

Exploring Linguistic Landscape inside a Faculty of Cultural Studies in Malang

Lydia Kusumahwati¹, Zuliati Rohmah²

{lydiakusumahwt@student.ub.ac.id¹, zuliatirohmah@ub.ac.id²}

Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia^{1,2}

Abstract. The linguistic landscape in multicultural areas represents the language choice of a group of people in society. Despite a number of research has been focused on public signage in multicultural areas, the functions of public signs in multicultural areas inside the educational field have not been adequately studied. The present paper aims to find out about multilingualism in the area of education and identify the functions of the signages apparent in the area. The data of the study are 225 public signs in a Faculty of Cultural Studies located in a reputable university in Malang. In addition, the faculty also offers other study programs related to education and culture. Therefore, it is a location worthy of research. Data was collected by capturing photos of public signs in the faculty. The findings of the current research show language choices in the monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual public signs and the functions of the texts and symbols in the signs.

Keywords: Linguistic landscape, linguistic landscape function, multilingualism.

1. Introduction

Linguistic landscape (henceforth, LL) in the educational field serves pedagogical functions. However, the presence of linguistic landscape in the context of the Indonesian educational field has been contradictory. The presence of signage in the educational field arguably can help students with language or cultural awareness, but not all the texts are relevant to language learning [7], [1], [3], [8], and [5]. Several articles stated that the multimodality of a linguistic landscape helps communicative skills such as pragmatics, vocabulary, and grammar. Despite those functions, the texts written in signage might not be relevant for language learning or even can impede students' language learning process. Therefore, the linguistic landscape in the educational field may serve a different function.

The language use of public signs in educational institutions shows the institution's perspective of a language. [3] explains that the use of a multilingual schoolscape is to acknowledge students' cultural diversity. The same findings were also found in Indonesian school contexts. The multilingual signs using the local language, Javanese, in Yogyakarta senior high schools serve as cultural symbols [1]. [7] states that the languages used in the linguistic landscape are potential authentic learning materials in second language acquisition (SLA) and for language awareness. In line with [7], one research mentions that the linguistic landscape was valuable to be an intensive reading assignment for students [5]. Another study also discovered that the linguistic landscape serves as a form of surveillance that encourages students to use proper grammar [4].

The research also shows examples of multimodality in linguistic landscape that may help students to learn languages. An example from [4] surveillance landscape is “Mr. Price is watching your grammar” and a man with eagle eyes’ is also presented to support the text. As a result, linguistic landscape may function as a cultural symbol and a promotion of language awareness.

Despite the cultural symbol and promotion of language awareness in schools, the languages or text apparent in the signage might not be relevant, or even misleading, for language learning. A qualitative study by [9] finds that the multimodality in text and symbols on the linguistic landscape can be used as learning materials but the circumstances of the learning environment need to be taken into account. They elaborate multimodal media the teachers usually use in the classroom, like pictures to brainstorm before the main learning activities, but the teachers are not aware that the linguistic landscape can be used as learning materials. They also found that sign-makers are not really aware of the English usage and so do the students. The same phenomena also happen in other research where the sign-makers show unfamiliarity with English. Even though the linguistic landscape is used as a cultural symbol and language awareness, they also show that the sign-makers’ proficiency in English is low [1].

Furthermore, the practices of code meshing often found in multilingual societies also become a challenge in the linguistic landscape of educational fields. Sugiharto [11] explains that a linguistic landscape containing code meshing shows creativity and a deep understanding of language use. For example, [11] found a menu in a culinary area written as “prett cikin”, which should be *fried chicken*. However, in order to use the linguistic landscape as a teaching material, it is important to avoid the practice of code meshing and the familiarity of sign makers with certain languages should be accounted for. This is crucial to prevent any misconceptions among students who are still learning languages.

Based on the previous research, the use of linguistic landscape in the educational field can support or impede language learning. The previous research also shows a contradiction between the use of linguistic landscape in language. Before linguistic landscape use in language learning, teachers should take into consideration the function of texts and symbols. However, research in the educational field related to the linguistic landscape is still limited. It is shown in [9] that teachers are unfamiliar with the linguistic landscape. In order to gain a broader perspective on the linguistic landscape in the Indonesian educational context, the present research aims to find out the languages and the functions of texts and symbols in the linguistic landscape of the Faculty of Cultural Studies. The functions of texts and symbols in the linguistic landscape, especially in the educational field, should be taken into consideration. The research is conducted in the Faculty of Cultural Studies located at a reputable university in Malang. The faculty is considered rich in data due to students’ cultural diversity and they learn five different languages in this faculty. In the current study, the researchers focus on two research questions: (1) What are the languages used in signage? (2) What are the functions of texts and symbols found in signage?

