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# Argument structure and semantic explanation of the verb *nggawa* 'to bring' in Javanese: a natural semantic metalanguage approach

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## ABSTRACT

The Javanese language has many verbs that describe how to carry inanimate objects, living things, humans, or animals. One of the most common words is *nggawa*, which is glossed here as 'to bring'. In this study, however, the analysis focuses specifically on Javanese verbs of physical carrying. It seems simple, but its meaning is actually very complex and culturally rich. This study examined 23 forms of the verb *nggawa* in Javanese. Each verb was analyzed in terms of semantic structure and argument structure using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach. This study employed a qualitative method with data from a corpus of Javanese texts, lexical references, and transcribed spoken interviews with native Javanese speakers from East Java. The results of the analysis showed that each verb of *nggawa* had a different pattern of meaning. Carrying techniques, body position, object type, and social context were the primary determinants of meaning differences. All verbs belonged to the divalent category, involving an agent and an object. Semantic explanation through NSM successfully clarified the meaning of the verbs in a clear and cross-culturally understandable manner. This study demonstrates that the richness of Javanese in describing the action of carrying reflects cultural values and societal perspectives on the body and social relationships.

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## 1. Introduction

Language is a reflection of human experiences in interacting with the world around them. Through language, humans can convey information (Mulyono et al., 2026; Rezaii et al., 2022). Language also shapes the meaning of actions, spaces, and social relationships that are experienced. One important aspect of the language system is verbs (Luraghi et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). Verbs related to movement and the transfer of objects play an important role in representing the relationship between actors, objects, and space in an action. In relation to social function, language also plays an important role in creating effective communication and maintaining harmony in interactions between speakers (Mulyono et al., 2025; Mulyono et al., 2025). This role makes language a mechanism for regulating social relationships within society.

One type of verb that is interesting to study further is the verb *nggawa*, a lexical form in Javanese that is glossed here as 'to bring'. In this study, however, the analysis focuses specifically on Javanese verbs of physical carrying. On the surface, the verb *nggawa* appears simple and uniform. However, conceptually, the action of *nggawa* can encompass a number of dimensions such as who is carrying, what is being carried, how it is being carried, for whom, and in what situation the action is being performed.

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Javanese is one of Indonesia's most widely spoken regional languages (Arifin et al., 2022; Cahyo et al., 2025; Saddhono & Hartanto, 2021). The Javanese language has an astonishing lexical richness for carrying. There are many varieties of verbs used to express *nggawa*. Each verb has a different meaning, reflecting ideas about the body, tools, and social relations.

To characterize the diversity and richness of meaning of these verbs in a systematic way a semantic analysis approach is required that can structure the meaning explicitly, structurally, and across cultures. One approach that can solve this the problem is called the NSM approach. NSM employs a number of basic semantic primitives regarded as universal (Kazmaly, 2024; Sanatifar & Ghamsarian, 2023; Wierzbicka, 2021). The present study finds it especially relevant along the same lines, given that the 23 carrying verbs in Javanese belong to the same semantic field. NSM is used to explicate the significant semantic components that set one carrying verb apart from another in a non-circular and easy-to-follow manner.

The analysis of these verbs and their accompanying nominal structures involves semantic structure analysis. Semantic structure refers to the meaning components of a lexeme (Al-Hussein & Mayuuf, 2021). These components implicitly and explicitly include action, agent, object, direction, and purpose. On the other hand, argument structure is involved in the abstract mapping from verbs to semantic roles which are realized as grammatical functions (Nash, 2022). NSM is the primary framework for semantic explication used in this study, whereas semantic structure analysis and argument structure analysis provide complementary analytical frameworks. It is possible to explore differences in meaning and the connections between semantic meaning, grammatical structure, and the surrounding cultural context by understanding both approaches.

There are several relevant studies that have used the NSM approach to study the meanings of verbs and cultural expressions. Taib and Mulyadi (2022) examined the Acehese interjection *ômma*. Subiyanto et al. (2024) studied motion verbs in the context of traditional fishing practices among Javanese communities. Adawiyah et al. (2022) examined volitional action verbs in the Bima language. AlBader and Al-Qenaie (2024) investigated maritime proverbs in the Kuwaiti dialect. These four studies demonstrate the utility of the NSM framework in revealing the interconnectedness of language and culture. However, none have focused on the verb *nggawa* from the perspective of agrarian culture in Javanese society. This study demonstrates how an analysis of the Javanese verb *nggawa* can reveal changes in lexical meaning and argument structure alongside culture-specific values embedded in the act of carrying.

Recent typological studies demonstrate that the verb 'bring' is realized through disparate lexical patterns in different languages. Margetts et al. (2022) identified several semantic components embedded in this verb, including causation, motion, accompaniment, and direction. These components take diverse forms with emphasis that changes depending on culture and language. In Indonesia, *membawa* is used in both literal and abstract constructs (Nugraha & Vincze, 2024). In Balinese, Sudipa et al. (2019) mentioned, verbs such as *ngaba* and *makta* each denote a different way the load is carried according to one's body picture and environment. These findings indicate that carrying is a concept that is culturally bound as well as linguistically encoded. In other words, it deserves more systematic semantic analysis across languages. The Javanese verb *nggawa* presents an interesting instance where lexical meaning and cultural knowledge intersect to represent action verbally.

However, no study has yet specifically and comprehensively analyzed the verb *nggawa* in Javanese using an integrated approach between NSM and semantic structure theory up to the argument level. Most research remains limited to general motion verbs, in foreign languages, or within specific cultural contexts. In fact, the verb *nggawa* in Javanese offers a wealth of semantics that has not been academically documented and can make a significant contribution to the development of typological semantics.

This study aims to, analyze the mapping of argument structures and thematic roles across 23 Javanese carrying verbs to determine their syntactic and semantic constraints, formulate NSM-based semantic explications using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) framework to achieve a cross-culturally transparent representation of meaning, and delineate the subtle semantic boundaries and cultural nuances embedded in these carrying techniques to reveal reflect the Javanese worldview on social relationships and physical responsibility. Through this integrated approach, the study seeks to expand the linguistic documentation of Javanese and contribute to the development of semantic lexicography and typological studies.

## 2. Literature review

This section describes the literature review that is the basis of this research.

### 2.1. *Natural semantic metalanguage (NSM)*

NSM is a semantic approach developed to explain meaning explicitly, systematically, and across cultures (Wierzbick, 1992). According to NSM, a lexical method is needed that can break down meaning into the smallest units that are universal and culturally neutral. NSM offers basic units of meaning that cannot be further broken down and are believed to be present in all human languages (Frommherz, 2022; Sudipa et al., 2019). Each unit serves as the foundation for constructing a consistent and cross-culturally understandable explanation of meaning. NSM also introduces universal syntax, which consists of fixed patterns in the combination of original meanings to form complex representations of meaning in the form of simple paraphrases (Pearl, 2021). This allows for the analysis of meaning to be conducted independently of the unique grammatical constructions of each language.

NSM is used as the main framework for analyzing the meaning of Javanese carrying verbs in a structured and conceptually explicit way. More specifically, NSM is relevant to this study because the 23 verbs examined here belong to the same semantic field of 'carrying', yet they are not semantically interchangeable. Their distinctions reside in components like as body position, support on body, instrumentality, the type of entity carried and social circumstance. This is why NSM is used to clarify semantic parts that enable one carrying verb to be distinguished from another in a manner which does not assume circular reasoning. Constructing semantic explications consisting of combinations of semantic primes, following the NSM tenet that lexical meanings should be explicated unambiguously and non-circularly (Gašpar et al., 2023). Such models are verified on this basis as they avoid uncertainty and ensure that semantics is maintained in the investigation. In this way, NSM assists in teasing out fine semantic distinctions within a single lexical domain when differences in meaning are closely associated with bodily techniques and culturally determined patterns of action.

The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) framework postulates a number of universal semantic primes that are found in all human languages and cannot be decomposed into more basic meanings (Thompson et al., 2022). Some of these primes are such words as DO, MOVE, FEEL, THINK, WANT, SOMEONE, SOMETHING, GOOD, and BAD. They provide the basis for the understandable and comparable description of ideas across multiple languages and cultures.

### 2.2. *Semantic structure*

Semantic structure refers to the internal and conceptual elements that constitute a lexeme. From a linguistic perspective, semantic structure refers to the fundamental arrangement of meaning encoded in a word that involves concepts like agent, action, object, direction, purpose and properties of implemented objects (Hledíková & Ševčíková, 2024; Jackendoff, 2025). Some of these are complementary pieces of information that, furthermore, come together to form a logically connected web of meaning. Semantic structure adds systematic, complementary relationships between elements (Breit et al., 2023). Isolating semantic parts in a lexeme is the crucial first step to breaking down meaning variation.

In this study, semantic structure is used to analyze the meaning of the verb *nggawa* and its synonyms in Javanese accurately. In this way, verb semantics are examined through the building blocks of individual verbs, such as who or what is initiating the act and what entity or being is being acted upon in that social or cultural context. This method enables more accurate analysis when differentiating meaning between seemingly similar verbs. This is done by creating a semantic representation of each verb's structure and demonstrating that there are differences within linguistic realms and between conceptual aspects. Semantic structures are an early foundation of a meaning-enhancing system in natural languages.

### 2.3. *Argument structure*

Argument structure is a critical part of verb analysis as it represents the relationship between a verb and nominal elements needed to form a grammatical clause. In linguistics, the term argument structure

refers to the number and types of arguments a verb allows in a grammatically correct clause (Kayama & Oshima-Takane, 2022; Sauppe et al., 2023). These arguments might be agent, theme, goal and instrument or means with different semantic roles. Verbs govern the interplay between clause components and dictate the smallest frame necessary for their semantic parsing (Kruiper et al., 2024). For its precise analysis of a verb's syntactic and semantic behavior, argument structure analysis thus provides an account of how descriptive it can be with respect to the above.

