe natural beauty, often employed to depict scenic views or landscapes. This refers to the beauty of nature, such as a beautiful mountain, lush greenery, or a serene beach scene. “Elok” in this context carries a more peaceful and tranquil connotation, evoking feelings of admiration for the natural world. It reflects the local cultural value placed on the aesthetic enjoyment of nature, where nature’s beauty is celebrated as an integral part of life. Thus, the word “elok” in Bengkulu Malay reflects its versatility in describing different types of beauty: the physical beauty of a person, the grandeur and magnificence of buildings, and the aesthetic allure of natural landscapes. The word serves to express appreciation in various contexts, whether referring to individuals, architecture, or the environment, and reflects the cultural emphasis on beauty and aesthetic values within the society.

### **Gerot**

(7a) *Kau ko memang gerot.*

“You are very strong.”

(7b) *Kini nyo la gerot di Jakarta.*

“Now he has a rank in Jakarta.”

In the Bengkulu Malay language, the word “gerot” has several meanings with various nuances, particularly in terms of social meaning. In example (7a), the word “gerot” means physically strong. In this context, “gerot” is used to describe someone who is physically powerful, often emphasizing their muscularity or physical endurance. This usage reflects cultural appreciation for physical strength, where being strong is seen as a positive trait, often associated with respect and admiration in social interactions. In example (7b), the word “gerot” takes on a more figurative meaning, with a social nuance. Here, “gerot” refers to someone who has social or political influence or status. This usage conveys that the person possesses power or

authority within a community or society, rather than physical strength. The word is often used to describe individuals who hold positions of power, either through position, wealth, or connections. In this sense, “gerot” symbolizes dominance and control, not in the physical realm, but in social dynamics, where an individual’s influence can shape the decisions or behaviors of others. Thus, “gerot” in Bengkulu Malay illustrates its flexibility in meaning, shifting from a description of physical strength to one of social power or influence. This dual usage reflects the way language in Bengkulu Malay can convey both physical and social attributes and highlights how strength and influence are valued and represented in different contexts within the society.

### **Jahanam**

(8a) *Jahanam kau!*  
“Curse you!”

(8b) *Anak jahanam tidak tau diuntung* (celaka)  
“Unfortunate child, doesn’t know how to appreciate his luck.”

The word “Jahanam” is derived from Arabic, where it means hell (Jahannam). In addition to this literal meaning, the word “jahanam” is used in various contexts to describe anger or hatred, as seen in example (8a). In this context, “jahanam” is used to express intense negative emotions, such as fury or rage. It conveys a strong sense of displeasure and hostility, reflecting how language can express extreme emotional states through vivid imagery associated with hell—a place of torment and suffering. In example (8b), the word “jahanam” takes on a social nuance, used to reflect a disobedient or rebellious child. Here, “jahanam” is applied figuratively to describe someone who is undutiful, implying that the child is as bad or problematic as a person condemned to hell. This use of the word symbolizes the severe judgment or condemnation of someone’s actions, particularly when those actions deviate from social or familial expectations. It highlights the negative social perception of disobedience and moral failure. Thus, the word “jahanam” in Malay serves as a powerful symbol with both literal and figurative meanings, associating it with the extreme and undesirable—whether it’s the physical realm of hell or the social consequences of bad behavior, such as disobedience or ill-will. The emotional and social implications tied to this word reflect cultural values regarding morality, obedience, and anger.

### **3. Adjectives with Cultural Nuances**

Adjectives with cultural nuances are those whose meanings are not solely based on physical or psychological descriptions but are also shaped by the values, norms, traditions, and cultural systems prevailing within society. In other words, understanding these adjectives requires linking them to the socio-cultural context of the speaker community. The characteristics of adjectives with cultural nuances embody collective values; they are judged as good or bad, or appropriate or inappropriate, according to Bengkulu Malay culture. These adjectives contain both ethical and normative dimensions, in addition to aesthetic ones, and serve as tools for cultural transmission, reflecting the worldview and local wisdom of the community. A total of 55 data points were found as shown in Table 3.

