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Geosemiotic Linguistic Landscape of English Representation: Evidence from Batu Bolong Beach, Bali, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the English use of outdoor signage at Batu Bolong Beach, Bali, a popular location in Canggu known for its unique black sand, surfable waters, and stunning sunsets. Data collection involved capturing outdoor signs using a mobile phone camera. The study focused on analyzing the vocabulary, phrases, or statements displayed on public signs, particularly those conveying prohibitions and warnings. The research findings reveal that at Batu Bolong Beach, English is used in a variety of ways, including English-only signage, bilingual English-Indonesian displays, and examples of code-mixing as well as the placement of signs also functioning in the context of social interaction and effective communication design. This study incorporates Indexicality, Dialogicality, and Selection as analytical frameworks.

1. Introduction

English is a global lingua franca. The presence of English alongside Indonesian shows a balance between global communication and national identity. Landscape Linguistic (LLs) refers to the visibility and presence of language on public and commercial signs in an area. Landry & Bourhis (1997) stated that the linguistic landscape of an area can have two basic functions: informational function and symbolic function. In Indonesian context, English is considered a way for people to interact with others in the world and have access to global information (Kurniawati & Rohmah, 2023).

The use of English in the linguistic landscape in Indonesia is commonly found in public places such as stations, museums, restaurants, beaches, cafes, hotels, airports, and even cemeteries (Khoiriyah & Savitri, 2021; Suprastayasa & Rastitiati, 2023; Widiyanto, 2019; Wijaya & Savitri, 2021; Wulansari, 2020; Yoniarti, 2021) . This is an important aspect of sociolinguistics and language policy,

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as it reflects linguistic diversity, power dynamics, and the identity of a community. English signs are common in areas that are visited by many tourists, aiming to serve a global audience.

The increased prevalence of English-only signage can be interpreted as a marker of trendiness, modernity, globalization, authority, and social class. This phenomenon is particularly evident in upscale urban areas and on official buildings, as suggested by several studies in the field of Linguistic Landscapes (LLs) (Gorter, 2022; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2022). English is commonly featured on signs related to public services, official road signage, and a range of commercial establishments, including national and international food chains, restaurants, cafes, hotels, bakeries, clothing and footwear shops, perfume stores, luxury private healthcare and education facilities, petrol stations, showrooms (selling cars, electronics, and furniture), stationery shops, salons, marketing services, wedding venues, and large retail stores.

Scollon (2003) and Reh (2004) clarified Textonomy into four categories: duplicating, fragmented, overlapping, and complementer. Duplicating refers to texts that repeat the same information across languages or modalities, reinforcing a particular message. Fragmented describes fragmented texts, where information is not presented as a whole but is spread out in separate parts, often to highlight different perspectives. Overlapping includes texts that have overlapping elements, creating interconnections between different parts of the text that may have similar contexts or meanings. Meanwhile, complementer refers to complementary texts, with each part contributing to a more nuanced or comprehensive understanding of a topic. This categorization aids researchers in describing the structure and function of texts and analyzing how information is organized and interpreted by readers.

Geosemiotics is an approach within semiotics that focuses on the relationship between signs and space. This analysis captures three aspects of geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) aligning with the three metafunctions of language: Indexicality (ideational), Dialogicality (textual), Selection (interpersonal). Indexicality pertains to the ideational meaning conveyed by signs. Dialogicality refers to the interdiscursive dynamics between signs, often manifesting as modality. Selection involves the process by which individuals choose from various potential meanings presented by a set of signs (Hu, 2022). In the study of geosemiotics, three attributes are particularly important: "interaction order", "visual semiotics", and the "semiotics of place".

2. Materials and Methods

This study employs a case study approach, focusing on the analysis on a particular social unit, whether individual, family, institution, cultural group, or even analysis of a particular society (Kothari 2004:113). Specifically, this study analyzes prohibition and warning signs. The data is in consist of images of these signs, caputured using a smartphone camera (iPhone Xr).

Prohibition and Warning signs were selected and analyzed based on English language representation (Hudson, 2004; Widiyanto, 2022). Bilingual signs will be analyzed based on textonomy (Reh, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). This study also presents a geosemiotic analysis of the signs related to Indexicality, Dialogicality, and Selection that appear on public notice boards as prohibitions or warnings (Scollon & Scollon, 2003).

The research location, Batu Bolong Beach, is located in Canggu, Bali (see Figure 1). This location was chosen due to its prominence as one of Bali's popular beaches, known for its distinctive black sand, surf-friendly waters, and picturesque sunsets. Uniquely, the beach also features a cemetery and a temple. Balinese Hindus visit this temple daily to pray and seek blessings from "Ida Batara Segara" for peace and harmony. The cemetery, reffered to as "setra" in Balinese, often serves as a temporary burial site, where remains are later exhumed for the "ngaben" cremation ceremony. The cemetery is considered a sacred and restricted area, which explains the presence of numerous prohibition and warning signs related to both the cemetery and the temple. The increasing presence of English on public signs reflects the growing number of international visitors to these tourist destinations.



Figure 1. Batu Bolong Beach, Bali.

