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Journal of Education, Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching

ANTHROPOLOGICAL LINGUISTICS STUDY ON COMMERCIAL NAMES OF DRUGSTORES IN SURABAYA

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Abstract

Names are a part of culture. They always appear in the interaction among people, a language community, and their environment. As a consequence, naming activity could be considered as a specific linguistic activity that could be intimately linked with values and traditions. The activity of naming was not found in personal and place names only, but was also found in the context of business or commercial activity. One of the phenomena of commercial naming could be found in the drugstore names. This study aimed to investigate the names of drugstore in Surabaya. The theories that were applied in conducting this study were related to anthropological linguistics, onomastics, and company names. The data in this study were the names of drugstores in Surabaya, East Java. The samples were 21 drugstores that were taken in Surabaya. There were five classifications of drugstore naming found, which were associated with personal names, good wishes, pharmaceutical terms, abstract names, and location. By naming the drugstores with certain categories, it definitely had a further commercial purpose. By establishing such trademarks, the naming of the drugstore could be easily remembered by the consumers.

Keywords: *Anthropological Linguistics, Drugstores, Naming, Onomastics*

INTRODUCTION

Names can occur in any kinds of life aspects in which they are formed by specific vocabulary of certain languages. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, there are some definitions of the word 'name', such as (1) a word or phrase that constitutes the distinctive designation of a person or thing and (2) a word or symbol used in logic to designate an entity. Ainiala, Saarelma, and Sjoblom (2016) also classify names as a part of culture because they always come about in the interaction among people and a language community as well as their environment (Ainiala, Saarelma, & Sjoblom, 2016). Moreover, according to Rosen house (2002), naming can be considered as a specific linguistic activity that is intimately linked with values, traditions, hopes, fears, and events in people's life. Furthermore, the implementation of names expresses various preferences of the name givers (or owners) in terms of real-life objects, actions, features, and beliefs (Al-Zumor, 2009).

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The activity of naming is not only found in personal and place names, but is also found in the context of business or commercial activities. One of the phenomena of naming in the context of commercial activities can happen in the naming of drugstore. Particularly in Surabaya, the names of drugstore vary in many kinds of language choice. For instance, they are named based on personal name (e.g., *Apotek Steven*), containing good wishes (e.g., *Apotek Seger Waras*), the combination with pharmaceutical terms (e.g. *Kimia Farma*), associated with particular location (e.g. *Apotik Semarang*), or even based on abstract names (e.g. *CnC Apotik*).

In consequence, this study aims to investigate the names of pharmacies or drugstores in Surabaya. By exploring these names and their references, the idea of what those words mean can be obtained and moreover the meaning of those names can be understood. The theories that are applied in conducting this study are anthropological linguistics, onomastics, and company names.

According to Foley (2012), anthropological linguistics is the subfield of linguistics (and anthropology) that focuses on the position of language in its wider social and cultural contexts, including its role in marching on and sustaining cultural practices and social structures. Even though it is close to sociolinguistics, however, they are different. Anthropological linguistics sees language through the perspective of anthropology and culture, in which it aims to uncover the meaning behind the use of languages in its different forms, register, and styles. On the other hand, sociolinguistics sees language as a social institution and tries to find out the patterns of linguistic behavior in certain social group and correlate the linguistic behavior using some variables such as age, sex, class, race, and so on (Foley, 2012).

Crystal (1999) explains that onomastics is a branch of semantics that explores the etymology of proper names. In the scope of onomastics, there are two research branches, which are anthroponomastics and toponomastics. The difference between anthroponomastics with toponomastics is that anthroponomastics studies the personal names while toponomastics studies the names of places. Moreover, in anthroponomastics, the theory is based on the strong interface between a language and cultural practices. By means, it reflects how language is used as cultural practices and how language is used as a powerful tool to discover and understand the world-view of a particular community (Al-Zumor, 2009).

Commercial names commonly refer to the names of various business and products. In the use of daily language, different commercial names often overlap so that real meanings are not always clear. In the scope of onomastics, particularly in German onomastics, commercial names (Ger. *Wirtschaftsname*) are sometimes also known as ergonyms. The concept of ergonyms itself is actually not bound to commercial business and products names only, but it also covers all non-commercial institutions, for example, schools, cultural places, churches, and organizations (Ainiala, Saarelma, & Sjoblom, 2016) .

Commercial names also consist of company names. A company name is defined as an expression that consistently refers to a certain business. By using this name, a company is identified and its activities can be differentiated from other companies. Sometimes, the reference of a company name is abstract but the name can be functioned for concrete commercial property, a commercial building, or business area.

