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Talk, Objects, and Boats: Multimodal Coordination and Cultural Meaning-Making at the Lok Baintan Floating Market

Tati Akhbaryah[1*], Jumadi[2], Fatchul Mu'in[3], Moh. Fatah Yasin[4], and Nasrullah[5]

[1,2,3,4]Doctoral Program in Indonesian Language Education, Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin, Indonesia
[5]Language, Literacy, and Technology Program, College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, USA

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Correspondence Address:
2030111720061@mhs.ulm.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Multimodal marketplace studies have focused on fixed settings, leaving markets with mobile trading platforms and the role of religious expressions underexplored. This study examines how verbal, nonverbal, artefactual, and spatial resources organise buying and selling at the Lok Baintan Floating Market (PTLB), South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Using a qualitative multimodal ethnographic design, data were collected from 15 informants (10 traders and 5 buyers) between July and October 2024 through participant observation, interviews, photographs, and short video recordings. The results show that forms of address and negotiation utterances organise commercial engagement, bodily responses may contribute to redirecting offers, and objects such as *bakul purun* become resources for negotiating terms. Traders' accounts indicate that the gathering, drifting, and approach of *jukung* condition interactional access. The greeting *Assalamu'alaikum* functions as a resource for initiating contact rather than evidence of ethical adherence. The study demonstrates how mobile riverine space and religious language shape relational meaning-making in Banjar trade.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural practices are sustained not only through inherited symbols but also through ordinary social actions in which people negotiate relationships and coordinate activities. In everyday economic exchanges, participants use language, bodily movement, material objects, and spatial arrangements to organise interaction; Hracs and Concha (2025), for example, show that street food market experiences are co-produced by traders, consumers, objects, and spaces. Communication in such settings involves the coordination of multiple semiotic resources whose functions emerge through situated action (Castaldi, 2024; Goodwin, 2000; Kress, 2010; Mondada, 2019; Norris, 2004). Examining this coordination shows how cultural meanings are enacted through ordinary practice rather than carried by symbols with predetermined meanings.

The Lok Baintan Floating Market (*Pasar Terapung Lok Baintan*, hereafter PTLB) in Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan, offers a distinctive setting for examining these processes. Buying and selling take place primarily on *jukung*, traditional boats that carry traders and commodities along the Martapura River. The mobility of the boats, the changing distance between participants, and the handling of goods shape how transactions unfold, so the river forms part of the environment through which participants establish contact, negotiate offers, and transfer commodities. Research in a very different setting, digital marketplaces, has shown that communication, material exchange, and place are closely interrelated (Podkalicka & Fredriksson, 2023), underscoring the value of examining how a trading environment shapes commercial practice.

Trading at PTLB also takes place within the linguistic and religious context of Banjar society. Religious expressions such as *Assalamu'alaikum* and *Bismillah* occur in everyday commercial communication, connecting Islamic communicative practices with local trading traditions. Principles of Islamic commercial ethics associated with *muamalah*, appropriate conduct (*adab*), and mutual consent (*ridha*) provide a conceptual context for this relationship. Pragmatic research shows that religious expressions in Muslim societies routinely perform interactional work beyond their literal meaning, including persuasion, signalling agreement, and managing social relationships (Al-Rojaie, 2021). Studies of Indonesian traditional markets, meanwhile, have examined Islamic business ethics mainly as normative principles of honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness in traders' conduct, often noting gaps between these norms and actual practice (Malasi, 2024; Septiani & Hadziq, 2023). While these studies provide relevant perspectives on the pragmatic functions of religious expressions and Islamic business ethics, they do not specifically examine how religious expressions operate within the sequential organisation of buying and selling interactions at the Lok Baintan Floating Market. At the same time, the presence of religious expressions does not by itself establish adherence to Islamic ethical principles; their significance must be examined through their interactional functions, since greetings such as *Assalamu'alaikum* may serve

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simultaneously as religiously recognisable expressions and as resources for initiating contact.

