

Indonesian Language Minority in the Virtual Space of Indonesian People Majority: Virtual Linguistic Landscape of r/Indonesia Subreddit

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Article History: Submitted Date; September 23rd, 2023; Revised Date; November 21st, 2023; Accepted Date; November 23rd, 2023; Published Date; December 31st, 2023.

ABSTRACT

Through the study of Virtual Linguistic Landscape (LLV), this descriptive qualitative research aims to explore the contestation of Indonesian language in a virtual multilingual space with Indonesian people as the majority, namely the r/Indonesia subreddit community, within a social media site dominated by English speakers, Reddit. Each of the top-down contents made by the community moderators and bottom-ups made by the community members is observed. The analysis consists of the identification of the language dominance as well as the informational and symbolic functions behind the use of the languages in both types of content to further elaborate the significance of the dynamic. The research found that although members of the community are mostly Indonesians, English dominates all top-down contents. This domination functions informationally as a form of language accommodation while symbolically signifying that positive attitude is more assigned to English than Indonesian language as a status symbol. However, both English and Indonesian language dominate various different bottom-up contents. While the use of both languages also functions informationally as a form of language accommodation, the symbolic functions are more significant. That is, English as a marker of competence within the space designed for niche discussions and Indonesian language as a form of closeness and solidarity among members. Additionally, the use of English in the semi-formal bottom-up content indicates an influence of language choice by the top-down contents.

Keywords: virtual linguistic landscape, Indonesian language, multilingualism, reddit.

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INTRODUCTION

Studies of Linguistic Landscape (LL) is an umbrella term for studies that analyze and characterize the use of language in signs within public spaces and its role in defining the socio-political and sociolinguistic character of a particular territorial area (Shohamy & Rafael, 2015). In the view of critical theory, the existence of languages in a multilingual society is no longer seen simply alongside one another, but a social practice based on ideologies that can result in social change (Horkheimer in Held, 2013). In this view, languages in multilingual societies are contesting to occupy the dominant position. Language contestation itself is the ideological perspectives of different languages and discourses being juxtaposed to produce various kinds of results/consequences (Mathiowetz, 2011). In countries of former Western colonies for instance, the use of English often possesses a higher value and dominates national and regional languages, thereby threatening the vitality of these languages (Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2018; Bromham et. al., 2020). Whereas, language vitality plays an important role as the identity of the language community affecting their overall welfare (Spolsky, 2021) because language is a manifestation of a community's way of life (Newmark, in Fatmawati & Setiawan, 2019)

As time progressed, public space has also developed to a virtual form of the interconnected network (internet) where information mobility has become wider, faster and more flexible (Stefan, et al., 2018). At the same time, LL studies have also developed with the emergence of Virtual Linguistic Landscape (LLV) studies inholding the same research objectives and functions as LL, but in a virtual space that provides more free and flexible access and expression in non-physical spaces (Ivković & Lotherington, 2009; Patil, 2021). Because of the nature of this space, virtual contents reflects social and political situations that are more up to date than physical space.

The type of virtual space with the most frequent visitors these days is the social networking sites (Similarweb, 3 August 2023). Of the various social networking sites, those designated as discussion forums and community development provide opportunities for greater language contact and convergence since the environment invites users to communicate and interact with each other more intensively. One of these types of social network is a site from the United States called Reddit. Uniquely, as a discussion space, users denoted by 'u/(username)' can not only upload contents and interact with contents, but can also form and organize one or more community spaces called subreddits (previously just reddit) symbolized by 'r/(community name)' by becoming a moderator (MOD) of the community. Its characteristic as a discussion forum makes it a form of virtual space that provides extensive and heterogeneous data.

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Even though the access is open to the public, Reddit is more popular in the United States, ranking the 10th highest internet users in the country (higher than other social networking sites such as Tik-Tok at 30th) and 15th globally (Similarweb, 3 August 2023). In addition, before June 23 2021, Reddit only provided English as the language of instruction on its site before now having French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish versions. Meanwhile, the environment as discussion forums for various global communities, added by the feature to enter the world's most popular homepage on the 'r/all' page (unlike communities, this page is available on every user's homepage) makes convergence inevitable. With the dominance of these languages, especially English, the languages of users and communities outside America and Europe are contesting as minority languages.