3. Results and Discussions

A. *English Representation on Prohibition and Warning Signs*

In this study, the results of the linguistic landscape (LLs) analysis show that the representations related to English prohibitions and warnings at Batu Bolong Beach are used in three ways: as English-only signs, bilingual signs with Indonesian through translation (English-Indonesian signs), and code-mixing. The detailed discussion is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
English Representation on Prohibition and Warning Signs at Batu Bolong Beach

English Representation	Number
English-only Sign	Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 4
English-Indonesian Signs	Figure 5, Figure 7, Figure 8
Code-mixing	Figure 6

English is regarded as a modern language (Sarniwati et al., 2022). Individually, English is used textually to convey prohibitions and warnings such as warnings about burial areas (Figure 2), no parking (Figure 3), and warnings for dog lovers visiting the beach (Figure 4). The Batu Bolong Beach area is a tourist area that has a strong international community, of course English is a means of communication and a symbol of affiliation with the dominant global culture.



Figure 2. Warning sign about the Cemetary Area



Figure 3. Prohibition Sign about the Parking in front of the gate and cemetery area



Figure 4. Warning Sign for dog lovers

English-Indonesian prohibition and warning signs serve as markers of identity and modernity, reflecting efforts to preserve national and cultural identity while remaining open to global influences. The bilingual prohibition and warning signs were analyzed according to the framework outlined in Textonomy (Matras et al., 2018; Reh, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 2003) classified into four categories: duplicating, fragmented, overlapping, and complementary are shown in Table 2.

B. *Linguistic Landscape Geosemiotics*

Indexicality in linguistic landscape geosemiotics refers to how prohibition and warning signs are anchored to specific contexts, such as physical location, the nature of the issue at hand, or cultural significance. At Batu Bolong Beach, the presence of a temple and a burial area leads to numerous signs associated with these sacred sites (see Figures 2, 3, 6, and 7). These signs directly reference Balinese

cultural norms and practices, particularly those surrounding the sacredness of the location and the respect it commands.

Figure 3 illustrates the interaction between two warning signs at the cemetery gate: "No Parking In Front of Gate" and "Cemetery Area, Please Do Not Enter." These signs function together rather than in isolation, with the former focusing on traffic regulations and the physical use of space, while the latter highlights ethical and social conduct in this sacred area. The dialogicality within the linguistic landscape is evident as these two signs collectively emphasize both the physical and social boundaries to be respected within the cemetery, conveying practical rules alongside ethical values to visitors.

Selection in geosemiotics concerns the choices made regarding semiotic elements and their positioning to communicate a specific meaning (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). This includes decisions about design, symbols, and the placement of signs within the environmental context. For instance, in Figure 6, a red "No Parking" symbol is placed prominently at the entrance. Similarly, Figure 8 presents a red "No Littering" symbol positioned at multiple points along the beach. These design and placement choices are deliberate, ensuring that the intended message is clearly communicated to the public.

Table 2
Textonomy Bilingual Prohibition and Warning Signs at Batu Bolong Beach.

Textonomy	**Number**
Duplicating	Figure 5
Fragmented	Figure 6
Overlapping	Figure 7
Complementary	Figure 8

The placement of text on the signs in Figures 5 and 6 suggests that English is positioned above Indonesian as the preferred code (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). This may be done to ensure that information can be understood by international audiences and Indonesian becomes a complementary information for local audiences. In contrast, Figures 7 and 8 suggest that Indonesian is the preferred code, while English is the peripheral code. This approach aims to reach the majority of the local population while still providing information in a global context.

Figure 5 examplifies of “duplicating” wherein the same message is presented in two languages. Figure 6 shows “Fragmented” where two separate pieces of information complement each other. Figure 7 demonstrates “overlapping” where similar prohibitions are conveyed with slight variations in language style. The bilingual sign in Figure 7 falls into the “complementary” category, delivering related messages with variations in the presentation of information. The primary message is a prohibition against throwing cigarette butts, with the English version adding the spresification “on the ground”, thereby indicating that the prohibition specifically applies to discarding cigarette butts on the ground.



Figure 5. Warning Sign about Pee in the Parking Area



Figure 6. Prohibition Sign about Private Road



Figure 7. Warning Sign for visitors not to go up to the Temple Area



Figure 8. Prohibition Sign to Visitors

The use of code-mixing in prohibition and warning signs involves the transition from one language to another across various levels of lexical and syntactic structure, including words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. In Figure 6, the prohibition sign exemplifies code-mixing by explicitly prohibiting visitors from parking. The noun phrase "PRIVATE ROAD" is presented in English and is

equivalent to "Jalan Pribadi" in Indonesian. Conversely, the Indonesian phrase "PURA SAJA" literally translates to "temple only," with "Pura" meaning "temple" and "saja" meaning "only." Implicitly, this phrase indicates that access is restricted to visitors of the temple only.

4. Conclusion

Building on the analysis, it is reasonable to concluded that English is presented in various ways, including public signs conveying prohibitions and warnings in English-only signs, bilingual English-Indonesian sings, as well as instances of code-mixing. The placement of these signs also serves within the context of social interaction and effective communication design. Bilingual usage was analyzed using textonomy and classified into four categories: duplicating, fragmented, overlapping, and complementary.

This study utilized an analytical framework comprising Indexicality, Dialogicality, and Selection to examine phrases or statements on public signs conveying prohibitions and warnings. The findings indicate that the choice of warning and prohibition signs is intended to communicate norms and practices, particularly for visitors to respect the cemetery and temple areas at Batu Bolong Beach.

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