Previous studies of PTLB have addressed its linguistic and cultural dimensions (Mufidah, 2014; Mu'in, 2019), speech acts (Radiansyah & Jumadi, 2013), *pantun* as commercial communication (Hamdani et al., 2024), social symbols in trader–visitor encounters (Mutiya & Hakim, 2024), persuasive discourse (Akbari et al., 2026), and traders' marketing practices (Sabhan et al., 2022). However, the relationships among verbal communication, bodily responses, material objects, and the mobility of trading vessels have received little attention as interconnected conditions of commercial interaction.

Research in other marketplaces provides a broader foundation. Studies have examined the survival of traditional markets in Aceh (Nazaruddin et al., 2023), the generic structure of traditional-market transactions (Alfani et al., 2021), marketplaces as multilingual, multisensory, and multimodal environments (Hua et al., 2017), the mediation of commerce by material and semiotic resources (Izadi, 2017), geosemiotic configurations of markets (Lou, 2017), embodied and sensory engagement at market stalls (Mondada, 2022), and the negotiation of communicative repertoires in a multilingual street market (Duman Çakır, 2023). Research on ambulant vending aboard Buenos Aires trains further shows how sales pitches are organised through verbal and embodied actions in mobile environments (Márquez Reiter et al., 2023). Less is known, however, about settings in which the trading platforms themselves are mobile.

Floating markets in Vietnam have been studied mainly in terms of their historical development and changing commercial practices (Nguyen & Huynh, 2024). At PTLB, by contrast, traders may gather in particular areas, drift with river currents, or approach prospective buyers, so opportunities for engagement depend on the changing spatial relationships among participants, vessels, and commodities. This raises the question of how mobile riverine space, which differs from relatively fixed commercial settings, conditions interactional access. To date, however, little is known about how verbal, bodily, material, and spatial resources are coordinated in a market where the trading platforms themselves move, or about how religious expressions such as *Assalamu'alaikum* function within everyday Banjar commercial interaction. The present study addresses this gap.

The study draws on multimodal interaction analysis and anthropolinguistics. Goodwin (2000) shows how social action is organised through the coordination of linguistic and embodied resources, Norris (2004) provides a framework for multimodal interaction, and Mondada (2019) and Castaldi (2024) emphasise situated relationships among semiotic resources. Studies of materiality and geosemiotics direct attention to how objects and spatial arrangements contribute to social activity (Lou, 2017; O'Halloran, 2023; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). From an anthropolinguistic perspective, language is a culturally situated practice through which social relationships and meanings are organised

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(Duranti, 1997; Hymes, 1974; Jewitt et al., 2016), as also illustrated by research on Javanese traditional food (Maulana et al., 2025).

Within this framework, four analytical domains are examined: verbal resources (forms of address, offers, negotiation utterances, and religious expressions), nonverbal resources (documented bodily responses and gestures), artefactual resources (commodities and trading objects, including *bakul purun*), and spatial resources (the positioning, orientation, and mobility of *jukung*). Cultural meaning-making is then examined through relational, ethical, religious, and aesthetic dimensions, with attention to the evidence supporting each interpretation.

Accordingly, two research problems are addressed in this study. First (RQ1), the contribution of verbal, nonverbal, artefactual, and spatial resources to the organisation of buying and selling interactions at PTLB is examined. Second (RQ2), the contribution of these communicative resources and their documented relationships to cultural meaning-making in trading interactions is analysed. The specific contribution of the study lies in demonstrating how the mobility of *jukung* conditions interactional access in river-based commerce and how religious expressions participate in everyday economic interaction in Banjar society. The study thereby contributes to religion–culture scholarship by examining the situated interactional functions of religious expressions in everyday Banjar commercial practices, without treating their occurrence as direct evidence of religious moderation or adherence to Islamic commercial ethics.

2. METHODS

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a qualitative multimodal ethnographic design to investigate naturally occurring buying and selling interactions at PTLB. Ethnographic inquiry and interaction analysis provide complementary perspectives on situated social practices (Rawls & Lynch, 2024), enabling the examination of how language, bodily actions, material objects, and spatial arrangements organise interaction within their social and cultural contexts (Dicks et al., 2011; Doak, 2019; Kress, 2011; Palipane, 2019).

