

Multimodal Linguistic Landscape in Lombok: A Case Study of Product Branding

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Abstract—A study of writing a language in a public area is known as the linguistic landscape. This research aims to map language choices (monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual) on food products in Lombok and analyze the interconnections between the implementation of national, regional, and foreign language policies on food products in Lombok. The multimodal approach can describe more about the language landscape, including the meaning and function of public writing. This multimodal concept views signs as a form of visual communication that is definite and non-arbitrary. Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are explored as a case study in creative linguistic marketing about local interactions and global forces on the linguistic landscape. These MSMEs use various semiotic sources of regional languages, foreign languages, local wisdom, and inclusive spirit as an introduction and production process. Through linguistic analysis of landscapes, researchers examine systems of signs, images, and texts within a semiotic framework. The uniqueness of this study is what makes it unique to researchers because it has rich local meaning in context. This research describes not only MSMEs but also semiotic landscapes that contribute to understanding changes in sociolinguistic patterns and creativity in the branding of MSME products in the Lombok region.

Index Terms—branding linguistics, multimodal, landscapes linguistics

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) provides enormous business potential for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The momentum of the World Superbike Championship (WSBK) and MotoGP 2022 in Lombok has significant implications for the development of MSMEs, especially in the tourism sector (KSP: Development of the Mandalika SEZ gives MSME business potential, ANTARA News). This world-scale moment contributes significantly to the progress of local MSMEs in increasing their productivity.

Product branding is the most important thing to do as a form of marketing strategy. This branding is part of advertising for product socialization in the community. As Barthes (1977) once said in Elliott, Kristen L. (2014), advertising is a unique form of representation because it is designed with a specific purpose in mind and serves to sell goods. Johnson (2008) in Ellison, Kristen L. (2014) also states that advertising has become a "cultural engine of consumption" as well as a structure of the surrounding cultural landscape that can be widely marked and appear repeatedly in the discursive practices of daily life.

This research involved several brands of MSME products in the Lombok region. The reason for sampling MSME products is related to several things, such as inclusivity, innovation, and digitalization. Digitalization plays an essential role in financial inclusion. Digitalization is crucial to achieving the target, namely access to financing, payments, bookkeeping, and digital marketing, which has been introduced to MSMEs (Sri Mulyani, 2022). Based on previous studies related to product branding, these three things are marketing strategies (Sudarwati & Venti, 2013). The branding

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of these three products already has a trading business license certification in the form of Home Industry Products (PIRT) issued by the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises Cooperatives.

Product branding based on inclusivity is a form of collaboration conducted by the Lombok State Future Satellite Foundation (Samara). Based on the results of an in-depth interview with the product owner, FN (Pseudonym), a blind person and the Chairman of the Blind Association (Indonesian Association for the Blind of NTB), the Samara Foundation is engaged in the field of creative economy and inclusive education from early childhood to high school. One of the products made as a form of creative economy is Kopibilitas, a product brand from Samara MSMEs. The robusta coffee products offered have the peculiarity of being produced for people with disabilities. Therefore, the brand's name was 'Kopibilitas' (coffee produced by people with disabilities).

In addition, there is also product branding based on innovation, such as what is done by MSMEs that produce clove sauce. Lombok is an area that has a culinary culture with spicy flavors. So many foods in Lombok have special spices made from chili, such as chili sauce products produced in Central Lombok. Central Lombok is a dry region, and most of the food there also tends to be dry, such as dried chilies that are specially packaged to make them easier to consume and have a long shelf life of two months of storage at room temperature. Etymologically, this dried chili is called 'sambal cengeh,' which means chili sauce from chili inherited from generation to generation, and those who consume it will come out crying (because it is spicy).

