

The Portrait of Landscape in Public Area in Medan City

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Abstract: *The problem of using language in Indonesia especially in Medan, the capital of North Sumatra is complex. The complicated happened since it relates to the three aspects: firstly, the language itself which includes Indonesian language, local language and foreign language. Secondly, the language user of which relates to the quality of how the language is used whether formally or informally. Finally, does the language use which tends to exists in every aspect of the field of languages. The researcher will elaborate and analyse the use of language in the advertisement or imperative statement in the semiotic and symbolic/systemic language. Whether the language has already sent a message they presuppose someone who understands them. The findings will be continued by a conclusion in the end.*

Keywords: *Landscape, language*

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Medan is the third biggest city in Indonesia which consists of multicultural society. Medan with its population of 2.497 million people¹, speaks in three languages namely local (such as Batakese, Melayu and other ethnic groups); national language (Bahasa Indonesia); and foreign languages (English, Mandarin and Indian). The language developments of Medan city especially in the public area for example in the government office are better than in the private area. This due in government area, the language that use is “*Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia yang Disempurkan*” (PUEYD) which is hoped that can accommodate the development of Bahasa Indonesia fastly. Also, in the government area, has implemented *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Utara Nomor 8 Tahun 2017 tentang Pengutamaan Bahasa Indonesia dan Pelindungan Bahasa Daerah dan Sastra Daerah*²; *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 24 tahun 2009 tentang Bendera, Bahasa dan Lambang Negara serta Lagu Kebangsaan*³; *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia*.⁴ On the other hand, in the private area,

¹World Population Review. (2018). Retrieved December 28, 2018, from <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/indonesia-population/>

²Kebudayaan, B. B. (2017). *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Utara Nomor 8 tahun 2017 Tentang Pengutamaan Bahasa Indonesia dan Pelindungan Bahasa Daerah dan Sastra Daerah*. Medan: Balai Bahasa Sumatera Utara Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

³Kebudayaan, B. P. (2011). *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 24 tahun 2009 tentang Bendera, Bahasa dan Lambang Negara serta Lagu Kebangsaan*. Medan: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

the language use are mostly in foreign language especially English. These are due to some reasons: business oriented, prestige and lifestyle.

1.2 Requirement of assignment

As a Doctorate student of Applied Linguistics of LTBI UNIMED, the researcher finds that Language Semiotics which consists of three credits is a must to be taken in the third semester. There are many benefits of having this subject, compared to what she got when she was in S1 Degree and Master Degree. The benefits are namely: first, what is semiotics? Why is it important in every part of human beings 'life? Then, it is very important for a candidate doctor of Applied Linguistics to master the whole knowledge of language semiotics or in other words to understand further what semiotics actually is. Thirdly, the language semiotic takes a role in a research of Applied Linguistics. Finally, as it is written in the Decree of Minister of Education of The Republic of Indonesia dated in December 20th, 2000, a doctorate candidate should have qualification as follows:

- a. Have ability of developing the concepts of knowledge, technology and/ or new arts in his field through a research.
- b. Have the ability of developing the science concepts, technology and / or new arts in core subject
- c. Have the ability to manage, lead and carry out research program;
- d. Have the interdisciplinary approach ability to create creativity in the field of core subject. Relating to the need of applied linguistic as the foundation of knowledge especially in *Language and Semiotics and Multimodal Discourse Analysis*.

1.3 The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems are formulated as follow:

1. What language is dominantly used in the landscape of Medan City?
2. How are the texts used? (completely/partially...)
3. Why are the texts used in the manners they used?

1.4 The Aim of the Study

The aim of the Study is to find out what language is dominantly used in the landscape of Medan City, how the texts are used and why the texts are used in the manners they used. The study also aims to be a suggestion for the society, stake holder and government to more appreciate *Bahasa Indonesia* as the national identity to communicate formally or informally especially in the public area.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher focuses on two determinants of using languages in Medan city whether in public area, such as in Government office, or Private Company, in using Bahasa Indonesia or English as a dominant.