The research focused on offers, price negotiations, material concessions, and spatial access involving *jukung*; these practices were interpreted from an anthropolinguistic perspective within the cultural context of Banjar society.

Participants and Researcher Positionality

The study included 15 informants (10 traders and 5 buyers), selected purposively according to their involvement in trading, use of the Banjar language, experience in floating-market activities, cultural knowledge, and willingness to participate.

Drawing on Spradley's (1980) approach to participant observation, the researcher adopted moderate participation, primarily observing naturally occurring commercial activities while occasionally participating as a buyer. Researcher–participant interactions

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were not treated as equivalent to all naturally occurring transactions. Observations focused on language use, bodily movements, facial expressions, trading objects, and the positioning and movement of *jukung* in relation to the stages of commercial encounters.

Data Collection and Documentation

Fieldwork was conducted between July and October 2024 through participant observation, interviews (approximately 1 to 30 minutes), field notes, approximately 20 photographs, and several short video recordings of about one minute each. The materials were organised, transcribed, coded, and analysed in 2025.

Four numbered data units were selected for detailed analysis. Data 1 documents a shrimp offer. Data 2 and Data 3 are consecutive extracts from a single *buah mentega* transaction: a proposal for reciprocal price adjustment, followed by the trader's offer of an additional fruit and a free *bakul purun* and the buyer's acceptance. Data 4 consists of traders' explanations about the gathering, drifting, and repositioning of *jukung*, recorded through direct observation of naturally occurring conversations with visitors. These observational records are treated as contextual evidence rather than continuous recordings of boat movements during Data 1–3. A separate *limau kuit* price statement and other field observations, including a bodily response to an offer, served as contextual materials. These units are analytically illustrative rather than statistically representative.

The evidential status of each source was considered before interpretation. Transcribed utterances supported claims about verbal formulations, field notes documented observed actions, photographs evidenced visible objects and spatial arrangements, and video recordings supported claims about the timing of actions only when these were captured in the same recording (Fazeli et al., 2023). Interview statements were treated as participants' accounts rather than substitutes for audiovisual evidence, and multimodal coordination was examined without assuming full audiovisual synchronisation (Hurdley & Dicks, 2011; Katila & Raudaskoski, 2020; Samuelsson, 2025).

Analytical Framework

Table 1 summarises the four analytical domains, the materials examined, the indicators used to identify relevant resources, and the interactional functions investigated.

Table 1. Multimodal Data Categories and Analytical Focus

Domain	Data analysed	Analytical indicators	Interactional functions examined
Verbal	Greetings, forms of address, offers, negotiations, and other utterances	Lexical choices, utterance forms, and sequential position	Initiating contact, presenting offers, negotiating terms, and expressing acceptance or refusal
Nonverbal	Documented gestures, head movements, and bodily responses	Direction of movement, bodily position, and responses to preceding actions	Displaying responses to offers and directing interactional attention
Artefactual	Commodities, *bakul purun*, *jukung*, and other trading objects	Object references, handling, display, placement, and documented use	Presenting commodities, specifying transaction terms,

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Domain	Data analysed	Analytical indicators	Interactional functions examined
			and incorporating objects into negotiated offers
Spatial	Position, orientation, and reported movement of *jukung*	Relative position, distance, orientation, and mobility	Establishing interactional access, facilitating contact, and adjusting spatial arrangements

(Source: Field data collected in 2024 and analysed by the authors in 2025.)

Data Transcription and Analysis

Verbal data, including Banjar expressions, were transcribed verbatim and examined alongside field notes and visual documentation. No comprehensive multimodal transcription system was used; nonverbal and spatial information was interpreted from the observational, photographic, audiovisual, and interview materials.

