

Research article

The Interpretation of Public Service Announcement: A Semiotic Analysis of Public Facilities and Television in Indonesia and Malaysia

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Abstract.

This study analyzes the language used in public service announcements via public facilities and televisions in Indonesia and Malaysia. The method used is the qualitative research approach. Public facilities and television were analyzed as the objects of this study. The researchers used documentation and observation for collecting data and used Barthes' theory to examine the public service announcements used. The result showed that public service announcements communicated in Indonesia and Malaysia have some similarities and some differences. They can be seen in languages, contents, colors, media, and designs used for and the places where the announcements were made. This article presents an analysis framework and rarely do any studies defy such attempts in a critical manner.

Keywords: semiotics, analysis, public notices, publishing

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1. Introduction

The Indonesian archipelago has its own lingua franca already spoken for centuries, the *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Language). This language is a standardized language of Malay, an Austronesia Language. The Bahasa Indonesia is spoken in formal places or occasion as well as situations where Indonesian people from various tribes meet each other. As for informal occasions or local situations, Indonesian speaks regional languages. Indonesians has 750 indigenous languages and each of these become most of Indonesian's mother tongue, thus placing Bahasa Indonesia as a second language.

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Bahasa Indonesia was set as a national language during the colonial era in the early twentieth century. The wide use of Bahasa Indonesia among Indonesian people puts English as a foreign language. Hence English is spoken on a specific occasion for specific purposes i.e. education, administration, judiciary, and upon meeting foreigners.

Malaysia on the other hand, inherited English as a second language since it was colonized by the British in the early 19th century. Aside from English, Malaysia still speak Malay as a national Language along with Chinese and Tamil as a vernacular language.

Similar to Indonesia, Malaysia is a multilingual and multiethnicity country. The Malaysian society consists Malay/ Bumiputera which makes up the 67.4% of the population, Chinese (24.6%) and Indian (7.3%) [1]. During colonialism era, the British established schools in urban areas attended by royal families, elites, and rich Malays and Chinese. Most of common Malay in the rural area favoured the Islamic-based schools (*Pondok*), the Chinese and Indian communities also established their vernacular-based schools. The educational system was formed in various mainstream based on vernacular languages with English as an additional language. Malaysian schools recognized as a formal institution to promote their native tradition and culture as well as to flourish their identity. The British English derives its own variety in Malaysia, the Malaysian English or Malaysian Standard English (MySE), but there is little official use of the term and mainly only on educational field.

The purpose of publishing public service announcement is to provide updates on site progress or to inform or educate the public about specific site activities. Public service announcement can serve its purpose if it reaches the intended audience. Public service announcement has to be simple, clear, and easy to see. A well-made public service announcement posted on concealed location will prevent anyone from reading it, thus render it useless.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Public Facilities

A study was conducted examining the usage of Public Service Announcement in Public Facilities. The Public Service Announcement examined was regarding the prohibition of smoking. It was stated that the PSA used at present is in a form of detectors. This detector has alarms that go off upon detecting cigarette smoke, triggering a response from the smoker. It was proposed that not only alarms used to warn smokers but also

a display capable of presenting an educational message regarding the disadvantages of smoking [2].

TABLE 1: Sign Map of Roland Barthes [4].

Signifier	Signified
Denotative Sign	
Connotative Signifier	Connotative Signified
Connotative sign	

2.2. Television

A study regarding the usage of Public Service Announcement in Television was conducted. In this study, a Public Service Announcement regarding the prevention of Stunting was examined. The language used was Bahasa Indonesia as the target audience is the community in Central Indonesia. The language used in this 3-minute PSA was following the demographic, the socio-cultural background of the target audience to ensure the effectiveness in advocating the public to stop their habits leading to stunting risks [3].

2.3. Semiotics

Semiotic is a study about signs. There are two people which are known as the fundamental founders in Semiotics field, Saussure (1857-1913) and Pierse (1857-1914). Pierse was an expert in philosophy and logic, meanwhile, Saussure was a scientist about general linguistics [4]. Semiotic talks about how meanings are made by the people in texts and cultural practices through linguistic and non-linguistic ways. Contemporary semioticians study signs not in isolation but as part of semiotic 'sign systems (such as a medium or genre). They study how meanings are made and how reality is represented [5]. Ferdinand Saussure defined semiotic as the knowledge that studied about the sign as part of social life. He regards linguistics as a part of semiotics and takes a sign as the combination of "signifier and signified". Signifier refers to something that is in a material form (physical), explicitly exists, and can be distinguished by human senses. Besides, signified denotes something literally and physically does not exist, which is in abstract basis [6]. The model of Saussure's sign can be shown in the following:

Concerning linguistic, Roland Gerard Barthes (1915-1980) continued and developed Saussure's theory about signs. Barthes stated that semiotic is not only to analyse the



Figure 1: Saussure's Model of Sign [4].

signifier and signified but also analyse the relationship which bound both of them. Barthes' semiotic theory is as illustrated below:

Methods

This study used a qualitative approach. Data of research were taken from public service announcements published in Malaysia and Indonesia and the data were analysed by using semiotic analysis. Data derived from public facilities and television. The technique of collecting used observation and documentation. Documents consist of public and private records that qualitative researchers obtain about a site or participants in a study. Furthermore, to find out the similarities and differences of public notices in Malaysia and Indonesia, researchers also used comparison analysis. The public service announcements in Malaysia which posted on public facilities and television were compared with public service announcements in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

2.4. Semiotics of Public Service Announcements Used in Malaysia

2.4.1. Malaysian Public Facilities

Signifier (Picture)	Verbal Sign	Non-Verbal Sign	Signified (denotative)	Connotative analysis
	All travellers are required to have covid-19 PCR test results upon arrival at the Malaysian international point of entry	Color: red, blue Picture: A mask, a red cross, and a Malaysian government logo	Instruction to have COVID-19 PCR test that should be followed by tourists if they want to enter Malaysia.	The color selection resembles a firm tone of warning The logo symbolizes the validity of the information, the red cross and the mask symbolizes the pandemic situation.