⁴Kebudayaan, B. P. (2016). *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia*. Medan: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

1.6 Significant of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be useful for:

1. The candidate students of Doctoral Degree, who are expected to give valuable insights as one of the alternative techniques to develop his/her knowledge of applied linguistics.
2. Readers who are interested in this study will inform more knowledge on semiotics.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Language as an effective and efficient means of communication, which is a must needed for every nation. Without language, one nation is impossible to communicate. Language shows as a national identity. Language as a part of culture can show cultural diversity of the nation. As mentioned by (Varshney, 1995), language is:

- a. As a social phenomenon

Language is a set of conventional communicative signals used by humans for communication in a community. Language in this sense is a possession of a social group, comprising an indispensable set of rules which permits its members to relate to each other, or interact with each other, to co-operate with each other. It is a social institution. Language exists in society; it is a means of nourishing and developing culture and establishing human relations. It is as a member of society that a human being acquires a language.

- b. Language is symbolic

The symbolism of language is a necessary consequence of the feature of arbitrariness discussed above. A symbol stands for something else; it is something that serves as a substitute. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols. For concepts, things, ideas, objects, etc, we have sounds and words as symbols. Language uses words essentially as symbols and not as signs (e.g. in Maths) for the concepts represented by them.

- c. Language is systematic

Although language is symbolic, yet its symbols are arranged in a particular system. All languages have their system of arrangements. Through symbols in each human language are finite, they can be arranged infinitely; that is to say, we can produce an infinite set of sentence by a finite set of symbols.

Every language is a system of systems. All languages have phonological and grammatical systems, and within a system there are several sub-systems. For example, within the grammatical system we have morphological and syntactic systems, and within these two sub-systems we have several other systems such as those of plural, of mood, of aspect, of tense, etc.

By 'systemic' we also mean the following: the speakers of language use only certain combinations. Thus although the sounds b and z occur in English, there is no word in English which begins with bz. Similarly we can say that **the beautiful girl chased the brown dog** is a sentence of English, but **the edfulbbeauti chase girl brown the dog** is not. Thus we conclude that all languages, though linear in their visual manifestation, have a dual system of sound and meaning. In other words, language is the systematic composition or arrangement of linguistic unit which correlate word and meaning. Each language, therefore, can be described as a special

system, suitable for conveying message within its own framework of structure and meaning, and having very little direct physical relation to the meanings or acts which it involves. It should also be remembered that language is meaningful.

Furthermore, semiotics also take a lot of role in presenting a language. The English word “semiotics” comes from Greek *sēmiōtikéepistémē* designates the science (*epistémē*) of signs (*sēmēion*, *sēma*). Signs are objects that convey something – a message; they presuppose someone who understands them – an interpreter. According to many scholars such as Ferdinand de Saussure, M.A.K Halliday, AmrinSaragih, RP Fawsett, and Thomas A. Sebeok, semiotics is the study of signs system and symbols and their use of interpretation. Thus, semiotics studies signs with respect to their functioning in sign processes within sign systems

Semiotics represents a range of studies in art, literature, anthropology and the mass media rather than an independent academic discipline. Those involved in semiotics include linguists, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, literary, aesthetic and media theorists, psychoanalysts and educationalists. Usually, semiotic analysis studies the roles of signs and the part they play on a social and cultural scale.

As it is noted by (Chandler, 2007) Semiotics is important because it can help us not to take 'reality' for granted as something having a purely objective existence which is independent of human interpretation. It teaches us that reality is a system of signs. Studying semiotics can assist us to become more aware of reality as a construction and of the roles played by ourselves and others in constructing it. It can help us to realize that information or meaning is not 'contained' in the world or in books, computers or audio-visual media. Meaning is not 'transmitted' to us - we actively create it according to a complex interplay of codes or conventions of which we are normally unaware. Becoming aware of such codes is both inherently fascinating and intellectually empowering. We learn from semiotics that we live in a world of signs and we have no way of understanding anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized. Through the study of semiotics we become aware that these signs and codes are normally transparent and disguise our task in 'reading' them. Living in a world of increasingly visual signs, we need to learn that even the most 'realistic' signs are not what they appear to be.

Thus, in every aspect of human beings' lives like in our society context we cannot avoid the use of a sign because a sign is something that can be interpreted as having a meaning, which is something other than itself, and which is therefore able to communicate information to the one interpreting or decoding the sign. Signs can work through any of the senses, visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory or taste, and their meaning can be intentional such as a word uttered with a specific meaning, or unintentional such as a symptom being a sign of a particular medical condition.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted by applying qualitative and quantitative method. Qualitative method itself is based on the literature, articles and books. First of all, the researcher read the books, journals and other resources. The books on semiotics and language are as the guidelines for the researcher to develop her study. Similar to this, the researcher also reads state regulations report such as *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Utara Nomor 8 Tahun 2017 tentang*

*Pengutamaan Bahasa Indonesia dan Pelindungan Bahasa Daerah dan Sastra Daerah*⁵; *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 24 tahun 2009 tentang Bendera, Bahasa dan Lambang Negara serta Lagu Kebangsaan*⁶; *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia*. to make sure that the correct *Bahasa Indonesia* is needed and to support the study.