Adjectives with cultural nuances in bMB demonstrate a strong connection to the values, customs, and traditions of the local community. Some words are used in relation to cultural rules and taboos, such as *aib*, which refers to something shameful in the eyes of society. Additionally, adjectives like *mambang* and *malis* describe the local wisdom of the reddish-yellow color at the horizon when the sun is setting in the west, or the pale color of the sky, respectively. This shows that adjectives with cultural nuances are not just markers of traits, but also carry symbolic meanings that bind the community within a living cultural framework along the coast.

On the other hand, adjectives with cultural nuances are often used to describe emotional expressions, behaviors, or physical conditions. For instance, *berenyeng* means noisy or chaotic, reflecting social atmosphere in the community’s tradition. The word *jenako* is used to refer to something funny, relating to entertainment in oral culture, while *segigitan* describes an easily angered person, carrying a negative connotation in social interaction. Similarly, adjectives like *loyo*, *letai*, or *benyai* describe a weak physical condition but are often used in daily conversations with a specific cultural meaning. These words demonstrate how the Bengkulu Malay community perceives human states through a distinct cultural lens.

Moreover, words like *lapuk*, *kulat*, and *rengkah* are used to describe old or damaged objects, often in material culture contexts. Meanwhile, *pekau*,

Table 3. Adjectives with Cultural Nuances bMB

No	Data	Cultural nuances	No	Data	Cultural nuances
1	<i>apak</i>	A bad smell, caused by being stored for a long time or being wet.	25	<i>kaing</i>	Crying loudly, reflecting cultural emotional expression.
2	<i>acik</i>	Better; superior.	26	<i>karut</i>	Unclear, reflecting uncertainty
3	<i>asung</i>	A behavior of giving, reflecting the value of mutual cooperation.	27	<i>kesek</i>	Greedy, stingy, reflecting negative social culture.
4	<i>aib</i>	Shame in customs, something taboo to talk about.	28	<i>kelam</i>	Dark, reflecting cultural atmosphere.
5	<i>basi</i>	Something outdated or no longer appropriate to use in customs.	29	<i>kerumuk</i>	Noisy, reflecting social and cultural atmosphere.
6	<i>bangat</i>	Very/exaggerated, showing a hyperbolic cultural expression.	30	<i>kikir</i>	Stingy, reflecting a negative cultural trait.
7	<i>benyai</i>	Weak, powerless, relating to body condition.	31	<i>kulat</i>	Moldy, reflecting the condition of old or decayed objects.
8	<i>berenyeng</i>	Noisy, chaotic, reflecting social and cultural atmosphere.	32	<i>lalai</i>	Careless, reflecting negligence in customs.
9	<i>bigal</i>	Stupid, not intelligent, often used as a mockery in local culture.	33	<i>lapuk</i>	Old, worn, reflecting objects in culture.
10	<i>buyan</i>	Naughty, prone to causing trouble, reflecting social behavior.	34	<i>letoi</i>	Weak, limp, reflecting body condition.
11	<i>celi</i>	Shy, reflecting politeness in culture.	35	<i>lemak</i>	Savory, rich in taste, reflecting traditional food.
12	<i>congkak</i>	Arrogant, reflecting negative social behavior.	36	<i>lindok</i>	Soft, flexible, reflecting cultural aesthetics.
13	<i>delek</i>	Unclear, ambiguous, reflecting cultural judgment.	37	<i>loyo</i>	Weak, sluggish, reflecting physical condition
14	<i>erang</i>	Crying loudly, reflecting cultural emotional expression.	38	<i>mambang</i>	Ghost, supernatural being in local culture.
15	<i>gagok</i>	Stammering, considered a deficiency in cultural interaction.	39	<i>mane</i>	Spoiled, reflecting affection in culture.
16	<i>gayat</i>	Fear of heights, reflecting cultural experience.	40	<i>miut</i>	Cute, small and adorable, reflecting closeness.
17	<i>gedebor</i>	Arrogant, talkative, reflecting a negative cultural trait.	41	<i>mengut</i>	Grimacing, reflecting facial expression.
18	<i>geli getan</i>	Restless, reflecting feelings in a cultural context.	42	<i>muno</i>	Stupid, reflecting negative social culture.
19	<i>gegeh</i>	Diligent, quick, reflecting positive work culture.	43	<i>ning</i>	Silent, quiet, reflecting tranquility in culture.
20	<i>gumam</i>	Speaking softly, reflecting cultural communication expression.	44	<i>orong</i>	Hole, reflecting nature or physical condition.
21	<i>hilap</i>	Forgetting, reflecting negligence in culture.	45	<i>pekau</i>	Pretending to be stupid, reflecting social strategy.
22	<i>jentik</i>	Light touch, reflecting social interaction.	46	<i>penek</i>	Short, reflecting physical size in culture.
23	<i>jenako</i>	Funny, playful, reflecting entertainment culture.	47	<i>pengot</i>	Dirty, reflecting negative physical condition.
24	<i>juil</i>	Frowning, reflecting facial expression	48	<i>ringkek</i>	Whining, complaining, reflecting social culture.
			49	<i>rengkah</i>	Cracked, broken, reflecting object condition .
			50	<i>sembok</i>	Fat, reflecting body condition in culture.
			51	<i>segigitan</i>	Prone to anger, reflecting emotional trait.
			52	<i>tengkar</i>	Quarreling, reflecting social conflict in culture.
			53	<i>turik</i>	Deaf, reflecting physical condition.
			54	<i>tebeliut</i>	Twisted, reflecting cultural event.
			55	<i>ubo</i>	Traditional medicine, reflecting local wisdom.

