

The Linguistic Landscape of Public Signs in Istiqlal Mosque

Siti Rohany^{1)*}, Widad Marshush²⁾, Sonya Ayu Kumala³⁾

¹⁾²⁾³⁾University of Buddhi Dharma

Jl. Imam Bonjol No.14, Karawaci, Tangerang, Indonesia

¹⁾siti.rohany@gmail.com

²⁾widad9192@gmail.com

³⁾sonyaa.ayuu@gmail.com

Article history:

Received 16 October 2024;

Revised 3 November 2024;

Accepted 8 November 2024;

Available online 30 December 2024

Keywords: {use 4-6 keywords}

Linguistics Landscape

Public Sign

Multilingualism

Communication

Abstract

This research examines the linguistic landscape in places of worship, focusing on public signs at the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta. The study aims to analyze the language use on signs in this iconic mosque, applying Spolsky and Cooper's theoretical framework, which classifies signs based on linguistic taxonomy. Data were collected through direct observation at the mosque, where researchers photographed public signs over a single day. The analysis identified 51 signs, categorized into 28 monolingual, 10 bilingual, and 13 multilingual signs. The multilingual signs featured a combination of Indonesian, Arabic, and English. These signs were further classified by function, including prohibitions, warnings, labels, directions, and informational purposes. The findings reveal a rich linguistic landscape that reflects the cultural and religious significance of the Istiqlal Mosque. The signs not only facilitate communication and navigation for domestic and international visitors but also underscore the mosque's role as a multicultural and multilingual space. The use of Indonesian as the national language dominates the signage, while Arabic emphasizes religious identity, and English accommodates international visitors. This study highlights the importance of linguistic landscapes in enhancing accessibility and fostering inclusivity in public spaces. By examining the diversity of languages and their functions on signs at the Istiqlal Mosque, this research provides valuable insights into the intersection of language, culture, and communication in a religious and cultural landmark. The findings also have implications for designing effective signage in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

I. INTRODUCTION

The place of worship is used to support worship activities by its adherents with those who believe in the religion. A place of worship is considered a holy place because of the place where they worship the god they believe in. In Indonesia with a diversity of ethnicities, races, cultures, and religions. In the Jakarta area, it is famous for the Istiqlal Mosque. Istiqlal Mosque is the largest mosque in Southeast Asia. This mosque is the pride of the Indonesia nation, as an

* Corresponding author

expression and manifestation of the gratitude of the nation and people of Indonesia, the majority of whom are Muslims. This mosque is called Istiqlal which means independence. Monumental buildings in Indonesia before the colonial period are quite impressive.

The mosque is a historical description of the development of Muslim activities (Shihab, M. Q, 1996). This mosque building is considered a quite unique building because right across the street from this mosque building is the Manila Cathedral Plaza which is quite large which faces each other directly between the two buildings. This is one of the tangible proofs of the value of tolerance in Indonesia. It is a fact that the function of the Istiqlal Mosque has affiliations with Muslims in Indonesia. However, the Istiqlal Mosque is not exclusive but inclusive which opens up people of other faiths to be able to visit it (Ardiansyah & Ir Sudiarto, 2017)

In Istiqlal Mosque area, there are several public signs that use 2 or more languages to give directions or directions using Indonesian Language, Arabic, English because it is undeniable that Indonesia is a multilingual country. Many visitors from abroad deliberately see the splendor of the largest mosque in Southeast Asia, therefore this mosque uses more than 2 to provide instructions on public signs to make it easier for visitors who want to worship or go around the istiqal mosque area.

According to (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015) uses the term multilingual to refer generally to situations in which there are speakers of more than one language. It not only occurs in spoken context but also in written signs. People all live in places surrounded by written signs, which are displayed on street names, posters, advertisements, official notices and messages, etc (Xia & Li, 2016). Written signs of multilingualism in Istiqlal Mosque can be easily found places of worship that function as religious destination. It probably attracts many people from different ethnicities, regions, and countries, and religions come to visit in such religious destination. In addition, the track of multilingual society can be noticed from language use. As a result, there may be used more than one language as public signs.