The quantitative method is conducted in the primer source. The primer source is data source that directly collected by the researcher to conduct the research. The data gathered is used an observation data collection technique (Sugiyono, 2012). The observation technique is not only write the data itself but through the process of considering and analysing it by stressed on the language, especially how the texts are used and why the texts are used in the manners they used. The texts that used will be analysed whether the texts structure are partial or complete. Partial means incomplete sentences that do not include *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia* and *Subjek-Predikat-Objek-Keterangan* pattern. In the contrary, the complete one use the more comprehensive structure pattern and based on *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia*. The data is conducted by collecting some pictures of landscape in the government area (in post office, Merdeka Walk, and *Badan Sumber Daya Manusia* office at Jalan Ngalengko No. 1 Medan) and some advertisement in private area (in Fairmall Plaza)

IV. FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The findings of this study show that most of landscape in public area especially in government area or officer use good Bahasa Indonesia which followed by *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia*. Below are four pictures found in public area:

4.1 Government Areas A. Picture 1



⁵Kebudayaan, B. B. (2017). *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Utara Nomor 8 tahun 2017 Tentang Pengutamaan Bahasa Indonesia dan Pelindungan Bahasa Daerah dan Sastra Daerah*. Medan: Balai Bahasa Sumatera Utara Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

⁶Kebudayaan, B. P. (2011). *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 24 tahun 2009 tentang Bendera, Bahasa dan Lambang Negara serta Lagu Kebangsaan*. Medan: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

This Statement is found in RSUD Dr. Pringadi Medan located on Jalan Professor M.Yamin. It shows that from the language grammatical it uses *Pedoman Umum Bahasa Indonesia* and grammatically it is an imperative sentence. Besides, from the linguistic aspect, we can analyse that the picture has shown the symbol and systemic language. The statement “*Buanglah Sampah Pada Tempatnya*” exists with the symbol of rubbish bin. The statement “*Kebersihan Tetap Terjaga*” exists as the systemic language where word and meaning are correlated with the provided symbols. From the rubbish bin symbol we can interpret that the role of scattered the rubbish in the place contain a semiotic element.

B. Picture 2



This statement is found in Merdeka Walk located in Jalan Balai Kota. It shows that from the language grammatically it uses *Pedoman Umum Bahasa Indonesia* and imperative sentence. Besides, from the linguistic aspect, we can analyse that the picture has shown the symbol and systemic language. The imperative statement “*Helm Harap Dilepas*” exists with the symbol of take the helmet off. The second statement refers to a suggestion statement which contains a systemic grammatical language. The statement “*Gedung ini dilengkapi dengan Kamera Pengawas (CCTV) 24 jam*” shown that there is an arrangement of linguistic unit which correlate word and meaning. The sentence is also supported as a semiotic which occurs by the correlation between second statement towards the first statement. The sign of the statements interpret that the CCTV will detect the safety of the helmet and transportation in the location from a theft.

C. Picture 3



This statement is found in RSUD Dr. Pringadi Medan located on Jalan Professor M.Yamin. It shows that from the language grammatical it uses *Pedoman Umum Bahasa Indonesia* and it is an imperative sentence. Besides, from the linguistic aspect, we can analyse that the picture has shown the symbol and systemic language as being mention by Varshney. The statement “*Katakan YA untuk mencuci tangan*” exists with the symbol of clean hand. The suggestion statement “*Ayo Cegah infeksi dengan Hand Higiene*” exists as the systemic language where word and meaning are correlated with the provided symbols. The sentence is also supported as a semiotic which occurs by the correlation between first statement towards the second statement. The sign of the statements interpret that let us wash our hand using the hand hygiene for the better health and avoid the infection.