Figure 2: Public service announcement in Malaysian public facility.

There were five public facilities found posted on Malaysian public facilities and then analysed using semiotics analysis. public service announcements in Malaysian public facilities are located in visible area where many people can see them clearly. Public service announcements in Malaysian public facilities are mostly use formal and neutral colours like dark blue and grey in an official style. The language used has an official tone without having a picture of people, but only use words and sentences for delivering the messages.

2.4.2. Malaysian Television

21 public service announcements were found on Malaysian television and further. Those public service announcements were further analysed using semiotics analysis. The public service announcements on Malaysian television are concise, clear, and interesting for all television viewers. The language used in public service announcements on Malaysian television is English with some Malaysian spelling.

2.5. Semiotics of Public Service Announcements Used in Indonesia

2.5.1. Indonesian Public Facilities

Signifier (Picture)	Verbal Sign	Non-Verbal Sign	Signified (denotative)	Connotative analysis
	Emergency stay permits information updates for foreign nationals. Your emergency stay permit is still valid after May 29, 2020 until further notice.	Color: Yellow and white (text), dark green (background) Picture: A foreigner An Instagram post	All foreigners' emergency stay permit is still valid after that exact date, and remain valid until further notice	The color selection resembles a cheer atmosphere The foreigner resembles a happy foreigner for having their emergency stay permit extended.

Figure 3: Public service announcement in Indonesian public facility.

27 public service announcements in Indonesia were analysed using semiotic analysis. Those public service announcements posted on public facilities are all posted by the government and providing information regarding health, taxation, immigration, etc. Based on the findings, those public service announcements on public facilities are put in the visible area and highly visible for everyone. The colour nuances used in PSAs uses calming yet official tone, for instance bright colours used by the immigration gives the relaxing suggestion for foreigners in Indonesia in the midst of pandemic. Furthermore, figures are also used to picture a safe and stable condition, for example that five happy foreigners looking happy as the immigration post good news on their

PSA. In addition, the announcements are displayed in big size with their slogans. Lastly, most of Indonesian PSAs placed on public facilities use any pictures which can best resembles the message. The colour usage for Indonesian PSA on public facilities can be seen in table 3.

2.5.2. Indonesian Television

There were 22 public service announcements found posted on Indonesian television. Both government and private parties post public service announcements on Indonesian television. Based on the semiotics analysis, those public service announcements on television are posted on television advertisings. The public service announcement on television uses a variety of colours to raise a cheerful vibe thus attracting viewers. Those public service announcements were designed and customized creatively to maintain viewer's attention.

2.6. Similarities and Differences Between Malaysian and Indonesian Public Service Announcements

2.6.1. Public Facilities

In both countries, public service announcements are displayed in strategic area so that a large number of people could see the announcement. The second is the language used, the imperatives and declaratives sentence structures are both present in public service announcements in public facilities in Indonesia and Malaysia.

The differences of public service announcements posted on public facilities in Indonesia and Malaysia lies on the background colour selection. the colour selection implies that those public service announcements posted in public facilities in Indonesia use a wider variety of colour resembling relaxed atmosphere i.e. light green, orange, and pink. On the other hand, the colour theme used in public service announcements posted in public facilities in Malaysia has more official-toned colour i.e. dark blue, grey and red.

2.6.2. Television

Public service announcements in televisions in Indonesia and Malaysia has some similar traits such as the placement in which clear and good for television audience. Both also uses a variety of colours and figures, presenting the public service announcements in a more audience-friendly atmosphere.

As for the difference of public service announcements posted on televisions on Indonesia and Malaysia is that the English language used in Indonesian public service announcements fully uses English spelling. While the public service announcements posted on Malaysian television uses English language but with Malaysian spelling on some words i.e. monsta.

3. Conclusion

The public service announcements in Malaysian public facilities are put on places where many people could see them, with a more official-themed colours (i.e. dark blue, grey). As for public service announcements in Malaysian television, a variety of colours and figures presenting the public service announcements in a more audience-friendly atmosphere. Public service announcements in Malaysian television uses English language but with Malaysian spelling on some of their words (i.e. the word monsta).

Public service announcements placed on Indonesian public facilities are all put on strategic area where many people could see them. Public service announcements in Indonesian public facilities uses a wide variety of colour in a more relaxed atmosphere (light green, orange, pink). Public service announcements in Indonesian television uses variety of colours and figures presenting the public service announcements in a more audience-friendly atmosphere with English words.

4. Authors' Contributions

Fahrur Rozi carried out the research reasoning and coordination. Lulu April Farida participated in the research sequence alignment. Tusyanah participated in the design of study. Hadziq Najmuddin Purwanto collected the Indonesian public service announcement samples, performed the semiotics analysis, and wrote the manuscript draft. Ashanti Dayani Pitaloka collected the Malaysian public service announcement samples and performed the semiotics analysis. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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