2. Method

The two research questions above mentioned are answered through qualitative research. Previous research has asserted that qualitative research is employed in the study of linguistic landscape, especially the one in an early phase, to acquire more information pertaining to signage. Consequently, qualitative research was employed to answer the research questions and

investigate the languages used in signage as well as the functions they serve within the surroundings of the Faculty of Cultural Studies. The researchers collected data by capturing the signage displayed at the Faculty of Cultural Studies using a mobile camera for three days. The data source consisted of signage encompassing a range of categories, including students' events, faculty regulations, and general public signs displayed at the Faculty of Cultural Studies.

In order to answer the first research question regarding the languages used in signage, the researchers collected signs that were easily visible to the researchers. This enables a comprehensive analysis of the languages employed in the signage. Around 250 signs were collected, but only 225 of signage were analyzed. It is because some signs contained repetitions; thus, signage with repetitive content was treated as a single entity. The collected signs were subsequently analyzed based on categories of monolingual signs, bilingual signs, and multilingual signs. The second research question was addressed by analyzing the signage based on its functions. The functions of the signage were analyzed based on previous studies mentioned in the introduction which include cultural symbols and language awareness.

3. Results and Discussion

The first research question regarding the languages apparent in the LL of a Faculty of Cultural Studies is answered by identifying different languages on signs and categorizing the signs into multilingual, bilingual, and monolingual. The functions of the signage are also identified based on the existing studies mentioned in the introduction, which include cultural symbols and language awareness in the linguistic landscape within educational fields.

3.1 Languages in the Faculty of Cultural Studies

This section tries to describe the result of the data analysis. Several aspects that need to be addressed in this section are the use of written codes. The researcher used abbreviations to represent the languages found, such as "Ind" for Indonesian, "Jav" for Javanese, "Eng" for English, "Jpn" for Japanese, "Fr" for French, "Sau" for Arabic, and "Chn" for Chinese. When a bilingual or multilingual sign is present, the first language written in the explanation indicates the dominant language used. Details about the languages in the signage will be described in the following explanation.

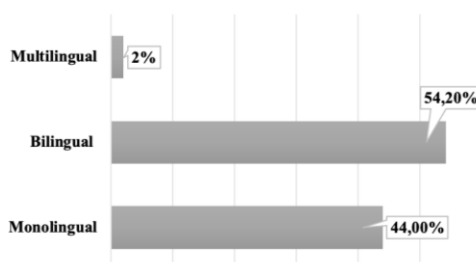


Fig. 1. Languages in the Faculty of Cultural Studies.

The result of the sign pattern shows that signage using bilingual language gains the highest percentage among other sign patterns. Among the three sign patterns, multilingual signs have the lowest percentage. Multilingual signage only contributes 2%, which only has 4 signs in total.

This is similar to [1] findings showing that multilingual signs are the lowest percentage among other sign patterns. Meanwhile, the highest percentage is bilingual signs that reach 54,20%. In total, the bilingual signs have 122 signage placed in the Faculty of Cultural Studies. The bilingual signs are mostly used in Indonesian-English. It contradicts the findings from Andriyanti's [1] study which found that monolingual signs are higher than the bilingual signs. However, other findings show that bilingual public signs are mostly used in Sidoarjo city [6]. Monolingual signs gain 44% placing this category at a moderate level. The majority of monolingual signs use Indonesian language, which is the national language of Indonesia.

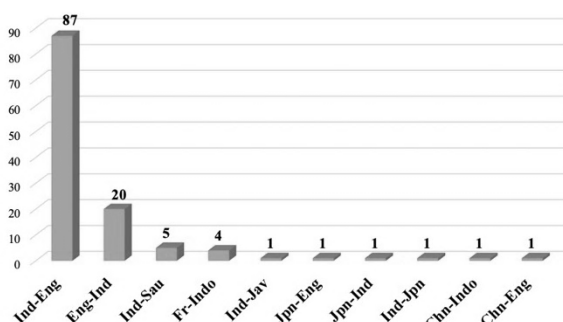


Fig. 2. Bilingual Signage.

