



Linguistic Landscape at Taman Margasatwa Ragunan: Types and Functions of Public Signs

Muhammad Azi Ramadhan¹✉, Eka Margianti Sagimin,²

^{1,2} Faculty of Letters, Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia

¹ Email: bonlaji1990@gmail.com

² Email: dosen00481@unpam.ac.id

Abstract

This study examines the linguistic landscape of Taman Margasatwa Ragunan, a public zoo in Jakarta, by focusing on the types and functions of signs found in the area. Linguistic landscape studies are significant because public signage reflects how language is used for communication, regulation, and identity construction in public spaces. The purpose of this study is to identify the types of signs and their functions based on the framework proposed by Landry and Bourhis. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the data consist of 60 signs collected through direct observation and photographic documentation. The signs are classified into two types, namely government signs and private signs, and are analyzed according to two functions: informative and symbolic. The findings reveal that government signs are more dominant than private signs. In terms of function, informative signs occur more frequently than symbolic signs. These results suggest that the linguistic landscape of Taman Margasatwa Ragunan primarily serves practical communication purposes while simultaneously representing national identity. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of language use in Indonesian public spaces..

Keywords: *linguistic landscape, public places, signs, Taman Margasatwa Ragunan.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental tool for human communication, enabling people to share ideas, express emotions, and interact socially. Beyond spoken interaction, written language in public spaces plays an important role in guiding behavior and conveying meaning. Duranti (2015) describes language as a form of social action that connects individuals within cultural contexts, while Crystal (2019) emphasizes its function as the primary system of human communication in both spoken and written forms. Public signs, as manifestations of written language, help people interpret their surroundings and organize daily activities, making them an important object of linguistic study.

Within sociolinguistics, language is examined in relation to social factors such as identity, power, and context. Meyerhoff (2018) explains that language choice often reflects social identity and group membership. Similarly, Van Herk (2018) argues that language use varies according to context and purpose. Spolsky (2021) further adds that language practices are influenced by social norms, cultural values, and language policy. These perspectives demonstrate that language in public spaces is not neutral but shaped by social structures, institutional authority, and ideological agendas.

One area of sociolinguistic research that focuses specifically on written language in public spaces is Linguistic Landscape (LL). Linguistic landscape refers to the visibility of language on public signs such as street names, advertisements, shop signs, and official notices (Shohamy & Gorter, 2010). These signs serve not only informative purposes but also symbolic functions by representing identity, ideology, and power relations. Kallen (2023) notes that linguistic landscapes often reflect broader social changes driven by globalization, migration, and tourism.

In the Indonesian context, linguistic landscape practices are strongly influenced by language policy. Law No. 24 of 2009 mandates the use of Bahasa Indonesia in public signage while permitting the use of foreign languages under certain conditions. This regulation aims to reinforce national identity while accommodating international communication, particularly in tourism-related spaces where multilingual signage is increasingly common.

Several previous linguistic landscape studies in Indonesia have examined urban streets, commercial areas, shopping centers, and educational institutions, with a strong focus on multilingualism, English dominance, and globalization. However, relatively little attention has been given to tourism-based public spaces such as zoological parks, which combine educational, recreational, and regulatory functions. Moreover, existing studies tend to emphasize language choice and multilingual display, while fewer have systematically analyzed the types of signs and their functions using Landry and Bourhis' framework in the context of Indonesian tourism sites. This gap indicates a need for more site-specific linguistic landscape research that explores how official and non-official signage operates within regulated public tourism environments.

Tourism spaces are particularly important sites for linguistic landscape research because they involve diverse audiences with varying linguistic backgrounds. Taman

Margasatwa Ragunan, a major public zoo in Jakarta, attracts visitors from different linguistic and cultural communities. The zoo features a wide range of signs related to navigation, education, conservation, and safety, some of which incorporate multiple languages. These characteristics make Ragunan Zoo a relevant and underexplored site for examining how language functions in a public tourism setting governed by national language policy.

