



Geosemiotic analysis of commercial outdoor signs in north Bali urban area, Indonesia

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Abstract

The article reveals the place semiotic elements as a part of geosemiotic analysis of the commercial outdoor signs in Singaraja city and Lovina tourist area in north Bali. It covers the signs' code preference, inscription, and emplacement. The researchers collected 604 pictures of commercial public signs from both places. Observation and interviews were also conducted to obtain the data for a comprehensive place semiotic analysis. In terms of code preference, this study found that Indonesian is dominant in local people-oriented signs, and English is more dominant in tourist-oriented signs. It implies that the commercial ideology of the signs put aside the language policy factors. Surprisingly, Balinese, as the local language, is not found on the signs, but Arabic emblemized with Islam religion, exists on the signs as the combination of business and religious identity. The inscription analysis shows that Roman script is the most dominant orthographic system, followed by Balinese and Arabic. In this case, the touch of local language policy supports the existence of Balinese script on the signs for transliteration only. Then, the emplacement analysis reveals that situated semiotics is the most frequent element due to the business location indexation. Decontextualization and transgressive elements were less frequently found since decontextualized signs are related to well-established brands, and transgressive signs are related to typical improperly placed commercial signs. The commercial signs do not align with the national and local language policy but emphasize profit orientation.

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Introduction

The language of commercial outdoor signs as parts of business properties is not confined to national, cultural, or even political frames (Zaini et al., 2021). Its concern is much influenced by commercial ideology showcasing the business owners' target for profit (George et al., 2021). However, in the Indonesian context, the latest national language regulation, President Regulation No. 63 year 2019 article 33, promotes the salience of Indonesian as the national language and Roman scripts on outdoor signs. Meanwhile, in Bali, one of the provinces in Indonesia, the local government issued Governor Regulation No. 80 year 2018 article 6, which obliges the use of Balinese scripts above the Roman script on public signs. Both national and provincial regulations seem contradictory in those articles. Moreover, the contestation becomes more complex due to the massive use of English as the effect of tourism and globalization, and the existence of migrants' languages from Java, Madura, Lombok, and other islands.

Two economic activity centers in North Bali are Singaraja and Lovina. Singaraja, which 154,997 people populate, is the second biggest city in Bali after Denpasar, the capital city of Bali province. Of the total population, 125,641 people (81.1%) are local people, and 29,356 (18.9%) are immigrants (Suardika et al., 2022). The commercial development in Singaraja city is shown with the rows of commercial infrastructure along the streets in the city. In the west of the city, the Lovina tourist area is also an important commercial area that tourists mostly visit compared with various other tourist places in north Bali (Tourism Board of Buleleng Regency, 2021). From 2017 to 2021, the number of domestic tourists who visited Buleleng Regency, where Lovina is located, was 2.4 million, and the number of foreign tourists reached 1.04 million (Suardika et al., 2022). The visit of tourists to Lovina has become an essential factor for government and private parties in establishing various tourist facilities (Pendit, 2020).

Linguistically, the situation triggers a multilingual phenomenon, especially in the language choice of commercial public signs. The language of the public signs is influenced by three factors: the language known by the sign makers, the language intended for the readers to read, and writing the signs in the language the writers wish to be identified (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991). Commercial establishments use specific languages on their signs to attract prospective customers. In addition, globalization also greatly impacts the linguistic aspects of commercial signs in Singaraja and Lovina. It supports the use of English in public signs, linguistic repertoires, and advertising discourse (Vandenbroucke, 2016).

Furthermore, English is identical to the status of the language of commerce, which fulfills instrumental and symbolic functions in business-related public signs (Lavender, 2020).

The people of Singaraja and Lovina, mostly Balinese, speak the Balinese language as their mother tongue and Indonesian as their national language. The sociolinguistic situation becomes complex due to the arrival of migrant people from the surrounding islands, mostly Muslim and familiar with the Arabic language. The existence of Balinese, English, Indonesian, and the languages of the migrants may raise language contestation in public space or complement each other as a global indexation mixture and nationalistic sentiment (Foster & Welsh, 2021).

