

**BALINESE LANGUAGE ON THE STREET SIGNS IN SINGARAJA TOWN, BALI:
A LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS**

Bahasa Bali Pada Rambu Jalan di Kota Singaraja, Bali: Sebuah Analisis Linguistik Lanskap

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Abstrak

Keberadaan bahasa daerah di Indonesia, termasuk bahasa Bali sering dihubungkan dengan isu marginalisasi. Beberapa penelitian sebelumnya mengungkapkan bahwa bahasa Bali jarang digunakan di ruang publik. Pemerintah daerah Bali telah menerapkan Peraturan Gubernur Nomor 80 Tahun 2018 untuk secara resmi melindungi bahasa dan aksara Bali, termasuk keberadaannya di ruang publik. Sehubungan dengan itu, penelitian ini menggali keberadaan bahasa dan aksara Bali pada rambu-rambu jalan lingual di Singaraja, Bali Utara. Selanjutnya, sebaran rambu-rambu jalan lingual juga diselidiki untuk mengungkap wilayah sasaran primer dan sekunder pemerintah dalam perlindungan bahasa Bali. Subyek penelitian adalah 151 rambu jalan yang dipasang oleh Dinas Perhubungan Kabupaten Buleleng. Data diperoleh melalui pengambilan foto dan observasi. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa bahasa Bali terpinggirkan dengan kehadiran bahasa Indonesia. Peraturan gubernur tersebut hanya berhasil meningkatkan penggunaan aksara Bali ketimbang penggunaan bahasa Bali. Dalam hal distribusi tanda, pemerintah memfokuskan penggunaan tanda dengan aksara Bali di pusat kota karena kontak bahasa yang intens terjadi di daerah tersebut.

Kata-kata kunci: bahasa Bali, rambu jalan, lanskap linguistik, Singaraja.

Abstract

The existence of local languages in Indonesia, including Balinese language is often related to marginalization issue. Some previous research revealed that Balinese language is rarely used in public spaces. The local government implements Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018 to officially protect the language, including its existence in public spaces. This research explores the existence of Balinese language and script on the lingual street signs in Singaraja, North Bali. Further, the distribution of the lingual street signs is also investigated to reveal the government's primary and secondary target areas in language protection. The subjects of the study are 151 street signs that are placed by the department of transportation of Buleleng regency. The data are obtained through photograph taking and observation. The research reveals that the presence of Indonesian language marginalizes Balinese language. The regulation only successfully improves the use of Balinese script instead of the use of Balinese language. In terms of the sign distribution, the government focuses on signs with Balinese script at the center of the town due to the intense language contact in the area.

Keywords: Balinese language, street signs, linguistic landscape, Singaraja.

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INTRODUCTION

To some extent, Balinese language is gradually marginalized in its homeland due to the strong impacts of Indonesian and foreign languages, especially English (Artawa & Sartini, 2018). In general, parents in urban areas of Bali tend to introduce Indonesian and English to their children for language assessment requirement, prestige, and local language complexity avoidance (Artawa & Sartini, 2018; Kardana & Sri Satyawati, 2019; Permanadeli et al., 2016; Putrayasa, 2016). Balinese language as a local language is still commonly used in the family domain but rarely used in public spaces (Permanadeli et al., 2016).

To protect and preserve Balinese language, the governor of Bali released Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018. Article 6 is the only part explicitly related to Balinese language in public space. It states that public signs must present Balinese script above the Latin script. The regulation seems to emphasize the symbolical function of Balinese language rather than the informational function. It is proven by the absence of an article that strictly requires the use of Balinese lexica or expressions on the signs. Consequently, many non-Balinese language lexica and expressions are transliterated into Balinese script on the public signs.

The public signs that are listed in article 6 are (a) Hindu temples, (b) traditional institutions, (c) building inauguration inscriptions, (d) building names, (e) governmental institutions, (f) private institutions, (g) street names, (h) touristic infrastructure, (i) and other public facilities (Peraturan Gubernur Bali No 80 Tahun 2018, 2018). The list is not limited to those places due to the existence of the item in section (i).

