

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Bali is one of the tourist destinations in Indonesia, commonly recognized as the “Island of the Gods” Bali is rich in cultural diversity, including traditional arts, breathtaking natural beauty such as beaches, mountains, and rice fields, as well as a variety of traditions. Bali also hosts numerous popular tourist attractions that are renowned both domestically and internationally. Each year, a large number of international and domestic tourists visit and enjoy Bali’s destinations, significantly influencing its sociolinguistic landscape. According to Artawa et al. (2023), the interaction between local culture and the forces of globalization has become increasingly visible in the use of language in Bali, where Indonesian and Balinese are the main languages spoken by locals. At the same time, the presence of international tourists introduces foreign languages, particularly English. The linguistic landscape in Bali, especially in areas rich in tourism, reflects the interaction between local and foreign cultures. In the context of English language education, linguistic landscapes provide authentic linguistic input that represents real-world language use. This exposure enables learners to observe how English is used in natural settings, beyond classroom instruction. Consequently, it supports the development of learners’ sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence.

In these tourism areas, commercial signage, restaurant menus, and tourism information often employ multiple languages, creating a multilingual environment that reflects ongoing social and economic dynamics. For instance, in Lovina, North

Bali, this multilingualism is clearly visible. Paramarta (2023) notes that a geosemiotic analysis of commercial signs in North Bali demonstrates how language is used to attract tourists' attention and create more inclusive experiences. This suggests that language functions not only as a tool for communication but also as a medium for expressing cultural identity and projecting the region's cultural image in the eyes of visitors.

Lovina, located in North Bali, represents an example of a region where globalization and local culture interact closely. Known for its black-sand beaches and its famous dolphin-watching tours, Lovina which once began as a quiet fishing village, has transformed into a bustling tourist destination. Popular for activities such as diving, snorkeling, and dolphin watching in the open sea, Lovina also offers rich cultural experiences, including festivals and traditional Balinese cuisine. This transformation has had significant economic impacts as well as effects on local linguistic practices and social interactions. Sakhiyya and Martin-Anatias (2020) argue that the revitalization of endangered languages in Indonesia, including those in tourism areas, is crucial for preserving local cultural identity amidst the pressures of globalization. In this context, the use of local languages in public signage and everyday interactions becomes increasingly important in maintaining cultural heritage and community identity.

Based on preliminary observation conducted in the Lovina area, many public signs display the use of English, Indonesian, and Balinese. English is often used to attract international tourists, while Indonesian and Balinese are used to reflect national and local identity. Interestingly, similar types of signs may appear across

different locations but convey different meanings depending on their context. These observations suggest that language use in public signage is not only functional but also reflects broader sociolinguistic processes. From the perspective of scale, language use operates at global, national, and local levels (Blommaert, 2010). In terms of indexicality, language choices signal social meanings such as prestige, modernity, and cultural identity (Silverstein, 2003). Furthermore, language use is influenced by multiple norms, including global tourism demands, national policies, and local cultural values, reflecting polycentricity (Blommaert, 2010). Therefore, a more interpretative approach is necessary to understand how linguistic landscape reflects complex social realities in tourism contexts.

Previous empirical studies on linguistic landscape in tourism contexts have shown that language use in public signage is closely linked to globalization, economic orientation, and cultural identity. Research conducted by Landry and Bourhis (1997), Backhaus (2007), Ben-Rafael et al. (2006), Shohamy and Gorter (2009), as well as more recent studies in the Indonesian and Balinese context such as Sakhiyya and Martin-Anafias (2020), Pendit et al. (2022), Suprastayasa and Rastitiati (2023), and Maharani et al. (2024), consistently indicate that English tends to dominate tourism signage, Indonesian functions as a national and regulatory language, and local languages are often employed symbolically to represent cultural identity. These studies have contributed significantly to understanding multilingual practices in tourism-driven public spaces.

However, despite the growing body of research, several important gaps remain. One major limitation of previous studies lies in their tendency to analyze linguistic

landscape phenomena from separate analytical perspectives. Some studies focus primarily on language dominance and hierarchy, while others emphasize indexical meanings or sociolinguistic scale. For instance, studies by Maharani et al. (2024) highlight the scale of language use in tourism signage, whereas Pendit et al. (2022) concentrate on indexicality and symbolic meanings. Nevertheless, these dimensions are rarely examined simultaneously within a single analytical framework. As a result, there is still limited understanding of how scale of language use and indexicality interact to produce layered social, cultural, and economic meanings in public signage.