The study of outdoor signs has been categorized as a linguistics landscape study (henceforth LL) since 1997 (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Several studies on commercial LL have been conducted in various countries. In Thailand, several LL studies reveal the dominance of English on public signs as a prestige symbol, raising media impact and world English (Vivas-Peraza, 2020). In Oman, Buckingham (2015) reveals the lexicalization of cultural concepts, innovation, and foreign culture in commercial signage. English assimilates with the local culture and reflects Arabic and South Asian dialects. This claim is in line with the finding stated by Alomoush (2021) on the Arabinglish in the advertisements in Jordania. In an Australian context, Yao (2021) revealed the balance of commodification and shared ownership of the Chinese community LL, constituting an essential situation of Chinese human mobility and globalization. Zaini et al. (2021) studied the commercial LL of Kuantan city, Malaysia, and found a multilingual situation with the dominance of Malay and English. The language choice depends not only on the national language policy but also on the business's commercial purposes. Another finding is published by Hassen (2016) on the LL of Addis Ababa city, Ethiopia. The commercial LL patterns in the city's main street were related to the country's history, politics, and culture.

Unlike previous studies, this study explores the commercial LL of Singaraja city and Lovina, which is not yet explored. The LL research of Bali still focuses on the multilingualism of both government and private outdoor signs, which are viewed from language policy perspectives. This research specifically concentrates on investigating the commercial signs related to the place semiotic element of geosemiotics; language preference, inscription, and emplacement (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). The research aims to reveal the language preference, inscription, and emplacement of commercial LL in places with local customers and international tourism orientations.

Literature Review

Linguistic Landscape Studies in Indonesia

Linguistic landscape studies in Indonesia have been improving significantly in the last decade. In education, Andriyanti (2019) investigates the sign patterns in the multilingual context of Yogyakarta's schoolscape. The most dominant language is Indonesian, followed by English, while Javanese is marginalized. Javanese is confined to cultural expressions. Arabic also exists to represent the Islamic identity of the schools. A different perspective, the semiotic landscape, is adopted by Goebel (2020) in revealing Bandung's cityscape. It was found that signage presents multilingualism, inequality, human mobility, and social, political, and economic effects on the city's multilingualism. In Balikpapan, Foster and Welsh (2021) found the absence of local language on the city thoroughfares. The use of English reflects identity contestation, which shows the decentralization force against the centralization Indonesian language. The intersection between national and international identity is manifested through codeswitching. In the Balinese setting, Artawa et al. (2020) investigated the language contestation in Kuta Bali. The presence of the local language regulation has enabled the Balinese language to regain its salience in Bali's most well-known tourist centre. At the same locus, Mulyawan (2021) reveals a problem of transliterating consonant clusters in the Roman script into Balinese script due to the unavailability of such an orthographic system. That research does not focus specifically on commercial signs investigation. The expanding analysis of non-linguistic modalities in the Balinese context is also essential to be revealed further. Geosemiotics has been implemented by Andriyanti (2019) in the education context, and further research in implementing the theory in a different context is still required.

Linguistic Landscape

Initially, LL is defined as the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a territory (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). The contestation happens in the public space due to the imbalance position of languages in the social life of a speech community in which there must be a dominant and marginal language as the result of language policy, commercial consideration, and the close relationship of a certain language to a speech community (Lotherington, 2013). Further development of LL theory arises, and it is defined as an interdisciplinary branch of the sociolinguistics of globalization which concerns the languages on outdoor signs in public areas and its

correlation with semiotics, sociology, politics, geography, and economy (Barni & Bagna, 2015; Goebel, 2020). Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) differentiate outdoor signs into two major groups: top-down and bottom-up. The authority makes top-down signage the manifestation of language policy, and top-down signs are owned by private parties which may be affected by the language policy. The classification is in line with Landry and Bourhis (1997), who use the term government signs and private signs to refer to a similar classification.