Street name (numbered with (g)) is one of the public signs that is easily found in the city area of Bali. Street signs play essential roles in various activities of community life. It does not only function as a transportation infrastructure but also indicates the multilingualism of the city area. The languages on the signs contribute to achieving various purposes in management, marketing, education, power, social relation, and language policy (Barni & Bagna, 2015; Purnanto & Ardhian, 2020).

Street signs are top-down public signs created by the government and are distinct from bottom-up signs (Backhaus, 2006; Gorter & Cenoz, 2007). They are crucial for street markers that function informatively and symbolically (Erikha, 2018; Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Informatively, the street signs supply information related to the street users' safety and convenience, and symbolically, they represent the government's language policy.

The study of languages on public signs has been growing in the last two decades in the area of the linguistic landscape. Various studies have been conducted in different parts of the world, which are primarily concentrated in city areas (see Hult & Kelly-holmes, 2019; Matwick & Matwick, 2019) or other melting pot places like touristic places (see Bilá & Vanková, 2019; Prasert & Zilli, 2019), international airports (see Woo & Nora Riget, 2020), in the education sector (see Helm & Dalziel, 2017; Jocuns, 2019), cyberspace (see Biró, 2018; Ivkovic & Lotherington, 2009) and other places. Those research range from multilingualism and language contestation, reflecting social, political, cultural, and economic phenomena in certain territories.

Especially for street signs, some researchers investigated them in different grounds. Purnanto & Ardhian (2020) analyzed the street signs in Malang city, and they found that Indonesian language is dominantly used over Dutch, Javanese, and English. The street names are taken from heroes, animals, cities, chemical elements, and social dan geographical entities of Indonesia. Some factors influence the language choice, namely nationalism spirit, economic motives, and cultural identity protection. In a different place, the city of Yogyakarta, Erikha (2018), investigated the renaming of some streets in *Raja Marga* (royal street) area. Informatively, the function of the new street names promotes the geographical places, Javanese ethnicity, and language boundary. Symbolically, those names are the manifestations of *Paraning Dumadi* philosophical concept for delineating Javanese ethnic community,

representing Javanese as the local language, showing power background in giving the names, and economic motives through tourism sector. The two pieces of research are qualitative studies conducted in different cities with similar local language backgrounds. The studies do not reach the investigation of local language existence concerning a formal regulation issued by the government. Then, the distribution of the signs as the actualization of the regulation is not yet explicitly explored.

Another related research was conducted by Mulyawan (2021) in Kuta, Bali, on Bali Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018's effects on the use of Balinese language on government and private public signs. It is revealed that Balinese script is becoming prioritized on the public signs of Kuta amidst the controversial contestation between the local and national language policy. The language contestation in Kuta may be typical and different from non-tourism areas in Bali due to the intense language contact that happened in the tourism center. In the research, the specific discussion on the Balinese language's existence on street signs, especially in other towns in Bali, is not yet deeply explored.

The previous research findings lead to the possibility of investigating the Balinese language on street signs in a non-touristic area. Ideally, street signs must accommodate the governor regulation as part of official signs. However, based on preliminary research conducted, some deviation towards the regulation exists in Singaraja town, a town of 86.7 kilometers away from Kuta. The deviation needs investigating, starting from the existence of Balinese language on the town's street signs and the distribution of the street signs.

In order to investigate the existence of Balinese language on Singaraja's street signs after the implementation of Governor Regulation of Bali Number 80 of 2018, there are two research questions presented i.e. (1) How is the existence of Balinese language and script on the street signs in Singaraja town? (2) How is the distribution of the lingual street signs in Singaraja town? Based on the two research questions above, the purposes of the research are, first, to describe the existence of Balinese language including its script on the street signs in Singaraja. Second, to analyze the distribution of the street signs concerning the use of Balinese script.