In addition, although the concept of polycentricity has been introduced within the sociolinguistics of globalization (Blommaert, 2010) and has begun to appear in linguistic landscape studies in Indonesia (Susianti et al., 2022), its application remains relatively underdeveloped. Previous studies on linguistic landscape have extensively examined the presence and distribution of languages in public spaces, particularly in tourism areas. However, many of these studies tend to focus on descriptive aspects, such as language dominance and visibility, without providing a comprehensive analysis of the underlying sociolinguistic processes. Moreover, existing research often examines key concepts such as scale, indexicality, and polycentricity separately rather than integrating them within a single analytical framework. In addition, studies conducted in tourism contexts have rarely explored how these three dimensions interact in shaping the meaning and function of public signage. As a result, there is still limited understanding of how language use in linguistic landscapes reflects complex social meanings, power relations, and

multiple normative influences simultaneously. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the linguistic landscape of Lovina, Bali through an integrated sociolinguistic approach that combines scale, indexicality, and polycentricity to provide a more comprehensive understanding of multilingual signage in a tourism setting.

Based on these gaps, the novelty of this study lies in its integrated analytical approach to the linguistic landscape of a tourism area. This research simultaneously examines scale of language use, indexicality, and polycentricity within a single empirical setting, allowing for a more comprehensive interpretation of multilingual public signage. By combining these three dimensions, the study moves beyond descriptive accounts of language presence and offers a deeper explanation of how languages function as social resources that index identity, economic orientation, and cultural values. Furthermore, this study provides empirical novelty by focusing on Lovina, North Bali, a tourism destination that has received relatively limited attention compared to more established areas in Bali. Through this localized focus, the research captures how global, national, and local linguistic forces intersect in shaping public signage in an evolving tourism context. In doing so, this study not only extends existing theoretical discussions on linguistic landscape and sociolinguistic globalization but also contributes new empirical insights into how multilingual practices are negotiated and visualized in tourism-driven public spaces.

In conclusion, this research not only contributes to the understanding of language dynamics in Lovina but also provides practical recommendations for

stakeholders in preserving local language and culture amid globalization. The findings are expected to serve as an important reference for future studies on language, culture, and tourism in Indonesia and other regions undergoing similar transformations.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background described above, several key issues related to the linguistic landscape in Lovina, Bali can be identified. First, the interaction between local culture and the influence of globalization is reflected in language use, where Indonesian and Balinese serve as the primary languages used by the local community, while the presence of international tourists introduces foreign languages, particularly English (Artawa, 2023). The linguistic landscape in tourist areas such as Lovina illustrates the interplay between local and foreign languages, which is manifested in commercial signage, restaurant menus, and tourism information that often incorporate multiple languages, creating a dynamic multilingual environment (Paramarta, 2023).

However, globalization also presents challenges for local communities in preserving their cultural identity. The use of English in tourism contexts may gradually displace the use of Balinese, potentially diminishing the cultural values embedded in the local language (Sakhiyya & Martin-Anatias, 2020). Furthermore, the increasing number of tourists influences social communication patterns and interactions among residents, where adaptation to foreign languages and cultures may lead to the neglect of local languages and traditions. Therefore, it is crucial to

understand how the Lovina community responds to these changes and how they strive to maintain their cultural identity amid the intensifying forces of globalization.

1.3 Problem Limitation

This study applies several limitations in order to maintain a clear research focus, ensure methodological feasibility, and avoid overly broad analysis. The limitations were determined based on the research objectives, the scope of linguistic landscape studies, and the practical considerations of data collection in a tourism-driven environment. By clearly defining these boundaries, the study aims to provide an in-depth and systematic analysis of language use in public signage without extending beyond the intended research focus. This study is limited as follows:

1. Limited Research Location

This research was conducted exclusively in the Lovina tourism area, Buleleng Regency, North Bali, with a specific focus on public spaces along the main tourism corridor of Lovina Beach. This area was selected because it represents the central zone of tourism activities where multilingual public signage is most visible and actively used by local communities, domestic tourists, and international visitors. Areas outside the main tourism corridor, such as residential neighborhoods, non-tourism-related zones, and private spaces, are not included in this study.