The following product discussed in this study is the branding of a grain-based product. The nutsafir grains include cashews, melinjo, lebu, red beans, green beans, cheese corn, almond chocolate, coconut, and cappuccino melinjo. The uniqueness of this product lies in its packaging and branding design. Regarding branding design, introducing Lombok tourism is conducted, such as 'gendang beleq,' beaches, Segara Anak waterfall, Sasak weaving, and 'Peresean culture.' These three products were selected as samples because they have unique, superior qualities and contribute to hosting the World Superbike Championship (WSBK) from March 3-6, 2023, which several countries have attended. Therefore, this research aims to map language choices (monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual) on food products in Lombok and analyze the interconnections between the implementation of national, regional, and foreign language policies on food products in Lombok.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials and methods branding is a crucial aspect of business success, and its connection to linguistics is explored through the framework of "branding linguistics." This approach, developed by Carnavale, Luna, and Lerman (2017), highlights five processes: (1) identifying brands, (2) experiencing brands, (3) integrating brand information, (4) signifying brands as symbols, and (5) connecting with brands.

Identifying brands: Consumers associate brands with categories and compare them within them, often using language-based categorizations. Language influences these associations, such as linking a brand to its country of origin, impacting perceptions.

Experiencing brands: Consumers perceive brands through verbal and visual presentations, with the linguistic identity of a brand affecting emotional connections. Spelling and congruence influence perceptions, and vocabulary in advertising can evoke emotional responses.

Integrating brand information: Consumers incorporate brand information based on linguistic identity and its relation to other brands. Brands develop personalities reflected in linguistic choices, such as tone and style, distinguishing them from competitors.

Signifying brands as symbols: Brands convey meaning through their symbolism, like languages, with names and logos as essential elements. Language choice influences consumer associations and identities tied to brands.

Connecting with brands: Consumers connect emotionally and attitudinally to brands, often forming brand communities. Language in advertising, especially for bilingual consumers, influences attitudes toward brands and reinforces their linguistic identity.

The study underscores how language shapes meaning, constructs identity, and enhances emotional connections between consumers and products (Lowrey, 2006; Lefkowitz, 2003; Mick et al., 2004; Schmitt, 2012). This interaction is significant in the context of the global spread of English, impacting how consumers relate to brands.

Gorter (2006, p. 2) states that the study of Language and Space (LL) is the study of the exploitation of language as a sign in public space. On the other hand, the LL reflects the power and status of each language in a specific environment (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006, pp. 67-68). Furthermore, they suggest that the study of LL influences the thinking and behavior of society toward the use of different languages in a particular environment. Ben-Rafael E. et al. (2006, p. 7) define LL as all forms of linguistic objects in public space. Moriarty (2014) claims that LL is a collection of external signs representing the local community's conditions. According to Spolsky (2006), the study of LL has been around for a long time and was previously referred to as the study of language in public space. On the other hand, Coulmas (2006, p. 13) mentions that the study of LL is as old as writing itself. He further suggests that all written speech worldwide, known as inscriptions, is a form of written communication performed openly in public.

Empirically, LL is a study of variations in written language usage among a group in a specific area. Theoretically, the study of LL can be analyzed through its two main functions, the informative and symbolic functions (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). The informative function approach analyzes the visualization function of signs as a means of visual mass

communication that distinguishes one area from another. Additionally, the informative function study indicates the types of language used in a specific area. In contrast, the symbolic function approach is abstract, fundamental, and principles or salience related to the function of external signs as an identity of a region characterized by implicit language usage. In line with the function of external signs, Kress and Leuwen (1996, 2006) believe that every sign created is confident and motivated, not arbitrary or random. In other words, the signifier and signified are created simultaneously as a visual unit. Furthermore, they suggest that every sign is created based on the motivation of its creator, which already has a definite meaning concept with all the signifiers used.