THEORETICAL BASIS

Landry & Bourhis (1997) coined the term linguistic landscape to name the language presentation and salience of commercial and non-commercial signages in a certain area. It has become the major concern of macro linguists' research that correlates multilingualism to social, political, and cultural aspects of meaning in most city areas (Shang, 2020). Further, Landry & Bourhis (1997) classify the languages on the public signs, which function in two ways; informational and symbolical functions. Informational function refers to the presentation of territorial description and delineation of different linguistic communities. The symbolical function is related to the emphasis on language value and status compared to other languages in a speech community. Including a certain language on public signs appreciates the community who speak the language. It also shows that the status of languages in a certain territory is related to a diglossic situation; the higher status language often appears on formal public signs, and the lower status language appears on home and local community signages (Landry & Bourhis, 1997).

Public signs are grouped into two distinct categories: official and non-official signs (Backhaus, 2006). The authority makes official signs of a certain area, and private parties make non-official signs. The government creates official public signs based on certain regulations to support a certain language and social group in the territory (Sumarlam et al., 2020). In Indonesia, official public signs accommodate Indonesian, local, and international languages, as stated in President Regulation Number 63 of 2019. This regulation is constructed based on previous and higher regulations, especially Language Law Number 24 of 2009 on the national

flag, language, country symbol, and anthem. The statute mainly regulates the presence of Indonesian language as the national language on public signs. At the provincial level, the local government put efforts to preserve and protect their local language by issuing local regulations. In Bali, there is Bali Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018, which regulates the protection and the use of Balinese language, scripts, and literature and the implementation of Balinese language month.

The languages on the Balinese street signs are regulated in Bali Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018, section 6. The section emphasizes the presence of Balinese script above the Latin script in a balanced composition. The pattern is compulsory for public and private infrastructure, including lingual street signs. This regulation was issued in 2018, and the existence of street signs in Balinese cities was established far before the issue of the regulation. This condition results in some deviation from the regulation on Balinese street signs.

The languages on the street signs are related to the location where the street signs are situated (Scollon & Wong Scollon, 2003). It is further described that the meaning of the street signs has a close relationship to urban planning design. Gaiser & Matras (2021) developed a mobile phone application named *LinguaSnapp*, which facilitates the documentation of languages on public signs and is location-based. This application aligns with the discourse in place theory coined by (Scollon & Wong Scollon, 2003). The application accommodates the documentation of the pictures of the signs, the description, and it is GPS generated. One aspect of the *LinguaSnapp* application closely related to geosemiotic theory is mapping the street signs to analyze the government's language policy, especially those related to street signs and local language protection in urban areas.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study is a descriptive qualitative study with the subjects of 151 lingual street signs in Singaraja. The street signs were created by *Dinas Perhubungan Kabupaten Buleleng* (Department of Transportation of Buleleng) and placed on 101 streets in Singaraja. Those streets included eight main streets and 93 smaller streets located around the main streets or connected directly to the main streets. The streets which were not under the criteria were excluded from the study due to time and budget limitation.

The data were obtained through photograph capturing using a digital camera and observation. One street sign was photographed at its best angle to ensure the quality of the picture, which supports the validity of the data. Different street signs on one pole are counted as separated signs as long as they contain distinct messages. Afterward, the observation was conducted to gather the location of the street signs in relation to their linguistic presentations.

For the analysis stage, the photographs were classified based on the compositional patterns of languages on the signs; monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual patterns. Each photograph was coded and stored in a folder. In order to answer the first research question, the photographs were observed one by one in terms of the types of languages and the orthographic system. The street signs often contained proper names, and their analysis was conducted in two ways, implementing the proper name analysis theory proposed by Edelman (2004). Certain proper names that did not contain lexical meaning were left uncategorized, such as 'Jalan Singaraja' (Singaraja Street). The lexicon 'Singaraja' was not categorized into any languages due to its absence in containing lexical meaning. In addition, the lexicon could not be categorized under which language it belonged. The second way dealt with proper names that contained lexical meaning, such as 'Jalan Kota Tua.' The lexicon 'Kota' and 'Tua' were identifiable as Indonesian lexicon.

The distribution of the signs with certain linguistic categories is presented through map visualization to answer the second research question. It was conducted to reveal the language

policy implementation concerning Balinese language and scripts preservation in Singaraja town. The analysis was based on the discourse in place theory proposed by Scollon & Wong Scollon (2003). The distribution of the signs through the map was adapted from the LinguaSnapp mapping proposed by Gaiser & Matras (2021).

