The reflection of top-down tourism approach in the linguistic landscape of a developing tourism village, Cisaat, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the linguistic landscape at the Cisaat village and explains the reflection of top-down tourism approach in the linguistic landscape at the Cisaat village. The village is planned to be a leading agritourism and educational tourism village by a state university based in the capital city of Indonesia – Universitas Negeri Jakarta. The plan is formulated with a top-down approach since each plan and move is decided by the actors or authorities on the upper hierarchical level (top) and centralistic. To understand how LL reflects the top-down tourism approach, any signs along the main road in the village were collected and classified according to the language use. Only two languages were found to be significant for this study: Indonesian and Sundanese language. The Indonesian monolingual signs dominated the LL in the area. The anticipated appearance of local language from the mobility of language in periphery and the anticipated multilingualism from the grand plan of Kampung Bahasa by the university does not translate into the LL. The result reflects the top-down tourism approach in the area. The village becomes an area of interesting encounter between centre and periphery, top and bottom, affected by the tourism approach initiated by the university from the capital of Indonesia.

Keywords: linguistic landscape, monolingualism, monolingual signs, top-down approach, top-down signs, tourism

INTRODUCTION

The study of linguistic landscape (hereinafter referred as LL) as a study of language texts in public spaces (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) has rigorously explored spaces in metropolitan and urban areas. Those studies include LL in Montreal (Leimgruber, 2017), Bangkok (Huebner, 2006), Tokyo (Backhaus, 2006; Backhaus, 2007), Hong Kong (Jaworski and Yeung, 2010), Rome (Gorter, 2009), Dili (Taylor-Leech, 2012) and many more. It is not surprising since those mentioned areas are inhabited by a wide variety of people from different cultures and produce a multilingual society. Hence, a rigorous number of multilingual signs in those areas can serve the purpose of LL; to see the dominant language use and how the dominance is produced (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006). However, other areas which are considered peripheral can be significant in the study of linguistic landscape as well. The voices of minority and local languages are more apparent in peripheral spaces as shown in the dominance of local language and local dialects in Malang, Indonesia – a city which is considerably far from the capital (Yannuar, 2018). It is also related with Blommaert (2010) who stated that the study of periphery can tell us about hierarchical structure which encompasses the inclusion and exclusion of society through language they use.
In this study, signs which are being examined are signs in an emergent tourism village in Indonesia, Cisaat. The area is considered peripheral since the village is not the nucleus of either nation or region core activities such as trading and education. The village is located in the south of Subang Regency, West Java, Indonesia. It takes a three-hour ride by car to get there from the capital city of Indonesia. Although it is a peripheral area, with the accessible distance in addition to the landscape of tea plantation, natural hot spring, and cooler air compared to the metropolitan city, the village is planned and programmed to be a leading tourist destination, specifically focusing on agritourism and educational tourist village. The term agritourism refers to a type of tourism which attracts tourists onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business to entertain and educate tourists with agricultural products specific to the area (USDA, 2023). Meanwhile, educational tourism is defined as a type of tourism where tourists’ primary objective is to learn something on their tourist destination (Tomasi, Paviotti, and Cavicchi, 2020). Both agritourism and educational tourism underline education as their highlights. Inevitably, tourist experiences are secondary to the educational aspects and experiences, although not totally absent. It is the risk of educational tourism as mentioned by Richie, Carr, and Cooper (2023). The grand plan of making Cisaat village to be a leading agritourism and educational tourism village is developed by a state university based in the capital city of Indonesia – Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

To pursue the goals, the university has planned various training programs to assist the village community in preparing for becoming one such as training of foreign language skills, accounting skills, cultural and historical objects documentation, branding, and many more. Furthermore, for the aspect of agritourism, the university has created various innovations to preserve the village’s representative agricultural product, Cisaat’s pineapple. One of which is a pineapple drink. The grand plan of the village’s development implements a top-down approach since each plan and move are decided by the university (centralism). A top-down tourism approach is described as a centralized tourism planning process from the government level to the community (Boukas & Ziakas, 2016). Although the approach discussed in this study does not extend to the government level, the characteristic of centralized planning process is taken into account to define the tourism approach in developing a tourism village, Cisaat.