The linguistic landscape study focuses on any display of written language on the sign in public, it can be multimodal, semiotic, or oral elements (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006). According to (Landry, Bourhis, & Richard Y, 16(1), 23–49.) Linguistic landscape as the study about languages of the road signs, advertisements, place names, shop signs, and official public signs by the government.

(Gorter, 2006)states that linguistic landscape is not only “the words used on the signage”, but also “the language’s representation”. The languages that appear on the signage in public space are not mostly related to the most language used by the people and the location of where they are placed. For example is in the tourist destination area, the languages that appear are not only written in one language, mostly, the signage on the tourist destination area are written in various language especially the native language and English. English appears because English plays as international language.

Study of (Scollon,R & Scollon, W, 2003), languages on a signs in the public areas are related to the language used by the people (geopolitical location) and some are not (socio cultural association). Based on Scollon and Scollon Wong theory, language of linguistic landscape in public area is divided into geopolitical location and socio cultural location.

Linguistic landscape is where the languages in public space is symbolically placed (Ben-Rafael , Shohamy, Amara, & trumper-hecht, 2006). The languages is not merely written with no meaning, it has written with the purpose. For the example, the road signs have a purpose to guide the people to the correct way. Another example found as a slogan of the shop. It has a purpose to attract the consumers. It is how the language works for the people.

Functions of multilingualism in public signs. Additionally, apart from communicating, a linguistics lanscape also aims to transmit messages to its readers and its study is fundamental to understand the background and current behaviour of a community. At the same time, it may be as powerful as to lead to changes in society (Coulmas, 2013) it can serve as a tool for protest, media broadcast or diffusion, and even language input

According to (Landry, Bourhis, & Richard Y, 16(1), 23–49.), there are several functions of public signs such as informational and symbolic. The informational function aims at indicating the geographical territory of a language group and the symbolic function

reveals how different languages are perceived by a particular linguistic community in terms of their value and status. another function could be considered: media diffusion. In this current era of digital globalisation, with English as the dominant language over the internet (Flammia & Saunderes, 2007)

This paper aims at analyzing signs of multilingualism at religious places in Istiqlal Mosque. The purposes are to discover languages as public signs at ten outstanding places of worship in Istiqlal Mosque and to show the most used language in all the religious places (Wafa & Wijayanti, 2018) There are several studies related to the previous linguistics landscape such as research English in the linguistic landscape of Thailand: A case study of public signs in Hat Yai by Ana Cristina Vivas-Peraza 2020 , Signs of Multilingualism at Religious Places in Surabaya: A Linguistic Landscape Study Ali Wafa, Sheila Wijayanti, Universitas Airlangga 2018 and also Linguistic Landscape and Ethnolinguistic Vitality. An Empirical Study by Landry, Rodrigue Bourhis, Richard Y 1997. This study examines linguistics landscapes in several regions that have multilingual from a linguistic perspective.

II. METHODS

The study was conducted using a quantitative methods approach. Quantitative analysis was used to provide an illustrative idea of the most common functions of English in signs, as well the visual and linguistic prominence in Indonesia, Arabic, English. Collecting data used to get information in order to achieve the objective of the research. Some steps were taken for collecting the data, the researcher have done observation to collect the data, first was observation. The researcher observed areas Istiqlal Moesque On Thursday 25 July 2024, the researcher has visited Istiqlal During the observation in each areas, the researcher took a figure of languages used as publis signs. In this study, the researcher used the large Arabic Al-Munawwir dictionary, the English using the Oxford dictionary and the Indonesian Language using the KBBI Dictionary (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*) to research the origin of the language used for public signs.

III. RESULTS

Researcher took a figure public signs which used in Istiqlal Mosque are. There are 10 pictures of public signs where used bilingual was included were taken randomly. 5 signs were monolingual data, only written in indonesia, 5 signs bilingual data written

Indonesian-Arabic and Indonesian-English, and the remaining 5 signs were multilingual, where more than one language appeared ; Indonesia, Arabic, and English.

Monolingual

The data found 5 monolingual language signs. 3 data are Indonesian language and 2 data is English data. It could see on figure 1 until 5.



