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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Investigation of the Linguistic Landscape of Local People at ''Pantura"

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| ABSTRACT

Indonesia, with about 700 regional languages, is considered one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. The imposition of a national language and the global dominance of English constitute a danger to multilingualism. This article explores the utilization and manipulation of language in Cirebon by applying social semiotics in linguistic landscape studies. We juxtapose the conventional signage seen on government buildings with that of private enterprises, such as restaurants and retail. The national/regional language policy acknowledges the existence of tensions between macro and micro language policies, which pertain to the rights of private and individual language choice. The conflicts are analyzed. The investigation uncovers a clear and discernible arrangement in the linguistic environment, where public signs prominently showcase Indonesian, Javanese, and English languages, while personal signs exhibit Indonesian, English, as well as other foreign languages such as Korean, Japanese, and Mandarin. The research indicates that language choices are not random, emphasizing that the linguistic environment is a powerful instrument for rejuvenating endangered local languages, such as Javanese.

1. Introduction

Indonesia, with a population of over 280 million, is renowned for its linguistic diversity, including about 700 regional languages. Multilingualism refers to the practice of using two or more languages, as defined by the European Commission (2007, p. 6). Linguistic proficiency is the capacity of an individual to regularly utilize several languages in their everyday tasks. Nevertheless, despite the vast array of languages present, Indonesia upholds the practice of using just one language, Bahasa Indonesia, as the official national language as stipulated by the National Constitution since the country gained independence in 1945. Regrettably, regional languages are presently at risk of extinction due to the forced adoption of the national language (Cohn & Ravindranath, 2014; Ravindranath & Cohn, 2014).

The significance of English as a global language has led to the emergence of new patterns in linguistic variation, which may be observed in the evolving language environments of Indonesian urban areas, the main subject of the present investigation. In order to do this, the ideas presented by Pavlenko (2009) about how the linguistic landscape changes over time, as well as the findings of Jaworski's (2015) study on the identification of new visual-linguistic patterns, are being employed. Landy & Bourhis (1997, 25) define the linguistic landscape of an area or city as the collection of language signs found on road signs, billboards, street names, place names, commercial store signs, and general signage on government buildings. Shohamy further elaborates on the term, while Gorter (2009, 1) broadens it to encompass "language present in the surroundings, as well as the words and images displayed in public areas." The concept of linguistic landscape is expanded to encompass iconography, graffiti, slogans, and pictures discovered in public areas.

6

This research will specifically analyze the conflict between micro language policy, which pertains to people's freedom to select their own language, and macro language policy in Indonesia, employing a social cs method. An examination of Indonesia's intricate historical, political, and economic context will be conducted in order to comprehend the factors that have influenced the formation of the language environment in Indonesia.

The study starts with a concise overview of pertinent research and then elucidates the employed research methodologies. The text also examines the most pertinent works in the field of linguistics to establish the conceptual framework utilized in the investigation. Indonesia's linguistic environment requires a more profound comprehension, leaving space for more investigation. The methodology section provides an explanation of the data gathering technique and a historical discussion of the language regulations that regulate language use in society. The study also examines semiotics, interpretation, and discourse analysis as methods for analyzing the data. It demonstrates that the linguistic landscape pattern is shaped by policy, regional/local policy, and market factors. The use of multilingual language on public signage emphasizes the significance of language usage in these particular circumstances. Thus, this research aims to investigate the role of the linguistic landscape (LL) in revitalizing endangered native languages, with a specific focus on Javanese in Cirebon, and analyze the impact of incorporating English multilingual signage on this revitalization.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Linguistic Landscape
The linguistic landscape, as described by Landry & Bourhis (1997), pertains to the prominence and visibility of different languages on public and commercial signs within a certain territory or region. The relationship between language and landscape is inherently interconnected; language necessitates the presence of landscape, while landscape anticipates the use of words. The connection between language and landscape, as well as language within the environment, is primarily shaped by spatiality. This study presents the notion within the specific setting of Indonesia, which has received limited scholarly attention as of mid-2019. This study is the first to thoroughly examine the correlation between linguistic landscape (LL) and language policy (LP) in Indonesia. The relationship between language learning (LL) and language policy (LP), as discussed by Shohamy, supports the idea that LL research may provide valuable insights into the role of LP in public settings, an aspect that has been neglected.