Coding was conducted manually in five stages: (1) materials were organised by source and interactional episode; (2) documented resources were classified into the four analytical domains, which served as initial categories rather than inductively generated themes; (3) resources were coded for their interactional functions, covering forms of address, offers, negotiations, and acceptance or refusal; gestures, head movements, and bodily responses; commodities, *bakul purun*, *jukung*, and other objects; and boat positioning, orientation, distance, and reported movement; (4) relationships among resources were examined according to documented temporal or functional connections, without combining information from different sources into a single sequence unless the documentation supported it; and (5) cultural interpretations were developed by relating these functions to the context of Banjar trading, without assuming that every dimension was present in every episode.

Trustworthiness and Research Ethics

Trustworthiness was supported through source triangulation across traders, buyers, and field materials; methodological triangulation across observation, interviews, field notes, photographs, and video recordings; and persistent observation. Differences in the evidential status of these sources were maintained throughout the analysis.

Formal member checking was not undertaken; informal face-to-face and telephone conversations with informants were used to clarify their accounts and were treated as supplementary contextual information rather than formal validation.

Verbal informed consent was obtained from all informants, and their personal information was kept confidential (see Declarations).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multimodal Coordination in Transactional Action

The analysis focuses on four data units: an opening shrimp offer (Data 1), two successive extracts from a *buah mentega* transaction (Data 2–3), and traders' explanations

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of *jukung* positioning documented through direct observation of naturally occurring conversations with visitors (Data 4), supplemented by a *limau kuit* price statement and contextual observations.



Figure 1. The Environment of Buying and Selling Interactions at PTLB, Showing Traders and *Jukung*
(Source: Authors' personal documentation, 2024)

Jukung serve as both transport vessels and mobile trading platforms, so commercial encounters unfold within a spatial arrangement shaped by the river and other vessels.

Data 1: Shrimp Offering Interaction (O-SV-KS-Mhj)

"Assalamu'alaikum, Mahaji. Ulun mambawa hundang, nah. Handakkah pian? Murah haja, singgahi dulu..."
Translation:
"*Assalamu'alaikum*, *Mahaji*. I have brought shrimp. Would you like some? It is cheap, so please stop by first..."

In Data 1, the religious greeting *Assalamu'alaikum* and the form of address *Mahaji* initiate contact, *Ulun mambawa hundang, nah* introduces the commodity, and *Handakkah pian?*, *Murah haja*, and *singgahi dulu* invite the buyer to consider the offer. Within this encounter, the greeting's identifiable function is to open interaction, illustrating how a religiously recognisable expression becomes part of everyday economic communication, although its use alone does not establish adherence to Islamic commercial ethics.

The negotiation of *buah mentega* illustrates a different interactional function of verbal resources.

Data 2: *Buah Mentega* Price Negotiation: First Extract (O-SV-RJB-U-UbPb)

"Sudah nang kaya ini aja gin, ulun baturun pian banaik, ulun jual tiga wadah ni haraga tangah dua nah, sakaranjang isi tiga bigi, jadi pian dapat sambilan bigi."
Translation:

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> "Let's just leave it at this. I will lower the price, and you raise your offer. I will sell these three baskets for one hundred and fifty thousand rupiah. Each basket contains three pieces, so you will get nine pieces."

The expression *ulun baturun pian banaik* frames negotiation as a reciprocal adjustment: the trader proposes lowering the price while inviting the buyer to raise the offer. *Sudah kaya ini aja* directs the exchange towards agreement, and the specification of three baskets, the price, and the number of fruits clarifies the terms. The utterance thus constructs the possibility of compromise, which the trader develops in Data 3 through an additional material concession.

Nonverbal resources also contribute to the progression of commercial offers. In one observed trading encounter, a trader raised dried *sepat* fish, as documented in Figure 2. Field notes from the same encounter (August 1, 2024, 12:03:49) documented the buyer shaking their head in response to the offer, after which the trader redirected the offer towards *limau kuit*. The photograph provides visual evidence of the trader's bodily action involving a commodity, while the field notes document the buyer's response and the subsequent change in the offer. These materials illustrate how bodily actions and material objects contribute to the organisation of commercial interaction. However, because the complete sequence was not captured in a continuous audiovisual recording, the analysis does not establish precise temporal synchronisation among these actions.



