



## **DIRECTIVE FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE ON OUTDOOR SIGNS IN THE RENON FIELD AREA, DENPASAR**

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### **Abstract**

This is a qualitative descriptive research aimed at analyzing the language function on outdoor signs in the form of banners and signboards in the Renon field area, Denpasar City. The focus of this research is solely on verbal signs in the form of written text. Data were collected qualitatively using purposive sampling techniques aided by a mobile phone camera. The researchers gathered data that could be clearly read in terms of design. Four sets of data were used for analysis, containing language functions of a directive nature. Leech's Language Function Theory (1974) served as the theoretical basis for data analysis. The research findings indicate the explicit presence of two types of directive language functions observed in the outdoor signs within the Renon field area in Denpasar. These functions are the directive consisting of recommendation or invitation and prohibition. The directive language of recommendation aims to encourage visitors to dispose of trash in the designated areas. Meanwhile, prohibition aims to forbid individuals from engaging in activities that could be detrimental to common interests, including prohibitions against damaging public facilities, selling items, littering, and bringing pet dogs. The aim of this research is to contribute theoretically to strengthening the language function theory in understanding language use in public spaces.

Keywords: language function, directive, outdoor signs

### *Abstrak*

*Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif, bertujuan untuk menganalisis fungsi bahasa pada tanda luar ruang berupa banner dan papan plang di area lapangan Renon, Kota Denpasar. Penelitian ini hanya berfokus pada tanda verbal berupa tulisan. Data dikumpulkan secara kualitatif*

*menggunakan teknik purposif sampling dengan bantuan kamera handphone. Peneliti mengambil data yang secara design dapat terbaca dengan jelas. Terdapat empat data yang digunakan sebagai bahan analisis yang mengandung fungsi bahasa direktif. Teori Fungsi bahasa Leech (1974) sebagai basis teori untuk menganalisis data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat dua jenis fungsi bahasa direktif yang terlihat secara eksplisit pada tanda luar ruang di area lapangan Renon, Kota Denpasar di antaranya fungsi bahasa direktif himbauan atau ajakan dan fungsi bahasa direktif larangan. Fungsi bahasa direktif himbauan bertujuan untuk menghimbau pengunjung agar membuang sampah pada tempat yang sudah disediakan. Fungsi bahasa direktif larangan bertujuan untuk melarang pengguna untuk melakukan aktivitas yang merugikan kepentingan bersama diantaranya larangan merusak fasilitas umum, larangan berjualan, larangan membuang sampah sembarangan dan larangan membawa anjing peliharaan. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan berkontribusi secara teoritis bagi penguatan teori fungsi bahasa dalam mengaji bahasa pada ruang publik.*

***Kata Kunci:*** fungsi bahasa, direktif, tanda luar ruang.

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Renon Field area in Denpasar City is an open space prepared by the Bali provincial government for various sporting activities such as soccer, basketball, volleyball, jogging, and other sports. This area is accessible to sports enthusiasts and reflects the government's commitment to promoting a healthy society through sports, aligning with the Bali Provincial Government's third mission of "Developing accessible, equitable, high-quality public health services supported by the development of a health history database for Bali residents based on sub-districts."

The provision of open spaces accessible for sports activities allows people from diverse backgrounds to utilize this area. Consequently, written notices and appeals need to be created and placed at central points within the Renon Field area to encourage compliance among its users. These appeals aim to maintain the Renon Field area clean, comfortable, and welcoming for all users, ensuring sustainable utilization.

This study examines the language used in public spaces through banners and signboards placed at various points in the Renon Field area. According to Landry and Bourhis (1997), public signs are outdoor signage components studied within the linguistic landscape. Linguistic Landscape focuses on language usage in public spaces and the purposes behind such language use (Ardhian & Fajar, 2017). Linguistic landscape within linguistic analysis is one of the various perspectives that can be explored. The language in public spaces in this research is analyzed using language function theory.

Leech (1974) categorizes language functions into five types: informative function, expressive function, directive function, phatic function, and aesthetic function. The informative function involves providing information through language, which can

include opinions, arguments, announcements, speeches, admonishments, and news reports. Expressive function uses language to convey the speaker's emotions, often employing expressions such as swear words and exclamations. The directive function aims to influence the behavior or actions of others using language, primarily through commands and requests. Leech's theory (1974) indicates that directives prompt the listener to perform the action requested or influenced by the speaker. Pyles & John (1968) state that the directive function of language allows advising, persuading, and convincing. The phatic function maintains communication and social relationships. Examples include greetings (initiating conversation), introductions, farewells, and routine polite questions as light conversation. The aesthetic function uses language as an art form, focusing on linguistic beauty, often observed in poetry or literary works (Seruni & Hamzah, 2019). This study specifically focuses on the directive language function explicitly evident in outdoor signs (banners) in the Renon Field area, Denpasar City.