Multimodality is comprehensively interpreting a communicative sign involving all its constituent modes. The concept of multimodality views signs as a definite and non-arbitrary form of visual communication. In other words, every communicative sign is made with a specific purpose in mind that is represented through various sign modes available. Sign modes represent all 'material' formations used by society that are influenced by the socio-cultural conditions of the local community, such as written language, spoken language, and body language (gesture) used by the local community (Kress, 2010; Lyons, 2016). Furthermore, Lyons (2016) suggests that the study of multimodality is based on three basic assumptions: 1) every visual communicative sign involves sign modes such as speech, writing, body movements, images, and others; 2) the meaning of the visual communicative sign is represented through the existing sign modes and their relationship; and 3) the use of each combination of sign modes in communication is formed based on social habits and the cultural background of the local community that is widely understood. In line with this concept, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) view signs as a visual communication medium that requires each constituent mode to be seen as a unit of meaning that supports and is independent in representing the intended meaning.

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. The characteristics of this research are trying to develop or describe things as they are and using qualitative data, which will produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from the observed research object (Alwasilah, 2008). This study exclusively examines fixed signs, differentiating them from mobile signage like flyers and posters (Sebba, 2010). Additionally, it distinguishes between the 'principal' sign and 'sub'-signs within the business front space (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006), although it acknowledges the potential challenges with this categorization. The primary focus is on signs responsible for identifying business names and their nature, while trademarked names displayed separately from the principal sign are not considered within this study (Huebner, 2009). In this study, the researcher formulated the research focus as the goal of the research, where the researcher intends to identify the meaning behind the three trademark logos of UMKM owners in Lombok. This process is one of the efforts to improve the quality of the product brand through a semiotic approach. This approach can reveal the connotative and denotative meanings of a sign or image so that readers can recognize and understand it (Hoed, 2011). The three logos chosen provide a good representation of other logos owners produce. The data to be obtained for this study are primary and secondary. Primary data come from the logo, the object of research, and interviews.

Meanwhile, secondary data come from theories such as books and other relevant sources. The data collection techniques were carried out by documenting the selected logos. In addition, researchers also conducted interviews with the owners, and questions were developed based on research needs that refer to the problem and the objectives of this study—identifying the symbols on the logos that represent symbols related to a good product marketing strategy for the advancement of the brand itself.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The documentation of products consists of three criteria: inclusion, innovation, and digitalization, which create curiosity about the origin of the product branding along with all the signs, images, and texts contained within them. Sign makers employ semiotic resources alongside verbal elements to enhance information presentation and brand promotion. This approach recognizes that effective branding requires not just creative language use but also the utilization of other semiotic tools. Visual rhetorical elements like text size, color, and font are instrumental in conveying messages to consumers. These resources work in conjunction with verbal content to create meaning. Analyzing these semiotic features individually underscores their significance, although it is essential to note that they often interplay and cannot be easily separated. Sign makers employ diverse semiotic resources to convey meaning and achieve branding objectives (Scollon & Wong Scollon, 2003).

The first product, as shown in Figure 1, displays branding based on the production process that involves people with disabilities in making spiced coffee. From the size and font style used, the product shows that the words 'people with disabilities' are more significant than the product name 'Kopi Rempah.' It means the product branding emphasizes the inclusive production process rather than the product name offered.



Figure 1. Kopibilitas From Yayasan Samara
Instagram @Kopibilitas

The text, sign, and picture from Figure 1:

1. Coffee beans, cinnamon, cloves
2. A cup of coffee
3. The logo features a hot coffee cup image marked with steam surrounded by the product name, "*Kopibilitas*," along with the place of production, Samara. The producer's name, Samara Lombok, is listed above the logo.
4. The text "people with disability" and the product name "NTB original spiced Robusta coffee" are shown.

In the '*Kopibilitas*' logo, there is the use of images and text that show coffee products. The image of a coffee cup filled with steam and the product name containing the element "coffee" is part of the product's signification. In addition, the manufacturer's name, "Samara," listed above the logo, also becomes a sign of the manufacturer's existence in the coffee product.