Geosemiotics

Some research on LL has expanded to a wider meaning beyond the language of outdoor signs (Jocuns, 2021). The most comprehensive point of view is geosemiotics, connected to discourse in places proposed by Scollon and Scollon (2003). It is considered a place-based theory and a method for comprehending the interconnection between signage and the indexicality of its current location, time, and space (Wang, 2021; Whittingham, 2019).

Geosemiotics includes three major interpretation areas: interaction order, visual semiotics, and place semiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Interaction order focuses on people's interaction in the social domain (Whittingham, 2019). Visual semiotics refers to any image presentation contributing to semiotic interpretation, and place semiotics covers code preference, inscription, and emplacement (Lou, 2017; Scollon & Scollon, 2003).

Language preference of the place semiotics covers the code salience of the signs, which can be seen from the size of the fonts for writing certain languages on the signs. The bigger the size, the more salient the language is. Code priority sequence is next under code preference, in which the first or top-positioned written language is the priority language on the signs. Another category is the number of codes on the signs, which are classified into monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual.

Afterwards, the inscription includes display mode, orthography, and material quality. Display mode refers to the way of making the signs, for instance, printed, carved, painted, or handwritten, and the availability of images on the signs. They are also related to the material quality of the signage, which index the outdoor signs' permanence or durability, temporality or newness, and quality (Scollon & Scollon, 2003).

The last element, the emplacement, is related to where the signs are placed. It is classified into decontextualized, transgressive, and situated signs. Decontextualized signs refer to outdoor signs that are always the same form in a different context. This is easily seen in famous brands. Transgressive signs are unauthorized signs exemplified as graffiti, trash, or discarded items, and situated signs are

commonly called the heart of geosemiotics in the forms of public regulatory signs and name plates that inform the name of a place (Scollon & Scollon, 2003).

Methodology

The research was a qualitative study with a descriptive method design. The three basic LL research steps proposed by Backhaus (2006) were implemented—first, deciding the research territory; second, determining the criteria of the outdoor signs for the research subjects; and third, determining the classification criteria for categorizing the outdoor signs. The territory of the research covers two main streets of Singaraja city, namely A. Yani Street and Diponegoro Street and Lovina, the neighboring tourist destination, about three kilometers away from Singaraja city. The criteria of the outdoor signs chosen as the study subjects were, first, the signs are commercial signs; second, the signs are still used by the owners; third, the signs are still readable; fourth, they are placed in their proper places. The signs are categorized based on the target readers of the commercial signs, namely, tourist-oriented and local people-oriented signs. The classification is intended to compare the geosemiotic aspects of signs for different target readers.

Commercial public signs in Singaraja city and the Lovina tourist area were captured using a digital camera. Taking pictures of public signs is a major way of data collection implemented by LL researchers (Barni & Bagna, 2008). In both places, there were 604 signs captured; 300 in Singaraja and 304 in Lovina. The observation was also conducted to get supporting data on the location, such as the place of the signs, their readability, and the business activities related to the signs. Interviews of 15 to 30 minutes were conducted with 22 business practitioners of commercial establishments, namely, restaurants, hotels, money changers, diving centers, tour and travel services, *warung* (food stalls), minimarket, street food sellers, beauty salons, car showroom, and gadget store. They were selected purposively to get the data on the reasons for choosing a certain language and

scripts on the signs, the material, and the inclusion of images on the signs. The interviews were pre-arranged or on-spot ones at the respondents' commercial establishments.

The analysis step was conducted based on geosemiotics theory especially place semiotics, to explore their code preference, inscription, and emplacement (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). In order to initiate the analysis, the code display (monolingual, bilingual, multilingual mode), and the dominant and less dominant code in both places were counted to obtain the general view of the commercial LL. Afterwards, the code preference is viewed from code salience and code priority sequence. Salience is determined by the size of the scripts on the signs. Code priority sequence is viewed from the top-position language written. Then, the inscription is analyzed through the methods of making the signs (printed, carved/ standing letters, painted), the image existence, the quality of the material or media of the signs, and the types of the scripts. The types may include Roman, Arabic, and Balinese scripts. Balinese script consists of 18 letters and lacks a consonant cluster system that often complicates the transliteration (Mulyawan, 2021). Lastly, the emplacement of the signs is analyzed through decontextualized, transgressive, and situated sign categories.