Meanwhile, Reddit does not even make the top 50 most popular sites in Indonesia (Similarweb, 3 August 2023). However, various subreddits from Indonesia can still be found on this site. Among them, the r/Indonesia community is the largest subreddit with the most members with more than 244,000 users (Reddit, 3 August 2023). r/Indonesia is a community space to discuss matters relating to Indonesia and the daily lives of its Indonesian members. Even though the username is the name of the country, this subreddit was voluntarily formed and managed by Indonesian Reddit users without any government interference. Therefore, r/Indonesia provides a unique phenomenon of multilingualism when Indonesian language as a minority language within the space of English as the majority language competes in a space with Indonesian people as the majority members freely and flexibly without government regulations.

Since 2009, numerous research of LLV has been carried out. One of the most recent is done by Bártfai (2017) who studied an almost extinct minority language in Russia, Udmurt, on the popular Russian social media, Vkontakte. The study found that despite its status as almost extinct in physical space, the Udmurt language is still surviving in virtual space with the existence of various community spaces (pages) exclusively dominated by Udmurt language. This finding shows that despite the dominance of Russian language in the Vkontakte site, Udmurt people still make use of the virtual space to put importance to their language identity. On the other hand, Biró (2018) revealed that virtual spaces encourage the need for monolingualism for effective communication caused by convergence, which in turns, disfavoring language diversity. Both studies show the opportunities and risks of language use in virtual spaces so that the significance of perceptive research into the language needs of a community in virtual space should not be overlooked. As stated by Spolsky (2021), the decision to maintain or revive a community's language vitality is on the people themselves considering how its use affects their wellbeing. With that in mind, language convergence and the dominant use of languages of the majority people as well as the respective functions

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should be observed objectively, not merely seen negatively.

Reflecting these findings, English as the dominant international language often shifts the use of national and regional languages in Indonesia's own physical space (Muslim, 2016; Aldama, 2019). Therefore, research that examines the contestation of Indonesian language, the language of a former Western colony, in a community of Indonesian people majority but also as a minority language in a virtual space dominated by English as the international *lingua franca* can provide insights on what functions of these languages the virtual people make use of to determine its importance to the very people using either, take advantage of its use and navigate how to strengthen the language status as it sees fit. Bearing in mind, virtual spaces have now been an important part of the everyday life of today's civilization so that its effects in shaping the society's outlook of the world and way of life cannot be denied. Hence, LLV studies, which not only study patterns of language use but also its attentive functions in virtual spaces, can provide a wider understanding of the usage needs of each language. Based on this background, the research is carried out to answer two questions, which are (1) how is the dynamic of language dominance in the r/Indonesia subreddit community and (2) the informational and symbolic functions of the language choice and its dominance through the study of the Virtual Linguistic Landscape (LLV). By answering these questions, the research aims to discover the pattern of language dominance and its functionality within the r/Indonesia considering the context of Indonesian language as the mother tongue of the majority of its members as well as a minority language on the Reddit space with English as the majority language.

METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods to analyze the data. According to Miles, et. al. (2019), qualitative research focuses on specific phenomena that is always evolving and fundamentally interpretative. Thus, qualitative analysis is well-suited to gain contextual, adaptable and deeper understanding on the language dominance and the functions of the languages used on r/Indonesia subreddit.

Language dominance in LL is determined based on its visibility in the public space through semiotic studies (Shohamy, 2015). Several points determining the visibility of language on signs are position, size, color and text material (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021). The dominant language is the language at the top, right/left (depending on the direction of the language writing system), middle, is larger, brighter in color, and has sturdier materials (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021). Generally, these characteristics emphasize the importance of the text being seen for the first time and receiving more attention from the target reader/recipient of information.

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Next, to identify the functions of languages used, Landry & Bourhis (in Gorter, 2013) in their popular study of the urban linguistic landscape stated that there are two functionality types of language use in LL, namely informational function and symbolic function. Languages in LL function informatically as a differentiator/identifier of a geographical territory inhabited by a particular language community. Therefore, a language that is not typically used in a community but is used or even dominates the community's LL may indicate a function other than simply differentiating/identifying. This situation underlies the symbolic function of language use in LL signifying the value and status of a language community relative to other languages in a particular sociolinguistic situation. The visibility of a language seen through both functions indicate the objective and subjective concept of the ethnolinguistic vitality of language communities in a territorial area (Heinzmann, 2014), including the role of authorities in language use within the area (Pütz & Mundt, 2019).