With those plans, the university sends their lecturers and students frequently there with various programs they bring along. Among the many programs created by the university, the program of Kampung Bahasa is expected to influence the linguistic landscape of the peripheral area in Cisaat village. Kampung Bahasa is a program to make the village the centre of foreign language learning. Various foreign languages will be present in the village which will enrich the LL of Cisaat village. Particularly, the continuous visits by Jakarta people represented by people from the university to the villages create interesting encounters between the centre and the periphery. When people from Jakarta interact with the local community who have their own language, in this case Sundanese language which is spoken by the Cisaat village community, the language in the area becomes more dynamic and results in the mixture of the visitor’s language and the local language in a tangled and complex space. Hence, the area is expected to have abundant multilingual signs. However, what is seen in the linguistic landscape of Cisaat village is the opposite. Instead of producing an interesting dynamic of multilingualism, the linguistic landscape shows how monolingualism dominates the face of the Cisaat village.
This study starts with a hypothesis that the linguistic landscape at Cisaat village reflects the top-down tourism approach. With those backgrounds, this study aims to depict the linguistic landscape at the Cisaat village and to explain the reflection of top-down tourism approach in the LL.

The Top-Down Approach at Cisaat Village

As it has been explained previously, the difference between top-down and bottom-up approach lies on the nature and hierarchical level of the actors (Seyhan & Russo, 2020). Top-down approach is initiated by actors from the upper level and realised to the bottom-level people. Meanwhile, the bottom-up approach is the contrary. The actors who sit on the upper level are those who have authority and power including governments and other authoritative institutions. In this study, the university plays as an actor who has authority at the upper level. All plans regarding the development of Cisaat village to become an agritourism and educational tourist village are formulated by the university. Hence, this approach is also called centralistic as the plans are orbited only on the authority (the university). Even so, the plan has also considered the village citizen’s goals to be included on the target in developing the tourism of Cisaat village. The activities of training and assistance always involve village citizens as the focus, and the university people simply act as a facilitator. In the end, when the Cisaat village has become a developed and independent agritourism and educational tourist village which does not need to be assisted anymore, the target of the university plan has been achieved (Ulupui, et al., 2023).

The Top-Down Signs in the Linguistic Landscape

It has been introduced that the linguistic landscape can determine the dominance of language and how the dominance is produced. One means to see how the dominance is exerted is through the classification of top-down and bottom-up signs (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006; Kallen, 2010; Lou, 2010; Van Mensel, Vandenbroucke, & Blackwood, 2016). Similar to the definition of top-down approach that tourism suggests, the top-down signs in LL refer to the official signs authorized by the government, national institutions, or authorities, while the bottom-up signs belong to independent individuals and private agencies. Therefore, the top-down signs are signs which are officially created by the government or other authoritative institutions as seen in official signs indicating the name of place, signs containing regulations, public advertisements, road signs, and so forth, on national institutions and facilities. On the other hand, the bottom-up signs are signs issued independently such as advertisements made by private companies, signs made by shop owners, and others. Whether it is the top-down or the bottom-up signs which are found to be the most prevalent, it can identify the implementation of language policy in the area identified (Kingsley, 2013). Regardless of how the language policy is implemented; the dominant language use is the representative of the public voice.
METHOD

The survey of linguistic landscape at Cisaat village was conducted over three days in June 2023. This study limited the survey areas on the main roads and eliminated the narrow and small alley as it only comprises houses and no signs were found there. The main roads are surrounded by buildings for vital activities consisting of schools, village administrative office, village meeting hall, youth union meeting hall, markets, and small restaurants. The survey limits are grounded on Backhaus’ determination of survey area in LL (2006). The signs surveyed included both top-down and bottom-up signs. This study found 43 signs, the majority of which were top-down signs. Then, it was analysed according to the language choice, either monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual, before the hierarchical symbolism of signs were analysed according to the top-down and bottom-up classification (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006; Blommaert, 2010; Fairclough, 2001). In the end, those signs and symbolism reflected the portrayal of top-down tourism approach at the developing tourism village, Cisaat.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Monolingual Signs