Results and Discussion

The Language Display of the Commercial Outdoor Signs in Singaraja and Lovina

In order to support the analysis of the code preference of the commercial public signs, it is necessary to identify the dominant and less dominant codes presented in monolingual, bilingual and multilingual modes. It is an initial diagnostic step for further analysis of deeper sociolinguistic situations in the area (Blommaert, 2013).

Table 1 shows different language proportions on the signs in Singaraja and Lovina. In Singaraja, Indonesian is ubiquitous in all types of language presentation. In the monolingual presentation, English is much less dominant

Table 1 Language display on the commercial signs

Code Presentation on the Signs	Singaraja		Lovina	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Monolingual				
Indonesian	166	55.4	107	35.2
English	7	2.3	119	39.1
Bilingual				
Indonesian+English	118	39.3	78	25.7
Arabic+Indonesian	3	1	0	0
Multilingual				
Arabic+Indonesian+English	6	2	0	0
Total	300	100	304	100

than Indonesian, as it exists on only 2.3 percent of signs. However, it appears in a relatively higher percentage in bilingual mode (39.3%). Arabic appears in bilingual (1%) and multilingual (2%) signs, which is much less dominant than Indonesian and English.

On the other hand, in Lovina, there is a subtle difference between monolingual Indonesian (35.2%) and English (39.1%) signs. Both languages also appear in the bilingual mode in a lower percentage (25.7%) than those in monolingual signs. No single commercial sign uses the Balinese language. This finding contradicts the research published by Artawa et al. (2020), claiming that the Balinese language has regained its salient position on public signs in Kuta, the largest tourist area in Bali. The invasion of the Indonesian language as the country's national language suppresses the existence of the Balinese language, especially in the context of commercial public signs. It confirms the previous finding by Permanadeli et al. (2016) that the Indonesian language is commonly used in Indonesian public spaces, and the local language is only spoken in the family domain. The presence of English as the language of commerce is less popular than the Indonesian language in Singaraja since the target customers are mostly Indonesian. It can be inferred that the language choice is primarily influenced by the target readers, in which English is embedded to tourists, and Indonesian is prepared for the locals. The national and international products with English information are promoted on the signs with Indonesian details to cover both Indonesian and English speakers. Some of them are decontextualized and not designed for a particular area. It is a way to support the prestige of the brands, and linguistically, it triggers bilingual and multilingual presentations.

Code Preference in Singaraja City

Singaraja is dominated by domestic commercial interaction and mainly focuses on the local people-oriented establishment. As presented in Figure 1, the code preference

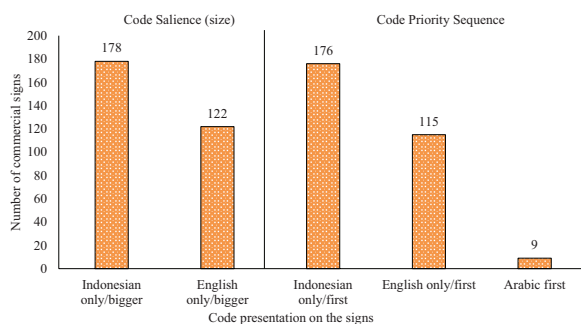


Figure 1 Code preference of the commercial signs in Singaraja city

is viewed from two aspects: code salience through the size of the fonts, code priority sequence through the first position. Of the 300 commercial outdoor signs, 178 use Indonesian only or in bigger font sizes, and then 122 signs are in English only or bigger than the Indonesian ones.