Moreover, the data collected is in the form of screenshots containing signs based on the direction of distribution. As stated by Ben-Rafael et al. (in Gorter, 2013), there are two types of signage based on the distribution directions according to the power structure of the society, which are top-down signage created by the above power structure for the structure below it and bottom-up signage created by the power structure from below for the structures alike or above it. Top-down signage is characterized by its centralization of authority, controlling, downward flow of information, formality and exclusivity. Meanwhile, bottom-up discourse is characterized by its decentralization, flexible information flow, informality and inclusivity. Top-down signage in r/Indonesia subreddit are contents made by community moderators, while the bottom-up contents are made by community members. The differentiation of the two types provided by Reddit is important in understanding how the context of power-dynamic effects language use.

Top-down contents created by moderators consist of the community's main page header, general information, menus, and posts created by the community moderators. Meanwhile, bottom-up contents created by the members consist of discussions along with the comments in the latest week between September 1st, 2023 to September 7th, 2023 as well as relevant popular posts of all time in the last three years to provide more insights of the context of languages used. In addition, this research does not take data from texts that have been decontextualized, which are texts that already have a preferred meaning that are not bound by contexts so that they do not portray any preferences of using certain languages (Scollon in Cocq, et al., 2020). The examples are trademarks, people's names, region names, etc.

The data was taken from the r/Indonesia community on the web version of the Reddit site at www.reddit.com/r/Indonesia/ on September 7th 2022. The default language on the Reddit site used for surfing is English.

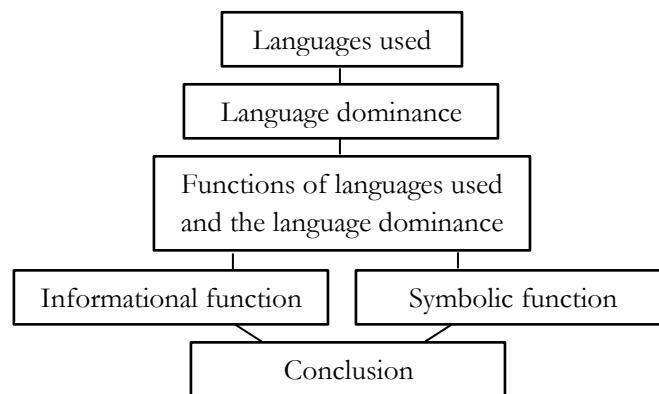
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The research only focuses on displays that can be modified by users. Meanwhile, displays that cannot be modified by the users, especially displays that contain default language options, are used to help understand the context of the discourse.

There are several stages in analyzing the data. The first stage is to identify the languages used and the language that dominates the two types of signs based on the theory presented by Kress & van Leeuwen (2021). This stage is followed by identifying the functions of language use and their dominance according to the theory proposed by Landry & Bourhis (in Gorter, 2013) adapted to the characteristics of top-down and bottom-up content as well as the context of language use on the r/Indonesia subreddit and the Reddit site and its communities in general. The final stage is to draw conclusions. Presented below is the diagram of stages in analyzing the data.

Graphic 1:
Stages of data analysis process



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Language Dominance in Top-down Contents

Picture 1 below is a screenshot of the main page header of r/Indonesia subreddit. The content created by the community moderators are the banner (longitudinal image at the very top), community profile photo, subreddit name, as well as names of members and members who are online.

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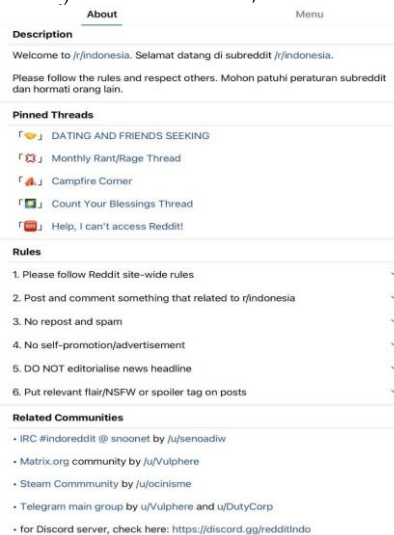
Picture 1:
Main page header of r/Indonesia



As observed, the word Indonesia is included on the left side of the banner and is used as the name of the r/Indonesia community. However, because the word Indonesian which refers to the name of the country is a decontextualized text, this word does not indicate a particular choice of language use. Meanwhile, English is used in naming the members, namely *Komodo dragons*, and the community members who are online, namely *are on the hunt*. However, beside the *Komodo dragons*, Indonesian Identity is also depicted visually on the banner containing traditional and popular culture among Indonesian youth in the form of traditional dances, house and costumes, as well as Didi Kempot (an influential picture in campursari music), Indomie and many others. In addition, the community profile photo also features the Garuda, the symbol of Indonesian ideology.