The signs explained in this section are considered monolingual or use only one language. From Table 1, it is shown that monolingual signs dominate the linguistic landscape at Cisaat village. The monolingual signs are also dominated by Indonesian language followed by Sundanese monolingual signs with a drastically different number. Although Indonesian language is not the mother language of the village community and the majority of village citizens do not get used to speaking Indonesian language, it appears to be prevalent. On the contrary, Sundanese language which is used in their daily conversation is found on only two signs. Meanwhile, there are no English monolingual signs found at Cisaat village. Initially, the dominance of Indonesian monolingual signs may emphasize Indonesian language policy – one nation, one language – as stated in the Law No. 24 of 2009. Yet, this section explores the nuanced discussion of the monolingual signs within the scope of tourism approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Counts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual signs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian language</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundanese language</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French name</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian + English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian + Sundanese</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilingual signs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian + English + Arabic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The number of various language choice at Cisaat village

The Figure 1 to 4 are representatives of Indonesian monolingual sign at Cisaat village. Those figures are placed in both formal and informal settings. Signs in formal settings can be found in school as well as village administrative office. Meanwhile, signs in informal...
settings are positioned at random places such as on the side of the main road as seen on the tourism information signs about the village’s trademark – pineapple and various village foods. Signs in informal settings also include name plates to show the contributions of people whose names are engraved on the plates to the development of Cisaat village tourism. This study put emphasis on signs in formal settings because the settings can portray how top-down tourism approach influences linguistic landscape at the Cissat village, even though signs in informal settings are also discussed to complete it.

At the setting of school, the use of Indonesian language in school is encouraged by the Indonesian government to comply with the national language policy. Particularly, although the autonomy of school regulation has been decentralized to the local government through the Law No. 32 and 34 of 2004 and the local content subjects such as local language subject are promoted, it does not hinder the pervasiveness of Indonesian language in school and does not foster the visibility of local languages. From the figures, it is seen that the school rule (Figure 1) and the go green campaign (Figure 2) use Indonesian language. It shows that any materials which have commanding or instructing messages in school are delivered in Indonesian language. Moreover, even though the scope of rules ranges from the rules applied locally at school to instructions which can be applied universally on green living campaigns, Indonesian language was chosen.

![Figure 1](image1.png)

![Figure 2](image2.png)

On the other hand, the signs found at the setting of the village administrative office as in Figure 3 are not instructions or commands. The signs at this setting promote the project...
carried out by the local and regional government. In Figure 3, the sign stated that Cisaat village can be merrier with digitalization. Cisaat village has been promoting to introducing internet and digitalization to the village community. The digitalization program is the program to transform the activities to digital activities which makes the internet familiar. This program is believed to support the tourism development at Cisaat village. Besides, the internet access is very limited in the village so far. Therefore, various signs about promoting the digitalization project have been placed in the village administrative office to make village citizens aware of its importance. Those are placed in outdoor areas where village citizens can see the signs easily and without boundaries. It appears that Indonesian language was chosen to be the neutral medium to promote the project and bridge the differences of language choice.

Meanwhile, with the informal setting of Indonesian monolingual signs, the signs are placed on the side of the main road as seen in Figure 4. The signs serve the informational function of the linguistic landscape beside the symbolic function (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). It also adds the categorization which may be overlooked from the classification of the LL of tourist guides offered by Sibarani, et al. (2021) that the tourist guides can also include informational signs about tourist destination objects. The sign in the figure gives information about the main agricultural product of Cisaat village: pineapple. It was made by the university as a support to raise the awareness of the village agricultural products, aimed to both the village citizens and tourists. The signs use Indonesian language as a medium to deliver the information. By using Indonesian language, the signs are intended to provide information to the extent of local tourists.
These Indonesian monolingual signs – from the instructions and regulations at school, the promotion of village digitalization, to the information about the village agricultural products – are issued by the elected authorities such as school principals, teachers, village authorities, and university representatives. Not to mention the university representatives’ name plates to mark the contribution of whose names are etched to the development of village tourism. Thus, those signs are categorized as top-down signs. It portrays how the top-down signs which used Indonesian monolingual signs are rooted from the top-down tourism approach. Both the contexts of promoting village digitalization and promoting the top village agricultural products are top-down approach imposed by the authorities on the upper level to improve the village tourism. Moreover, although the context of school seems disconnected from the tourism approach, the area of school is at the front of the main road and hence serves as the face of the village when tourists come to the village. In LL, the location of signs also adds the meaning which strengthens its significance on the area, which is also called emplacement (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Therefore, by placing Indonesian monolingual signs at Cisaat village, it reflects the language choice as the result of conscious force imposed by the authorities to support the tourism development at the village.