Figure 2. A Trader Raising Dried *Sepat* Fish Among Trading Commodities at the Lok Baintan Floating Market (Source: Authors' personal documentation, 2024)

Note. The photograph documents the trader raising dried *sepat* fish. The buyer's head movement and the subsequent redirection of the offer towards *limau kuit* were recorded in field notes from the same encounter and are not shown in the photograph.

A separate *limau kuit* price-offering statement provides another example of verbal negotiation:

"Itu sudah harga pas Bu, ai, ulun jamin murah."

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Translation:
"That is already the fixed price, Ma'am; I assure you it is inexpensive."

The expression *harga pas* presents the price as firm, while *ulun jamin murah* reinforces its affordability, maintaining the persuasive character of the offer. Unlike the reciprocal adjustment in Data 2, this statement presents the existing price as the preferred term. In the very different setting of live-streaming commerce, Liu and Cheng (2025) show that interactional metadiscourse also serves interpersonal functions in selling.

Greetings and forms of address thus initiate contact, negotiation expressions formulate possible agreements, price statements establish commercial positions, and bodily responses may redirect an offer. Their functions become intelligible through their placement within particular actions, as also shown in research on everyday shopping (Rasmussen et al., 2025) and small talk in service encounters (Kim, 2023).

Artefactual Resources and Material Concessions

Material objects can also be incorporated into the formulation of offers, as evidenced by the continuation of the *buah mentega* transaction.

Data 3: *Buah Mentega* Transaction: Additional Offer and Verbal Acceptance (Continuation of Data 2)

Trader:
"Ulun manawari pian lagi sabigi jadi pian dapat sapuluh bigi. Ulun bari'i lagi bakul purun haraganya sapuluh ribu. Gratis karanjang ini gasan mambawa buahnya. Kayapa?"
Buyer:
"Inggih ayuja Cil ai ulun tukari."
Translation:
Trader:
"I am offering you one more fruit, so you will have ten. I will also give you a *purun* basket worth ten thousand rupiah, free of charge, to carry the fruit. What do you think?"
Buyer:
"Yes, all right, Auntie, I will buy it."

In Data 3, the trader increases the quantity from nine to ten fruits and adds, free of charge, a *bakul purun* valued at IDR 10,000 for carrying the fruit. The question *Kayapa?* invites evaluation of the revised proposal, and the buyer's response, *Inggih ayuja Cil ai ulun tukari*, signals acceptance. The exchange thus demonstrates a functional relationship between verbal negotiation and an artefactual concession.

Although the basket has practical utility as a container, it becomes a resource through which the trader modifies the terms of the offer, so its function is not reducible to its material properties or monetary value. Lilja and Jokipohja (2024) show that object-

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related requests are sensitive to material circumstances and perceptual access, and Urbanik (2024) shows how objects and bodily actions serve as explanatory resources in work interactions. The finding also aligns with studies of situated materiality (Castaldi, 2024; Giovannoni & Napier, 2023; Izadi & Luke, 2025; Maiorani, 2024) and of craftsmanship in service encounters (Berger-Remy et al., 2026), as it demonstrates how an ordinary trading object acquires interactional significance through its situated use.



Figure 3. *Bakul Purun* Displayed Among Trading Commodities on a *Jukung* at PTLB
(Source: Authors' personal documentation, 2024)

Figure 3 shows *bakul purun* among commodities on a *jukung*. It does not depict the negotiation or transfer described in Data 3; the basket's interactional role is evidenced by the verbal offer and acceptance, so the photograph serves as contextual documentation only.

Spatial Coordination and Interactional Access

Unlike markets with fixed stalls, PTLB combines a recognisable trading area with mobile platforms whose positions change with river currents, other traders, and prospective buyers. Data 4 presents traders' explanations recorded through direct observation of naturally occurring conversations with visitors at the floating market. These observational records provide contextual evidence of how traders describe their gathering locations and changes in *jukung* positioning in relation to river currents and the arrival of other traders.