A comprehensive approach that goes beyond only analyzing written materials. The analysis of linguistic landscape should incorporate several elements, including historical, political, geographical, and sociocultural factors of the group inhabiting the area. An integrated approach is necessary to address the intricacy of signals, enabling a more effective understanding of linguistic choices exhibited in LL. In addition to language, it is important to include numerous semiotic devices in the field of Language and Linguistics. These devices symbolically communicate the strength and status of specific languages. Public and private signs can be distinguished based on their influence on linguistic landscaping, with top-down forces representing public signs and bottom-up forces representing private signs. Government or official signs are subject to regulation at the highest level, whilst signs exhibited by private enterprises originate from the lowest level.

The field of sociolinguistics has seen the emergence of the linguistic landscape as a prominent subfield, with a considerable number of books and papers produced up till now. The field of research on linguistic landscape gained popularity among researchers after the publication of Landry and Bourhis's influential article in 1997. It started to attract academic interest in the second half of the 2000s, especially after the release of the first book solely dedicated to the topic, "Linguistic Landscape: A New Approach to Multilingualism," edited by Gorter in 2006. Subsequently, a sequence of novels was released in a rather rapid manner. Following Gorter's publication, Backhaus released the first book, which was written by one author on the topic of linguistic landscape, titled "Linguistic Landscapes: A Comparative Study of Multilingualism in Tokyo" in 2007. This was followed by the edited volume "Linguistic Landscape: Expanding the Scenery" by Shohamy and Gorter in 2009. The next publication in this field was "Linguistic Landscape in the City," edited by Shohamy, Ben-Rafael, and Barni in 2010. In 2012, two further publications were published: "Linguistic Landscapes, multilingualism, and Social Change," edited by Hélot, Barni, Janssens, and Bagna, and "Minority Languages in the Linguistic Landscape," edited by Gorter, Marten, and Van Mensel. Since then, a multitude of books and papers have been produced, delving into the examination of signs seen in public areas across five continents. These signs are written in hundreds of different languages and dozens of different scripts and have been studied using a variety of study frameworks.

2.2 Indonesia and Multilingualism
Multilingualism refers to the presence of several languages within a country or the capacity of an individual to speak numerous languages. The term is derived from the combination of "multi," meaning 'many,' and "lingualism," which pertains to language. Clyne (1997) presents two viewpoints on multilingualism: one that defines it as the existence of more than two languages in society and another that defines it as the ability of humans to communicate in several languages. In contrast to Bodomo's (2017) notion that a country is multilingual while its residents are polyglots, suggesting that a country can have several languages while its individuals are proficient in more than two languages.

Indonesia is a nation that has many languages spoken inside its borders (Zein, 2019). In addition, the majority of Indonesians have been proficient in many languages since their early years. Their multilingualism is a result of the influence of tradition and culture. Indonesia is a linguistically diverse country with a plethora of native languages. According to Ethnologue (2021), a total of 652 traditional languages have been counted. Despite Bahasa Indonesia being the official language, there is a significant risk of native languages like Sundanese and Javanese becoming extinct.

Contributing factors include gaps in intergenerational transmission and little study on language preservation. During the 1980s-1990s, urban areas saw a transition from using local languages to adopting Bahasa Indonesia. In recent times, there has been a notable transition towards the use of English, especially in urban areas like Jakarta and Bandung. In 2006, English instruction was expanded to include primary schools. However, it was met with criticism and was discontinued in 2013-2014. Despite several obstacles, Bahasa Indonesia continues to be the primary medium of teaching, whereas indigenous languages like Javanese are projected to become extinct over the next two to three decades.

2.3 Indonesia Language Policies

Indonesian is not only a language phenomenon but also a political phenomenon, as stated by Heryanto (2006). In the broader Indonesian political environment, a sequence of national congresses and language policy choices occurred throughout the periods known as the "Old Order Era" and "New Order Era", characterized by a centralized national government. This era spans from the inaugural language congress in 1938 to the fifth meeting in 1988. During the span of 50 years, namely from 1938 to 1988, the language policy may be succinctly described as outlined by Hamied (2015), Idris (2014), and Renandya (2000). During the early 12th century, Malay was widely used in coastal and rural regions of Southeast Asia. It had a role in the development of the Indonesian language (Errington, 1986). Due to the simplicity of Malay's vocabulary and honorific structures compared to Javanese, the Dutch colonial authority employed it as the administrative language of the Dutch East Indies throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. The Indonesian nation was formed through a creative establishment of linguistic cohesion. Martin-Anatias (2018a, 2018b, 2019a, 2019b) asserts that Indonesia is widely regarded as the foremost emblem of Indonesian national identity after achieving independence in 1945. Soekarno, Indonesia's inaugural president, made a strategically and philosophically significant decision to prioritize the teaching of Indonesian and English in schools instead of Dutch or Japanese. According to Article 32 of the 1945 Constitution, the state acknowledges and preserves regional languages as a form of cultural variety, in addition to English and Indonesian.