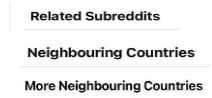
Next, picture 2 below is a screenshot of information about the community. In this page, the words *About*, *Menu*, *Description*, and *Rules* are the default content types from Reddit that cannot be modified by users/moderators. Additionally, the analysis also excluded the mentioned names of websites considered as decontextualized texts. They are IRC (*Internet Relay Chat*), *Matrix.org*, *Steam*, *Telegram*, and *Discord*.

Picture 2:
Information about r/Indonesia



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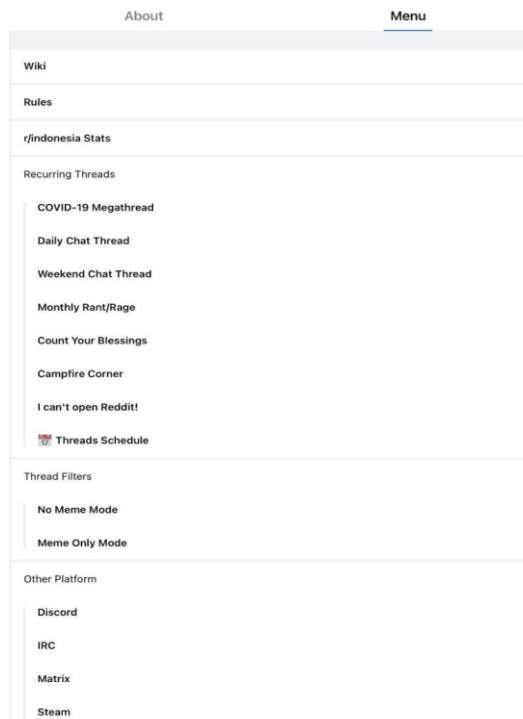


Source: <https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/BWDtzoPgiB>

Almost all of the texts in the page above are written in English, except the description part that uses both English and Indonesian language. It is written “Welcome to r/Indonesia. Selamat datang di subreddit r/Indonesia. Please follow the rules and respect others. Mohon patuhi peraturan subreddit dan hormati orang lain.”. In this part, Indonesian language is used as a form of translation from the preceding English sentences. Hence, this positioning as well as the use of English monolingually in other parts of this page portray English as the language with a higher hierarchy than Indonesian language.

Moreover, the image 3 below displays the menu related to r/Indonesia subreddit provided by the moderators. Each item can be clicked to take users to the desired pages. Similar to picture 2, there are also decontextualized texts in the form of website names in this page. They are *Wiki* (shorter term for Wikipedia), *Discord*, *IRC* (*Internet Relay Chat*), *Matrix*, and *Steam*. However, unlike the community information page which still shows the use of Indonesian language, English is used monolingually in this page.

Picture 3:
The menu provided in r/Indonesia



Source: <https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/Y2XAVxWFNq>

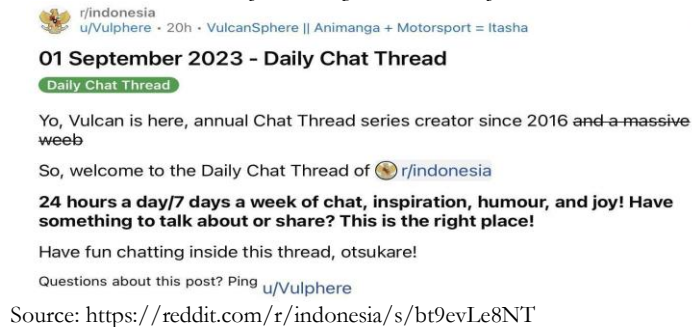
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Furthermore, image 4 below is a post uploaded by one of the community moderators, u/Vulphere. This upload is in the form of the head of a chat thread that is created and updated every year as a designated space for members to have daily conversations. Underneath, members can post comments and replies to other members.

Picture 4:

The head of the daily chat thread for members



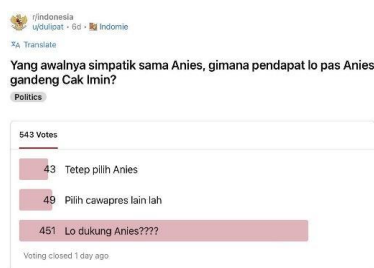
Almost all of the texts in this post are written in English, except the Japanese word *otsukare* (a form of greeting to colleagues). Also, different from texts in the pictures 1, 2 and 3 which are written in formal language, this post is written in informal language. Thus, this post shows that the dominance of English is not only normalized by the community moderators as a formal language, but also in the informal everyday language of the r/Indonesia community.