Previous researches in the scope of onomastics study, especially in Indonesian-cultural context, have been conducted. One of the studies, written by Permataswari (2020) with the title “*Meeting Rooms Naming in East Java Governmental Building: A Study of Anthropological Linguistics*” explored the phenomenon of naming in a public place and the implied meaning behind it. In her study, she explained that the room naming at East Java governmental building

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used the names of prior governors and kings or military chief of great kingdoms in East Java. The researcher also discovered that by using the names of notable figures in East Java, the officials attempted to appreciate their ascendants and heritages while also inherit the cultural and historical values to the next generations.

Not only there was research that studied the naming in a particular place in Indonesia, but there were also studies that specifically explored the naming phenomena in the business and commercial sectors. One of the studies was written by Aribowo (2017) entitled “*Linking Arabic, Islam, and Economy: Onomastics on Business Name of People of Arab Descent*”. This study investigated how Arabic words were used along with the strategy from the merchants, who were also Arab descendants, in order to build the image of their shops. From the investigation, the writer found out that the business names in the area were mostly dominated by single Arabic words. Hence, the writer concluded that by applying this kind of naming strategy, the Arab merchants wanted to establish a positive impression from the customers because the names were associated with halal products and also to show the identity from the Arab-merchant community.

Another study was written by Wiyana (2021) entitled “*Onomastics and Branding for Culinary Tourism: Evidence Soto Traditional Culinary*” which purposed to discover how the naming pattern of Soto could influence consumers’ perception of the business and how it could affect the sales of the Soto itself. Based on this research, it could be seen that to increase the sales, *Soto*’s branding was identically associated with the names of the cook or the people who made the *Soto*. Beside the naming strategy, other aspects that built up the branding also came from the consistency of the quality and the presentation style of the Soto.

Interesting study of naming in the business sector was also conducted by Cholsy (2022) with the title “*Foreign Versus Indonesian and Local Languages Identity of Business Entity’s Name in Sosrowijayan Tourism Village Yogyakarta*”. This study discussed the comparison between foreign language to Indonesian and regional languages in business’ name, specifically in a tourism village. The writer then also concluded that there was a language negotiation within the business naming process in order to highlight the identity of the community in order to attract consumers.

Similar to those previous studies mentioned above, this research is also interested in exploring the commercial names. However, different with the previous studies, this research uses drugstore names as the object of interest in order to find out more various findings in the scope of onomastics or the study of names.

METHODS

In particular, this study applied the method of case study. Creswell (2003) explained that case study employs the researcher to explore a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals in depth. In addition, the process of data collection for a case study is extensive and can be drawn from various sources like direct or participant observations, interviews, archival records or documents, physical artifacts, and audiovisual materials. Later, the report should include patterns or lesson learned that can be connected with theories (Williams, 2007).

The data population in this study consisted of the names of drugstores in Surabaya, East Java. The samples of the population were 21 drugstores that were chosen mainly located in West and Central Surabaya. The data that had been collected were later classified based on specific categories. This step was taken so that the process of data analysis would be easier.

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Journal of Education, Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching

Furthermore, the process of interview was also performed to one of the drugstore owners in order to find out the background of the drugstore naming. In the process of data analysis, the theory discussing about company names was applied. After the analysis process finished, the conclusion of the study was drawn.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

This section consists of the classification of the drugstores' names found in Surabaya. Furthermore, the implied meanings of each naming classification are also explained correlated with the business strategy of the drugstores.

Drugstore Naming Associated with Personal Names

In this study, there were nine drugstores that were named based on the personal or owners' names, which were *Apotek Steven*, *Apotek Khen*, *Apotek Fajar*, *Apotek Kartika*, *Apotek Prayogo*, *Apotek Tiara 2*, *Apotek Fillina*, *Apotek Aditara 2*, and *Apotek Novem*. It can be interpreted that the activity of naming of the drugstore based on the personal or owners' names represents a power that is wanted to be featured through the drugstore names. Furthermore, by using the owners' names in the process of naming, the owner wants to establish a trademark. According to Ainiala, Saarelma, and Sjoblom (2016), a trademark is a registered sign with reference to a certain product group of a specific manufacturer. A crucial function of a trademark is to signify the origin of certain product or service (Ainiala, Saarelma, & Sjoblom, 2016).

The purpose of trademark establishment from the naming process activity is also supported by the statement of Mr. Aditya, who is the owner of *Apotek Aditara 2*. He said that *“Untuk nama apotek saya sendiri, yaitu Apotek Aditara. Alasan mengapa saya memberi nama seperti ini ya mungkin sekedar inspirasi gabungan dari nama saya sama adik saya. Nama saya Aditya dan nama adik saya Taradiva, jadi ya mungkin digabungin aja (biar lebih gampang) jadi Aditara gitu”* (interviewed via WhatsApp). According to the statement of Mr. Aditya, the decision to name his drugstore based on his and his sister personal names is because it is easier to be remembered by the consumers. Besides, he wants to create a trademark for his drugstore in which good services and products provided by his drugstore will always be attached to the name of *Apotek Aditara 2*.