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The objective is to establish a uniform and promote the dissemination of the official language. The Language Center was established by Suharto, the subsequent president, as documented by Anderson in 1966 and Heryanto in 1995. The New Order's evolution was significantly influenced by language policy starting in 1970, as noted by Anderson (2006), Errington (1992), and Heryanto (1995). President Soeharto, the head of the New Order regime, established linguistic standardization in the national language by the People's Consultative Assembly Decree 11/MPR/1983, emphasizing its "accurate and consistent" usage. Hooker (1993) argues that the emphasis on "correct and regular" use is intended to build a desirable cultural regime rather than for aesthetic purposes. This is achieved by formalizing the utilization of language through the implementation of radio, television, and information networks, along with educational establishments.

The findings indicate that while language standardization and institutional expansion have occurred, the present number of Indonesian language users stands at around 250 million. This is in stark contrast to a century ago when only a minority of individuals used Indonesian as their native language (Heryanto, 1995). Regulations on the use of Indonesian in public spaces. Especially in government buildings. As stated in the Indonesian Government (2009), page 14, paragraph 30, for example, "Indonesian must be used in public administration services in government offices and institutions." In accordance with PR 63/2019, this sentence is further confirmed in paragraph 33, which states, "Indonesian must be used in formal communications in government and private offices" (Government of Indonesia, 2009, p. 15). However, local languages are in danger due to this top-down approach, despite this approach being one of the greatest successes in language planning. According to research by Cohn and Ravindranath (2014), the dominance of national languages in public spaces is the cause of the sharp decline in the use of Javanese, both at high and low levels. Addressing this problem, Articles 41 and 42 of LL 24/009 specifically highlight how the central government officially orders regional governments to maintain the continuity of regional languages and literature. The use of foreign languages is officially restricted. As a result, Indonesia has become a rich field for conducting more linguistic research.

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3. Methodology

Data collection commenced on January 22, 2024, and concluded on February 20, 2024, in the city of Cirebon. Data is acquired by the digital capture of many types of signage, including government-related signs, commercial signs, and privately owned billboards. Our primary focus was on multilingual signage, specifically among the 100 examples we collected. While using the data strategy, we observed the multilingual utilization of the signals. Our primary idea is to ensure that the sign includes a minimum of two languages, allowing local residents in the region to easily understand and utilize it. This research employs a semiotic methodology to ascertain the discriminating function and social significance of language use. We utilize principles from Barthian visual semiotics to analyze the many levels of significance, namely denotation and connotation.

As stated by Van Leeuwen in 2011, De notation refers to the explicit subject matter or individuals displayed in a picture, whereas connotation involves examining the underlying concepts and beliefs conveyed, as well as the manner in which they are conveyed. Hence, we also take into account additional semiotic components such as visual imagery, dimensions, hues, and placement of language employed in signs and absence of language, among others. These modalities contribute to the comprehension and interpretation of the multilingual indicators present in a landscape (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; van Leeuwen, 2011; Wee & Goh, 2020). In addition to comprehending the connotative significance, we also analyze how the power dynamics and interaction between multilingual information boards and the public manifest or attempt to exert an impact on language learning (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Shohamy, 2006).

This research employs a semiotic technique, which is further enhanced by a textual and interpretative approach. The social, cultural, and political settings are taken into account in this research, as demonstrated by the works of Shohany (2006, 2015). The ethnographic notes we recorded throughout the process of data collection can be utilized to facilitate the interpretation and foundation of the analysis. From the data we gathered in the cities investigated, we saw consistent patterns in the corpus of linguistic landscapes. Specifically, we found that public signs varied from private signs in the linguistic landscape. In order to comprehend the data we gather in a purely qualitative manner, a sequence of thorough, intricate, and multi-faceted analyses is conducted.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The General Picture

The linguistic landscapes collected from the municipalities under investigation revealed similar patterns, indicating that public and private signs exhibit unique characteristics. Our process is based on a rigorous qualitative approach to analyzing data and conducting discussions. We aim to deliver thorough, detailed, and in-depth assessments that consider several layers of information. We collected data from the city of Cirebon while ensuring that our assessment of its diverse characteristics was not oversimplified. The connotation layer of analysis focuses on the underlying ideas and principles transmitted and how they are represented, whereas the denotation layer refers to the literal interpretation of "what or who is depicted in the image" (van Leeuwen, 2011). Furthermore, we include supplementary semiotic elements such as visual representations, the dimensions, hue, and positioning of language in signs, absence of language, and so on (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; van Leeuwen, 2011; Wee & Goh, 2020).