Thematic roles theory is thus a good model for describing the semantic contribution of each argument. According to Haegeman (1991), certain roles that occur regularly and prominently in such argument structures include: agent, patient, theme, experiencer, benefactive, goal, source and location. These functions encode semantic traits of participants and can differ from their grammatical forms. Thematic roles to represent the relations between the agents and also entities being carried in Javanese carrying verbs '*nggawa*'. That same framework guides the separation of core argument information from peripheral information such as route, setting and manner that may accompany an event but are not encoded by the verb.

This study examines how entities are patterned in these languages, as defined by argument structure. It accounts for how their semantic properties shape verb meaning, by tracking the number and type of core arguments that occur with each verb. A large class of verbs take two core arguments, an agent and a theme. Some constructions show locative, directional and instrumental expressions. These are often optional adjuncts and do not count as core arguments. Here, an argument is considered a core argument when the verb subcategorizes for it in order to create a well-formed clause. Next, it is worth noting that an element counts as an adjunct when its omission does not violate the grammaticality of the clause. These distributional patterns are relevant for syntactic classification and provide an account of systematic semantic differences between the verbs in the Javanese lexical system.

Javanese verbal morphology can introduce an additional core participant and change the valency pattern. Derivational patterns with applicative or benefactive functions may license a recipient or benefactive as a core argument and form a trivalent configuration. Forms built from *nggawa* plus applicative or benefactive morphology, including *-ke/-ake* and related variants in actual usage, can support a three-participant structure involving an agent, a theme, and a recipient or benefactive. This study recognizes the availability of these alternations in the broader *nggawa* system. The present analysis does not develop them in detail because the primary dataset is organized around divalent patterns.

Across the *nggawa* verbs, the dominant pattern includes an agent and a theme. The semantic nature of the theme varies and carries analytic significance. Verbs such as *manggul*, *nyunggi*, and *nggotong* typically select inanimate themes such as sacks, baskets, and tools. Verbs such as *nggendhong*, *mbopong*, *ngemban*, *munji*, and *mapah* select animate or human themes, including children, elders, and individuals who require physical support. This distinction matters for semantic analysis because it correlates with different social functions, including caregiving, intimacy, responsibility, and ceremonial participation. The study therefore treats animacy as a systematic constraint on the theme argument. This parameter helps explain meaning contrasts among verbs that share the same basic valency.

### 3. Research methods

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The purpose of this approach was to describe and examine the meaning of the verb *nggawa* in Javanese in a deep and structured manner based on its context of use. The study focuses on lexical forms that contain the concept of *nggawa* in Javanese, as well as the semantic and syntactic principles that underlie them.

#### 3.1. Data source

The data in this study were obtained from a qualitative dataset of written Javanese sources and lexical references representing various contexts of everyday language use. The data sources included *Kawruh basa Jawa pepak: rupi-rupi kawruh, kawruh basa, paramasastra, kasusastran, wayang, ugi aksara* from Daryanto (1999), and selected literary text titled *Konsep Makna Nggawa 'Membawa' dalam Bahasa Jawa: Kajian Linguistik Kognitif* from Mahanani (2025) that contained verbs related to the meaning of 'carrying'. In addition, the dataset included transcribed spoken interviews with four native Javanese speakers from Surabaya and Nganjuk, East

Java, conducted in informal conversational settings related to everyday carrying practices. Only sources that could be clearly identified and bibliographically verified were included in the dataset.

Although Javanese is spoken in various regions across Indonesia, this study specifically focused on data originating from the island of Java. This focus was based on the consideration that the region is the native area of the Javanese language and remains a place where the language is still actively used in daily communication.

This study did not aim to represent all dialectal and regional variations of Javanese, which are known to be rich and diverse. Instead, it limited its scope to lexical forms that are generally known, used, and understood by speakers from different parts of Java.

The analysis was also limited to the *Ngoko* register, which is the most commonly used informal level of the Javanese language. This register was chosen because the verbs being studied typically appear in informal, everyday settings. While *Krama* and *Madya* registers are also important and culturally significant, they are not the focus of this study.

### 3.2. Instruments

The instruments used in this study consisted of written documentation and linguistic theory tools. The documentation included quotations of Javanese texts taken from relevant sources and containing the use of the verb *nggawa*. Meanwhile, the theoretical framework used included NSM, semantic structure, and argument structure. These served as tools to describe the relationships between meaning and function in each lexicon.

### 3.3. Data collection procedure

Data collection was conducted through systematic examination of the written Javanese sources and lexical references described above. This process involved identifying, classifying, and recording *nggawa* verbs based on their occurrence in the dataset. Each verb was recorded in its original form, accompanied by its source reference and context of use, and then categorized based on its semantic and grammatical characteristics. From this process, 23 verbs were obtained for use as objects of analysis in the study. These verbs are *manggul*, *mikul*, *nggendhong*, *mbopong*, *munji*, *ngemban*, *nggotong*, *nyangking*, *nyunggi*, *ngempit*, *ngindhrit*, *nyengkiwing*, *nengguluk*, *nyeret*, *mapah*, *mandhi*, *nggembol*, *ngarak*, *nuntun*, *nyurung*, *nyangklong*, *nyengkelit*, and *mondong*.

They all belonged to the semantic field of *nggawa* 'to bring', denoting the core meaning of moving a physical object (or human) from one location to another using different body parts or techniques. Each of these verbs conveyed an act of carrying that illuminates the physical, cultural and social aspects of Javanese life. The 23 verbs in this study were the only carrying-related lexemes found from the sources studied and were then cross-checked against traditional Javanese lexicons. The spoken interview transcripts were used to support and confirm the contextual use of these verbs in natural everyday speech. Focusing on forms that are relatively familiar and recurrent in the material chosen.

The figures in question were designed by the researcher to visually depict what each verb means, or the semantics of verbs in the semantic field of *nggawa*. Figures were AI-generated, then subsequently modified by hand using digital means to ensure that depicted acts correspond well with Javanese culture and context. The figures were original visualizations supporting the analysis of semantic and argument structure and were not sourced from any copyrighted third-party sources.

### 3.4. Data analysis

The NSM theoretical framework with semantic structure and argument structure analysis were used to analyze the data. The verbs were analyzed in order to determine their basic meaningful components, internal conceptual infrastructure and relation to the arguments elements like agent, theme, tool or purpose. The NSM stage involved semantic analysis of each verb by identifying recurring semantic components in its context of use, such as which agent performs what action with which instrument upon the direct object; what specific body part is performing the action; and how it typically occurs socially,





The verb *mikul* can be accompanied by additional elements such as from the house (indicating place of origin) or using a carrying pole (indicating instrument). These elements do not affect the basic structure and are classified as adjuncts (Adt). Therefore, the basic pattern of the verb *mikul* remains S+V+O. The semantic roles of the arguments of the verb *mikul* are explained in Table 5.

The meaning of the verb *mikul* can be explained explicitly using the NSM approach, with a systematic and operational conceptual structure. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *mikul* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was not on X's body
- c. X does something with something so that Y is on two sides of X's body
- d. Because of this, one part of this something is on X's body above other parts of X's body
- e. X does something with parts of X's body so that Y does not move much
- f. X does this in order to carry Y to another place
- g. Y is an inanimate and heavy object
- h. X uses something to do this

This semantic structure shows that *mikul* refers to carrying an object with the support of a tool. The carrier places the tool on the shoulder and suspends the load on both ends. This configuration distributes the weight on both sides of the body. It supports stable and efficient movement over a distance.

The meaning of *mikul* is made clear in contrast with *manggul*. *Manggul* is dependent on physical support and does not use any other tool to assist. *Mikul* needs a tool to help distribute and balance the load on each side of the body. Speakers thus cannot use *mikul* when the object is simply resting on the shoulder, without any supporting instrument. This contrast indicates that the semantic core feature that separates *mikul* from *manggul* is instrument-based suspension. Table 6 summarizes the semantic properties of the verb *mikul*.

This verb *mikul* denotes a carrying method unique to the region, characterized by sound physical skill and an even distribution of mass on an assist. The interaction of agent, object and tool creates a particular meaning structure that no other carrying verb can replace without altering the whole inflection of what is going on.

#### 4.4. Verb *nggendhong*

The verb *nggendhong* in Javanese indicates the action of carrying something or someone by attaching it to the front or back of the body. The object is carried in an attached position and held using the hands or assisted by a cloth such as a scarf wrapped around the carrier's body. This carrying technique is commonly used in childcare, but is also often applied to carry items such as baskets, jamu bottles, or small merchandise. In social practice, *nggendhong* can represent practical and symbolic functions that imply physical closeness, familiarity, or efficiency in mobility.

**Table 5.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *mikul*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

**Table 6.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *mikul*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Shoulder (support), hand (holder)
Assistive devices	Yes (stick, pole)
Weight of items	Weight
Size of objects	Medium to heavy
Type of objects	[+Inanimate object], [+paired], [+can be hung]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Medium to far
Social context	Agriculture, transportation of produce, traditional physical labor

The verb *nggendhong* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], which is the person who carries with physical strength and awareness. The second argument is the theme [+human] or [+inanimate object], which is realized as an object in the form of a small human, such as a child, or an inanimate object that can be carried attached to the body. The verb *nggendhong* does not form a monovalent structure because the object being carried is the core element. There is also no trivalent structure because auxiliary devices such as scarves are only additional information and not fixed arguments. The basic sentence structure of the verb *nggendhong* is explained in Table 7.

Besides *nggendhong* [+inanimate], the verb can also be used for [+human]. A sentence like the father *nggendhong* his child shows that the object can also be a human. The presence of the tool is optional, so the basic sentence pattern remains S+V+O, with additional elements classified as adjunct (Adt). The semantic roles of the arguments of the verb *nggendhong* are explained in Table 8 below.

The meaning of the verb *nggendhong* can be explained explicitly through the NSM approach, which forms meaning in conceptual structures. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *nggendhong* based on the NSM approach is as follows.






- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was not on X's body
- c. Because of this, Y is on one part of X's body for some time
- d. X does something with parts of X's body, or with something, so that Y stays in this place
- e. Because of this, Y does not fall
- f. X does this in order to carry Y to another place
- g. Y is a small human or an inanimate object that cannot move like this alone

This explanation shows that *nggendhong* denotes a carrying technique that keeps the carried entity in direct contact with the carrier's body. Childcare and similar activities are common contexts in which speakers use this verb. This action requires control through posture and movement. It frequently signals proximity between the actor and what is being carried.

A contrast with *ngemban* and *mbopong* makes the semantic boundary of *nggendhong* clearer. *Ngemban* usually uses cloth support. This cloth is designed to stabilize the child, and it allows the carrier's hands to remain relatively free for much of the action. Throughout the carrying event, *mbopong* uses hands as its main support. *Nggendhong* offers more freedom in terms of body position. It allows the carried entity to remain attached to the body rather than being supported continuously by the hands. This is why one avoids the use of *mbopong* when carrying an entity that remains attached to the body without further manual holding. In that sense, *nggendhong* is still applicable. This contrast demonstrates that bodily attachment is the key semantic component of *nggendhong*. Table 9 shows the semantic properties of the verb *nggendhong*.

The verb *nggendhong* describes a style of carrying that depends on physical contact and bodily flexibility, suggesting a social and cultural connection between the agent and the carried object. In other words, its semantic structure cannot be substituted with other verbs of carrying without changing the dynamic of the orientation and technique and proximity employed in the act of carrying.

**Table 7.** Syntactic Patterns of the verb *nggendhong*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence				Image
S+V+O	 <i>Mbah</i> Grandma 'Grandma carries a basket of herbal medicine.'	 <i>nggendhong</i> Carry	 <i>keranjang</i> Basket	 <i>jamu</i> Herbal drink	

**Table 8.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nggendhong*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+human], [+inanimate]	Object (O)



The semantics of *mbopong* emerge by contrast with *nggendhong* and *ngemban*. In the case of *mbopong*, the hands are used as both the primary and continuous support throughout a carrying event. *Nggendhong* enables the carried person to stay physically connected to the body. The hands can bear the weight, but they do not have to do so constantly. *Ngemban* usually employs a cloth that secures the child, with the carrier’s hands remaining relatively free. For this reason, speakers do not use *mbopong* when the person being carried does not receive continuous support from the hands. In that sense, *nggendhong* or *ngemban* is more applicable. This differentiation confirms that continuous hand-based support is the prototypical semantic property of *mbopong*. Table 12 presents the details of the semantic properties of the verb *mbopong*.

The verb *mbopong* serves both a technical and social role in the act of carrying. This technique is applied when the speaker desires full control of the carried object due to its shape or fragility. *Mbopong* is one of the forms of carrying in the Javanese lexical system that shows more specific attention and intention.

**4.6. Verb munji**

The verb *munji* in Javanese describes the action of carrying a small child on one’s shoulders. In this position, the child’s legs dangle on the right and left sides of the carrier’s neck, while the child’s hands usually hold the head or forehead of the person carrying them. This technique is commonly used by adults/parents, especially men, in a familiar and relaxed atmosphere. This position provides a sense of security for the child and allows the carrier to walk with an upright posture and relatively free hands.

The verb *munji* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], which is the conscious and physically capable actor. The second argument is the theme [+human], which is the child who is the object of the action. This technique cannot be performed by animals, nor is it intended for inanimate objects. There is no monovalent structure because the action of carrying requires the presence of a human object. There is also no trivalent structure because there are no fixed complements or tools required in the construction of the verb *munji*. The syntactic pattern of the verb *munji* is explained in Table 13 below.

The sentence can be expanded with additional information. For example, *munji* around the town square indicates direction or place, but does not affect the core structure. This element is classified as an adjunct (Adt) and is not part of the main argument structure. The semantic role of the verb argument *munji* is described in Table 14 below.


The meaning of the verb *munji* can be explained through universal conceptual forms. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *munji* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Y is a small child

**Table 12.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *mbopong*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Hands
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to moderate
Size of objects	Small to medium
Type of objects	[+human]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Short
Social context	Care, assistance, respect, special handling

**Table 13.** Syntactic pattern of the verb *munji*.

Syntactic patterns			Syntactic patterns		Syntactic patterns
S+V+O	ꦧꦩꦥꦺꦤ꧀ꦠꦺꦝꦸꦏ꧀ꦩꦸꦤꦗꦶ	ꦩꦸꦤꦗꦶꦩꦸꦤ꧀ꦠꦺꦝꦸꦏ꧀ꦩꦸꦤꦗꦶ	ꦩꦸꦤꦗꦶ	ꦲ	
	<i>Bapak</i>	<i>munji</i>	<i>anak</i>	-e	
	Father	Carry	Child	His	
	'The father carries his child.'				

- c. Because of this, Y is on one part of X's body above other parts of X's body
- d. Y's legs are on two sides of another part of X's body
- e. Y holds one part of X's body with parts of Y's body
- f. X walks while carrying Y in that position
- g. X does not use any tools
- h. X and Y know each other and are close

This explanation shows that *munji* encodes a carrying technique and a relational setting between an adult and a young child. The action signals protection and familiarity. Speakers associate it with a relaxed interaction in which the adult controls movement and the child remains secure.

The semantic range of *munji* becomes evident by contrast with the terms *manggul*, *mikul*, and *mbopong*. *Manggul* and *mikul* are used for inanimate loads and do not involve a child as the carried participant. *Mbopong* requires continuous hand support throughout the carrying event. *Munji* places a child on the upper body so that the child sits high with their legs resting on either side of the carrier's neck or shoulders. This position also frees the carrier's hands for much of the movement. For this reason, speakers do not use *munji* when the child is carried in the arms or does not sit on the upper part of the body. This difference indicates that the core semantic feature of *munji* is 'seated positioning on the upper body'. Table 15 below shows the semantic properties of the verb *munji*.

*Munji* is a verb with powerful social functions in Javanese. This suggests that the actor and object have a close relationship. The action of carrying performed by this verb cannot be substituted with another, which would name not only the same position but also a different emotional relation in that body.

#### 4.7. Verb *ngemban*

In Javanese, the verb *ngemban* refers specifically to carrying another person, such as a small child, on the front of one's body while supporting their back with a long cloth or scarf wrapped around the body of the carrier. This cloth provides the child with support and stability while being carried. This technique is a common practice in traditional childcare, domestic activities, and other cultural contexts in the Javanese community.

The verb *ngemban* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], which is the person who consciously carries and controls the position of the body and the tool. The second argument is the theme [+human], which is the child or other human being being carried in a position attached to the chest. A monovalent structure is not found because the meaning of carrying always requires the presence of an object. A trivalent structure also does not appear because tools such as a shawl are only descriptions, not fixed arguments in the grammatical construction. The basic syntactic pattern of the verb *ngemban* is explained in Table 16 below.

An element such as using a sling can be added to indicate the use of a supporting tool. However, because it is optional, this element is categorized as an adjunct (Adt) and does not change the basic

**Table 14.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of verbs *munji*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+human]	Object (O)

**Table 15.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *munji*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Shoulders, neck
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to moderate (small children)
Size of objects	Small (sufficient for sitting on shoulders)
Type of objects	[+human]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Close
Social context	Nurturing, fatherhood, intimacy, play, affective relationship

structure of the sentence. The semantic roles of the verb arguments *ngemban* are explained in Table 17 below.

The verb *ngemban* is interpreted through the NSM approach as a series of actions that involve placing a child in front of the body, supporting them with a cloth wrapped around the body of the carrier, and keeping them stable while being carried to another place. The following is an explanation of the verb *ngemban*.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was not on X's body
- c. Because of this, Y is on one part of X's body for some time
- d. X does something with something so that Y stays in this place
- e. Because of this, Y does not fall
- f. X does this in order to carry Y to another place
- g. Y is human and cannot walk on their own or is too small

This explanation demonstrates that *ngemban* is a carrying action which requires close body contact and uncomplicated reliance on cloth support. In the context of childcare practices that require careful care; and positioning and balance, speakers use this verb. It stabilizes the child on the front of the body and allows engaging with their body more actively as they navigate.


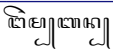


The semantic boundary of *ngemban* becomes apparent by contrast with *nggendhong* and *mbopong*. *Nggendhong* carries the child on the front or back of the body. This movement allows more freedom in body orientation and does not require an auxiliary object. *Mbopong* relies on continuous hand-based support during the carrying event. *Ngemban* traditionally uses a cloth that binds the child to the front of the body. This reduces the role of the hands as the primary support. For this reason, speakers avoid *mbopong* when a cloth holds the child against the body and the hands are not used for continuous support. In that context, *ngemban* is the more appropriate verb. This contrast indicates that cloth-supported bodily attachment is the semantic core of *ngemban*. Table 18 below presents the semantic properties of the verb *ngemban*.

The verb *ngemban* literally translates as 'to carry' and denotes a style of carrying that is specific to Javanese childrearing practices. The position of the body and the use of cloth as a supporting base distinguish *ngemban* from other types of carrying and reinforce the social relationship between actor and object.

#### 4.8. Verb *nggotong*

The verb *nggotong* in Javanese refers to the act of carrying heavy and large objects together by two or more people. The object is carried by lifting it from below, using hands or simple tools such as wood or a stretcher. This action demonstrates cooperation and physical coordination among the participants. This is because the object is too large or heavy to be lifted alone. This technique is common in practices such as mutual assistance, evacuation, or moving large objects in social and traditional physical work contexts.

**Table 16.** Syntactic pattern of the verb *ngemban*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence			Image
S+V+O	 <i>Ibu</i> Mother	 <i>ngemban</i> Carry	 <i>bayie</i> Her baby	
	'The mother carries her baby.'			