Public signs in the Faculty of Cultural Studies were mostly found in bilingual patterns. The bilingual public signs were dominantly written in Indonesian-English. The number of public signs that use Indonesian-English were more significant than other bilingual languages. In Figure 2, it is stated that there are 87 public signs written in Indonesian-English, while English-Indonesian public signs are only found 20 public signs. This implies that even in bilingual public signs, Indonesian language is more dominant than English. Similar findings were also stated in another research in which Indonesian was found to be the dominant language in Indonesian-English bilingual signs [10, 6]. Even though the results show that bilingual signs were the most frequently found in the Faculty of Cultural Studies, the language patterns still prioritize Indonesian as the national language of Indonesia.

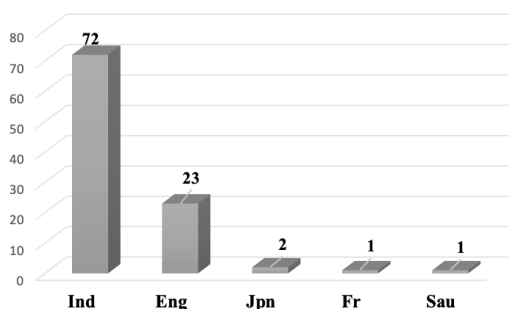


Fig. 3. Monolingual Signage.

The monolingual signs also show that Indonesian is dominating the public signs in the Faculty of Cultural Studies. This current study reveals that the presence of monolingual patterns in public signs is moderate, indicating a balanced frequency. However, compared to bilingual and

multilingual signs, several other studies have reported that monolingual signs are the most common sign in public spaces [10, 1, 6]. Then, English is in the second position after Indonesian. Two public signs were discovered written entirely in Japanese. In contrast, only one public sign was found in French and Arabic. In total, there are 5 languages that were found in monolingual patterns. Meanwhile, there are no monolingual signs written in Chinese even though the Faculty of Cultural Studies has a Chinese literature study program.

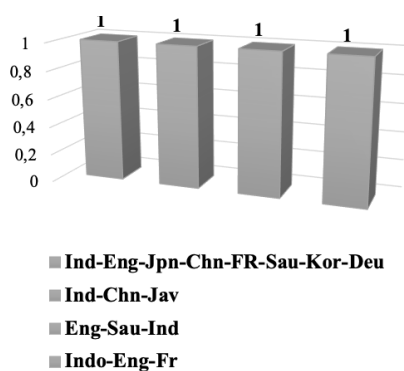


Fig. 4. Multilingual Signage.

Only a few public signs utilize multilingual patterns, with Indonesian being the dominant language. This indicates that despite the educational environment that teaches various languages and the presence of students from different cultural backgrounds, Indonesian is still used as the national language. Most of the languages offered as study programs in the Faculty of Cultural Studies were observed in multilingual signs. Chinese and Javanese were seen written together in one signage, while Arabic and French were combined with the use of Indonesian and English. Korean and German languages were only observed in one signage in the Faculty of Cultural Studies. The use of multilingual patterns in signage has also been identified in previous studies, which found that multilingual signs in a particular area tend to be limited in number [10, 8]. Even in a limited number, multilingual signage includes languages that are studied in the Faculty of Cultural Studies.

3.2 Function of Signage in the Faculty of Cultural Studies

After analyzing the signage found in the Faculty of Cultural Studies, the researchers analyzed the functions of the LL and found three functions. The most common function of signs in public signage of the faculty area is language awareness. As seen in Figure 5, the use of English is to promote language awareness. The sign in Figure 5 shows information about an analysis of word formation made by students. The sign contains the name of the group, the name of the creator, and the students' ID number which indicates the identity of the sign makers.

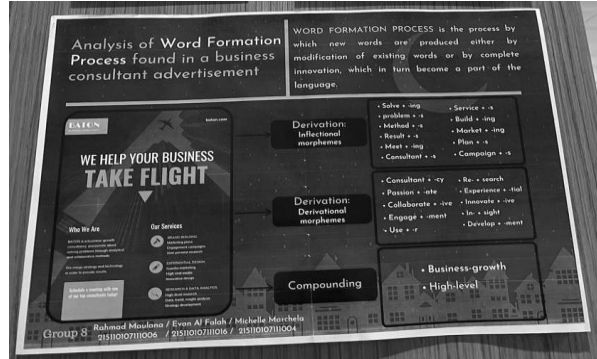


Fig. 5. A Monolingual Sign in English Showing Language Awareness Function.