2. Limited Type of Public Signage

The scope of this study was limited to permanent and semi-permanent outdoor public signs that are physically displayed in public spaces and accessible to the general public. These signs include fixed commercial signage such as hotels, restaurants, cafés, dive centers, travel agencies, and souvenir shops, as well as semi-permanent non-commercial signage such as public information boards, directional signs, and warning signs. Temporary banners, handwritten notices, posters, digital signage, indoor signage, online advertisements, social media-based communication, and spoken interactions are excluded from the analysis to ensure consistency, stability, and clarity of the data.

3. Limited Linguistic Scope

This research focuses only on English, Indonesian, and in Balinese as they appear on public signage in the research area. These languages were selected because they were the most dominant and socially meaningful languages in the linguistic landscape of Lovina and represent different sociolinguistic scales, namely global, national, and local levels. Other languages that appear infrequently are not included in the analysis.

4. Limited Theoretical Perspective

The analysis was limited to the perspectives of scale of language use, indexical meanings, and polycentricity within the framework of sociolinguistics of globalization. The study does not examine spoken interaction, language attitudes, audience perception, or the effectiveness of signage for tourism promotion.

5. Limited Time Frame and Research Design

Data collection was conducted within a specific observation period during active tourism conditions. This study does not aim to conduct a longitudinal analysis of changes in the linguistic landscape over time or a comparative analysis with other tourism destinations.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background the author explained, the author proposes several research problem formulations follows of:

1. What language scales are used in public signs in Lovina area?
2. How do public signs reflect the indexicality of social, economic, and cultural status in Lovina area?
3. How do different language norms (polycentricity) influence the linguistic landscape in Lovina area?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the research of the problems above, the objective of the study as are follows:

1. To identify the language scales represented in public signs in the Lovina area.
2. To analyze public signs in relation to the indexicality of social, economic, and cultural status in Lovina area.

3. To analyze how different language norms (polycentricity) influence the linguistic landscape in Lovina area.

1.6 Significances of The Study

The results obtained in this study aim to open up insight into Linguistic Landscape as well as to provide theoretical and practical interests.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the understanding of linguistic landscape as an interdisciplinary field within sociolinguistics. By analyzing the coexistence of local and foreign languages in Lovina, Bali, the study contributes to theories of language contact, globalization, and identity formation. It provides empirical data that support discussions on how linguistic landscapes serve as visual representations of cultural and linguistic power relations. Moreover, this study offers insights into how public signage reflects social attitudes toward language use and cultural preservation, thus strengthening the conceptual framework for future linguistic landscape research in multilingual tourism contexts.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

- a) For English Language Education

This study provides empirical data that can be utilized as authentic teaching materials in English language classrooms. The linguistic landscape of Lovina offers

real-world examples of multilingual language use, which can support vocabulary learning through exposure to public signs and commonly used expressions in everyday contexts. In addition, it enables students to develop pragmatic awareness and sociolinguistic competence by understanding how language is used appropriately in different social and cultural settings. Furthermore, the findings of this study can support the implementation of context-based learning (CBL) and place-based approaches in English language education, particularly in enhancing students' sensitivity to both global and local language dynamics.

b) For Further Researchers

This study is expected to serve as a useful reference for future researchers who wish to explore similar topics in different geographical or sociocultural contexts. The findings and methodological approach presented in this research can provide guidance for conducting linguistic landscape analyses, particularly in tourism-based areas. It may also inspire comparative studies between local and international tourism destinations to examine how globalization influences language visibility and identity negotiation.

c) For Students

For students, particularly those studying English language education or linguistics, this research can deepen their understanding of how language functions in real-world contexts, especially in multicultural and multilingual societies. It helps them recognize the importance of language choice in public spaces and its role in representing cultural identity. Furthermore, this study can motivate students to develop awareness and appreciation for local languages, encouraging them to

participate actively in language preservation efforts amid globalization.