**Table 17.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *ngemban*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+human]	Object (O)





**Table 23.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nyangking*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

**Table 24.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nyangking*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Hand
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to moderate
Size of objects	Small to medium
Type of objects	[+Inanimate object], [+has a handle or strap], [+stable]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Short to medium
Social context	Domestic activities, carrying items, practical use

The semantic boundary of *nyangking* becomes clear through contrast with *mbopong* and *nggendhong*. *Mbopong* requires the hands to support the carried entity from below throughout the carrying event. *Nggendhong* places the carried entity on the front or back of the body through bodily attachment. *Nyangking* holds the object by one part and lets it hang below the hand without underhand support. For this reason, speakers do not use *nyangking* when the object needs support from below or when the object remains attached to the body. This contrast shows that hanging support from above forms the core semantic feature of *nyangking*. The main semantic characteristics of the verb *nyangking* are described in Table 24.

The verb *nyangking* forms a specific lexical meaning, denoting the act of carrying that is not only practical but also limited by the shape and nature of the object. It cannot be replaced by other verbs of carrying without changing the technique, body position, and overall meaning of the action.

#### 4.10. Verb *nyunggi*

In Javanese, the verb *nyunggi* refers to when someone carry an object that is placed on their head. The item is set in a neutral position and held at full height. This performer has used a rolled cloth for the ground for comfort and stability. But this assistance is not required. This can facilitate temporary support or to let the hands free if the object is stable enough. This technique is used in conventional and traditional activities such as carrying baskets, jugs or crops and nationally developed techniques passed on the ancestor to offspring.

The verb *nyunggi* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], which is the performer who is able to maintain balance and lift the object above the head. The second argument is the theme [+inanimate object], which is the object that can be balanced on the head. A monovalent structure does not form because this action requires the presence of an object. A trivalent structure also does not appear because the base of the head, such as a cloth, only functions as a adjunct (Adt). The basic sentence structure of the verb *nyunggi* is presented in Table 25.

Additional phrases such as from the kitchen or using a flat bamboo tray can accompany the sentence and function as place or instrument adjunct (Adt), without affecting the main S+V+O structure. The semantic roles of the verb argument *nyunggi* are detailed in Table 26.

The meaning of the verb *nyunggi* can be explained explicitly through the NSM approach. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *nyunggi* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- X does something to Y
- Previously, Y was not on top of X's body
- Because of this, Y is on one part of X's body above other parts of X's body
- X does something with parts of X's body, or with something, so that Y stays in this place
- Because of this, Y does not fall

- f. Y is an inanimate object that is not small and is quite heavy  
g. X does not use any mechanical aids, only hands or a cloth

This explanation shows that *nyunggi* refers to carrying an object by placing it on the head. The carrier maintains balance through posture control during movement. Speakers associate this technique with traditional and domestic activities that rely on practiced bodily coordination.

The semantic boundary of *nyunggi* becomes clear through contrast with *nyangking* and *manggul*. *Nyangking* involves holding an object by the hand so that it hangs below the body. *Manggul* places the object on the shoulder through direct bodily support. *Nyunggi* requires the object to rest on the head in a balanced position. This position often allows the hands to remain free. For this reason, speakers do not use *nyunggi* when the object does not rest on the head or when the action requires continuous hand or shoulder support. This contrast shows that head-based balance forms the core semantic feature of *nyunggi*. The main characteristics of the verb *nyunggi* are described in Table 27.





The verb *nyunggi* denotes the unique action of carrying in the Javanese semantic field. This technique is not only functional, but also rich in cultural meaning and skill. It cannot be replaced by other verbs of carrying without changing the technique, body position, and social values it conveys.

#### 4.11. Verb *ngempit*

The verb *ngempit* in Javanese describes the action of carrying an object by clamping it under the armpit or against the side of the body using the upper arm. The object is not held with the hands, but is kept in position by pressure between the upper arm and the body. This technique is used in situations where the hands are not free to grasp directly, such as when carrying newspapers, documents, bottles, or cloth. The object tends to be positioned sideways, parallel to the body, and remains in close contact with the carrier.

The verb *ngempit* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], that is, the performer who carries with bodily awareness. The second argument is the theme [+inanimate object], that is, an object that is light and stable enough to be clamped to the side of the body. No monovalent structure is found because the meaning of the action of carrying is not formed without an object. No trivalent structure is found either because the tool or direction does not function as a fixed complement in the construction of the verb *ngempit*. The basic sentence structure of the verb *ngempit* is presented in Table 28.

**Table 25.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nyunggi*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence		Image	
S+V+O	 <i>Ibu</i> Mother 'The mother carries a basket.'	 <i>nyunggi</i> Carry	 <i>bakul</i> Basket	

**Table 26.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nyunggi*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

**Table 27.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nyunggi*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Head
Assistive devices	None or fabric base
Weight of items	Medium to heavy
Size of objects	Medium to large
Type of objects	[+inert], [+stable shape], [+not easily spilled]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Medium to long
Social context	Traditional, domestic, manual transport, local culture

The sentence in Table 28 can be expanded with additional information such as to school (direction). This is classified as an adjunct (Adt). This element does not change the basic structure of S+V+O. The semantic role of the verb argument *ngempit* is explained in Table 29.

The explanation of the meaning of the verb *ngempit* according to the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was not on X's body
- c. Because of this, Y is on one side of X's body, near one part of X's body
- d. X does something with a part of X's body so that Y stays in this place
- e. Because of this, X's hands are not holding Y
- f. X does this so that he can carry Y to another place
- g. Y is an inanimate object and is not large or heavy
- h. X does not use any tools

This semantic structure shows that *ngempit* refers to carrying an object through body pressure rather than hand grip. The carrier holds the object against the side of the body. This configuration keeps the hands free and supports efficient movement in everyday situations.

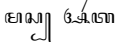



One of the semantics of *ngempit* definition only becomes clear in contrast with *nyangking* and *mbopong*. This hand hold is a requirement of *nyangking*. *Mbopong* is done with doubled hand support from below. *Ngempit* holds the object alongside the body with no contact of hands. *Ngempit* is therefore not used to refer to the situation where the object stays in the hands or when it is received by a support from below. This huge contrast shows that its core semantic property is one of clamping without hand support with the side of the body, which is clear from *ngempit*. The prominent characteristics of the verb *ngempit* are illustrated in Table 30.

The verb *ngempit* describes a type of carrying that is highly efficient and allows for movement, using a unique technique that requires the intervention of the side of your body. This verb indicates a type of carrying that is particularly practical within everyday life.

#### 4.12. Verb *ngindhit*

The verb *ngindhit* in Javanese refers to the action of carrying items with the hands, containers, or light tools in relatively large quantities. This technique is generally performed by one person while walking,

**Table 28.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *ngempit*.

Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns		Syntactic patterns	
S+V+O	 <i>Mas Arta</i> Mr. Arta 'Mr. Arta carries a book (under his arm).'	 <i>ngempit</i> carry	 <i>buku</i> book	

**Table 29.** Semantic role and grammatical function of the verb *ngempit*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate objects]	Object (O)

**Table 30.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *ngempit*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Upper arm, armpit, sides of the body
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to moderate
Size of objects	Small to medium
Type of objects	[+inert], [+clampable], [+not easily broken]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Short to medium
Social context	Daily activities, quick carrying, hands-free conditions

such as when going to the market or moving from one place to another carrying crops or merchandise. The objects being carried can be placed in the hands, but the main meaning of the verb *ngindhrit* lies in the mobility and transport function that accompanies the movement.

The verb *ngindhrit* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], which is the person carrying with conscious direction and body movement. The second argument is the theme [+inanimate object], which is the item or object being transported. This action does not form a monovalent structure because an object is always required. There is also no trivalent structure because tools such as baskets or containers are not considered fixed complements in the sentence structure. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *ngindhrit* is explained in Table 31 below.

Additional clauses can be included, such as *ngindhrit* the plants to the flower shop. The phrase to the flower shop functions as a directional modifier, while a form like using a basket can also be added to indicate an instrumental modifier. Both elements are optional and classified as adjunct (Adt) because they do not affect the basic structure of the sentence. The semantic roles of the verb arguments *ngindhrit* are explained in Table 32.

The explanation of the meaning of the verb *ngindhrit* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was not with X
- c. Because of this, X has Y with X while X moves from one place to another
- d. X does something with parts of X's body, or with something, so that Y can be moved in this way
- e. Y is an inanimate object, more than one in number or in a bundle
- f. X does this so that Y arrives at another place
- g. X does not use a vehicle or large machine

This semantic structure shows that *ngindhrit* refers to carrying as part of purposeful movement from one place to another. The carrier moves while managing a load that often consists of several items or a bundled set. Speakers commonly use this verb in household routines and market-related activities that involve manual transport.

The semantic boundary of *ngindhrit* becomes clear through contrast with *nyangking* and *nggotong*. *Nyangking* refers to carrying a single object by holding one part so that it hangs below the hand. *Nggotong* requires collective action and involves more than one carrier. *Ngindhrit* emphasizes individual mobility while carrying multiple items or a bundled load over a distance. For this reason, speakers do not use *ngindhrit* when the action involves only one hanging object or when the task requires more than one carrier. This contrast shows that individual transport of multiple or bundled items during movement forms the core semantic feature of *ngindhrit*. The main semantic characteristics of the verb *ngindhrit* are detailed in Table 33.

The verb *ngindhrit* forms a lexical meaning that reflects the action of carrying in a social and functional context. The technique relies on physical strength without heavy equipment and reflects the human role in the manual movement of goods in Javanese cultural systems.

**Table 31.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *ngindhrit*.

Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns			Syntactic patterns
S+V+O	ꦩꦧꦏ꧀ꦠꦺꦤ꧀ꦢꦸꦫꦤ꧀	ꦲ	ꦤꦒꦶꦢꦲꦶꦠ	ꦠꦺꦤ꧀ꦢꦸꦫꦤ꧀ꦥꦺꦴꦠꦺꦤ꧀
	<i>Mbok</i>	-e	<i>ngindhrit</i>	<i>tanduran</i>
	Grandmother	Her	Carry	Plants
	'Her grandmother carries plants.'			