Language Dominance in Bottom-up Contents

Pictures 5, 6, 7, and 8 below present a range of the most popular posts made by the community members. Picture 5 represents the posts written in Indonesian language, picture 6 represents the posts written in English, and picture 7 and picture 8 represent posts written in English and Indonesian language with contrasting language dominance.

Picture 5:

The post written in Indonesian language



Source:
<https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/cTYh8BgBYk>

Picture 6:

The post written in English



Source:
<https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/RA77IFHsI0>

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Picture 7:
Bilingual post dominated by Indonesian language



Source:
<https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/YQYDCKXcNE>

Picture 8:
Bilingual post dominated by English



Source:
<https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/8BVLSXdW0v>

The four pictures above display various findings of the languages used and the language dominance in bottom-up contents. In picture 7, Indonesian language is used in almost all of the written texts, while English is only used in the word *enjoyable* as well as the phrases *Chad K13* and *wojak Merdeka*. *Chad* and *wojak* are both English slangs. *Chad* refers to the typical 'alpha' male who is attractive, muscular and cocky, while *wojak* refers to the typical 'beta' male who is physically and mentally weaker (Urban Dictionary, 2023).

In Picture 8, both English and Indonesian language are used at the phrase and sentence level. At the phrase level, a form of code-mixing can be observed in the phrase *Chad Kuli Jawa*. At the level of sentences, the use of Indonesian language can be seen in the sentence “*Ngurug? Ngecor? Ngebata? Ngeramik? Naikin genteng? Bikin ledeng? Pasang listrik? Bisa diatur.*”, while the English language can be seen in the sentence “*Noo That’s Not My Scope Of Work!*”. However, as observed, while English can be found monolingually in sentences or phrases, the use of Indonesian language is always accompanied by English, including *Kuli Jawa: Jack of All Trades* and *Chad Kuli Jawa*. Meanwhile, the use of English can be found in the *r/plumbing* subreddit upload, the phrase *Average Western Tradies*, as well as the monolingual sentences and mixed phrases that have been mentioned. Such a dynamic of both languages makes English the more dominant language within the post.

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Beside user posts, a variety of language use can also be seen in the user comments. Pictures 9 and 10 feature comments that respectively use Indonesian language and English monolingually. Meanwhile, pictures 11 and 12 are comments with different variations of language dominance.

Picture 9:

The comment written in Indonesian language



bossterakhir · 11h

Mau k13 atau kurikulum merdeka kalau gurunya enggak bisa nerapin percuma sih. Daripada gonta-ganti kurikulum lebih baik tingkatkan kualitas guru sih menurut gw.

Source: <https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/TQr0I71MfI>

Picture 10:

The comment written in English



FantasyBorderline · 18h

I saw a Youtube comment saying that Western tradesmen and workers are too specialized. They know everything about their job... but barely anything about any other field.

Source: <https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/8tJrTTGsmN>

Picture 11:

The comment dominated by Indonesian language



External_Neat_5352 · 13h

Yg pasang listrik agak doubt sih.....

Krn mereka beneran modal nekat doang..... biasanya groundingnya jelek bahkan tidak ada

Rumah nyokap gue kek gitu dan akhirnya harus telpon PLN.

Source: <https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/jIMGNYMXiS>

Picture 12:

The comment dominated by English



Efficient_Chair_2238 · 20h

Kinda like Polentruppen here in Germany. Bought a house last year and I am currently doing renovations. Kuli Jerman mahal dan scope kerjanya sempit, really had to grind my gears just to make a hole in the wall and extend cables. Then got to know some kuli Poland. They are not only the jack of all trades, but also friggin cheap.

Source: <https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/GkDDpquTfS>

In Picture 11, there are code-mixes of English into Indonesian language with the use of the word *doubt* within the sentence of Indonesian language structure “*Yg pasang listrik agak **doubt** sih.....*” (the electrician is a bit doubttable) and the word *groundingnya* (grounding (head of word of English) + *nya* (suffix of Indonesian language)) within the sentence “*Krn mereka beneran modal nekat doang..... biasanya **groundingnya** jelek.*” (because they rely solely on being daring, the grounding is usually bad). On the other hand, in Picture 12, there is a mix of Indonesian and German into English

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which can be seen from the use of the German word *Polentruppen* (people of Poland) within the sentence “*Kinda like Polentruppen here in Germany*”, the Indonesian language word *kuli* (laborer) within the sentence “*Then got to know some kuli Poland.*” and the use of the Indonesian sentence “*Jerman mahal dan scope kerjanya sempit*” (German laborer are expensive and the working scope is narrow) among the overall English structured comment.