Based on this research gap, the present study aims to analyze the linguistic landscape of Taman Margasatwa Ragunan by applying Landry and Bourhis' (1997) framework. The study focuses on identifying the types of signs (government and private) and their functions (informative and symbolic). By examining these aspects, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of language use in Indonesian public tourism spaces and expands linguistic landscape studies beyond commonly investigated urban and commercial settings.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to analyze the linguistic landscape of public signage at Taman Margasatwa Ragunan, Jakarta. A qualitative approach was selected because the data consist of written language and visual elements displayed on public signs, which require contextual and interpretive analysis rather than quantitative measurement (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This method is appropriate for examining how language is used, organized, and functionalized within a public tourism space.

The data sources consisted of public signs located in various functional zones of the zoo, including animal enclosures, playground areas, pedestrian pathways, entrance and exit points, and internal road signs. These areas were purposively selected to ensure representativeness of the zoo's spatial layout and to capture a wide range of communicative purposes, such as regulation, information delivery, direction, and education. A total of 60 signs were collected as the data for this study.

The selection of signs was based on explicit criteria. First, the signs had to be permanently displayed and accessible to the public. Second, the signs needed to contain written language, either monolingual or multilingual, rather than purely pictorial symbols. Third, the signs had to serve a communicative function relevant to visitors, such as providing information, instructions, warnings, or symbolic representations of identity. By applying these criteria and collecting signs from different areas of the zoo, the study ensured that the data represent diverse types of signage and language functions within the site.

Data collection was conducted through direct observation and photographic documentation. The researcher visited the zoo and photographed the selected signs

using a smartphone camera. Each photograph was catalogued and organized according to its location and function to facilitate systematic analysis.

Data analysis followed a qualitative descriptive procedure using the framework proposed by Landry and Bourhis (1997). Each sign was classified based on its type (government or private) and its function (informative or symbolic). The results of the analysis were then described and interpreted in narrative form to explain patterns of language use and sign functions within the public tourism space of Taman Margasatwa Ragunan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the analysis on the types and functions of linguistic landscape signs found at Taman Margasatwa Ragunan. The data were obtained from public signs located in various areas of the zoo, including animal enclosures, pathways, playground areas, and road signs. A total of 60 signs were collected and analyzed in this study. The signs were classified based on the framework proposed by Landry and Bourhis (1997), which categorizes signs into government and private types, as well as informative and symbolic functions.

Findings of Linguistic Landscape at Taman Margasatwa Ragunan

The table reveal that two types of linguistic landscape signs were found at Taman Margasatwa Ragunan, namely government signs and private signs. The most dominant type was government signs, which appeared 42 times. These signs are mainly used to provide official information related to safety, directions, and zoo regulations. The second type was private signs, with 18 occurrences, which are mostly found in specific areas and contribute to the visual and recreational atmosphere of the zoo.

The findings also show two main functions of linguistic landscape signs. Informative signs were the most frequent, occurring 52 times. These signs deliver practical messages such as directions, animal information, and warnings to help visitors navigate the zoo safely and efficiently. Symbolic signs appeared less frequently, with 8 occurrences. These signs mainly represent institutional identity and thematic representation, such as area names and decorative labels.

Table 1. Types and Functions of Linguistic Landscape Found in Ragunan Zoo.

No	Types		Functions	Occurances
1	Private		Informational	15
			Symbolic	3
2	Government		Informational	37
			Symbolic	5
		Total		60

These results indicate that informative government signs dominate the linguistic landscape of Taman Margasatwa Ragunan. This dominance reflects the zoo's function as a public institution where clear and effective communication is essential for visitor management and safety. Although symbolic signs appear in smaller numbers, they still play an important role in shaping the cultural and visual identity of the zoo. Overall, the findings suggest that the linguistic landscape of Ragunan Zoo prioritizes practical communication while also supporting symbolic representation in a public tourism space.