**Table 32.** Semantic role and grammatical function of the verb *ngindhrit*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate objects]	Object (O)

### 4.13. Verb *nyengkiwing*

The verb *nyengkiwing* in Javanese describes the action of carrying an object by hanging it on the arm. The object carried is usually small or has a specific shape that allows it to be held securely. This technique is commonly used to carry books, gadgets, or other light items. The carrying position allows the hands to remain free, making this action practical in everyday activities.

The verb *nyengkiwing* belongs to the divalent category. Two main arguments form the structure of the verb *nyengkiwing*, namely the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being carried. The agent is realized as the subject and must be [+human] because the action of attaching an object to the fingers requires conscious body control. The theme is realized as an object in the form of [+inanimate object] that has a part that can be reached by the fingers. No monovalent structure was found because the verb *nyengkiwing* always requires an object. A trivalent structure also does not appear because elements such as tools or direction only function as optional complements. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nyengkiwing* is shown in Table 34.

In other forms, additional elements such as from home or to home may appear as place or directional modifiers. These elements do not affect the structure of the main argument and are classified as adjunct (Adt). The semantic roles of the two main arguments of the verb *nyengkiwing* are detailed in Table 35.

The meaning of the verb *nyengkiwing* can be explained explicitly using the NSM approach. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *nyengkiwing* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was not on X's body
- c. Because of this, one part of Y is between parts of X's body
- d. X does something with parts of X's body so that Y stays in this place
- e. Because of this, X's hands can do other things.
- f. X does this in order to carry Y to another place
- g. Y is an inanimate object and is small
- h. X does not use any additional tools

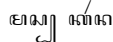



This explanation shows that *nyengkiwing* refers to a carrying technique that uses the arm or finger gaps as the main support. The carrier keeps the object in place through light suspension rather than firm gripping. This configuration keeps the hands relatively free and supports quick movement in everyday domestic settings.

*Nyangking* and *ngempit* in contrast form the semantic limit of *nyengkiwing*. *Nyangking* or holding one part of object to hang down below the hand. *Ngempit*, this term refers to clenching an object through pressure with the upper arm on something and then pressing downwards. *Nyengkiwing*, which is another type of weight hanging, engages objects suspended on the arm or between the fingers

**Table 33.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *ngindhit*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Hands, back, or entire body
Assistive devices	Present or absent (basket, container, cloth)
Weight of items	Light to moderate
Size of objects	Moderate to heavy
Type of objects	[+Inanimate objects], [+bound], [+household items]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Medium to far
Social context	Market, transportation, household economy, daily routine activities

**Table 34.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nyengkiwing*.

Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns
S+V+O	 <i>Mas Karno</i> Mr. Karno 'Mr. Karno carries a book.'	 <i>nyengkiwing</i> Carry	 <i>buku</i> Book
			

**Table 35.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nyengkiwing*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate objects]	Object (O)

**Table 36.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nyengkiwing*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Finger gaps
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to medium
Size of objects	Small to medium
Type of objects	[+Inert], [+easy to reach], [+small]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Short to medium
Social context	Daily activities, practical carrying, personal use

without a strong grip in hand and without the side-body clamping. For this reason, speakers avoid *nyengkiwing* when the object is large enough to be held firmly in the hand or pressed against one's body. This distinction indicates that *nyengkiwing* is fundamentally characterized by loose suspension on the arm or fingers. The main thematic properties of the verb *nyengkiwing* are summarized in Table 36.

*Nyengkiwing*, a verb describing such a thing, also shows flexible ways of carrying. The basis of this method is body steadiness, more precisely on the finger or arm being mainly converted into a supporting point. In Javanese, this verb represents a distinct interaction between semantic structure and argument structure.

#### 4.14. Verb *nengguluk*

The verb *nengguluk* in Javanese indicates the action of carrying an object by placing it on the shoulder and holding it in place using the side of the neck or head. This carrying technique is commonly used for long and light to medium-weight objects, such as hoes, bamboo, or sticks. The carrying position relies on the balance of the upper body and pressure from the neck or head to keep the object stable while the person is walking.


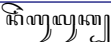

The verb *nengguluk* belongs to the divalent category. Two main arguments form the structure of the verb *nengguluk*, namely the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being carried. The agent is realized as the subject and must be [+human] because this carrying action requires body control, head balance, and positional awareness. The theme is realized as an object in the form of [+inanimate] that is light and long enough, and can be clamped or supported on the shoulders and neck. No monovalent structure is found because this action always involves an object semantically. No trivalent structure is found either because tools such as ropes or supports do not function as fixed complements in the sentence. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nengguluk* is shown in Table 37.

In some uses, elements such as from the rice field may appear and function as place modifiers. This phrase is optional and does not change the structure of the main argument. Therefore, the basic sentence pattern remains S+V+O, and the additional elements are classified as adjunct (Adt). The semantic roles of the two main arguments of the verb *nengguluk* are detailed in Table 38.

The meaning of the verb *nengguluk* can be explained explicitly using the NSM approach, which constructs meaning based on universal conceptual units. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *nengguluk* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- X does something to Y
- Previously, Y was not on X's body
- Because of this, Y is on one part of X's body above other parts of X's body
- One part of Y is touching one part of X's body near X's head
- X does something with parts of X's body so that Y stays in this place while X moves

**Table 37.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nengguluk*.

Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns	Syntactic patterns
S+V+O			
	<i>Simbah</i> Grandparent 'Grandparent carries a hoe.'	<i>nengguluk</i> Carry	<i>cangkul</i> Hoe

**Table 38.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nengguluk*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate objects]	Object (O)

- f. X does this in order to carry Y to another place
- g. Y is an inanimate object that is long or elongated
- h. X does not use additional tools

This explanation shows that *nengguluk* refers to a carrying technique that depends on balance and pressure from the side of the head. Speakers use this verb in physical work and agricultural settings when they move long objects manually without tools. The object stays stable because the carrier controls its position through upper-body coordination.

The semantic boundary of *nengguluk* becomes clear through contrast with *manggul* and *nyunggi*. *Manggul* places an object on the shoulder and relies on hand support to keep it stable. *Nyunggi* places an object on top of the head in a balanced position. *Nengguluk* supports a long object on the shoulder and stabilizes it with the side of the neck or head. For this reason, speakers do not use *nengguluk* when the object rests on the shoulder with continuous hand support or when the object balances on top of the head. This contrast shows that lateral head–shoulder support forms the core semantic feature of *nengguluk*. The main semantic characteristics of the verb *nengguluk* are detailed in Table 39.

The verb *nengguluk* conveys the meaning of carrying in a manner that is distinctive, efficient, and inherent to agrarian communities. The technique used cannot be replaced by other forms of carrying without changing the position of the body, the type of object, or the social context of the action.

#### 4.15. Verb *nyeret*

The verb *nyeret* in Javanese indicates the action of carrying by dragging an object across the ground or floor. The object being carried is not lifted, but pulled while remaining in contact with the surface, usually by holding one end or side. This technique is often used for heavy, large, or impractical objects, such as cabinets, tables, or large pieces of wood. The movement of carrying through *nyeret* tends to produce a friction sound and visually shows a process of carrying that depends on pulling force, not lifting force.

The verb *nyeret* belongs to the divalent category. The first argument is the agent [+human], which is the actor who consciously pulls the object. The second argument is the theme [+inanimate object], which is a large or heavy object that cannot be lifted manually. A monovalent structure does not form because the meaning of carrying is not achieved without an object. A trivalent structure is also not found because there are no fixed complements that are part of the syntactic construction. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nyeret* is shown in Table 40.

In other forms, a phrase such as from the room can be added as a place modifier. These phrases are optional and do not change the core structure of the sentence. Therefore, the pattern remains S+V+O, and the additional elements are classified as adjunct (Adt). The semantic roles of the two main arguments of the verb *nyeret* are explained in Table 41.

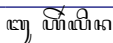


The meaning of the verb *nyeret* can be explained explicitly using the NSM approach. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *nyeret* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Previously, Y was on the floor or ground

**Table 39.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nengguluk*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Shoulders, neck, sides of the head
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to moderate
Size of objects	Moderate to long
Type of objects	[+Inanimate objects], [+elongated], [+work tools]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Short to medium
Social context	Agriculture, physical labor, traditional tool transport

**Table 40.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nyeret*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence	Image	
S+V+O	<p>    <i>Bu Erlina</i>                      Mrs. Erlina                      'Mrs. Erlina carries a suitcase.'                 </p>	<p>    <i>koper</i>                      suitcase                 </p>	

**Table 41.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nyeret*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

- c. Because of this, X does something to one part of Y so that Y moves on the ground
- d. Because of this, one part of Y is always touching the ground while X moves
- e. X does this in order to carry Y to another place
- f. Y is an inanimate object that is very large or very heavy
- g. X cannot lift Y above the ground
- h. X does not lift Y, but only pulls it

This explanation shows that *nyeret* refers to moving an object by dragging it along the ground. The carrier does not lift the object. The action relies on pulling force and continuous contact between the object and the surface during movement.

The semantic boundary of *nyeret* becomes clear through contrast with *nggotong* and *manggul*. *Nggotong* requires more than one carrier and involves lifting the object off the ground. *Manggul* also lifts the object and places it on the shoulder through direct bodily support. *Nyeret* keeps the object on the ground while the actor moves it across the surface. For this reason, speakers do not use *nyeret* when the object is lifted above the surface. This contrast shows that continuous surface contact during movement forms the core semantic feature of *nyeret*. The main semantic characteristics of the verb *nyeret* are detailed in Table 42.

The verb *nyeret* reflects an efficient carrying technique when lifting is not possible. Its argument structure and semantic structure indicate that this action is functional, dependent on the attractiveness of the body, and an important part of the Javanese lexical system for representing friction-based carrying and direct contact with surfaces.