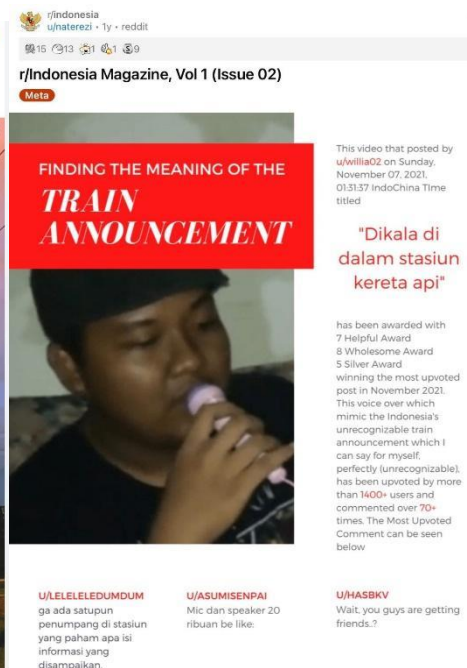
Furthermore, although the dominance of English and Indonesian language is found respectively in various posts and comments made by the community members, there is a tendency to use English as a more dominant semi-formal language. This can be seen through its use in the r/Indonesia subreddit annual magazine post uploaded by u/naterezi. This magazine, which was uploaded one year ago (the date of upload is not specified) and is one of the most popular posts of all time, reviews the most popular posts of the r/Indonesia subreddit during 2021. Picture 13 and picture 14 below presents the cover and a snippet of the magazine content which uses English as the editorial language.

Picture 13:
r/Indonesia magazine cover post



Source:
<https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/ovcjNd0ZFZ>

Picture 14:
Snippet of r/Indonesia magazine



Source:
<https://reddit.com/r/indonesia/s/sYhp0AooP4>

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As seen in picture 13, the magazine cover only uses English, from the title “*r/Indonesia Indonesia Subreddit Exclusive Yearly Magazine*” to the topics discussed in the magazine along with the captions as follows.

*“Find Out The Top Post During 2021 Easily find what user on r/ Indonesia like”
“Who's U/Vixion And What S/He's Done Find out the user you don't care post something that you guess what? Don't care”
“This Magazine Was Made By U/Naterezi The only person (I think) to waste enough time to make this free magazine that you can enjoy (hopefully)”.* (Naterezi, 2021)

Moreover, as sampled in picture 14, the magazine discusses one of the popular posts in 2021. The post is in the form of a video entitled “*When at the train station*”. Even though the post and its title are in Indonesian language, the language used by the editor to present and explain the post is written in English as follows:

“This video that posted by u/willia02 on Sunday, November 07, 2021, 01:31:37 IndoChina Time titled “Dikala di dalam stasiun kereta api” has been awarded with 7 Helpful Award 8 Wholesome Award 5 Silver Award winning the most upvoted post in November 2021. This voice over which mimic the Indonesia's unrecognizable train announcement which I can say for myself, perfectly (unrecognizable), has been upvoted by more than 1400+ users and commented over 70+ times. The Most Upvoted Comment can be seen below.” (Naterezi, 2021)

As seen from the spontaneous commentary “*which I can say for myself, perfectly (unrecognizable)*” contrasting from the formality of the rest of the text, this paragraph is written in semi-formal language style. Therefore, given the nature of the top-down discourses which exercises control over the power structure below and thus creates communication standards, the finding of bottom-up content in the form of this semi-formal magazine post written in English indicates an influence from the top-down contents which is written in formal language and is also dominated by English.

Functions of the Languages Used

Informational Function

In top-down content, the dominance of English functions as a lingua franca to accommodate Reddit site users who are dominated by the Western society in general. This function satisfies the ideal of the subreddit as a source of information about what is happening within Indonesia's virtual community to the outside world, considering that access to and from the subreddit is open to the public. Apart from that, the overall Reddit's environment having the majority of users and contents written in English also gives rise to the

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feasibility that there is an expectation that members of the r/Indonesia subreddit who are Indonesians can at least master English in written form so that the use of English by moderators can bridge communication between users inside and outside Indonesia.