Fig. 6. A Monolingual Sign in Japanese as Language Awareness.

Figure 6, indicates the use of monolingual signs in Japanese is used to show language awareness. The placement of the two signs were in a working space where students mostly used to complete their assignment. The working space can be used for different study programs in the faculty. The signs are not related to any materials for the Japanese study program, but rather to show the acceptance of Japanese language in the Faculty of Cultural Studies. In Fakhriroh & Rohmah [6], one of the functions of public signs in the city is to attract customers. However, in the educational field, public signs serve different function.



Fig. 7. A Room's Label.

Other than that, the label for rooms is using bilingual Indonesian-English. The same findings are also found in [2] that the labels for certain rooms are using Arabic-English. [2] claims that the use of Arabic-English as rooms' label is to show religious and social function in Islamic schools. Other research has found that labels in rooms function as symbolic purposes [13]. In this context, it symbolizes language awareness that the Faculty of Cultural Studies is accepting the English language for internationalization purposes. In Figure 7, it shows that even for Japanese language education study programs, the room's label is using Indonesian-English patterns. It indicates that English is used in various study programs within the Faculty of Cultural Studies.



Fig. 8. A Prayer Room's Label

Moreover, labels used to mark the prayer room use bilingual Indonesian-Arabic. However, the Arabic text is written in Latin. Similar to [2] and [12] reports, Arabic is primarily used in relation to a religion. Thus, the use of Arabic written in Latin is to mark the prayer room for Muslims.



Fig. 9. Menu Signs.

The second function is to deliver information. The information signs covered different ranges of topics, including academic learning, canteen menus, and internal or external events. In Figure

9, both signs represent menus from the canteen. The left side of Figure 9, the menu is written in Indonesian and accompanied by pictures that are relevant to the texts. The purpose of using pictures on the menu is to attract customers to purchase their food items. On the right side of Figure 9, it also shows that multiple languages are employed to convey information. The language used in the little beverage shop around the Faculty of Cultural Studies includes Chinese, Indonesian, and Javanese. The little beverage shop is owned by several students who are studying in the faculty, thus the use of Chinese, Indonesian, and Javanese serves different purposes in the sign. The use of Chinese signifies language awareness, Indonesian is used to provide customers with information about the products sold in the beverage shop, while the use of Javanese indicates cultural identity.



Fig. 10. Signs Function Showing Information.

In Figure 10, there are two images displaying public signs that serve the purpose of providing information. On the left side, the sign provides academic information and has pictures to help understand the content. It also shows how to use E-Resources with photos to make it easier for people to follow the steps. On the right side, there are posters for students' events written in Indonesian-English or full English, while the use of Indonesian is less common. This shows that many students in the Faculty of Cultural Studies are comfortable using English, regardless of their study program.



Fig. 11. School's Regulation.

Furthermore, the use of Indonesian-English is also employed to convey information about the school's regulations. In Figure 11, the sign on the left side features pictures illustrating the proper dress code for entering the building. Instead of providing detailed descriptions, the sign utilizes symbols. The use of numerous and large symbols is intended to make the sign more readable and understandable even from a distance. The headline on the sign is written in Indonesian, while "Faculty of Cultural Studies" is written in English. The text size used on the signs is also quite large, indicating that signs in Figure 11 aim to emphasize the school's regulations that must be followed by every faculty member.

The sign on the right side of Figure 11 also lacks detailed descriptions. It is written in English, stating "Do" and "Don't". The purpose of this sign is to provide information that the area is not intended for dating or intimate gestures, but rather for conversations or academic-related work. This is indicated by the symbols inside the picture. For example, in the upper part of the sign on the right side of Figure 11, there are symbols of a laptop, books, a bag, and a person holding a drink. Those symbols convey the meaning that the people in the picture are engaged in an activity related to academic assignment. On the other hand, in the lower part of the picture, there is only a figure of two people leaning against each other without any laptops or books. Additionally, there is a heart-shaped symbol indicating that they are in a romantic relationship. Moreover, the use of checkmarks and crosses signifies what is allowed and what is not allowed. In the sign, the checkmark indicates permissible actions or behaviors, while the cross indicates prohibited actions or behaviors. The visual representation helps to convey clear instructions and guidelines to individuals in understanding what is allowed and prohibited in the area.