#### 4.16. Verb *mapah*

The Javanese verb *mapah* denotes the act of guiding or accompanying someone while walking together. In this action, the agent assists a person who has difficulty walking by walking beside them and providing light physical support, such as holding the hand or supporting the arm. The object is neither carried nor lifted, but is guided to maintain balance and to be able to walk alongside the agent. This guiding technique is better understood as walking companionship, and is commonly performed for young children, the elderly, or individuals with physical limitations.

The verb *mapah* belongs to the divalent category because it involves two core arguments: the agent as the actor and the theme as the person being guided. The agent is realized as the subject and must

be [+human], since the act of guiding requires bodily awareness, social empathy, and sensitivity to the other person's condition. The theme is also [+human], realized as the object, typically someone who is not fully independent in their movement, such as a child, an elderly person, or someone who is unwell. No monovalent structure was observed, since this action always involves two participants moving together. Trivalent structures also do not appear, because direction or location functions only as an optional adverbial. The basic syntactic pattern of *mapah* is presented in Table 43.

In extended sentences, phrases such as *menyang kamar* 'to the room' may occur and function as optional locative adverbials that do not affect the core argument structure. Therefore, the basic pattern remains S+V+O, and additional elements are classified as adverbials (ADV). The semantic roles of the two main arguments are summarized in Table 44.

The meaning of *mapah* can be explicitly formulated using the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) approach. The semantic explication of *mapah* is as follows:

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Before this, Y was not walking together with X
- c. Because of this, X is very close to Y while they move
- d. X does something with a hand or an arm to Y so that Y can walk
- e. X and Y walk together to another place
- f. Because of this, Y does not fall or lose direction
- g. X does this because Y cannot walk well alone
- h. Y is a human who is small, old, or weak

This semantic structure shows that *mapah* refers to guiding or accompanying a person during movement. The action involves physical proximity and light support. Speakers use this verb to describe assistance that helps someone walk safely. The meaning centers on shared walking rather than on lifting or bearing a load.

The semantic boundary of *mapah* becomes clear through contrast with *mbopong*, *nggendhong*, and *ngindhrit*. *Mbopong* and *nggendhong* require the person being helped to be lifted off the ground during the carrying event. *Ngindhrit* applies to transporting objects rather than people. *Mapah* requires both participants to walk together on the ground. The helped person keeps the feet in contact with the surface while moving with the guide. For this reason, speakers do not use *mapah* when the person is

**Table 42.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nyeret*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Hands
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to very heavy
Size of objects	Medium to large
Type of objects	[+Inert objects], [+difficult to lift], [+long or large]
Number of actors	Individual (may also be plural, depending on the size of the object)
Carrying distance	Short to medium
Social context	Household, physical work, moving large objects

**Table 43.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *mapah*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence				Image
S+V+O	 <i>Andi</i> Andi 'Andi carry his grandparent.'	 <i>mapah</i> Carry	 <i>simbah</i> Grandparent	 -e His	

**Table 44.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *mapah*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+human]	Object (O)

lifted or carried off the ground. This contrast shows that shared walking with light physical support forms the core semantic feature of *mapah*. The main semantic characteristics of the verb *mapah* are detailed in Table 45.

The verb *mapah* illustrates an act of walking accompaniment marked by empathy and light physical support. This technique cannot be replaced by other carrying verbs without losing its embedded social and cultural meaning. The relationship between argument structure and semantic structure indicates that *mapah* remains within the lexical field of *nggawa* ‘to carry’, although it occupies a peripheral position. The act does not involve the physical transfer of a load. Instead, it reflects a shared movement and social involvement between agent and theme. Therefore, *mapah* extends the core meaning of *nggawa* from a physical domain to a social one, emphasizing values such as empathy, respect, and care in Javanese cultural practices.

#### 4.17. Verb *mandhi*

The verb *mandhi* in Javanese refers to the act of carrying an object, especially a weapon, by slinging it over the shoulder. The object is carried across or parallel to the body and supported by one or both hands. This technique emphasizes physical readiness and body control, and often has symbolic meaning because it is associated with the military, traditional ceremonies, or certain social roles such as soldiers and security officers. Unlike *manggul*, which is used in the context of general physical labor, *mandhi* is more related to carrying weapons or official objects.


The verb *mandhi* belongs to the divalent category. Two main arguments form the structure of the verb *mandhi*, namely the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being carried. The agent is realized as the subject and must be [+human] because this action requires awareness of position, body balance, and responsibility for carrying formal objects. The theme is realized as an object of [+inanimate], specifically in the form of weapons or heavy, long tools, such as rifles or clubs. A monovalent structure is not found because this type of carrying action always requires the presence of an object. A trivalent structure also does not appear because there are no fixed complements that necessarily accompany the verb *mandhi*. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *mandhi* is shown in Table 46.

In some types of sentences, phrases such as to the field or from the base may appear as place or directional modifiers. These elements are optional and do not affect the core structure. Therefore, the main pattern remains S+V+O, and the additional elements are classified as adjunct (Adt). The semantic roles of the two main arguments of the verb *mandhi* are explained in Table 47.

**Table 45.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *mapah*.

Component	Specification
Body part	Hands, arms, shoulders
Instrument	None
Object weight	Not relevant (the object is not lifted)
Object size	Human, proportional
Object type	[+Human], [+not independent], [+requires walking assistance]
Number of actors	Individual
Distance moved	Short to medium
Social context	Companionship, empathy, physical assistance, social care

**Table 46.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *mandhi*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence					Image
S+V+O	ꦥꦿꦗꦸꦂꦶꦠ꧀ <i>Prajurit</i> Soldier	ꦏꦸꦮꦶ <i>kuwi</i> That	ꦩꦤ꧀ꦝꦶ <i>mandhi</i> Carry	ꦧꦺꦝꦶꦭ꧀ <i>bedhil</i> Rifle	ꦲ -e His	
	‘That soldier carries his rifle.’					

**Table 47.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *mandhi*.

Semantic role	Grammatical function
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate objects]	Object (O)

The meaning of the verb *mandhi* can be explained explicitly using the NSM approach. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *mandhi* based on the NSM approach is as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Y is an inanimate object of one kind (for example, a weapon)
- c. Because of this, Y is on one part of X's body near X's shoulder
- d. X does something with parts of X's body so that Y stays in this place while X moves
- e. X does this in a way such that X can use Y at any time
- f. X does this in order to move Y to another place
- g. X does not use additional tools

This semantic structure shows that *mandhi* refers to a carrying technique with social and symbolic meaning. Speakers associate this action with readiness and disciplined conduct in formal settings. The verb often applies to carrying weapons or official objects in a controlled manner.

The semantic boundary of *mandhi* becomes clear through contrast with *manggul* and *nengguluk*. *Manggul* is used in physical labor and it does not encode readiness for use. *Nengguluk* emphasizes balance between the shoulder and the side of the head when carrying long objects. *Mandhi* places an elongated object on the upper body in a position that signals preparedness and formal responsibility, especially for weapons. For this reason, speakers avoid *mandhi* in ordinary labor contexts and in routine tool transport that lacks readiness implications. This contrast shows that readiness-oriented shoulder carrying forms the core semantic feature of *mandhi*. The main semantic characteristics of the verb *mandhi* are described in Table 48.

The verb *mandhi* conveys the meaning of carrying, which is not only technical but also representative. This technique involves conscious use of the body and reflects discipline and honor. In the Javanese lexical system, *mandhi* has a special place as a form of carrying that reflects the social role and physical readiness of the actor.

#### 4.18. Verb *nggembol*

The verb *nggembol* in Javanese refers to the act of carrying something by placing it in the folds of a piece of cloth or using an accessory such as a scarf, sarong, or sling. The object is wrapped, tied, and then tucked into the folds of the cloth on the side of the carrier's stomach. This technique allows the carrier to move more freely because the load does not need to be held directly with the hands but is held by the folds of the cloth. The verb *nggembol* is used to carry personal items, money, or small items, especially in activities that require high mobility.

The verb *nggembol* belongs to the divalent category, consisting of two main arguments, namely the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being carried. The agent is realized as the subject and is in the form of [+human] because the action of carrying requires bodily awareness and binding techniques. The theme is realized as an object in the form of [inanimate object] that can be wrapped or tied and tucked in a stable manner. There is no monovalent structure because the meaning of the verb *nggembol* requires the presence of an object. A trivalent structure also does not appear because elements such as tools only function as complements (ADV), not mandatory complements. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nggembol* is described in Table 49.

**Table 48.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *mandhi*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Shoulders, hands
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Medium to heavy
Size of objects	Medium to long
Type of objects	[+Inanimate object], [+weapon], [+elongated], [+formal or official]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Medium to far
Social context	Military, security, traditional ceremonies, symbols of alertness

An element such as *to the market* in the original sentence can be added as a directional adjunct (Adt). This element is optional and does not affect the core structure of the sentence. Thus, the basic pattern remains S+V+O, and information such as place, tool, or direction is classified as adjunctive information. The semantic roles of the two main arguments are explained in Table 50.

The meaning of the verb *nggembol* can be explained using the NSM approach as follows.






- a. someone X does something to object Y
- b. previously Y was not on X's body
- c. Because of this, X puts Y inside one part of something that is on X's body (for example, cloth)
- d. X does something so that this thing closes around Y
- e. Y remains there because it is held by this thing
- f. X carries Y to another place while walking
- g. X does not hold Y with their hands
- h. Y is an inanimate object that is not too large
- i. X does this so that X's hands can do other things

This explanation shows that *nggembol* refers to carrying that keeps a small load stable against the stomach through cloth folds worn on the body. The carrier secures the object inside the cloth so that it stays in place during movement. This technique supports efficiency because the hands remain free while the carrier stays active.