The second aspect of code preference is code priority preference. The language arrangement of the signs shows the priority; single language presentation, top-to-down or left-to-right presentation. Indonesian is presented in a single presentation and the first position on 176 commercial signs, followed by English on 115 signs and Arabic on nine signs. Those numbers indicate that the target readers are Indonesian speakers, and English's influence is essential as the language of commerce in Singaraja city. Another essential finding in this part is the presence of the Arabic lexicon on the commercial signs, even though in less significant frequency (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 Multilingual Arabic + Indonesian + English local people-oriented signs in Singaraja

The presence of the Arabic language is embedded in the Islam religion (Andriyanti, 2019). The language and Arabic scripts index religious identity, halal food serving, and spiritual blessing expression for their business. The Arabic lexicon, if written in Roman, would read *bismillahirrahmanirrahim*, which is equivalent to 'in (or with) the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.' Arabic combined with Indonesian and English exists on a few signs. The Indonesian language is instrumentally used to inform the products. English is related to the products being offered; for example, the lexicon 'juice' and the phrase 'pop ice' in Figure 2, and Arabic symbolizes religious identity.

On the contrary, the Balinese sellers, usually Hindus, rarely use the Balinese language on their commercial public signs. They do not have a similar religious system to the Muslim sellers. Once, a movement was initiated by a Balinese Hindu activist to create a similar system by placing the sign '*Sukla Satyagraha*' (Hindu-based economic empowerment). It is intended to educate and support Balinese people to develop their business in their homeland, which is also termed '*Ajeng Bali*' (maintaining Balinese culture and tradition in the modern era) (Creativany et al., 2020). However, outdoor signs representing Balinese people's business empowerment are not found in the LL of Singaraja, indicating the movement

has not been successfully developed. The sellers do not choose the Balinese language because they perceive that it has less linguistic capital for commercial purposes.

Code Preference in Lovina Tourist Area

In Lovina, the commercial signs are grouped into tourist and local people-oriented signs. Tourist-oriented signs are the outdoor signs of tourist establishments like hotels, restaurants, bars, spas, water sports, money changers, souvenir shops, nightclubs, and tour and transport services. The local people-oriented signs are commercial signs intended for the locals, namely ‘*warung*’ (street food stalls), traditional markets, minimarkets, electronic and machinery shops, and other establishments that supply the locals’ needs. The two classifications’ data show code preference variations (Figure 3).

Figure 3 presents code preference in Lovina, which is viewed from two angles. First, in terms of code salience (size), tourist-oriented signs are dominated by English (in 122 signs). However, on 32 signs, Indonesian is presented in a single presentation or bigger size than English, and only on two signs, are the languages equal in size. The local-oriented signs are dominated by single Indonesian or bigger written Indonesian (in 77 signs). Interestingly, English is presented in a single presentation or bigger than Indonesian in 66 signs on this kind of sign. The signs are mostly promotional signs which offer products with English names to the locals. The equal size of both language presentations is only found in five signs. Second, in terms of code priority sequence, similar distribution occurs. English is dominant on the tourist-oriented signs (on 124 signs) and less dominant than Indonesian on 32 signs.

On the contrary, on local-oriented signs, Indonesian is presented in single mode or in first position on 78 signs, and less dominant than English on 70 signs. The size and priority sequence of the language presented on the signs reflect the target readers, the business’ prospective customers. This finding is different from Hassen (2016), who stated that English is symbolic in the Addis Ababa context and is less popular than the Ethiopian language, Amharic. Figure 4 presents examples of commercial public signs written in monolingual English.

In terms of code presence, the number of commercial signs in monolingual forms is much higher than that of bilingual signs. It seems that the sign makers try to focus on certain target readers. The bilingual signs accommodate international and domestic customers, even though, in recent times, English seems familiar to most people who visit Lovina. Figure 5 presents examples of commercial signs combining English and Indonesian.