Based on the results and discussions, the language used in the Faculty of Cultural Studies predominantly consists of Indonesian and English. The use of Indonesian indicates that members of the faculty still prioritize the national language, despite studying other foreign languages. Meanwhile the use of English is to show internationalization and globalization. Other research also shows the same findings that the national language is still widely used even though they see English as a global language [10, 13]. The result also shows that there are no signs that use code meshing, which indicates that the LL in the Faculty of Cultural Studies is properly written. Additionally, the use of Arabic language is found to indicate the presence of prayer

rooms for Muslims. The incorporation of other foreign languages in the Faculty of Cultural Studies serves as an expression of language awareness among the individuals.

4. Conclusion

The languages predominantly used in the Faculty of Cultural Studies are Indonesian and English, highlighting the continued significance of Indonesian as the national language in a multilingual educational setting. English serves as the second most commonly used language, reflecting the faculty's internationalization and globalization efforts. Additionally, other foreign languages such as French, Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic are also present, serving the purpose of language awareness. Bilingual and multilingual signs further demonstrate the inclusion of Javanese, a local language, to represent cultural identity. The public signs in the Faculty of Cultural Studies serve various functions, including showcasing language awareness among faculty members, providing information, and conveying school regulations. Symbols used in the signs convey specific messages, such as indicating permissible and prohibited actions, facilitating understanding from a distance, and providing instructions.

However, there are several limitations of this research. The study does not deal with the use of LL as learning materials. Therefore, future research can explore the use of linguistic landscape as learning materials and investigate the perspectives of both students and faculty members towards linguistic landscape in more detail.

References

- [1] Andriyanti, E. (2019). Linguistic landscape at Yogyakarta's senior high schools in multilingual context: Patterns and representation. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v9i1.13841>
- [2] Andriyanti, E. (2021). Social meanings in school linguistic landscape: a geosemiotic approach. *Kemanusiaan The Asian Journal of Humanities*, 28(2), 105–134. <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2021.28.2.5>
- [3] Bernardo-Hinesley, S. (2020). Linguistic landscape in educational spaces. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education*, 3(2), 13–23. <https://doi.org/10.46303/jcve.2020.10>
- [4] Cushing, I. (2020). The policy and policing of language in schools. *Language in Society*, 49(3), 425–450. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404519000848>
- [5] Da Silva, A. M. (2023). Linguistic landscape projects as english teaching and learning resources: a review. *Scope: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 7(2), 143. <https://doi.org/10.30998/scope.v7i2.15970>
- [6] Fakhroh, Z., & Rohmah, Z. (2018). Linguistic landscape of sidoarjo city. *NOBEL: Journal of Literature and Language Teaching*, 9(2), 96–116.
- [7] Gorter, D. (2018). Linguistic landscapes and trends in the study of schools. *Linguistics and Education*, 44, 80–85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2017.10.001>
- [8] Nuswantara, K., Firdausiyah, H., Rohmah, Z., & Sholihah, D. N. (2021). Multilingualism in Sunan Ampel Tomb Complex: a linguistic landscape study. *Insaniyat: Journal of Islam and Humanities*, 6(1), 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.15408/insaniyat.v6i1.21141>
- [9] Riadi, A., & Warti, F. W. (2021). Linguistic Landscape: a language learning media in an underdeveloped region. *Indonesian TESOL Journal*, 3(1), 46–67. <https://doi.org/10.24256/itj.v3i1.1782>
- [10] Riani, Y. W., Ningsih, A. W., & Novitasari, M. (2021). A linguistic landscape study in Indonesian sub-urban high school signages: An exploration of patterns and associations. *Journal of Applied Studies in Language*, 5(1), 134–146. <http://ojs.pnb.ac.id/index.php/JASL>

- [11] Sugiharto, S. (2022). The ordinariness of code-meshing in the Indonesian linguistic landscapes. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 22(2), 404–412. <https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v22i2.4802>
- [12] Yusuf, K., & Putrie, Y. E. (2022). The linguistic landscape of mosques in Indonesia: materiality and Identity Representation. *International Journal of Society Culture and Language, Online First*. <https://doi.org/10.22034/ijscsl.2022.550006.2570>
- [13] Zhou, X., & Li, Y. (2021). Linguistic landscape in campus of local universities: a case study of Ankang University. *International Journal of Teaching Innovation in Higher Education*, 1(1), 34–36. <https://doi.org/10.25236/IJFS.2021.032108>