Data 4: Traders' Gathering and Movement of *Jukung* (O-SS-SM-RIJB)

"Oh di sini tempat kami berkumpul. Kalau pagi hari, pedagang kumpul di sini supaya pembeli mudah datang."

Translation:

"Oh, this is where we gather. In the morning, traders gather here so that buyers can come more easily."

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The trader links the gathering of vessels to making the trading area easier for buyers to approach.

The trader further explains:

"Kadang kami balarut posisi jukung bergeser sedikit mengikuti arus sungai atau banyaknya pedagang yang datang, tetapi masih dalam kawasan Pasar Terapung Lok Baintan."

Translation:

"Sometimes we drift, and the position of the boat shifts slightly with the river current or the number of traders arriving, but we remain within the Lok Baintan Floating Market area."

Boat positioning is thus shaped by both environmental and social conditions, and mobility is part of the practical organisation of trading rather than necessarily a deliberate communicative act.

The trader also states:

"Ada juga kami yang mendekat kalau mereka ingin membeli dagangan."

Translation:

"Some of us also move closer when they want to buy our goods."

Moving towards an interested buyer facilitates the contact required for negotiation. The account therefore points to three spatial functions: collective accessibility through gathering, spatial adjustment in response to currents and other vessels, and interactional access through approaching buyers. The mobility of *jukung* allows trading positions to change while the market remains recognisable as a place of economic activity.

Geosemiotics directs attention to social action within its material and spatial environment (Scollon & Scollon, 2003), and studies of markets in Hong Kong (Lou, 2017), Abeokuta (Anifowose et al., 2025), and Yogyakarta (Suharyanto et al., 2025) show how spatial configurations, cultural values, and urban change shape trading practices. At PTLB, however, the trading platform itself is mobile, making accessibility subject to the shifting positions of boats and participants.

These findings share the emphasis of Mondada (2022) and Duman Çakır (2023) on embodied, sensory, and spatial conditions of commercial interaction but extend it to a riverine setting. The distinctive contribution lies in identifying the mobility of trading platforms as a condition of interactional access: before an offer can develop into negotiation, participants must be positioned so that contact is possible, and at PTLB, this depends on the movement of *jukung*.

Multimodal Coordination and Cultural Meaning-Making

In response to RQ1, the preceding findings show that verbal expressions establish interpersonal contact and formulate terms, bodily responses contribute to the progression of offers, material objects become part of negotiated proposals, and spatial arrangements condition opportunities for interaction. These findings are consistent with research on

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embodied service interactions, highlighting the roles of bodily actions and material environments in shaping commercial encounters (Salomonson & Echeverri, 2024). However, the four resources were not necessarily documented simultaneously within a single transaction.

Table 2 summarises these relationships while distinguishing the resources documented in particular episodes from contextual evidence.

Table 2. Multimodal Coordination in Buying and Selling Interactions

Interaction episode	Verbal resources	Nonverbal resources	Artefactual resources	Spatial resources	Interactional function
Data 1: Opening a shrimp offer	Greeting, commodity announcement, question, price evaluation, invitation	Not specified in the episode	Shrimp	*Jukung* as trading setting; movement not documented in this extract	Establishing contact and inviting commercial engagement
Data 2: *Buah mentega* price negotiation	Reciprocal price adjustment and specification of quantity and price	Not specified in the episode	Fruits and containers referred to in the offer	Not specified in the episode	Proposing reciprocal concessions and specifying transaction terms
Data 3: Continuation of the *buah mentega* transaction	Additional offer, question, and verbal acceptance	Not specified in the episode	Additional fruit and *bakul purun*	Trading setting; episode-specific movement not documented	Incorporating a material concession into negotiation and obtaining verbal acceptance
Data 4: *Jukung* positioning observed (trader–visitor conversations)	Trader's description of gathering, drifting, and approaching buyers	Not documented as an observed gesture in this unit	*Jukung* as mobile trading platforms	Reported clustering, drifting, and repositioning	Explaining conditions of buyer accessibility and interactional contact

(Source: Field data collected in 2024 and analysed by the authors in 2025.)
Note: The table distinguishes directly documented transactional resources from contextual evidence obtained through observation of naturally occurring trader–visitor conversations. The entries do not imply that all resources were recorded simultaneously.