meaning pretending to be ignorant, and *congkak*, meaning arrogant, reflect social values regulated by culture. Thus, adjectives with cultural nuances in Bengkulu Malay not only describe conditions or traits but also serve as tools for transmitting the values, norms, and traditions that are alive within the community.

### Basi

(9a) *Lagu itu lah basi.*

“Lagu ini sudah ketinggalan zaman”

(9b) *Tolong ambilkan basi nasi dalam lemari.*

“Please take the bowl of rice from the cupboard.”

(9c) *Gulai itu jangan dimakan, lah basi.*

“Don’t eat that curry, it’s already spoiled.”

The word “basi” in the Bengkulu Malay

language has a variety of meanings with different nuances, including cultural connotations. In example (9a), the word “basi” is used to describe something that is outdated or obsolete. In this context, “basi” refers to something that has lost its relevance or usefulness due to the passage of time. It suggests that the item or idea in question is no longer in fashion or no longer serves its original purpose, reflecting the cultural value placed on modernity and innovation. In example (9b), the word “basi” is used to describe a cultural artifact, specifically a metal bowl used for storing rice or vegetables, often made from porcelain. In this context, “basi” implies that the object is outdated or old-fashioned, reflecting how certain cultural practices or objects might be considered obsolete in modern times.

The term here highlights the transition in material culture, where traditional tools or items are replaced by more modern alternatives. Finally, in example (9c), “basi” refers to food that has gone bad or is no longer fit for consumption. In this context, the word “basi” conveys a negative meaning, indicating that the food is spoiled or rotten, and it should not be eaten. This use of “basi” emphasizes the cultural importance of freshness and the value of food safety, with strong social implications for health and hygiene. The word “basi” in Bengkulu Malay has a flexible meaning that spans cultural, social, and practical contexts. This versatility of “basi” reflects the complex relationship between tradition, modernity, and practicality in the culture of Bengkulu Malay speakers, highlighting how language evolves to address both past and present realities.

### **Gumam**

(10a) *Nyo ngecek menggumam, jadi idak jelas nian apo yang dikecekyo.*

“He just mumbled, so it was unclear what he was saying.”

(10b) *Makanlah cepek jangan digumam ajo nasi itu.*

“Eat it, don’t just hold on to that rice.”

The word “gumam” in the Malay language has several nuanced meanings, including cultural connotations. In example (10a), the word “gumam” is used to describe someone who speaks unclearly or indistinctly. This usage suggests that the person’s speech is not articulated properly, often making it difficult for others to understand. Additionally, “gumam” is frequently used in a sarcastic or mocking manner to refer to someone who speaks incoherently or with a lack of confidence. This cultural nuance carries a certain level of disapproval or criticism, as the speaker’s unclear speech may be perceived as a sign of weakness, hesitation, or lack of clarity. In many contexts, using the word “gumam” may carry an implicit judgment about the speaker’s ability to communicate effectively. In example (10b), the word “gumam” is used to describe someone who holds food in their mouth without swallowing. This refers to a situation where a person, perhaps out of hesitation or habit, chews food but does not swallow it immediately. Thus, the word “gumam” in Malay carries flexibility in meaning, from describing unclear speech and sarcastically commenting on someone’s communication to referring to the physical act of withholding food. It reflects the cultural importance

of communication, where clarity in speech is valued, and the act of eating is often tied to social norms and expectations.