Several previous studies have addressed linguistic landscapes in specific areas. Purwanto & Fila (2020) researched the Strategic Language Functions in Economic Activities: a Linguistic Landscape Study of Restaurant Advertisements in Pontianak City. Their research revealed that in economic activities, especially concerning basic needs, Pontianak city residents possess sufficient knowledge and awareness to use Indonesian language, both in public and outdoor spaces. Moreover, their study highlighted at least five roles of foreign and local languages that cannot be substituted by the Indonesian language. Similarly, Da Silva, Tjung, Wijayanti, & Suwartono (2021) studied language use and tourism in Yogyakarta; the linguistic landscape of Malioboro. Their findings unveiled the presence of Indonesian and English languages in commercial signs, regulations, and infrastructure, mostly with an informative nature.

Based on the aforementioned studies on outdoor signage, it is evident that these studies generally focus on how language is distributed in public spaces. There is limited research specifically concentrating on the analysis of language functions, particularly the directive function in outdoor signs. Therefore, this research specifically examines the directive language function in outdoor signs in the Renon Field area, Denpasar City, contributing to enriching language function theory through linguistic landscape studies. The theoretical framework employed to analyze this phenomenon is Leech's (1974) language function theory.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Language Functions**

Language functions serve as essential elements in communication, encompassing diverse purposes and objectives within linguistic exchanges. Leech (1974) categorizes language functions into five primary types: informative, expressive, directive, phatic, and aesthetic functions. The informative function involves conveying information, opinions, or reports, serving to inform and educate (Leech, 1974). Expressive language functions express emotions, feelings, or attitudes, allowing individuals to convey their sentiments through language (Halliday, 1975). The directive function aims to influence

or guide the behavior of others through commands, requests, or suggestions (Leech, 1974).

Moreover, the phatic function maintains social relationships and initiates communication, often observed in greetings, small talk, or politeness strategies (Jakobson, 1960). Lastly, the aesthetic function focuses on the artistic and creative aspects of language, emphasizing linguistic beauty and creativity (Leech, 1974). These functions are essential in various contexts, allowing individuals to interact effectively and convey nuanced meanings in different communicative situations.

Further research by Brown and Yule (1983) emphasizes the cultural aspect influencing language functions. They suggest that the usage and interpretation of language functions can vary based on cultural norms and social contexts. This viewpoint emphasizes the importance of considering cultural nuances in understanding how language functions operate within a society (Brown & Yule, 1983).

Additionally, contemporary studies have delved into how digital communication platforms have shaped language functions. Crystal (2001) discusses the evolution of language functions in digital communication, indicating how digital mediums have influenced expressive and phatic functions through emojis, acronyms, and emoticons (Crystal, 2001). This evolution highlights the adaptability and dynamic nature of language functions within evolving communication landscapes.

## **2. Linguistic Landscape**

Linguistic landscape, a concept introduced by Landry and Bourhis (1997), refers to the visible language and text displayed in public spaces, reflecting the linguistic diversity and sociolinguistic aspects of a particular area. It encompasses various written elements such as signs, billboards, advertisements, and street names, serving as tangible representations of languages used within a specific geographical region (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). These visible linguistic manifestations in public spaces offer insights into societal multilingualism, cultural identities, and power dynamics.

Research by Shohamy and Gorter (2009) expanded the understanding of linguistic landscape by highlighting its socio-political significance. They emphasized that linguistic landscape analysis involves examining the power dynamics and ideological aspects embedded within the displayed languages, reflecting societal hierarchies and language policies (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009). This perspective underscores the importance of linguistic landscape in understanding societal power structures and language ideologies.

Furthermore, scholars like Blackwood (2015) have explored the role of linguistic landscape in urban spaces, emphasizing its influence on social interactions and perceptions of place. Blackwood's research delves into how linguistic landscape contributes to the creation of urban identities and influences the social dynamics within urban environments (Blackwood, 2015). This highlights the significance of linguistic landscape not only as a representation of languages but also as a factor in shaping urban cultural identities.

Moreover, recent studies have investigated the impact of globalization on linguistic landscape. Blommaert and Backus (2013) discuss the effects of globalization on the linguistic landscape, emphasizing how global forces have influenced the proliferation of dominant languages and commercial symbols in public spaces worldwide (Blommaert & Backus, 2013). Their research sheds light on how

globalization reshapes linguistic diversity and influences the visibility of languages in urban environments.

### C. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study aimed at discussing the directive language function explicitly conveyed through signboards (banners and signboards) in the Renon Field area, Denpasar City. The data in this research consist of images of banners and signboards captured using a mobile phone camera. Data sources were purposively sampled, selecting those that were still readable in their design. Additionally, the selected samples contain directive language functions relevant to the research objectives. Four data points were collected and analyzed to identify the types of directive language functions used in these outdoor signs. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed using Leech's (1974) language function theory, aligning the identified language functions in the banners and signboards with the theory's framework.