These modalities aid in the interpretation and attribution of significance to multilingual indicators within a landscape. We also examine the ways in which multilingual information boards and the power dynamics and connections of the public might reveal or attempt to shape language acquisition. This is done in order to understand the implied meanings behind the language (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Shohamy, 2006). Indonesian remains the predominant language used in the city of Cirebon, regardless of whether it is spoken in conjunction with English, another language, or Javanese. English ranks second, either independently or in conjunction with Indonesian, in the LL goods. Less than 5% of public information boards in LL are printed in Javanese, using either Javanese script or the Latin alphabet. The English language is spoken in the region that international visitors may travel to. The diversity of languages is most noticeable in personal signs, where Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, and/or Indonesian may be combined with other foreign languages. The absence of regional or national rules allows market forces to regulate LL, as shown by the general trend. This finding corroborates Backhaus's (2007) assertion that public signage is a result of deliberate decisions and direct involvement of government agencies at the national and local levels rather than being solely influenced by individual actions. The creator or proprietor of the sign has the authority to make a personal or organizational decision.

4.2 Public Sign

Despite the continued dominance of the Indonesian language on public signs, there is a noticeable tendency to integrate English into public signage in many locales, including large metropolitan centers, rural areas, and even minor roads. The incorporation of the English language seeks to streamline contact with a wide range of foreign visitors, travelers, and expats. This underscores the possible degradation of indigenous languages and the prevalence of English as the worldwide common language. In this particular situation, politicians and language advocates are confronted with the task of achieving a delicate equilibrium between advancing the national language, such as Indonesian, and safeguarding the variety of languages and cultural traditions. To summarize, the

presence of English on public signs alongside Indonesian is a result of the intricate interaction between globalization, cultural interchange, and linguistic variety. This highlights the necessity for sophisticated language policies that encourage the use of several languages while safeguarding Indonesia's diverse linguistic legacy.

Figure 1. A street name plaque in Cirebon.

Figure 1 represents The street name signboards, situated in the heart of Cirebon, which play a crucial role in displaying the distinctiveness of a locality. The street name boards prominently display the Indonesian language spelling, ensuring that the information is easily comprehensible to the majority of the people. This emphasizes the importance of the Indonesian language in public communication. The inclusion of the Indonesian language at the apex of the street name signboard signifies its position as the official language of the nation and as the national language that brings together many ethnicities, cultures, and tribes in Indonesia. However, the inclusion of the Javanese Kuno script beneath it serves to enhance the cultural and historical significance, demonstrating a commitment to safeguarding the native language and culture. The utilization of the Javanese Kuno script displays a sense of pride and affiliation with the abundant indigenous culture that is frequently transmitted throughout successive generations. From a semiotic analysis standpoint, the positioning of the Indonesian language at the top of the street name board can be interpreted as a symbol of the prevailing national culture, whereas the inclusion of the Javanese Kuno script below signifies endeavors to preserve and foster the local cultural heritage.

This exemplifies the intricate cultural dynamics in which elements of national and local cultures intersect and mutually impact one another. Within this framework, street name boards serve as more than mere physical markers but rather as manifestations of an intricate and ever-evolving cultural exchange. Studying the semiotic language of street name boards may provide valuable insights into the cultural dynamics, political power, and collective identity of a community. Hence, by employing semiotic analysis, we may acquire a profound understanding of the messages communicated through visual forms of communication, such as street name boards, and how these signals influence society's perception and comprehension of cultural and social identities.

4.3 Private Sign

Private firms or individuals construct personalized signage in many creative styles and designs. We were instructed that the commercial sector employs language in a more innovative manner than the state sector and that their decisions do not necessarily align with the vernacular language spoken in everyday life due to English still being seen as a foreign language in Indonesia. Engaging in linguistic experimentation is an effective strategy to captivate attention and establish a substantial consumer base. Figure 2 depicts a fast food establishment named "Ayam Geprek Fun Chicks" that specializes in serving fried chicken in the city of Cirebon.