In semiotics, the steam from the hot coffee cup in the logo can be considered an index, indicating a causal relationship with the associated object. In this case, the steam produced by hot coffee indicates that the drink in the cup has just been brewed and is still hot. This index helps consumers understand the quality and freshness of the brand's coffee. Therefore, the steam index in the '*Kopibilitas*' logo depicts the hot nature of the coffee drink and connotes a desire to try it for people who like fresh, hot coffee.

In addition, the text element "bilitas" in the product name "Kopibilitas" can be interpreted as an iconic sign. The word "*bilitas*" in the product name is visually displayed with a larger font size and different colors, making it stand out and attract attention. In this case, this iconic sign can depict a product with excellent quality and produced by people with disabilities who can also produce quality products.

In the overall '*Kopibilitas*' logo, semiotic elements such as the steam index and the "*bilitas*" iconic sign can serve as signs that support and strengthen the message that this coffee product is produced by people with disabilities who have good abilities and quality.

Hierarchy in typography refers to the arrangement and hierarchy of different typography elements' size, shape, and color to achieve a structured and easily understood layout. "Samara" is placed in the first larger hierarchy, followed by "*Kopibilitas*" in the second hierarchy, and additional information "people with disability" in the third hierarchy. The third hierarchy is designed with a white (diapositive) background to highlight the uniqueness of disabilities. This reinforces the unique positioning of disabilities in the product, making it more prominent and connoting a special meaning. It conveys the message that product branding emphasizes an inclusive production process.



Figure 2. Sambal Cengeh
Instagram @sambalengehlombok

The text, sign, and picture from Figure 2:

1. The words "Maiq Meres Food" which means delicious food.
2. A white-colored chili pepper image encircles the product name.
3. The text "Food Spicy Everyone".
4. The halal label.
5. Multicolored packaging.

Furthermore, in the second product, there is a variation of packaging that looks neat and unique by featuring the local wisdom of Lombok, such as introducing regional tourism, from arts, tourist destinations, and local products such as woven fabrics. What is interesting about this product is the word "LOMBOK" in large size and the product manufacturer's name "NUTSAFIR" in medium size and colorful letters. Meanwhile, the image of the product derived from grains is also visible. The producer prioritizes introducing the product by sharing a text containing the benefits of the grains in the cake, also listed in the package box.

The foreign language "Food Spicy Everyone" is seen below the product name "Sambal Cengeh." According to the product maker's statement, this product has been enjoyed by most Indonesians and will enter the international market, so the producer uses foreign terms in the product naming. The packaging also features the words "Maiq Meres Food". The product name "Sambal Cengeh" is put in the center and surrounded by an illustration of long curved shapes resembling the shape of chili. It indicates that the visual element in the sambal logo plays an essential role in conveying the message about the product.

Muslim communities worldwide, including Indonesia, prefer food products with halal certification labels. The halal label on food packaging indicates that the food has been processed well according to the rules set by Islam and is considered lawful and clean for Muslim consumers. Therefore, the halal logo can influence consumer decisions about food products. The word "halal" in Arabic denotes a food label allowed to be consumed in an Islamic way. In common parlance, "halal" refers to meat slain by Islamic dietary standards, which can be traced back to the verses in the Quran. In non-Muslim countries, "halal" symbolizes a religious brand indicating that a product fulfills the dietary needs of a specific group of followers, i.e., Muslims (Yusuf Kamal et al., 2022).

In more detail, the long-curved shapes can be interpreted as a symbol of chili, which is part of the product name. By placing the product name in the center, inside the chili curve, this symbol can provide an impression of the product's identity and uniqueness. In addition, the position of the product name in the center with the chili symbol surrounding it can also give the impression that the product is of good quality and attracts consumers' attention.

Furthermore, using similar chili objects surrounding the product name can convey a message about the availability of spicy food that everyone can enjoy. The selection of objects surrounding the product name can also indicate that the product is known for its unusual spiciness, making many people interested in trying it. In addition, by mentioning that Sambal Lombok is known to be spicy and can be accepted by many people, the phrase "feel spicy everywhere" can give the impression that the product has been widely accepted and consumed by the community.