### D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the collected data and analysis, the explicit directive language functions observed by the users of the Renon Field area on banners and signboards placed at various points can be categorized into two types: directive functions in the form of urging and directive language functions in the form of prohibition.

#### 1. Directive Language Function of Encouragement

In essence, humans employ language as a medium of communication. In this context, the language used is human language. Language, within the framework of Functional Systemic Linguistics, is one form of social semiotics functioning within the context of situations, cultures, and utilized both orally and in writing. From this perspective, language represents a structure formed by concurrent functions and systems (Wiratno & Santosa, 2014).

Language is functionally employed to express purposes and the function of social processes within a context of situation or cultural context (Halliday, 1994). In this study, the language on outdoor signs, particularly signboards, fulfills its function of communicating specific messages to readers, particularly the users of the Renon Field area in Denpasar City. The language function observed on these signboards is the directive function of urging or soliciting, evident in the following illustration:



Figure 1: Signboard Encouraging Proper Waste Disposal

Based on Figure 1, it can be observed that the language function used on signboards is the directive language function of urging or soliciting. The directive language function of urging or soliciting aims to persuade listeners to undertake an action in line with the speaker's suggestion or request (Leech, 1974). In written language in public spaces, the directive language function of urging or soliciting intends to influence readers to act in accordance with the suggestions conveyed in the writing.

In the above figure, it is apparent that the urging or solicitation is formed in the imperative sentence "Dispose of litter in its place," which signifies more than a mere suggestion or urging. It instructs visitors to the Renon Field area to maintain cleanliness. The maintenance of cleanliness relies on the discipline and orderliness of users to dispose of litter appropriately. The Renon Field authorities have provided waste bins categorized by type to support the implementation of these suggestions or solicitations.

Referring to the instrumental function, through specific media, language can induce certain actions in the listener or reader. Arini (2018), in a study on the Form, Meaning, and Function of Written Language on Social Media as a Communication Tool and Interaction on the Internet, stated that social media serves as a means of interaction and sharing impressions through published messages, triggering events for readers. In this research, the use of language in public spaces through signboards aims to also prompt specific actions in readers, particularly users of the Renon Field area, to regulate themselves in disposing of litter in designated areas.

### 3.2 Directive Language Function of Prohibition

Language and communication are closely intertwined with human life. Language is used as a medium for communication in human interactions. Language is crucial as a part of communication, and communication is a skill that humans acquire. Typically, humans have a natural ability to speak and converse with one another. In communication, language serves its function of giving, receiving, or exchanging information, ideas, and opinions, ensuring that the message from the interlocutor is understood by the listener (Kanaza, 2020).

In this study, language serves its function to influence readers or listeners to act in accordance with the conveyed message. Language functions to communicate specific messages to listeners through outdoor media (banners and signboards). Based on the gathered data, it is evident that the language in public spaces constitutes written language categorized as a directive function of prohibition, seen in the following illustration:



Figure 2: Outdoor Signs Depicting Prohibitions

The directive language function aims to influence listeners to act in accordance with the speaker's message (Susanthi et al., 2018; Susanthi et al., 2021). In written language in public spaces, the directive language function aims to influence readers to take specific actions. The directive function observed on outdoor signs at Renon Field is the prohibition directive function. Based on Figure 2 above, there are four prohibition directive functions conveyed through banners and signboards, including: (1) Prohibition against damaging public facilities available at Renon Field. Public facilities are instruments accessible and usable by all residents of Denpasar City. Therefore, all users need to maintain and preserve these facilities. (2) Prohibition against littering. The directive language function at this point extends beyond mere suggestions. (3) Prohibition against vending around Renon Field. Renon Field area is specifically an open arena designated for various sports activities. This implies that other activities disrupting users' comfort are not allowed. Additionally, activities generating waste are discouraged to maintain the area's cleanliness and comfort. (4) Prohibition against bringing pets and other animals. The prohibition directive language function in this point demonstrates the management's concern at Renon Field to create a friendly open space and prevent various accidents and diseases originating from various sources, including pets. Additionally, this prohibition aims socially to maintain social harmony among Renon Field users.

These four prohibition directive language functions are more than mere suggestions or invitations to users or visitors. Prohibition represents a stronger directive language function and entails specific consequences if violated. Violations lead to certain sanctions in accordance with the prevailing local regulations.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that linguistic landscape is an analytical unit that can be examined from various perspectives, including the perspective of language function used on those outdoor signs. The explicit language functions observed on outdoor signs, such as banners and signboards, at Renon Field in Denpasar City are the directive language functions of urging/invitation and prohibition. The language in public spaces serves to communicate messages to users, advocating for responsible litter disposal and establishing prohibitions against damaging public facilities, littering, vending, and bringing pets. The prohibition directive language function goes beyond mere suggestions and entails consequences if violated.



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