DISCUSSION

There are two research problems to be investigated in the study: the existence of Balinese language and script on the street signs in Singaraja town and the distribution of the lingual street signs in Singaraja town. Each finding concerning those problems is presented as the following.

The Existence of Balinese Language and Script on the Street Signs

The types of street signs in Indonesia have been categorized into four: warning, prohibitory, mandatory, and directory street signs (Peraturan Menteri Perhubungan Republik Indonesia Nomor PM 13 Tahun 2014, 2014). In this study, only lingual street signs are selected since the concern of the study is on the existence of Balinese language and script on the signs.

Three languages are contesting on the lingual street signs in Singaraja; Balinese, Indonesian and English. Table 1 presents the existence of Balinese language on the street signs. The street signs found are in monolingual and bilingual compositions.

Table 1.
The Use of Balinese Language among Indonesian and English

Language Presentations on The Signs	Total Number	Percentage
Monolingual		
Balinese	-	-
Indonesian	134	88.7
English	1	0.7
Bilingual		
Balinese + Indonesian	13	8.6
Indonesian + English	3	2.0
Total	151	100

The marginalization of Balinese language is visible on the street signs. No sign presents Balinese language monolingually. Indonesian is the dominant language used on the signs (88.7%), and English is used in only one sign (0.7%). Balinese language only exists in bilingual composition, in which it is combined with Indonesian language. Its occurrence is not significant (8.6%) compared to the frequent use of Indonesian language. This data confirms the claim from Permanadeli et al. (2016) that local languages, including Balinese, are rarely used in the public space domain. The national language policy is given more emphasis than the local language policy. The National Language Regulation Number 24 of 2009 and the Presidential Regulation Number 63 of 2019 clearly emphasize the prominence of Indonesian language in all formal activities of Indonesian people, including the language of public signs.

This finding shows a similarity and a difference from the street signs in the city of Malang investigated by Purnanto & Ardhian (2020). The local language is given less space to exist on the public signs in both cities. In a more specific context, Malang and Singaraja's local governments implement different language policies on the languages of street signs. The street signs in Malang accommodate Indonesian, Dutch, Javanese, English, and Arabic; meanwhile, in Singaraja, Indonesian, Balinese, and English are used.

The use of Balinese language is limited on the word level on the street names. Their combination with Indonesian lexicon results in Indonesian phrases, as presented in figure 1.



Figure 1.

The Use of Balinese Lexicon on the Street Name Sign

The name of the street is 'JL. TOYA ANAKAN' consists of the Balinese lexicon 'TOYA' and 'ANAKAN. 'TOYA' is a high tongue Balinese lexicon equivalent to 'water' in English. Then, 'ANAKAN' is also a Balinese lexicon that refers to 'a subordinate part of something.' The Balinese phrase 'TOYA ANAKAN' indexes the name of a holy water spring in the area. In addition, those Balinese lexica are combined with the Indonesian lexicon 'JL' (the abbreviation of 'JALAN' (street)). The abbreviation is common in Indonesian street signs due to the limited space available and considering the readability factor. The presence of the Indonesian lexicon 'JL' at the initial position of 'JL. TOYA ANAKAN' indicates the street name is in Indonesian language.

Furthermore, there are two types of scripts used on the sign. The upper part is written in Latin script, and the lower part is in Balinese script. The lower part is the transliteration of the upper part. It tends to represent the identity of Bali even though it does not represent Balinese language. In addition, the use of capital letters in Latin script presentation indicates that the script is more prominent than the Balinese script (see Kress, Gunther and Van Leeuwen, 2006).

Balinese scripts on the signs are also analyzed as an important linguistic phenomenon on the street signs. Balinese script is used in 89 (59%) lingual street signs in Singaraja with two combination patterns, while another pattern excludes the script (see table 2).