Figures 1. Examples of Drugstore Naming Associated with Personal Names

Drugstore Naming Associated with Good Wishes

According to the result of analysis, drugstore naming based on good wishes became the second most found strategy. The names of drugstores that could be associated with good wishes were four drugstores, which were *Apotek Raja Waras*, *Apotek Menggala*, *Apotek Damai*, and *Apotek Pahala Pacuan*. The first drugstore name, which was *Apotek Raja Waras*, was derived from Bahasa Indonesia. According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI), the word 'Waras' is defined as 'sembuh jasmani dan sembuh rohani'. The second name was *Apotek Menggala*. The word 'Menggala' in *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI) is defined as 'memberi alamat baik; mendatangkan bahagia; berbahagia'. Next, the word 'damai' from the name *Apotek Damai* refers to 'tenteram; tenang' according to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI). The fourth drugstore with name based on good wishes is *Apotek Pahala Pacuan*. The word 'Pahala' in *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI) means 'ganjaran Tuhan atas perbuatan baik manusia; buah perbuatan baik'.

The activity of naming of the drugstore using names containing good wishes can be interpreted to reflect the wishes and prayer that want to be achieved by the owner of the drugstore. In addition, the meaning implied in the names is related with health and fitness. By the use of this name, it gives a suggestion that the products or service in those drugstores will give good effects for the consumers.



Figures 2. Examples of Drugstore Naming Associated with Good Wishes

Drugstore Naming Associated with Pharmaceutical Terms

In this study, the names of drugstore found that were associated with pharmaceutical terms were *Viva Generik Apotek*, *Kimia Farma Apotek*, and *Apotek Mitra Farma*. According to Danesi (2004), one of the strategies in naming is by referring to the aspects of nature and giving the product quality related to nature (Pamungkas & Abdulah, 2017). By naming the drugstore using pharmaceutical terms, in which its nature is closely related with medicines, it can be interpreted that the product quality from those drugstores are good and reliable as the names suggest trustable commercial names. Therefore, the consumers will likely to purchase drugs from those drugstores.





Figures 3. Examples of Drugstore Naming Associated with Pharmaceutical Terms

Drugstore Naming Associated with Abstract Names

The abstract names of the drugstores found in this study were considered to not have a specific pattern or included in other classifications. Some of the findings were *CnC Apotek*, *Apotek 2 Oscar*, and *Apotek K-24*. Ainiala, Saarelma, and Sjoblom (2016) stated that an abstract reference for a company name is included in the semantic field in which the name extends from its essence meaning to subjects closely related to it, in which it is also known as relational association (Ainiala, Saarelma, & Sjoblom, 2016).

According to the website of *Apotek K-24* (www.apotek-k24.com), it can be inferred that its naming is derived from the dedication stated and service given. It is stated in the 'About Us' page section that *Apotek K-24* opens every day for 24 hours non-stop and provides complete stocks of medicines with affordable prices (Apotek K-24, 2016). Therefore, it can be interpreted that the name of *Apotek K-24* subjects closely related to the 24-hour service. Within the use of *Apotek K-24* naming, the customers can easily remember that they can go to this drugstore whenever they need to purchase any medicine.



Figures 4. Examples of Drugstore Naming Associated with Abstract Names

Drugstore Naming Associated with Location

The finding of drugstore names that were based on their location showed two drugstores, which were *Apotik Semarang* and *Apotek Farmasi Airlangga*. They were named as so because both of them were located exactly in the Semarang street and at Airlangga University. Ainiala, Saarelma, and Sjoblom (2016) explained the term polysemic which can be defined as the meaning of name that has been extended so that it includes the references that are closely related to one another. In addition, they also give an example where a statue's surroundings are also referred to by the name of the statue (*e.g.* Our meeting place is *Havis Amanda*) (Ainiala, Saarelma, & Sjoblom, 2016).

By using the name that is associated with the location of the drugstore, the owner of *Apotik Semarang* wants to emphasize that this drugstore is located in the exact same street name, which is Semarang Street. In addition, this strategy of naming using the reference of location makes the consumers easily remember about *Apotik Semarang* that is precisely located in Semarang Street.



Figures 5. Examples of Drugstore Naming Associated with Location

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the naming of drugstores that become the object of analysis can be considered to mainly reflect the idea and creativity of the owners. By naming their drugstores with certain categories, such as based on the owners' names, associated with pharmaceutical terms, related with location, containing good wishes, and even named with abstract names, it definitely has a further commercial purpose. By establishing such trademarks, the names of the drugstores can be easily remembered by the consumers.

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Journal of Education, Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching

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