Multimodal coordination is thus best understood through the functions and relationships of resources rather than their simultaneous presence. This is consistent with approaches that regard social action as organised through situated relationships among resources (Goodwin, 2000; Mondada, 2022; Norris, 2004) and with Nathues et al.'s (2025) account of objects in meaning-making across modes. Like ambulant vending in Buenos Aires (Márquez Reiter & Iveson, 2026), PTLB trading unfolds in a mobile environment, but here the trading vessels themselves are repositioned. A verbal reference to an object, moreover, can be consequential in negotiation even when its physical transfer is not documented.

From an anthropolinguistic perspective, language is situated within social relationships, material practices, and cultural contexts (Duranti, 1997; Hymes, 1974). Four interpretive dimensions are considered: relational, ethical, religious, and aesthetic.

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The relational dimension is most clearly supported: the greeting, address, and invitation in Data 1 organise contact; *ulun baturun pian banaik* in Data 2 frames negotiation as reciprocal adjustment; and the revised offer and acceptance in Data 3 move the transaction towards agreement.

The ethical dimension concerns the negotiation of interests. The reciprocal price proposal and the added *bakul purun* show how terms are adjusted during bargaining and may be discussed in relation to fairness and mutual agreement, although conclusions about participants' moral motivations require evidence of their own evaluations.

The religious dimension is illustrated by *Assalamu'alaikum* in Data 1, which functions as an opening resource in commercial interaction. Concepts of *muamalah*, *adab*, and *ridha* offer relevant interpretive perspectives on conduct and agreement, but the evidence establishes the contextual use of religious language rather than adherence to a system of Islamic commercial ethics. This finding is consistent with pragmatic research indicating that religious expressions can perform interactional functions beyond their literal meanings (Al-Rojaie, 2021). It also complements studies of Islamic business ethics in Indonesian traditional markets (Malasi, 2024; Septiani & Hadziq, 2023) by demonstrating how an Islamic greeting functions as a resource for initiating interpersonal contact during the opening phase of a trading interaction.

The aesthetic dimension concerns the visible configuration of boats, commodities, clothing, and equipment; because the episodes provide no evidence of participants' own aesthetic evaluations, it remains a direction for further research.

Table 3 distinguishes the empirical basis and interpretive status of these cultural dimensions.

Table 3. Cultural Interpretations and Evidential Status in Buying and Selling Interactions

Cultural dimension	Empirical basis	Contextual interpretation	Evidential status
Relational	Greeting, forms of address, negotiation, and verbal acceptance	Communicative resources organise interpersonal contact and the progression of commercial engagement	Directly supported by specific verbal episodes
Ethical	Reciprocal price adjustment and additional material concession	Negotiation involves the management of interests and proposed agreement	Contextually relevant; specific moral motivations not established
Religious	*Assalamu'alaikum* in Data 1 and other reported religious expressions	Religious language participates in everyday economic communication	Supported for contextual use; broader religious interpretations require additional evidence
Aesthetic	Visible arrangements of *jukung*, commodities, and trading equipment	The market presents a distinctive material and visual environment	Descriptive evidence available; participant-defined aesthetic meaning not established

(Source: Field data collected in 2024 and analysed by the authors in 2025.)

Distinguishing analytical domains (the communicative materials examined) from cultural dimensions (interpretations of their significance) prevents cultural meanings from being attributed automatically to objects, expressions, or movements. Consistent with Lizardo's (2021) discussion of cultural internalisation, the analysis is limited to

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meanings supported by documented interactions rather than participants' cognitive processes. The findings thus answer RQ2 most directly through the relational organisation of commercial interaction, with religious expressions showing how culturally recognisable language participates in routine exchange.