However, there is only one Sundanese monolingual sign which is placed as a welcome sign at the front of the main road at Cisaat village as shown in Figure 5. Another local monolingual sign is also visible at the gate of school in which the sign used old Javanese word which loans the Sanskrit word “adiwiyata”. The word gives the identity to school which applies green living concept. Those signs matched one of the categorizations of the LL of tourist guides proposed by Sibarani, et al. (2021) which belongs to the categorization of greetings at tourist object locations. Those signs are also the top-down sign issued by village and school authorities. The Sundanese monolingual sign in Figure 5 means “welcome” in English. Although Sundanese monolingual sign is considered minority with only one sign, by placing it in front of the village – the gate where tourists are welcomed when coming to the village – it becomes a representative of village citizens. It emphasizes their identity that they belong to the Sundanese language community. The tourism approach here does not neglect the village citizens’ identity by putting Sundanese language as the welcome sign. The gates – both at the front of the main road and at the front of school – become the face of the village. These monolingual signs as the greeting categorization are also aligned with the bilingual and multilingual signs which put Sundanese as the priority portrayed in the signs at the front of each valley.

![Figure 5](image-url)
Bilingual and Multilingual Signs

These bilingual and multilingual signs refer to signs which use two or more than two languages. Multilingual signs can portray an interesting encounter of various languages as portrayed in the abundant LL research such as Huebner (2006); Backhaus (2006); Gorter (2009); Jaworski and Yeung (2010). Multilingual signs can also depict how identities are contested (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006; Taylor-Leech, 2012). In Table 1, it shows that there are eight bilingual and multilingual signs. Compared to the monolingual signs, the number of signs in this section fall behind. The bilingual signs are composed of English and Indonesian language, as well as Sundanese and Indonesian language. Meanwhile, one multilingual sign comprises English, Indonesian, and Arabic language. Those bilingual and multilingual signs are the top-down signs issued by the university to support the development of village tourism.

One bilingual sign of English and Indonesian language appears as the name of a market owned by the village enterprises. It inserts the English word “mart” after Indonesian word “bumdes (village-owned enterprise)” as its name. The mart is where the village enterprises market the village’s products such as the pineapple drink. It is also the place where tourists can buy village souvenirs. This market is significant for the village tourism development and hence, familiar word like “mart” is used. By using familiar words, the effort to attract visitors to buy souvenirs and village products will be easier. The word “mart” is largely used in Indonesia to identify market, particularly since the largest retail market in Indonesia also uses this word as in “Alfamart” and “Indomaret”. Since this market is owned by the village and contributes significantly to the village tourism development, the choice to name the market is made by the authorities. The choice of placing bilingual sign as the market name is made from the top-down approach.