Table 2
The use of Balinese and Latin scripts on the street signs

Types of Road Sign	Balinese+ Latin	Latin+ Balinese	Latin
Directory Street signs			
Street name sign	25	49	30
Direction sign	-	-	20
Location sign	-	-	4
Prohibitory Street signs	15	-	8
Total of each type	40 (26.5%)	49 (32.5%)	62 (41%)
Total signs	151 (100%)		

Table 2 presents the number and percentage of lingual street signs that use Balinese and Latin scripts. One hundred fifty-one street signs are classified into three script compositions; Balinese + Latin (Balinese language in upper position and Indonesian language in lower position), Latin + Balinese, and Latin script only. The Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018 is implemented in 40 (26.5%) street signs. They present Balinese script in the upper position and Latin script below it. Before the release of the regulation, the use of Balinese script in public signs had been supported by the release of two previous *Peraturan Daerah* (provincial government regulations), namely *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Daerah Tingkat I Bali Nomor 3 Tahun 1992* on Balinese language, orthography, and transliteration, and literature, which was

renewed with *Peraturan Pemerintah Provinsi Bali Nomor 1 Tahun 2018* on the same topic. The two regulations index the local government's effort in promoting Balinese script on public signs. However, the regulations do not specifically regulate the arrangement of the two languages on the street signs. As a result, before implementing Bali Governor Regulation Number 80 of 2018, most street signs present Balinese script below the Latin script. On the other hand, some street signs even exclude Balinese script, which is believed to represent the Balinese language. Those patterns align with the Language Law Number 24 of 2009, which positions Indonesian language in a superordinate place over the local language.

In terms of percentage, successively, signs in Latin-script-only gain the highest percentage (41%), followed by Latin + Balinese script (32.5%) and Balinese + Latin script (26.5%). Despite the two different bilingual patterns, Balinese script has existed on most of the street signs in Singaraja. This finding is in accordance with a diachronic study conducted by Artawa et al. (2020). They compare the use of the Balinese script in public signs in Kuta in 2015 and after 2018. They found that Balinese script regained its position in Balinese public space after implementing the governor regulation. Previously, Balinese language and script were only placed on cultural-based identity signs such as cemeteries, temples, and *bale Banjar* (village meeting hall) (Mulyawan, 2017). The dual orthographic pattern is also found on Raja Marga street in Yogyakarta, which shows ethnic identity (Erikha, 2018).

Another important finding presented in table 2 is the absence of Balinese-script-only street signs. It possibly shows a tendency for Balinese script to only function as the symbol of Balinese language. The script is unreadable for non-Balinese, which may lead to their confusion in reading the street signs.



Figure 2
The Variation of Scripts and Their Positions on the Street Signs

According to the governor regulation, the appropriate script position is presented on the left side picture in figure 2. It is the street-name street sign of Melur Street, written in Balinese script in the upper position. The Balinese script is written without abbreviation like the lower lexicon in Bahasa Indonesia 'JL. MELUR.' The Latin script is printed in capital letters, which reflects its salience. The middle picture of the street-name street sign is the opposite of the two types of scripts. The Indonesian name "JL. RAMPAI" is printed out in capital letters with the abbreviation of the lexicon "JALAN" into "JL" due to the limited space available on the plate (Purnanto & Ardhan, 2020). The middle sign deviates from the governor regulation because the sign was made before 2018. The following pattern is shown on the right picture of 'JL. A. YANI.' This sign presents Latin script without Balinese script. It strengthens the claim of the dominance of the Indonesian language over the Balinese language on the street signs.

The high percentage of the use of Balinese script to transliterate the Indonesian lexicon is assumed to be an effort to protect Balinese language in public spaces. This assumption is

debatable because there is no scientific proof that confirms the use of Balinese script may protect Balinese language. The transliteration also shows the distorted line between the national and local language policy.

The Distribution of Lingual Street Signs in Singaraja

It is essential to describe the distribution of the signs as the representation of the local government strategy to implement the governor regulation. The placing of Balinese + Latin street signs, Latin + Balinese street signs, and Latin-only street signs are depicted in the map, which was screen captured from Google Maps.