### **Lalai**

(11a) *Jangan lalai lagi, ari ko ndak hujan, angkeklah cucian itu.*

“Don’t be negligent anymore, it will rain soon, take the laundry down.”

(11b) *Kau ko lalai nian, barang segedang itu pacak ketinggalan.*

“You are not careful, something that big could be left behind.”

The word “lalai” in the Bengkulu Malay language has several meanings and nuances, including cultural connotations. In example (11a), the word “lalai” is used to describe a local cultural practice. It is often used in the context of the community’s daily routine, particularly when people hang laundry outside the house to dry. The term “lalai” refers to the lack of attention or negligence that occurs when laundry is left outside and not brought in before it rains. In example (11b), the word “lalai” is used to express emotional frustration or anger toward someone who has been negligent or careless in their duties. Here, “lalai” takes on a more negative emotional tone, where the speaker is frustrated or upset because the person has failed to act responsibly or attentively. This usage of “lalai” highlights how the word can carry an emotional charge, reflecting the speaker’s disappointment or anger at another person’s oversight or failure to act in a timely manner. The word encapsulates both the practical aspect of local customs and the social norms regarding responsibility, as well as the emotional reactions that arise from such neglect in interpersonal relationships.

### **Tekepor**

(12a) *Searian ambo nolong di rumah kemantin, baliknyo ambo tekepor.*

“I spent the whole day helping at the funeral home, and by the time I got home, I was exhausted.”

(12b) *Waktu kami pai ke Curup, oto yang kami tumpang tekepor di tengah jalan, patah asnyo.*

“When we were on our way to Curup, the car we were riding in broke down in the middle of the road.”

The word “tekepor” in the Bengkulu Malay language has several meanings and emotional nuances. In example (12a), the word “tekepor” means “exhausted” or “tired,” and it is used to describe the cultural practice of mutual help within the community, especially during times

of misfortune or ceremonies. In this context, “tekepor” reflects the collective effort or community solidarity, where individuals come together to assist one another in difficult times. The use of “takepor” highlights the spirit of mutual aid and the sense of duty that binds individuals together in times of challenge. In example (12b), the word “tekepor” is used to describe the condition of a vehicle that has broken down in the middle of the road. This usage of “tekepor” extends beyond just physical tiredness and captures a more situational sense of being trapped or helpless due to unforeseen circumstances. Thus, “tekepor” in Bengkulu Malay serves as a versatile term, encompassing meanings related to physical exhaustion, community involvement, and unexpected disruptions. It reflects both the cultural value of mutual support in times of need and the frustration or helplessness that can arise from practical inconveniences, such as a broken vehicle.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The nuances of adjectives in Bengkulu Malay (bMB) reveal a strong connection between language and culture, as their use goes beyond merely describing traits or states; they also reflect the value system and identity of the speakers. The varying degrees of politeness, from casual to intimate to rough, highlight the function of adjectives as a means of emotional expression. Furthermore, the diversity of adjectives illustrates respect for elders, praise for women, and judgment of social behavior. More importantly, the use of certain adjectives marks distinct local identities, thus reinforcing the role of language as a cultural medium. Semantically, adjectives in bMB are not only denotative in meaning but also carry connotative meanings that enrich the communicative function of the language. This is reflected in the three main classifications of meaning nuances: adjectives with emotional nuances, adjectives with social nuances, and adjectives with cultural nuances.

The classification of bMB adjectives into emotional, social, and cultural nuances strongly aligns with foundational theories on the intricate relationship between language and culture. Scholars like Sapir and Whorf, with their language relativity hypothesis, argued that language shapes how humans perceive reality and reflects their thought patterns, value systems, and cultures (J. Gumperz & C. Levinson, 1996). Similarly, Halliday emphasized the ideational, interpersonal,

and textual functions of language, asserting its deep intertwining with ideology, customs, and local wisdom (Halliday et al., 2014). The role of language as a marker of cultural existence and a transmitter of values is directly validated in this study. The bMB adjectives, through their nuanced meanings, demonstrably serve as repositories of the Bengkulu community’s worldview, collective memory, and unique cultural conceptualizations, moving beyond mere descriptive functions to embody deeper cultural significance (Baranyiné Kóczy & Szélid, 2024; Sharifian, 2017).