Figure 1. Monolingual Indonesian Sign

This sign is monolingual sign category because there is text “Tempat Penitipan Sepatu/Sandal. In Indonesia dictionary, class word and meaning of “Tempat” is N means something or a place used to put. “Penitipan” from “titip” word and it is N means a place for custody. “Sepatu” is N means foot wraps or shoes. “Sandal” is N (Noun) means footwear with hooks on the feet. This sign means shows footwear storage facility to keep visitors’ footwear. Visitors could put footwear in the storage. The picture has symbol right arrow sign which means footwear storage facility in the right way. The color of this symbol is blue means notice to place of footwear.



Figure 2. Monolingual English Sign

This sign is monolingual sign category because only one language in the text and the text is “Dilarang Menyimpan Sepatu/Sandal Di Sini (Rawan Hilang)”. In Indonesian dictionary, class word and meaning of “Dilarang” is V means instruct not to do something. “Menyimpan” from “simpan” word and it is V means put something. “Sepatu” is N means foot wraps or shoes. “Sandal” is N means footwear with hooks on the feet. “Di” is particle. “Sini” is pronoun. “Rawan” is ADJ means create security disturbances. “Hilang” is V means ceases to exist or disappeared. In Indonesian which means “do not putting in footwear in here (it could lost)”. The sign means to give intruction that do not putting footwear in that place. The purpose of this sign is to putting footwear in another place.



Figure 3. Sign Prohibiting Monolingual Indonesian

This sign is monolingual sign category because only Indonesia language in the text and the text is “Hanya Untuk Dipakai, Tidak Untuk Dibawa Pulang”. In Indonesian dictionary, class word and meaning of “Hanya” is ADV (Adverb) means just. “Untuk” is particle means purpose or goal. “Dipakai” is V means wear and it is from “pakai” word. “Tidak” is ADV means rejection. “Dibawa” is V means bring and based word of “bawa”. “Pulang” is V means go to the place of residence or origin. This sign means just for use, do not for take away. This sign means

to use water for ablution and water do not to take away from the place. The purpose is people to use water for ablution.



Figure 4. Indonesian Monolingual Water Use Signs

This sign is monolingual sign category because only English language in the text. The text is “Toilet”, in Indonesian dictionary, class word and meaning of “Toilet” N means a place for grooming. This sign means place for defecation and urination. So, there is facility to wastewater for people who visit the masjid. There is right arrow symbol which means the toilet in the right way. The color of sign is blue because to notice the right arrow symbol. The purpose of this sign is notice to find toilet space.



Figure 5. English Monolingual Toilet Direction Sign

Bilingual

The use of two languages in public signs is often found in public places because it is necessary to complete the information needed. In this study, researchers found 5 public signs that used two languages, which were Indonesian-Arabic and Indonesian-English. The results obtained between the two languages, which are often found in Istiqlal mosque. It could see on figure 6 until 10.

This sign is bilingual language sign because there are 2 (two) language that is Indonesian and arabic. There is text “Jama’ah” in arabic language means people and the text “Masuk Melalui Pintu” in Indonesian which means could enter to another door in mosque. In Indonesia dictionary, the class of word “Jama’ah” is N on based word is jemaah means a gathering of people for the purpose of pray. “Masuk” is V means entered in area such as room or space. “Melalui” is V means passing the road. “Pintu” is N means places to exit and enter. Another text is “Al-Qudus/Al-Fattah” in arabic language Al-Qudus means the most pure and holy. Al-Fattah means Allah SWT who opens doors of blessing, victory, and knowledge. So, those is name of Allah SWT.



Figure 6. Indonesian-Arabic Bilingual Sign

In this sign is name of the doors, the language use hijaiyah language because easy to read with all people. So, this sign has means people could enter at Al-Qudus door and Al-Fattah door. The picture has a symbol that is right arrow sign which means Al-Qudus door and Al-Fattah door at the right way. The color of sign is green that means instruction to find doors to enter a mosque.



Figure 7. Istiqlal KB/RA Direction Sign

This sign is bilingual language sign because there is 2 (two) language that is Indonesian-Arabic and there is text "Kb/Ra Istiqlal". In Indonesian dictionary, class of word "Kb" is N from kelompok bermain, kelompok means a collection of something such as people and animal, bermain is V means play. "Istiqlal" is N means N means liberty and freedom. "Ra" from Raudhatul Atfal means school level that is playground. There is left arrow sign to guide visitors to the playground location at the mosque. The placement of these signs helps parents and visitors find the education facilities more easily. The purpose is to ensure clear navigation and ease access to child education services at the Istiqlal Mosque.