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The restaurant's name has several meanings, highlighting LL's innovative and adventurous attitude. The fast-food business owner intentionally uses multivocal English and chooses words such as "Ayam Geprek Fun Chicks". Banda and Jimaima (2015) found that a brand's memorability is positively correlated with its distinctiveness. It may be deduced that their fried chicken is cooked in the Western style, using English techniques. Authentic Indonesian fried chicken does not use flour in its preparation. Instead, it requires aromatic spices like lemongrass, turmeric, ginger, garlic, galangal, coriander, pepper, cumin, and bay leaf. Once the chicken is tenderized by gentle cooking, it is next subjected to deep-frying. Additionally, several individuals in Indonesia appreciate Western-style fried chicken due to its more contemporary taste. Therefore, to maintain this impression, it is essential to have an English brand name. The language resources in this sign are organized semiotically, starting from the highest global scales and progressing to the lowest local stages (Jaworski, 2015). This indexicality sequence conveys the local sense of Bahasa Indonesia, whereas the global sense is indexed by English, according to Bloomaert (2007).

Figure 2. A fast food (fried chicken) restaurant named 'Ayam Geprek Fun Chicks' in Cirebon

Despite the continued dominance of the Indonesian language on public signs, there is a noticeable tendency to integrate English into public signage in many locales, including large metropolitan centers, rural areas, and even minor roads. The incorporation of the English language is intended to streamline contact with a wide range of international visitors, travelers, and expats. This underscores the possible degradation of indigenous languages and the prevalence of English as the worldwide universal language. In this particular situation, policymakers and language advocates are confronted with the task of achieving a delicate equilibrium between the advancement of the national language, such as Indonesian, and the safeguarding of linguistic variety and cultural legacy. Ultimately, the presence of English on public signs alongside Indonesian is a result of the intricate interaction between globalization, cultural interchange, and linguistic variety. This highlights the necessity for sophisticated language policies that encourage the use of several languages while safeguarding Indonesia's diverse linguistic legacy. Figure 1 depicts the signage of a barbershop situated adjacent to a thoroughfare in Cirebon. The initial line is composed in the English language, succeeded by the subsequent line in Bahasa Indonesia, and then the third line once again in English.

Despite the prominence of foreign language on the banner, it is clear that in Cirebon, Bahasa Indonesia takes priority, as indicated by its larger size and strategic placement. In this public sign, Bahasa Indonesia is semiotically prioritized above English. The content is shown in a noticeably larger font size and is positioned in the center of the sign, surrounded by the less conspicuous English text. This arrangement implies that the shop owner is emphasizing the significance of Bahasa Indonesia in the context of language policy. Despite being multilingual, Bahasa Indonesia remains the primary and official language, taking precedence over other languages. The language policy is communicated and represented using semiotic means. Considering its purpose and role as a barbershop, it is justifiable to emphasize and prioritize Bahasa Indonesia owing to its widespread use and clear understanding as the official language of the nation, which is comprehended by the majority of Indonesians. Thus, employing Bahasa Indonesia is regarded as the optimal approach to guarantee that the communicated message may be comprehended by a wide range of individuals.

Figure 3. Barbershop in Cirebon.

Figure 3 depicts a prominent sign advertising a barber business situated across the primary thoroughfare in Cirebon. The initial line is composed in the English language, the subsequent line in Indonesian, and the subsequent line once again in English. Despite the existence of other foreign languages, it is evident that in Cirebon, Indonesian is given precedence, as indicated by its prominence and placement. From a semiotic perspective, this public sign assigns a higher status to the Indonesian language compared to English. The content is shown in a significantly bigger font size and is positioned at the center of the sign, surrounded by the less noticeable English text.

This arrangement demonstrates the business owner's recognition of the significance of Indonesian in the realm of language policy. Indonesian, being multilingual, has precedence as the national and official language. Language policy is communicated and expressed using semiotic means. Given its role and significance as a barbershop, it is logical for Indonesian to be emphasized and given a significant position due to its widespread usage and recognition as the official language of the nation, which is comprehended by the majority of Indonesians. Hence, employing Indonesian is regarded as the optimal approach to guarantee comprehensibility among a wide range of individuals.

5. Conclusion

The linguistic landscape (LL) can function as a means to revitalize endangered native languages, such as Javanese. The top-down strategy in Cirebon reveals the coexistence of both Javanese and Indonesian languages in public settings, indicating the majority of the people are bilingual. In defiance of the macro language policy, the multilingual signage demonstrates an effort to defy it and conform to the worldwide pattern by incorporating English. These findings suggest that LL can serve as a viable means to preserve the longevity of local languages and motivate individuals to regain proficiency in them. The coexistence of local languages and national languages can contribute to the preservation of linguistic variety and cultural identity within an area.

This research provides important insight into the role of linguistic landscape in sustaining endangered indigenous languages, especially Javanese in Cirebon. By highlighting multilingual language strategies and macro language policies, this research not only strengthens awareness of language pluralism but also assists in the preservation of language varieties and local cultural identities. The results can be a valuable guide for language policy and linguistic landscape management in similar areas.

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