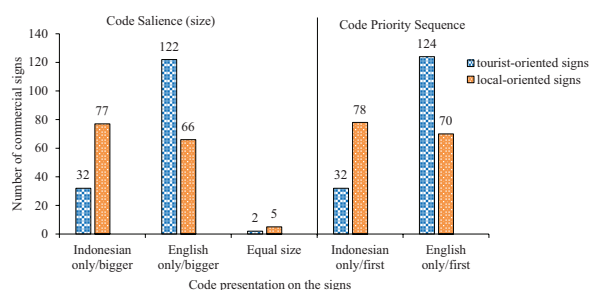


Figure 3 Code preference of commercial signs in Lovina tourist area



Figure 4 English monolingual tourist-oriented commercial signs in the Lovina area



Figure 5 Bilingual English + Indonesian signs for the locals and tourists in Lovina

The left picture is a ‘land for rent’ advertisement in Lovina. The sign maker offers the opportunity for domestic and international investors for it. This can be seen from the English and Indonesian languages used on the sign. The English phrase ‘for rent’ is written above its Indonesian equivalent, ‘*dikontrakkan*’, to attract readers’ attention due to the prestige of English. The English phrase is already familiar to the locals after the immense English contact in the area. At the same time, the phrase is also informative for English speakers even though the details are written in Indonesian. They may clarify the details in various ways, one of them is by contacting the owner through the mobile number.

Meanwhile, on the right photograph, the English phrase ‘Balinese food’ is placed below the Indonesian phrase ‘*Warung Dewi*’ (literally translated into ‘*Dewi food stall*’). A ‘*warung*’ is a simple street food stall in Indonesia that sells inexpensive local food and drink. The customers of a *warung* are usually local people or budget tourists who are already familiar with the area where the *warung* is located. Since the *warung* is located in Lovina, the owner wrote the English phrase ‘Balinese food’ on the sign to attract low-budget English travelers.

Based on the result of the interview, the language choice is totally profit oriented. International and national companies produce printed advertisements that covers prospective customers in all regions of the product distribution instead of using local-oriented language. This practice will decrease the cost of the advertisements and is considered more effective in increasing sales. The informants also said that using the local language for certain national and international products was difficult. It is in line with a research finding stated by Zaini et al. (2021) that the language policy frame could not control commercial language choice since the commercial signs reflect personal freedom and are profit-oriented.

Inscription in Singaraja and Lovina

Inscription, in place semiotics, refers to three parts: display mode, orthographic system, and material quality (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). In this research, the display mode is in the forms of printed, carved or standing letters, painted or handwriting, and the presence of images. Orthography is viewed from scripts used on the signs, namely, the combination of Balinese + Roman scripts, Roman only, and Arabic + Roman. Then, the material quality focuses on the permanence and temporality of the signs. The inscription is presented in Figure 6.

The tourist-oriented signs in both places are dominated by printed signs combined with pictures. Multimodality is essential in transferring the message contained in commercial signs (Heriyanto et al., 2021). The signs are commercial signs which often promote products to the readers. Normally, the readers do not have much time to read the detailed information in words. The pictures contribute to transferring the message of the signs (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). Some commercial signs are created using a more complicated method: carving, standing letters, and painting. These methods are more costly than the printing method but result in more artistic and high-quality outdoor signs. It is why carving, painting, and

standing letters are implemented by high-standard business establishments like luxurious hotels and diving centers, as presented in Figure 7. The sign of 'The Lovina hotel' belongs to a five-star hotel in Lovina, where its customers are usually high-class tourists. A similar standard is also implemented by 'Arrows Dive Center,' which targets foreign tourists as its customers. The material chosen to build the signs is limestone representing nature and high quality (Lu et al., 2021).

The next analysis is on the orthographic system of commercial signs. Three types of scripts used are Balinese, Roman, and Arabic. The Roman script is undeniably the most frequently used one. It is used to write in all languages found on the signs. Unlike Roman scripts, Balinese and Arabic ones have specific characteristics. Balinese script conveys a symbolic function which does not represent the Balinese language. Mulyawan et al. (2022) found similar proof that Balinese scripts transliterate the Roman-written words on the signs. Figure 8 presents examples of two commercial outdoor signs with Balinese scripts.