On the other hand, the bilingual signs consisting of Sundanese and Indonesian language are found on six alley gates. Those signs mentioned the village local wisdom as portrayed in Figure 6. Furthermore, as previously explained, the area where signs are placed contributes to the meaning of signs. Since these signs are distributed to each alley gates on the main road where it welcomes the village citizens to enter their housing area, those local wisdoms are portrayed as it is attached closely to them – close to their home. It signifies that those local wisdoms are the values which are deeply upheld by the village citizens. In Figure 6, the local wisdom stated in Sundanese language is presented in bigger size than the Indonesian language. Indonesian language functions as the translation of the Sundanese language. The Indonesian language is placed as the companion for local tourists who may not understand the Sundanese language. The sign shows that “semua yang dikerjakan harus penuh pertimbangan” which means; all activities must be considered thoughtfully. It portrays that the village citizens never take what they do for granted. Since these signs are made by the university authorities, the university aims to give a representation of the village citizens’ image. The kind of image that the university wants to represent the village is reflected in the choice of local wisdoms on the signs. The image of Cisaat village can also be a branding to attract more tourists. Considering each step taken by the university to build the image of Cisaat village, these bilingual signs are the result of a top-down tourism approach.
It applies similarly with the multilingual sign consisting of English, Indonesian and Arabic language. The sign serves the informational function (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) and belongs to the categorization of direction at tourist sites (Sibarani, et al., 2021). It points the direction to the homestay and culinary centre of Cisaat village. The English word that is used in this sign is “homestay” and it is mixed with the Indonesian words “kuliner kampung Cisaat (the culinary centre of Cisaat village)”. On the side of the Indonesian and English words, there are Arabic words which translate the English and Indonesian language. Although there is no data which shows the number of Arabian visitors and the significance of using Arabic language seems irrelevant, the university has a different approach to use the multilingual signs. The existence of the multilingual sign shows the trace of the university, which has an Arabic language program, in contributing to the development of village tourism. Specifically, it refers to the grand plan of the university to make Kampung Bahasa which includes the Arabic language program. The grand plan of making Kampung Bahasa is believed to support the development of educational tourism at Cisaat village. Therefore, putting a multilingual sign with language that is included in a university program reflects the fact that the tourism development at Cisaat village is a top-down tourism approach initiated by the university.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of monolingualism which is dominated by Indonesian monolingual signs portrays the linguistic landscape at Cisaat village. The Sundanese monolingual signs which were expected to outnumber the other signs turns out to be seen in a very small number. Instead, Sundanese language is largely visible on bilingual signs together with Indonesian language. Aside from those two languages, no other languages contribute to the significance of the linguistic landscape at the Cisaat village. Even English which is considered as a global language (Zein, 2019) and has more economic value (Kurniawan, 2017) which should be important in regard to tourism development only appears twice. English is used as a mixing to name the village market and as a loan word to express homestay. On the other hand, the only foreign language in contrast to the expectation of multilingualism from the grand
plan of Kampung Bahasa is Arabic language. The Arabic language appears once to provide a translation for the direction sign.

The specific result of linguistic landscape reflects the top-down tourism approach and confirms the complexity of interaction between centre and periphery. Only two languages contribute to the significance of LL at Cisaat village: Indonesian language and Sundanese language. The top-down tourism approach uses Sundanese language merely as an entrance symbol to create a representative image of Cisaat village – which later will be useful for branding. The image of the village as rooted in local culture is portrayed through local wisdoms written on the gate of every alley along the main road and delivered in bilingual – Sundanese and Indonesian language. Hence, the approach affects the peculiarity in which Sundanese language does not make a considerable visibility in the LL despite being commonly used for the daily interaction by the Cisaat village community. On the other hand, the top-down tourism approach used Indonesian language as a neutral medium to bridge the distance between languages, and between the actors on the top and bottom. Through the appearance of Indonesian language only on signs containing regulations, promotion of local authorities’ tourism projects, and directions signs, Indonesian language is functioned to deliver the messages from the authorities to the village community. The mobility of language from top to bottom is achieved through the use of the national language – Indonesian language. Moreover, the monolingual Indonesian signs provide the symbolic function of LL that reflects the power of centre which gravitates the actor on the upper hierarchical level towards the centre. We can see that the language choice in the linguistic landscape at the village is not a representative of public voice but an authoritative choice. It shows how the interaction between the top and bottom actors, the centre and periphery, was conducted.

Therefore, when tourism approach is made with the top-down approach, also called as a centralistic approach, it affects the linguistic landscape of the village. The anticipated appearance of local language supported by the mobility of language in periphery and the anticipated appearance of multilingualism from the grand plan of Kampung Bahasa does not translate into the LL of the Cisaat village. From this study, we can see the progress of tourism development planned by the university with a top-down tourism approach which is reflected in the linguistic landscape at Cisaat village. The village becomes the area of interesting encounter of centre and periphery, top and bottom, through the tourism approach initiated by the university from the capital of Indonesia.

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