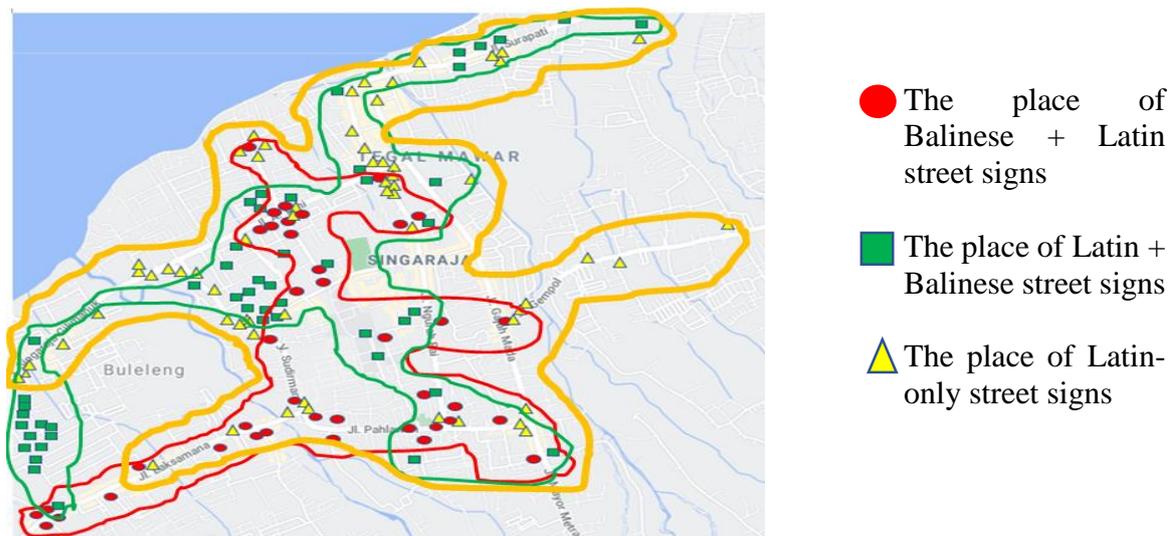


Figure 3.
The distribution of the lingual street signs

Figure 3 shows that Balinese + Latin script street signs (symbolized using red dots) are placed relatively in the most limited area (see the area limited by the red line). The red dots are primarily situated in the middle area of the map representing the center of Singaraja town. It indicates that the implementation of the governor regulation is initiated and concentrated in the city center area. A different pattern is shown by the green squares, which represent the Latin + Balinese script street signs. The green line limits the squares, and the coverage area is relatively more extensive than the red line. It means that the Latin + Balinese script street signs are placed in a larger area of the town. Then, the green squares tend to flock in some areas, indicating many small and short streets. Those streets are usually the streets of housing and government office complexes.

In contrast, the red dots are located on the town's main streets instead of flocking at certain areas. Promoting the Balinese script, which is assumed to be the identity of Balinese language, starts in the town center, where people's concentration and mobilization occur frequently. The language contact in the center of the town is considered high compared to the places outside of the center of the town. The center of the town is the potential place for language maintenance, identity protection, and preservation. The orange line, which covers the yellow triangles, shows the distribution of Latin-only street signs. It covers the largest area in the center and the outer areas of the town. This type of road sign represents the national identity. The Indonesian language is used in all top-down public signs, and Indonesian is the *lingua franca* in all provinces in Indonesia.

CLOSING

Balinese language on the street signs in Singaraja is marginalized. It is undeniable that the intense use of Balinese script shows the local government's effort in protecting and preserving the Balinese language in public places. The effort is a significant breakthrough that seems to be further evaluated. The intense use of Balinese script on the sign to transliterate Indonesian lexica seems to be a less serious decision for Balinese language protection. The ideal way is that the street signs present Balinese lexical written in Balinese script. Balinese script is assumed to represent Balinese language and is mainly used on the street-name street signs. Further investigation is required around interconnectedness between the presence of Balinese script on public signs to Balinese language protection.

The distribution of the street signs shows the government's primary and secondary target areas to protect and preserve the Balinese language in Singaraja. The primary target area is the center of the town, where the people from various language backgrounds meet. As a local language in Singaraja, Balinese language has to be protected and preserved amidst the national language policy and the popularity and prestige of English and other foreign languages as the impact of tourism in Singaraja and Bali in general. The secondary target area is the outer parts of the town.

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