The picture on the left is a shop name board of a local fried chicken seller. The name is 'Jaya Fried Chicken (JFC).' This shop sign resembles the pattern of the worldwide known fried chicken restaurant sign 'Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC)' by presenting the cartoon image of the founder. It is a marketing strategy of mixing the local culture and international products. The cartoon image is in a traditional Balinese outfit with an Indonesian red and white flag on the chest. The international touch is



Figure 7 Carved hotel name and dive center signs for tourists in Lovina

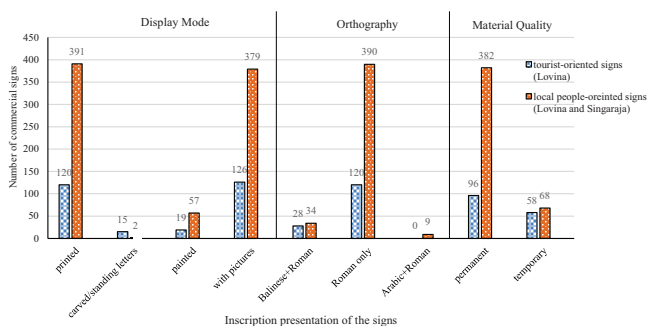


Figure 6 The inscription of the commercial signs in Lovina and Singaraja city



Figure 8 Balinese scripts transliteration on the commercial signs

represented by the English phrase ‘fried chicken.’ The customers are expected to relate their perception of KFC to JFC, which offers similar products at lower prices. This strategy is also found in the research conducted by Purnanto et al. (2022) on the LL of culinary business in Surakarta city, Indonesia.

Figure 8 presents the Balinese script on the top of both signs to implement Bali governor regulation number 80/2018, yet the script is much smaller than the Roman one. The small size indicates that the sign makers do not put them as the most salient parts of the signs (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). The roman scripts are still presented in a more salient way. In addition, there is a difference in orthographic systems between Balinese and English that make the writings less accurate. Balinese scripts do not have a consonant clusters system, so it will be inaccurate to transliterate words in Roman script, which contains consonant clusters (Mulyawan, 2021). The English word ‘chicken’ is transliterated into Balinese script read as ‘*ciken*,’ and ‘Mc Donald’s’ is merely transliterated into ‘*Mik Donal*’ in the Balinese script. The transliteration is based on the way the local people pronounce the words.

The materials used to make the signs can be differentiated into permanent and temporary material quality. Figure 6 presents that the permanent signs dominate the temporary signs. The permanent signs are usually limestone, concrete, metal plate, wood plate, neon box, and thick acrylic plates. The use of permanent material indicates the prestige and the quality standard implemented by commercial establishments (Lu et al., 2021). The permanence shows the well-established products they offer to the customers. However, permanent and temporary signs are often found in one store. The name board of the store is usually permanent, and the product information or advertisement they sell is usually presented in temporary signs due to the dynamic of the information presented in the advertisements. The temporary material is made of vinyl banner sheets, cloth, paper, or blackboard, which are erasable, replaced, and regularly renewed without a high cost.

Emplacement

The three types of semiotics are found in the commercial signs in their typical characteristics. Decontextualized semiotics is found in well-known brand advertisements. Figure 9 depicts three handphone advertisements and one minimarket name board.

The left picture of Figure 9 was taken from a gadget store in Singaraja. Three famous handphone brands, Xiaomi, Vivo, and Samsung, were presented without sufficient product descriptions. None of those brands is a

local product, but they are already familiar to local consumers. Another commercial sign is presented in the right picture. It is the name board of Alfamart, a national franchise minimarket. The typical design covers font type and colour with a thick red and yellow underline; the red and yellow frame and white background are fixed and remain unchanged. The fixed composition is the brand owners’ intellectual properties. The designers of the signs utilize the linguistic and semiotic composition to construct a branding of universal and decontextualized recognition for being instantly recognizable (Scollon & Scollon, 2003).

The next type of semiotics is the transgressive one, also found in Singaraja and Lovina in specific characteristics. Many temporary adhesive promotional sheets are on the electricity poles along the main streets of Singaraja and Lovina. Another type is printed posters framed and nailed on the trees on the edge of the streets, as exemplified in Figure 10. Promotional information of any kind is regulated by the local government to be placed in legal places, which are usually not free. However, some business practitioners do not obey the rules.