On the other hand, the only presence of Indonesian language in top-down content in the form of translation from the English preceded it accommodates Indonesian-speaking users who do not speak English. This is made possible by the form of the site that Reddit is not only available in the form of an application, where only users who have an account can view the content, but also on a website that can be accessed by the general public through search engines such as Google. Reddit as a discussion forum containing various niche information and reviews from its users enable this site to often appear in search results so that the Indonesian translation in the description section accommodates those who speak Indonesian language and do not speak English when visiting the r/Indonesia subreddit. In addition, the use of the Indonesian language supported by the typical references of Indonesia, such as Komodo Dragon, and Indonesian-themed visual representations as displayed on banners and Garuda profile photos, also function informationally signifying the authenticity of the Indonesian community.

Likewise, the monolingual use of Indonesian and English in various bottom-up contents denotes the informational function in line with its use in top-down contents, which is to accommodate Indonesian or English language users respectively. On the other hand, in contrast to the use of Indonesian language in top-down content as a form of translation from English, Indonesian language in bottom-up content is used either monolingually in individual post/comment or bilingually and mixed with English. The use of a few internet registers, such as the words *chad* and *wojak* in bottom-up contents, supports claims underlining the influence of a globalized media to vocabularies of internet users that is currently centered in the English-speaking Western world (Maulidiyah et. al., 2023; Ining, 2021). However, the other code-mixing cases have equivalent words commonly used in Indonesian language so that they do not indicate a function of language accommodation. Thus, the dominance of the two languages in virtual space with the majority of Indonesian society that is also part of a larger virtual space with a majority of English-speaking community more seemingly indicating symbolic function.

Symbolic Function

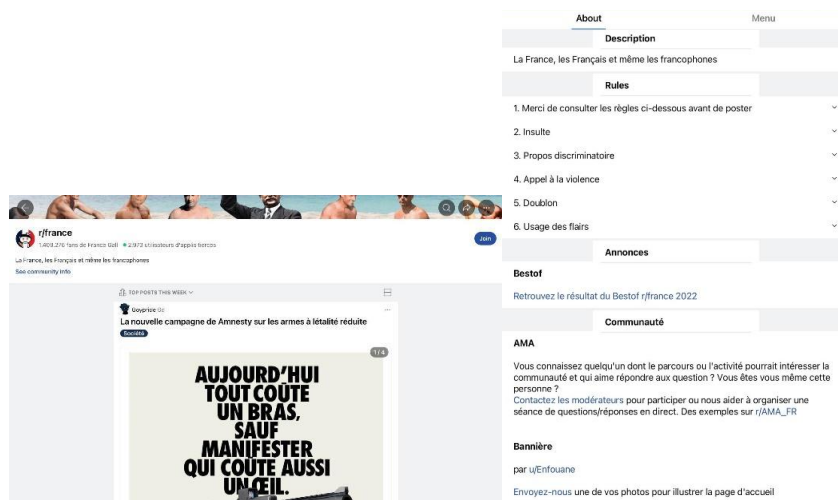
In top-down content, the community symbolically identifies itself as part of a virtual international space dominated by the western world through the dominant use of English. However, there are various communities of other countries that choose to use their national language dominantly, even monolingually, so that the dominance of English while making Indonesian

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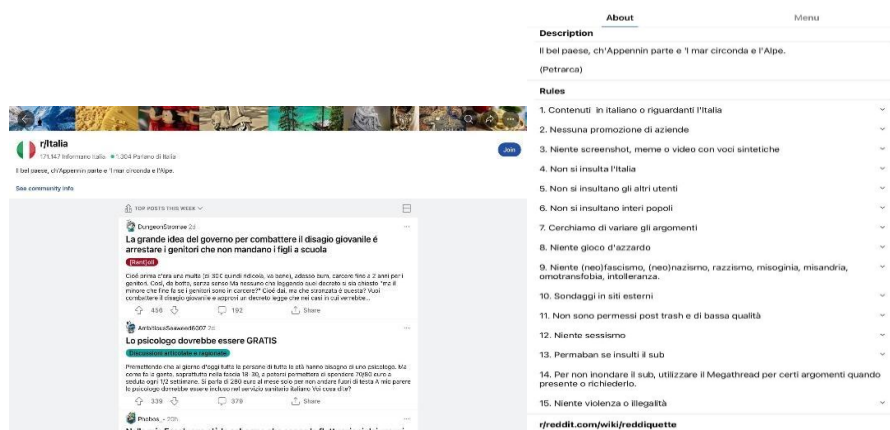
language the inferior one reveals a more positive attitude from community moderators towards English than Indonesian language. For context, some examples of subreddits of countries where the national language is monolingually dominant are France (r/france) and Italy (r/Italia). Picture 10 and picture 11 below respectively show the front page and information about the community of the top-down content of the r/France and r/Italia subreddits.