From a linguistic landscape perspective, the word "cengeh" can be understood as a signal that refers to the conventions or standard agreements within the language user community about the word's meaning. In this context, "cengeh" can be considered a code or sign containing a mutually agreed meaning, making communication and understanding about the product more accessible.



Figure 3.

<https://nutsafirlombok.com>

The text, sign, and picture from Figure 3:

1. It features nine types of grain variants (cashews, melinjo nuts, lebu nuts, red beans, green beans, cheese corn, almond chocolate, coconut, and cappuccino-flavored melinjo nuts) which are the essence of the product.
2. Images of grains are displayed alongside the nutsafir cake.
3. Local wisdom symbols represent the product's origin, such as introducing Lombok's tourism, such as 'gendang beleq,' beach, Segara Anak waterfall, Sasak weaving, and Peresean culture.
4. The product's color concept represents the color of the grains, such as the brown-colored cashews, dark, red-colored red beans, green-colored green beans, dark brown-colored almond chocolate, and black-colored cappuccino-flavored melinjo nuts.

The nine types of grain variants listed in the text are signs that represent the product's essence. These signs inform the audience about the ingredients and flavor of the product. NUTSAFIR, using multiple colors, can convey a sense of diversity and inclusivity, as each color represents something unique and different. From a semiotic perspective, using multiple colors in a logo can be seen as a strategy to create a complex set of signifiers that convey different meanings to the audience. Each color can be interpreted as a sign representing a unique concept or idea, combined with other signs below to create a more complex sign.

The images of grains displayed alongside the nutsafir cake are icons, as they resemble the natural grains. The icons emphasize the main ingredients and suggest the product's quality by showcasing its natural ingredients. The cultural background can influence the design and choice of symbols or icons used in product packaging. The local wisdom symbols, such as 'gendang beleq,' beach, Segara Anak waterfall, Sasak weaving, and Peresean culture, are indexical signs that represent the product's origin. These symbols associate the product with Lombok's tourism, culture, and local identity. Using cultural symbols such as musical instruments on product packaging can give the impression that the product comes from Lombok. This specific region has cultural richness, such as 'gendang beleq.' The Gendang Beleq is a traditional musical instrument from Lombok, made of hollowed-out tree trunks and cowhide. It is often played during cultural ceremonies and festivities. In addition, cultural symbols can also be part of the brand identity the manufacturer wants to establish.

The product's color concept is a symbol that represents the color of the grains used in the product, the brown-colored cashews, dark, red-colored red beans, green-colored green beans, dark brown-colored almond chocolate, and black-colored cappuccino-flavored 'melinjo' nuts, symbolize the quality and diversity of the product. These symbols associate the product with Lombok's tourism, culture, and local identity.

Using signs, symbols, indices, and icons in the text, images, and symbols in Figure 3 enhances the product's meaning, origin, and quality. Combining these semiotic elements appeals to the audience's emotions, senses, and cultural identity, which may influence their perception and decision-making about the product.

IV. CONCLUSION

Symbols representing local wisdom, texts in foreign and regional languages, and images depicting local tourism are creative marketing strategies. The use of foreign languages in marketing can provide benefits in reaching international markets. However, MSMEs also need to pay attention to the use of regional languages and local wisdom in marketing to attract local consumers and increase the value of their products. Using foreign languages can give a modern and international impression to product branding. It can help MSMEs attract consumers' attention in international markets and provide a more professional and trustworthy image.

MSMEs engaged in the culinary industry, such as *Nutsafir* products and *Sambal Cengeh*, can market their products by using names or terms in regional languages that describe the local flavor or ingredients used. In addition, local wisdom can be applied in packaging design or product logos that depict the distinctive characteristics and identity of the region.

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