This research provides further evidence for the critical role of connotative meaning in language. Examples from bMB, such as “gilo” (literally ‘crazy’ but evoking fear or pity) or “elok” (meaning ‘beautiful’ but also ‘polite’ or ‘appropriate’ according to customary norms), illustrate how adjectives carry collective values and societal attitudes. The descriptive and evaluative nature of bMB adjectives, particularly their ability to express properties, states, emotions, and social judgments, suggests that adjectives are not only descriptive but also value-laden. Moreover, adjectives are fundamental in reflecting the social, emotional, and cultural values of their speakers (Abdullah, 2019; Borer & Roy, 2010; Ebeling, 2024; Pullum & Huddleston, 2002; Su & Hunston, 2019). This research extends these general observations to the unique lexical features and cultural context of Bengkulu Malay.

Crucially, this study explicitly addresses a significant gap identified in previous research, which noted the limited studies on adjectives in bMB, despite the language’s unique features. This research, therefore, makes a substantial contribution to the linguistic documentation and understanding of Bengkulu Malay, highlighting how specific lexical items, such as adjectives, are deeply embedded within the community’s cultural fabric (Hassan, 2015); Muawanah et al., 2024; Susianti et al., 2024). Furthermore, the findings align with observations in other regional languages, where lexical items serve not only as communicative tools but also as repositories of shared understanding and cultural practices, shaping how a community perceives its environment and social interactions (Handoko, et al., 2024; Judaa & Alshbeekat, 2024; Nahak et al., 2019).

By employing a qualitative descriptive

approach and classifying adjectives into emotional, social, and cultural nuances, this research provides a novel academic contribution. It enriches semantic studies, expands regional linguistic knowledge, and supports the preservation of the Bengkulu Malay language as a vital part of the nation's cultural heritage, effectively applying and extending existing theoretical frameworks to an under-researched linguistic domain. The exploration of such nuances is vital for understanding cultural intelligence inherent in idiomatic expressions and the broader linguistic landscape.

Despite its valuable contributions, this study acknowledges several limitations that provide clear avenues for future research. Firstly, the exclusive reliance on written texts in Bengkulu Malay (bMB) means the findings may not fully capture the nuances present in spoken discourse, where linguistic features and stylistic variations can differ significantly. Secondly, the qualitative descriptive methodology, while offering in-depth understanding, inherently limits the statistical generalizability of the findings across the entire bMB lexicon or diverse speaker communities. Future studies could expand the data corpus to include spoken bMB, contemporary texts, or different genres to provide a more comprehensive and diachronic perspective. Moreover, integrating quantitative methods could enhance the statistical generalizability of findings, while investigating other lexical categories would offer a holistic understanding of bMB's linguistic landscape.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that adjectives in Bengkulu Malay (bMB) possess unique linguistic nuances in semantic analysis, encompassing three main dimensions: emotional, social, and cultural nuances. The differences among synonymous adjectives go beyond lexical meanings and include connotative values determined by the communication context. This suggests that adjectives play a crucial role in conveying feelings, attitudes, and the community's perspectives on its environment. Therefore, the semantic study of these adjectives demonstrates that bMB is a representation of the Bengkulu community's culture, which deserves to be preserved. The

nuances found in adjectives also highlight the close relationship between language and culture. Their use goes beyond merely describing traits or states and reflects the value system and social identity of the speakers. The varying levels of politeness in the use of adjectives—whether casual, familiar, or rude—demonstrate their function as tools for emotional expression. The variation in adjectives also conveys social messages, such as respect for elders, praise for women, and judgments on specific social behaviors. Furthermore, some adjectives serve as markers of distinct local identity, reinforcing the role of language as a medium that strengthens cultural existence. Moreover, from a semantic perspective, adjectives in bMB exhibit both denotative and connotative meanings, thereby enriching the language's communicative function.

## CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

**Eli Rustinar**, initially drafting, introduction, theoretical framework, method, data collection and analysis, discussion, and conclusion.

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## ETHICS STATEMENT

The authors have read and followed the ethical requirements for publication in *JournalArbitrer*. The current work does not involve human subjects, animal experiments, or any data collected from social media platforms..

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