Theoretical Contribution and Implications

The principal contribution of this study is the identification of mobile riverine trading space as a condition shaping interactional access. Existing research has established the importance of language, bodily action, objects, and space in commercial encounters (Duman Çakır, 2023; Lou, 2017; Mondada, 2022), including mobile vending (Márquez Reiter et al., 2023). Whereas encounters in fixed markets are organised around stalls and counters, at PTLB vessels gather, drift, and approach buyers, so the conditions for engagement depend on the mobility of the platform itself.

This perspective shows that multimodal interaction studies must consider the material organisation of a commercial environment, and it situates verbal negotiation and material concessions within the practical conditions of riverine economic life. For religion–culture studies, the use of a religious greeting as an opening resource shows how religious language is incorporated into ordinary commerce. For heritage documentation, descriptions of Banjar trading culture should include not only traditional objects and vocabulary but also interactional practices and the mobility of *jukung*.

Limitations

The study relies on purposively selected transactional extracts, contextual observations, photographic documentation, and interview accounts. The analysis of nonverbal resources is limited by the availability of continuous audiovisual evidence. Although Figure 2 documents a trader raising dried *sepat* fish and field notes from the same encounter record a buyer's head movement and the subsequent redirection of the offer towards *limau kuit*, the complete interactional sequence was not captured in a continuous recording. Consequently, the findings support a context-specific interpretation of bodily actions and their relationships to commercial offers rather than a detailed analysis of temporal synchronisation. Furthermore, the available materials do not provide synchronised audiovisual evidence of all four analytical domains within a single transaction. Data 4 consists of traders' explanations documented through direct observation of naturally occurring conversations with visitors, rather than continuous audiovisual recordings of *jukung* movements. Claims concerning participants' ethical commitments and aesthetic interpretations therefore require further investigation**.**

CONCLUSION

Buying and selling at the Lok Baintan Floating Market are organised through verbal, nonverbal, artefactual, and spatial resources whose functions depend on their situated use. In response to RQ1, verbal expressions facilitate engagement and

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negotiation, bodily responses can influence the progression of offers, material objects become resources for adjusting transaction terms, and spatial arrangements condition contact between traders and buyers. Regarding RQ2, these practices contribute most clearly to relational meaning-making, while religious expressions show how culturally recognisable communication is incorporated into economic activity.

The study's principal theoretical contribution is recognising the mobility of *jukung* as a condition of interactional access in riverine commerce. This extends multimodal marketplace scholarship beyond fixed-stall settings and shows how communicative, material, and spatial resources can be examined together in anthropolinguistic research.

For religious and cultural studies, the findings demonstrate that Islamic greetings function as resources for initiating interpersonal contact within everyday commercial encounters. Their documented use illustrates how religiously recognisable language participates in Banjar trading practices. However, the available evidence does not establish the absence of tension between religious expressions and economic activities, nor does it demonstrate religious moderation or adherence to Islamic commercial ethics. These broader questions require further investigation. Practically, the study supports documentation of floating-market heritage that includes communicative practices and mobile spatial arrangements alongside vocabulary and artefacts.

DECLARATIONS

Author Contributions: The first author conceptualised the study, conducted the investigation, curated and analysed the data, wrote the original draft, and prepared the visualisations. The second and third authors contributed to the conceptualisation and methodology, supervised the research, and validated the findings. The fourth author contributed to the formal analysis, validation, and visualisation. The fifth author validated the findings and reviewed and edited the manuscript.

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Ethics Approval and Informed Consent: The study was conducted under an official research permission letter issued by the Vice Director for Academic Affairs of the Postgraduate Programme at Universitas Lambung Mangkurat. The research permission letter did not constitute formal approval from an institutional research ethics committee.

Verbal informed consent was obtained from all 15 informants (10 traders and 5 buyers) prior to their participation in the study. Participants' personal information was treated confidentially, and permission was sought for research documentation.

Data Availability: Relevant research data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to consideration of the purpose of the request, participant confidentiality, informed consent, and applicable ethical restrictions. Access to identifiable or sensitive research materials may be restricted to protect participants' privacy.

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