The electricity pole in the left picture has adhesive brochures affixed at eye-level height. The authority regularly cleaned the pole; however, the remains of the adhesive paper were still there. It is similar on the right. It is forbidden to harm the trees. The authority has cleaned signs off the trees, but the problem still exists. Low-budget sellers commonly place such transgressive signs to avoid paid promotion. At the same time, it indicates the lack of legal pressing from the authority. This transgressive way is typical and different from the exemplification given by Scollon and Scollon (2003), as the transgressive includes graffiti and unused items. The promotional items affixed in the wrong places are not yet listed in the definition. Lu et al. (2021) also found other transgressive signs in Dali ancient city in China, where the signs are stuck on pavement and other legal public signs. It proves that commercial outdoor signs are not always in line with the authority regulation (Zaini et al., 2021).



Figure 9 Examples of decontextualized commercial signs

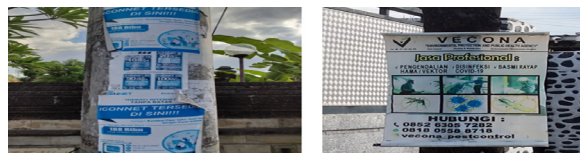


Figure 10 The examples of transgressive commercial signs

The last category is situated semiotics, in a simple way defined as ‘This is X store’ (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). The situated commercial signs are most often found in Singaraja and Lovina, as represented by the two pictures in Figure 11. Every commercial establishment has its name. The name is a compulsory prerequisite to getting an operating license from the government and becomes the distinctive identity of the place.



Figure 11 The examples of situated commercial signs

Among many name boards, the two pictures were taken from a ‘warung’ on the left and a bar and restaurant on the right. The name of the *warung* (food stall) is ‘*Warung Dessy*,’ and the restaurant's name is ‘*Bintang Bali*.’ Those name boards tell the customer implicitly that this is *Warung Dessy* or *Bintang Bali* bar and restaurant. Those names differentiate the establishments from the neighboring similar food stalls and restaurants. Those name boards are placed in the front of the warung and on the edge of the street. The placing of the signs makes them visible and recognizable to the customers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The place semiotics analysis as a part of geosemiotics theory in two major commercial outdoor signs in Singaraja and Lovina reveals the influence of commercial ideology in the research locus. The code preferences of the sign makers are Indonesian, English, and Arabic based on the target readers that may become the business’s customers. Indonesian language, written in Roman or Balinese scripts, is intended to address domestic customers. The existence of English is unavoidable due to the decontextualization aspect of the products offered and the status of English as the prestigious language of commerce. The inscription analysis shows that the Balinese script on the signs functions symbolically as the representation of Balinese culture conservation, which the local government regulates. It is used to transliterate the outdoor signs’ Indonesian and English words. Unlike the Balinese script, the Balinese language is marginalized on the signs even though most customers are Balinese. Arabic language and script are on the food stalls’ name boards or banners of Muslim sellers to show identity, serve halal food, and express spiritual blessing. Another important point is the material chosen for making them—

the more luxurious the material, the higher the quality standard indexed by the signs.

The emplacement analysis shows that well-established brands as intellectual properties of the companies mostly implement decontextualized semiotics. Transgressive semiotics is also found in the data of low-budget promotional signs affixed on the electricity poles or nailed on the eye-level height of the trees on the edge of streets. Lastly, the most frequently found signs are situated signs. They represent the situated semiotics which is perceived as the heart of geosemiotics of Singaraja and Lovina. The signs exist in the most visible site of the business establishment as shop names that become the identity and fulfill the administrative prerequisite of an operating license. This research only interviewed 22 business practitioners without interviewing those who read the signs. Further research is recommended to investigate the sign readers’ views on the geosemiotic elements of the signs. Then, the analysis may be expanded to include other elements, namely interaction order and deeper visual semiotics.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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