The semantic boundary of *nggembol* becomes clear through contrast with *ngempit* and *nyangking*. *Ngempit* clamps an object against the side of the body through pressure from the upper arm. *Nyangking* holds an object by one part so that it hangs below the hand. *Nggembol* encloses and secures an object within folds of cloth attached to the body. For this reason, speakers do not use *nggembol* when no enclosing cloth is involved or when the object is held directly by the hand or arm. This contrast shows that enclosure within body-worn cloth forms the core semantic feature of *nggembol*. The semantic details of the verb *nggembol* are presented in Table 51.

The verb *nggembol* forms a unique lexical meaning in the Javanese semantic system. This technique shows the close relationship between bodily functions, traditional tools, and the need for mobility in everyday life. It cannot be freely replaced by other verbs without changing the technique or social nuances contained within it.

**Table 49.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nggembol*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence			Image	
S+V+O	 Mbok Mother 'Her mother carries money.'	 -e Her	 nggembol Carry	 duwek Money	

**Table 50.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nggembol*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

**Table 51.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nggembol*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Belly
Assistive devices	Yes (shawl, sarong, sling)
Weight of items	Light to medium
Size of objects	Small to medium
Type of objects	[+Inert objects], [+wrapped or tied], [+flexible]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Medium to long
Social context	Household, small trade, travel, practical mobility



audience and ceremonial purpose. This difference reveals that public display and communal representation constitute the essence of *ngarak*. The overall semantic characteristics of the verb *ngarak* are illustrated in Table 54.

The verb *ngarak* has specific lexical meaning in the Javanese semantic system. It embodies collective representation in the act of carrying. This technique respects performance and social participation in the community. Thus, this verb of *ngarak* cannot be substituted with other verbs of carrying without losing its meaning and cultural significance.

**4.20. Verb nuntun**

In Javanese, the verb *nuntun* describes carrying someone or something by directing, guiding, or leading them in a way that they can stay in a different place. It is deliberate and entails actual closeness of the agent to the goal. The one who is guided could be a human being, an animal or even a moving object like bicycle or a cart. carrying in this way differs from lifting since the weight is not moved through force but rather, it is directed through direct accompaniment.

The verb *nuntun* belongs to the divalent category. The two main arguments that form its basic structure are the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being carried. The agent is realized as the subject and is [+human] because the act of guiding requires consciousness, body control, and social responsibility. The theme is realized as an object that can be [+human, animal] that can be moved manually but requires direction. No monovalent structure is found because the meaning of this action requires the existence of an object. The trivalent structure also does not appear because the tool or direction only functions as an explanation, not a grammatical complement. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nuntun* is explained in Table 55.

A phrase such as from the market can be added as a directional modifier. These elements do not affect the main structure of the sentence and are categorized as adjunct (Adt). The semantic roles of the two main arguments are explained in Table 56.


The meaning of the verb *nuntun* can be explained through the NSM approach as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. Y can move by itself

**Table 54.** Semantic features of the verb *ngarak*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Not specific (hands, upper body)
Assistive devices	May be present (stretchers, decorations, vehicles)
Weight of items	Varies (not literally relevant)
Size of objects	Varies, often large or symbolic
Type of objects	[+Human or inanimate], [+socially meaningful], [+representative]
Number of actors	Usually plural (communal)
Carrying distance	Medium to distant
Social context	Traditional ceremonies, celebrations, culture, symbolic processions

**Table 55.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nuntun*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence	Image
S+V+O Bapak Father 'Father carries a buffalo.'	Bapak nuntun kebo. Carry Buffalo	

**Table 56.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nuntun*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+human, animal]	Object (O)

- c. Because of this, Y does not know where to go or cannot go well alone
- d. X does something with a hand or part of X's body to Y
- e. X walks with Y while keeping Y moving in the right direction
- f. X does this so that Y arrives at another place
- g. X does not lift Y above the ground

This explanation shows that *nuntun* refers to guiding movement through direction and accompaniment rather than through physical transfer of weight. The actor keeps the theme moving along an intended path. The meaning centers on controlled shared movement, not on lifting or bearing a load.

The semantic contour of *nuntun* emerges from contrast with *mapah*, *nyeret*, and *nggotong*. *Mapah* requires close bodily support between two human beings walking together. *Nyeret* is the act of dragging an item along while maintaining its contact with the ground. *Nggotong* requires lifting an object from the ground using coordinated physical strength. *Nuntun* features a theme that can move on its own but still needs guidance during movement. Thus, speakers do not use *nuntun* when the entity is lifted, dragged along the surface, or physically supported in a way that involves bearing its weight. This contrast illustrates that non-lifting directional guidance is the defining semantic feature of *nuntun*. Table 57 summarizes the semantic properties of the verb *nuntun*.

The verb *nuntun* is an action of carrying relational and functional meanings. It signifies a social position that directs the progress of others but does not control anyone fully. In the lexical system of Javanese parser, *nuntun* is a carrying that focuses on significant activity and care in regard to the instruction and safety of what it brought.

#### 4.21. Verb *nyurung*

The verb *nyurung* in Javanese indicates the act of carrying something by pushing it forward using the hands, body, or tools. The object being carried is not lifted, but rather moved by applying pressure from behind or from the side. Objects that are pushed generally have a shape that can be moved, such as a cart, table, door, small vehicle, or wheelchair. This action involves physical strength and directional control simultaneously, with the aim of moving the object to another place.

The verb *nyurung* belongs to the divalent category. The two main arguments that form its basic structure are the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being pushed. The agent is realized as the subject and is [+human] because this action requires initiative, body control, and positional awareness. The theme is realized as an object that can be [+inanimate] and can be moved manually without being lifted. A monovalent structure is not found because the object is an essential part of the meaning of this action. A trivalent structure is also not found because tools or direction are not syntactically required complements but only function as modifiers. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nyurung* is described in Table 58.

Phrases such as to the market or from the house can be added as directional or locational adjunct (Adt) and do not affect the main sentence structure. The semantic roles of the verb arguments *nyurung* are explained in Table 59.



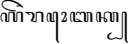

The meaning of the verb *nyurung* can be explained through the NSM approach as follows.

- a. someone X does something to object Y
- b. someone X does something to Y

**Table 57.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nuntun*.

Components	Components
Body parts	Body parts
Assistive devices	Assistive devices
Weight of items	Weight of items
Size of objects	Size of objects
Type of objects	Type of objects
Number of actors	Number of actors
Carrying distance	Carrying distance
Social context	Social context

**Table 58.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nyurung*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence			Image
S+V+O	 Bapak Father 'Father carries a cart.'	 <i>nyurung</i> Carry	 <i>gerobak</i> Cart	

**Table 59.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nyurung*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

- c. Before this, Y is on the ground or on a surface
- d. X is behind or beside Y
- e. X touches or presses Y with their hands or body
- f. Because of this, Y moves forward on the same surface
- g. X does this so that Y reaches another place
- h. X does not lift Y above the ground
- i. X does not pull Y, but pushes it

This explanation shows that *nyurung* refers to moving an object through pushing force while it remains in contact with a surface. The actor controls direction through steady pressure. The meaning centers on forward displacement without lifting.

The semantic scope of *nyurung* is clarified in contrast with *nyeret*, *nuntun*, and *nggotong*. *Nyeret* involves pulling an object toward the actor while that object stays on the ground. *Nuntun* means moving something by leading an independently movable entity. *Nggotong* involves physically cooperating to lift an object off the ground. *Nyurung* makes an object move forward through pressure from behind or from the side. The actor neither pulls the object nor lifts it. For this reason, *nyurung* is not used when the movement involves dragging, guiding, or lifting. This contrast demonstrates that pushing forward along a surface constitutes the prototypical gesture of *nyurung*. Table 60 lists the major semantic features of the verb *nyurung*.

In the Javanese carrying action domain, *nyurung* gains a unique lexical meaning. This motion is all about creating active forward pressure with your body, not a lift. It can also be used for social purposes, helping living beings or just moving heavy objects and almost everything we do in daily life. *Nyurung* was found in Javanese semantic system as a carrying technique, and cannot be replaced with other verbs without altering meaning and function.

#### 4.22. Verb *nyangklong*

The verb *nyangklong* in Javanese denotes the action of carrying an object by hanging it on the shoulder using a strap or handle. The object is usually a bag, bundle, or container with a long strap that is slung diagonally from one shoulder to the opposite side of the body. This technique allows the hands to remain free, and the weight is distributed across the shoulders and back, making it a practical and ergonomic form of carrying. *Nyangklong* is commonly used in the context of travel, school activities, or field work.

The verb *nyangklong* belongs to the divalent category. Two main arguments are present in the structure of the verb *nyangklong*, namely the agent as the performer and the theme as the object being carried. The agent is realized as the subject and must be [+human]. This is because this action requires body awareness, a stable posture, and mobility. The theme is realized as an object in the form of [+inanimate] that has a strap or handle that can be worn on the body. A monovalent structure is not found because this action always requires an object semantically. A trivalent structure also does not appear

because the rope or handle is part of the object, not a separate grammatical complement. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *nyangklong* is shown in Table 61.

Phrases such as to school or from home can be added as place or directional adjunct (Adt) and do not affect the main syntactic structure. The semantic roles of the verb arguments *nyangklong* are explained in Table 62.

The meaning of the verb *nyangklong* can be explained explicitly using the NSM approach as follows.

- a. X does something to Y
- b. previously Y was not on X's body
- c. X puts one part of Y (a long strap or handle) on one shoulder of X
- d. because of this, Y is on one side of X's body, hanging across X's body
- e. X walks while carrying Y
- f. X's hands do not directly hold Y
- g. Y is an inanimate object with a long strap or handle
- h. X does this so that X can move easily while carrying Y

This explanation shows that *nyangklong* refers to carrying that supports free movement through balanced weight distribution. The carrier uses the upper body, especially the shoulder and back, to keep the load stable in an ergonomic position.