D. Picture 4



This statement is found in RSUD Dr. Pringadi Medan located on Jalan Professor M.Yamin. It shows that from the language grammatical it uses *Pedoman Umum Bahasa Indonesia* Besides, from the linguistic aspect, we can analyse that the picture has shown the symbol and systemic language as being mention by Varshney. The statement “*6 Langkah Cuci Tangan*” exists with the symbol of washing hand steps. The symbols are supported with statement in the below as a little essential informations. Similar with the second statement “*5 Saat melakukan praktek kebersihan Tangan*”, the symbol has shown the steps from the numbering arrow symbol towards the patient symbol with limited information and language.

These suggestion statement exists as the systemic language where word and meaning are correlated with the provided symbols. The sentences are also supported as a semiotic which occurs by the correlation between first statement and the second statement. The sign of the statements interpret that let us wash our hand using the hand hygiene for the better health and avoid the infection displacement. The message that is interpreted from the sign (semiotic) means a lot for their role in the social and culture scale.

4.2 Private Areas



There are some reasons why these landscapes using English instead of *Bahasa Indonesia* :

1. These four landscapes found in Fairmall Medan located at Jalan Gatot Subroto. It uses English in order to attract for some reasons. First, as a trader, they usually prefer use English to *Bahasa Indonesia* by using English is meant to get positive image from the society and it also create prestige for the traders' business. The trader said that using English has positive reasons such as have a good impression, more interesting, fashionable, more trendy, more intellect, and not old-fashioned. However it is contrary to

Pasal 36 ayat 3 UU RI Nomor 24 tahun 2009 said that: “*Bahasa Indonesia wajib digunakan untuk nama bangunan atau gedung, jalan, apartemen atau permukiman pekantoran, kompleks perdagangan, organisasi yang didirikan atau dimiliki oleh warga negara Indonesia atau badan hukum Indonesia*” ; *Pasal 37 ayat (1)* said that: “*Bahasa Indonesia wajib digunakan dalam informasi tentang produk barang atau jasa produksi dalam negeri atau luar negeri yang beredar di Indonesia* ; *Pasal 38 ayat (1)* said that: “*Bahasa Indonesia wajib digunakan dalam rambu umum, petunjuk, jalan fasilitas umum, spanduk an alat informasi yang merupakan pelayanan umum*”. It should be written in Indonesian first then English, vice versa.

The word “*toilet*” should be translated to “*kamar kecil*”. The word “*skycross*” should be translated to Bahasa as “*penyebrangan*”. The word “*brand sale*” should be translated to Bahasa as “*merek-merek terkenal*”. The word “*Further reduction up to*” becomes “*Pengurangan harga*”. The word “*to level 1 or 2*” should be replaced as “*Lantai 1, Lantai 2*”.

2. The trader or the businessman just imitate the other businessman because they use English to persuade the customer. They found that other businessman that use English are more success than those who don't. They hope they will success too.
3. In terms of semiotic, actually the businessman has used semiotic successfully because they have shown the symbol and the sign. However they want to make everyhting instant without aware of the grammatical system because in business-oriented, “*the shorter is the better*”.

In order to overcome the problem of using foreign language in public area, the government has actually mandated, has ever one sent a letter to the government, municipal, mayor all over Indonesia in order to discipline the use of foreign language (Surat Mentri Dalam Negeri kepada Gubernur, Bupati dan Wali Kotamadya Nomor 434/1021/SJ. Tanggal 14 Maret 1995, tentang Penertiban Penggunaan Bahasa Asing, but it did not approve by the official. Similar to this, the newestregulation is *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Utara Nomor 8 Tahun 2017 Tentang Pengutamaan Bahasa Indonesia dan Pelindungan Bahasa Daerah dan Sastra Daerah*.

If it is asked, who is being blamed in this problem, according to me, the government, the society and the stakeholder should be able to work together to overcome this. We should realize that we ourself are the user of *Bahasa Indonesia*. We are as the host. Therefore wherever we are, we are respected by other nation. We should be smart when we use *Bahasa Indonesia* and when we use foreign language.

V. CONCLUSION

This study finds that *Bahasa Indonesia* have been using better and better until now especially in the landscape of government area. Whereas, English is still dominantly used for private area. It is hoped that Indonesia especially North Sumatera (Medan), be aware that *Bahasa Indonesia* is our identity. Medan city should be able as an example for the use of the right *Bahasa Indonesia* especially in open area. To sum up, some texts are used completely in government landscape. However it is used partially in private landscape. For the government

area, they obey the rule of using *Bahasa Indonesia*. Whereas, for the private area, they tend to use foreign English or English in a manner of business-oriented.

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