Figure 8. Indonesian-English Bilingual Warning Sign

This sign is bilingual language sign because combines Indonesian text that is "Titik Kumpul" and English that is "Assembly Point". In Indonesian dictionary, class word of "Titik" is N means center and "Kumpul" is V means together. In English dictionary, class word of "Assembly Point" N means to meet and to gather for people if there is emergency. Indicates the location to be used as a muster point in an emergency situation. This sign is to indicate the area that should be used as a meeting place in the event of an emergency such as fire or evacuation. The placement of this sign at Istiqlal Mosque is intended to ensure that all visitors know where to safely gather in the event of an emergency. The purpose is to facilitate an orderly and safe evacuation process and to improve safety and coordination at mosque environment.



Figure 9. Indonesian-English Bilingual Gathering Point Mark

This sign is bilingual language sign because combines Indonesian text that is "Pintu" and Arabic that is "Al Qudus". In Indonesian dictionary, class of word "Pintu" is N means places and tools to exit and enter. In Arabic dictionary, "Al Qudus" means the most pure and holy. This sign shows the location of the door called Al Qudus. This sign helps visitors to the Istiqlal Mosque to know and find specific doors that have specific access in the mosque. This sign is important in the Istiqlal Mosque to provide clear directions to visitor. The main purpose of this sign is to facilitate navigation within the mosque and ensure that visitors can find doors quickly and effectively.



Figure 10. Al Quddus Door Bilingual Sign

Multilingual

Multilingual was also found in public signs. There are 5 Public signs in Istiqlal Mosque. It shows that multilingual in public places is very important to facilitate visitors from other countries. Publics signs work well in public places to be able to find places, get information, prohibitions or as warnings signs in Istiqlal Mosque, The public sings used multilingual shows in Figure 11 until Figure 15 .



Figure 11. Multilingual Madrasa Sign

There is public sing which used multilingual Indonesia, Arabic, and English. The word of Madrasah in Indonesia, مدرسة in Arabi and Islamic School in English has the same meaning, namely school basic of islamic knowldage in the used of three languages.



Figure 12. Multilingual Signs of Prayer Room and Women's Toilet

There are 2 sentences at public sign which used 3 languages Indonesia, Arabic, and English at first sentence above Ruang Shalat Lantai Utama in Indonesia. دعاق هلا صلا in Arabic and Main Floor Prayer Hall in English has same meaning for Information on the location of the prayer on the main floor and second Sentence was also used multilingual Wudhu & Toilet Wanita in Indonesia, تارود هلي ملا يضاوملاو اءا سد نلل in Arabic, And Women's Toilet & Ablution in English which give information for toilets and ablution places for women.



Figure 13. Arrazzaq Door Multilingual Sign

Figure above of public sign which used 3 language Indonesia, Arabic, and English. Pintu in Indonesia Arrazzaq It comes from Arabic which when translated into Indonesian means 'yang maha pemberi rezeki', باب قازر لا in arabic and Arrazzaq Entrance in English, Arrazaq in Arabic if when translated Into English means 'The Almighty Giver of Sustenance' and word of Enterence In English. That is Public Sign have same means for a name of directions towards the Arrazaq door.



Figure 14. Multilingual Sign of Women's Wudhu

The Public sign used multilingual, Wudhu Wanita in Indonesia المواضي للنساء in Arabic and Women's Ablution in english. The public sign has same meaning of a place for women's ablution.



Figure 15. Multilingual Sign of Prayer Place Boundaries

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The researchers found total of 15 language sign data. The result of the analysis shows there are 3 (three) language sign data those are 5 of monolingual language sign, 5 of bilingual language sign, 5 of multilingual language sign. In the Istiqlal Mosque domain use bilingual language sign that is Indonesian-Arabic because there is a lot of name of place and activity use arabic. The researchers suggested to use function of language sign to analysis, use interview method to more know about the function, and the differences of object as example is Cathedral Church.

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