The semantic boundary of *nyangklong* is made clear in contrast with the terms *nyangking*, *nggembol*, and *mandhi*. *Nyangking* means holding an object in such a way that it hangs below the hand. *Nggembol* wraps an object inside fabric worn on the body. *Mandhi* places a long object in a controlled position that indicates readiness and formal responsibility. *Nyangklong* balances an object diagonally across the body by means of a strap on the shoulder. Hence, *nyangklong* is not used when there is no strap, when the object is enclosed in cloth, or when the object is carried in a readiness-oriented position. This contrast demonstrates that shoulder suspension by means of a strap constitutes the core semantic feature of *nyangklong*. Table 63 shows the semantic features of the verb *nyangklong*.

*Nyangklong* forms its own meaning in the continuum of Javanese lexica: it is a way of carrying that privileges efficiency, free movement, and social functionality. The verb cannot be substituted without modifying the carrying method, the load placement on the human body and therefore, the social role of such an action.

**Table 60.** Semantic features of the verb *nyurung*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Hands, body, or assistive devices
Assistive devices	May be present (handles, canes, push devices)
Weight of items	Moderate to heavy
Size of objects	Moderate to large
Type of objects	[+Inanimate objects], [+stable]
Number of actors	Individual or multiple
Carrying distance	Medium to far
Social context	Household activities, assistance, logistics, object control

**Table 61.** Syntactic patterns of the verb *nyangklong*.

Syntactic pattern	Example sentence					Image
S+V+O	ꦲꦲꦶꦁꦏꦭꦺꦁꦏꦺꦴꦭꦶꦁ	ꦱ	ꦲꦲꦶꦁꦏꦭꦺꦁꦏꦺꦴꦭꦶꦁꦏꦺꦴꦭꦶꦁ	ꦠꦱ	ꦱꦺꦏꦺꦭꦲ	
	<i>Adhik</i>	-e	<i>nyangklong</i>	<i>tas</i>	<i>sekolah</i>	
	Younger sibling	His	Carry	Bag	School	
	'His younger sibling carries a school bag.'					

**Table 62.** Semantic roles and grammatical functions of the verb *nyangklong*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)



extended carrying event. This contrast shows that under-arm clamping forms the core semantic feature of *nyengkelit*. The semantic details of the verb *nyengkelit* are presented in Table 66.

The verb *nyengkelit* forms a unique lexical meaning in the Javanese language system, namely the act of carrying that emphasizes spontaneity, efficiency, and physical flexibility. This technique cannot be replaced by other verbs without changing the way of carrying and the relationship between the body and the object.

#### 4.24. Verb *mondong*

The verb *mondong* in Javanese indicates the act of carrying an object by lifting it to chest height using both hands and hugging it toward the body. The objects carried are usually large or medium-sized items, and are held tightly so that they do not fall while being carried. This technique involves the strength of the hands and chest, as well as a slightly forward-leaning body position to maintain balance. This action is commonly performed in domestic activities or physical work such as carrying large pillows, bundles of cloth, or stacked objects that cannot be carried or carried on the shoulder.

The verb *mondong* belongs to the divalent category. This is because it involves two main arguments: the agent and the theme. The agent [+human] is realized as the subject and must be an individual who has control over their body and arm strength. The theme is realized as an object [+inanimate object] that is large or medium in size and can be lifted and held tightly with both hands. The verb *mondong* does not have a monovalent form. This is because the meaning of carrying is only formed when there is an object being carried. There is also no trivalent structure, because no tools are used and the direction of movement is optional as a modifier. The basic syntactic structure of the verb *mondong* is shown in Table 67 below.

A phrase such as a container filled with fruit can be accompanied by additional modifiers like from the room or to the outside, but these elements are optional and do not affect the main argument structure. Thus, the basic pattern remains S+V+O, and elements such as location or direction are classified as adjuncts (Adt). The semantic roles of these verb arguments are described in Table 68.

*Mondong* can be explained explicitly through the NSM approach, which forms a structure of meaning based on universal components. The explanation of the meaning of the verb *mondong* is as follows.

- a. a person X does something to an object Y
- b. Previously, Y was not in X's hands or on X's body
- c. X lifts Y up to the front of X's body, near X's chest
- d. X holds Y with both arms so that Y is pressed against X's body
- e. X carries Y to another place while doing this
- f. Y is a fairly large or heavy inanimate object
- g. X does not use any tools

**Table 65.** Semantic role and grammatical function of the verb *nyengkelit*.

Semantic role	Grammatical functions
Agent [+human]	Subject (S)
Theme [+inanimate object]	Object (O)

**Table 66.** Semantic characteristics of the verb *nyengkelit*.

Components	Specifications
Body parts	Armpit, upper arm, sides of the body
Assistive devices	None
Weight of items	Light to moderate
Size of objects	Small to medium
Type of objects	[+Inert], [+non-rigid], [+easy to clamp to the body]
Number of actors	Individual
Carrying distance	Short to medium
Social context	Daily activities, busy hands, spontaneous, practical



abstract expressions of thematic roles, showing its semantic flexibility. Margetts et al. (2022) noted that shared semantic components of causation, movement, and intention in carrying verbs are common among languages. Meanwhile, in a parallel study on Kuwaiti Arabic maritime proverbs, AlBader and Al-Qenaie (2024) showed how NSM could serve as an analytical tool for expressing moral values and cultural norms in figurative discourse. When observed in comparative terms, these findings reinforce the typological and cultural significance of *nggawa* in Javanese.

The integration of Natural Semantic Metalanguage and argument structure theory provides a systematic illumination of culturally shaped actions. Thus, this study confirms the claim made by previous research that the Javanese carrying verbs consistently preserve a divalent configuration containing an agent and a theme. This level of stability points to the fact that they occupy a cognitive arena where carrying is a direct relationship between an actor, typically human, and the entity moved. As a repository of cultural life, language stores social reasoning, and moral values through its individual lexemes.

A consistent set of semantic parameters separating verbs in the *nggawa* domain emerges from the study dataset. These parameters include placement on the body and level of attachment to the body. They further focus on the means by which tools are used, along with surface contact. The lexical meaning is also shaped by distinguishing between individual and collective events. These properties help to explain the limited substitutability of near-synonyms. There is one notable difference between *manggul* and *mikul* in the use of tools. The essence of *nggotong* is identified as collective action. Such systematic partitioning indicates the lexical complexity of Javanese in registering physical and spatial coordination.

From a typological point of view, the 23 carrying verbs in Javanese demonstrate that the prototypical meaning 'to carry' is lexicalized not merely as an undifferentiated category but rather as a structured semantic area organized along recurrent parameters. Some of these parameters are the locus of bodily support, mode of support or attachment, presence of instruments, animacy and physical properties of the theme, and the number of actors. Based on this, it follows that the domain of Javanese carrying can be organized into several typological subtypes, such as body-supported carrying, hand-supported carrying, instrument-assisted carrying collective carrying and guided human movement. This grouping indicates that lexical contrasts in Javanese are not random lexical distinctions but rather reflect semantically stable dimensions relevant to wider cross-linguistic debates about carrying and bringing events. In this sense, the current study makes a contribution both to the description of Javanese lexical semantics and to the typology of bodily transport event coding across languages.

## 6. Conclusions

This research presents a detailed account of 23 Javanese verbs in the *nggawa* domain. The results establish stable meaning profiles for each verb and highlight limited substitutability among near-synonyms. Every verb in the dataset occurs in divalent constructions with an agent and a theme. This analysis is based on these divalent structures and their valency switches.

The NSM explications clarify the meanings of lexical items through controlled explication. These explications decompose each verb into its semantic primitives. This enables systematic comparison across verbs and facilitates cross-linguistic understanding of meaning in context.

Semantic structures display a systematic relation between the human body and the carried entity. The semantic role of each verb is determined in part by body-placement parameters and theme properties. The nature of movement that each action serves is another distinction. These parameters account for the organized lexical variation in Javanese carrying verbs.

This paper supports this claim with argument structure analysis, showing that such verbs are theme-requiring and pointing to the fact that they do not have a monovalent predicate. The relevant constructions are shown to be configurations in which expressions of location and direction fulfill the role of optional adjuncts rather than core arguments. Derivational morphology may as well introduce recipient roles in other contexts but are beyond the focus of this study.

From a typological standpoint, this study shows that Javanese organizes the semantic field of carrying through a limited set of recurrent dimensions, namely bodily locus, support mechanism, instrumentality, theme type, and participant number. These dimensions motivate the emergence of distinct lexical subtypes rather than a single general verb of carrying. Therefore, the contribution of this study extends beyond the

documentation of Javanese: it also offers a typologically relevant account of how languages may lexicalize carrying events through culturally grounded but structurally comparable semantic distinctions.

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Author 1	conceived the project, the main conceptual ideas and proof outline, worked out almost all of the technical details, and determined the literature review.
Author 2	Worked out almost all of the technical details, and sentences performed on the data which are indicated to represent the characteristics of the data.
Author 3	Worked out the bound for data transcription, determining content analysis.
Author 4	Proposed the data analysis and checked the completeness of the results and data discussion.
Author 5	Conducted data curation by organizing and managing the datasets used in the study to ensure their quality and usability.
Author 6	Contributed to data curation, carried out formal analysis to interpret the data, and drafted the original version of the manuscript.
Author 7	Participated in creating illustrations and data curation, helping to collect, organize, and maintain research data for analysis.

## Author contributions

CRedit: **Mulyono Mulyono**: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing; **Arie Yuanita**: Methodology, Validation; **Mochamad Bayu Firmansyah**: Data curation, Formal analysis; **Dianita Indrawati**: Data curation, Investigation, Validation; **Siti Rumilah**: Data curation, Validation; **Anggoro Abiyyu Ristio Cahyo**: Data curation, Investigation, Writing – original draft; **Molion Syahputra Mulya**: Data curation, Investigation, Visualization.

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## Data availability statement

We state here that the research data associated with an article is available, and under what conditions can be accessed via this link [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Va9lpO2ty9VPhYUaGxFJmhdobriWH\\_F?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Va9lpO2ty9VPhYUaGxFJmhdobriWH_F?usp=sharing).

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