Picture 15:
The front page and information about r/France



Source: <https://reddit.com/r/france>

Picture 16:
The front page and information about r/Italia



Source: <https://reddit.com/r/italia>

French, which was historically used in royal culture that developed with colonialism, and Italian, which was used during the Renaissance, make both of them languages of a high prestige internationally (Kahane in Sairio & **How to Cite (in APA 7th Edition):**

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Pallander-Collin, 2012). These two languages are often used in naming various products throughout the world, such as clothing, jewelry, property and many others to provide a prestigious value. However, neither of them is an international *lingua franca* like English as the language with the most speakers in the world. Therefore, its monolingual use within the respective subreddit community spaces does not accommodate the international Reddit users. This is considering the fact that tourism and international business is prominent in both countries, which makes contacts with the international community to be more frequent. Therefore, the use of both languages monolingually indicates the symbolic function of the prestige value of the language which gives the impression of a higher social status for its members.

This situation is different compared to Indonesian language which has a lower position internationally due to it being the language of a former western colonized country. On that account, the inferiority of Indonesian language to English in the top-down content indicates the symbolic function of using the higher prestige of English to give the impression of a higher social status of the community members. This is made possible by the state of Reddit as a site with the majority of English-speaking Americans and international people in general so being a part of this space provides a higher prestige value for users of the native language speakers with lower prestige. However, the presence of the Indonesian language along with signs of Indonesian characteristics, such as the naming of members as Komodo, Indonesian-themed visual depictions on the banner, and Garuda profile photo still shows a positive attitude towards the use of Indonesian language and the country Indonesia it represents.

Moreover, the presence of languages of minority communities in public spaces also symbolically function as an expression of community identity and solidarity (Cioce, et. al., 2022). However, in this context, even though the majority of users on Reddit are English speakers, the majority of r/Indonesia subreddit users are Indonesian people who speak Indonesian language. Hence, because the predicate of a minority language in this context is not determined by the number of language users, but in practice (Shohamy & Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012), the inferiority of Indonesian language within the r/Indonesia subreddit makes it a minority language within its own community. This dominant use of non-native language within the native community itself emphasizes the function of 'synthetic personalization', that is an art of conversational control tactics (in this case the use of language) as an instrument of social control (Fairclough, in Hiltunen & Loureiro-Porto, 2020).

In bottom-up content, the respective dominance of English and Indonesian language in various different posts and comments also denotes a positive attitude towards the use of both languages. In line with the top-down content, the dominance of English also symbolically functions as a form

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prestige to the user's social status. In addition, English as one of the compulsory subjects in the national education system also gives the impression of a good competence to the users. The feasibility of this function is motivated by the design of Reddit as a social media site focused on being a discussion forum so that user credibility is a valued matter. Furthermore, in line with the use of Indonesian language in top-down content, the dominance of Indonesian in bottom-up content also bears a symbolic function to build solidarity/closeness between users.

CONCLUSION

The research concluded that even though the majority of r/Indonesia subreddit members are Indonesians, Indonesian language is not given adequate power in competing with English through the significant dominance of English by the community moderator in top-down contents. This in turn appeared to be manifested in bottom-content by the use of English in semi-formal content presented in the community magazine. While informatically English dominance functions as lingua franca as the language of the majority of Reddit users, it also signifies a more positive attitude toward English and functions as a social status symbol more than merely accommodating considering its non-existence in subreddits of countries with prestigious languages. However, both English and Indonesian language dominate various bottom-up contents which not only functions as language accommodations to both parties of either languages, it also shows a positive attitude with its respective symbolic functions according to the space's environment. They are to give the impression of prestige and good competence with English and to build solidarity/closeness between users with Indonesian language. Moreover, future research or language regulations of varying objectives in the same or similar spaces may consider the findings of the top-down and bottom-up dynamic of language dominance and the functions in this study. This research is especially expected to be applicable to spaces of local governments to advocate for the visibility of local languages while also accommodating those non-native speakers with lingua franca, Indonesian language or English, by considering the respective functions for the multilingual communities presented.

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