Figure 1. Sign of Direction to Animal Area



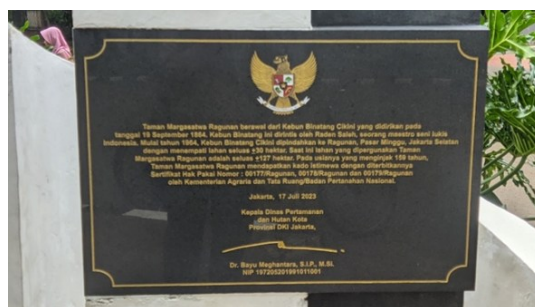
The sign is an official private sign installed by the management of the zoo that functions as a directional guide for visitors. It provides clear information about the locations of animal exhibits, the information center, and the management office through arrows, illustrations, and place names, helping visitors navigate the zoo easily. The main function of the sign is informational, as it supports efficient movement and reduces confusion, while it also has a symbolic function by representing the zoo's authority and its effort to create an organized and visitor-friendly environment.

Figure 2. Sign of Direction to Exit



The sign is classified as a private sign installed by the management of Taman Margasatwa Ragunan, as it is not issued by a governmental authority. The text "PINTU KELUAR PEJALAN KAKI" and the left-pointing arrow clearly serve an informational function by guiding pedestrians toward the exit area. The use of Indonesian in large uppercase letters indicates that the sign mainly targets local visitors, while the simple message and clear visual symbols make it easy to understand. Its bright yellow background and bold design increase visibility and help visitors notice the sign quickly, supporting smooth movement and reducing confusion in crowded areas.

Figure 3. Ragunan Zoo History Information Plaque



The black plaque is a government sign with a strong symbolic function, as described by Landry and Bourhis (1997). Its formal design, shown through golden text on a black background and the Garuda Pancasila emblem, represents authority and official status. The use of Bahasa Indonesia indicates that the message is mainly directed at Indonesian citizens and emphasizes the role of the national language in official historical information. The inclusion of a government leader's name and identification number further confirms the authenticity of the plaque and symbolizes state involvement in preserving the zoo's history. Overall, the plaque not only provides historical information but also reflects national pride, heritage, and government responsibility in managing Ragunan Zoo as an important public institution.

Figure 4. Orangutan Kalimantan Sign



This sign is a government sign with an informational function because it provides scientific and educational information about the Borneo orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*). The sign explains the animal's classification, physical characteristics, habitat, reproduction, and diet using formal and scientific language, including Latin taxonomy and conservation status terms such as *terancam* and *kritis*. The use of the Latin name gives the animal a universal scientific identity that can be understood internationally. The presence of official logos from the local government and Ragunan Zoo confirms that the sign is officially issued. Overall, the sign aims to educate zoo visitors, promote awareness, and support conservation efforts by providing clear and reliable information about the species.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to identify and explain the linguistic landscape found in Taman Margasatwa Ragunan. The aim of the study was to describe the types, functions, and languages used in public signage based on the framework proposed by Landry and Bourhis (1997). A total of 60 signs were collected in the form of photographic data containing words, phrases, and symbols from various locations within the zoo. The signs were analyzed and categorized according to their types (government and private), their functions (informative and symbolic), and the languages used. The analysis indicates that the types of signs found in Taman Margasatwa Ragunan consist predominantly of government signs and, to a lesser extent, private signs. Government signs dominate the area and are generally produced in accordance with policies and regulations established by zoo management and related authorities.

These signs typically follow standardized formats and convey direct information such as directions, rules, safety instructions, and public notices. In contrast, private signs are usually installed by food vendors, souvenir shops, or sponsors. These signs tend to incorporate symbolic elements, including animal illustrations, logos, and creative designs, with the purpose of attracting visitors' attention and promoting commercial activities. In terms of function, the signage in Taman Margasatwa Ragunan serves both informative and symbolic purposes. The informative function is more dominant, as most signs are intended to provide practical guidance, instructions, or factual information related to animals and public facilities. This function supports visitors in navigating the zoo efficiently and understanding essential regulations. At the same time, the symbolic function is also evident, particularly in signs that emphasize cultural identity, environmental awareness, or institutional branding. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that public signage in Taman Margasatwa Ragunan not only facilitates communication and orientation but also conveys broader social and cultural meanings within the public space..

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