

THE SIGNAGE DESIGN CONSIDERATION FOR
WAYFINDING IN UNESCO HERITAGE SITE OF
MELAKA

BY

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ABSTRACT

Melaka UNESCO heritage sites is recorded as one of the most visited places in Malaysia in 2015. These sites are significant to tourists, thus are equipped with public facilities. An effective signage design around these sites must be put into careful consideration to ease the tourists' wayfinding. Several studies on signage in heritage site, tourism, user experience, signage and wayfinding have been conducted, however they are not focused on Melaka UNESCO heritage sites. There is a gap on the signage in heritage site, tourism, user experience, signage and wayfinding around UNESCO heritage site of Melaka areas. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the signage design consideration for wayfinding in UNESCO heritage sites of Melaka. The objectives of this study are to identify the content and composition in existing signage of heritage sites, to determine the level of usage of signage universal design guideline in existing signage in UNESCO heritage sites of Melaka and to develop signage design consideration for wayfinding in UNESCO heritage sites of Melaka. The data was collected through the site inventory, profiling, checklist, pilot survey, main survey and video taking in the UNESCO heritage sites of Melaka. The findings from this research indicate that most of the signage in the heritage sites are not effective due to the unsuitable location and ineffective design. Some of the existing signages are following Universal Design Guideline in content and composition except for the hardware system which include shape, size, eye level and clarity. Thus, it is suggested that the signages should be sensitively located, scaled and detailed so as not to obscure ambiguous or distract the tourists from historical objects. Apart from that, signages with good functional attributes and suitable location will make the journey of the tourists who are visiting the UNESCO site of Melaka enjoyable and less time consuming. In conclusion, this research contributes to the field of tourism by providing a design consideration for the signage that can be adapted by the local authority for designing signage for UNESCO heritage site in the future.

خلاصة البحث

على الرغم من الزيارة السياحية المكثفة لموقع ملاكا للتراث العالمي لليونسكو، فقد كانت المواقع واحدة من أكثر الأماكن زيارة في ماليزيا في عام 2015. وكانت ملاكا، باعتبارها واحدة من مواقع التراث الهامة لليونسكو في ماليزيا مع العديد من التسهيلات العامة وخاصة المباني التراثية التي تحتاج حقًا إلى التفكير في التطبيق الفعال لتصميم اللافتات لتسهيل العثور على الطرق السياحية. لقد تم إجراء مجموعة متنوعة من الأبحاث حول اللافتات وإيجاد الطرق، لكن هذا البحث لم يركز على موقع اليونسكو للتراث في منطقة ملاكا. ومع ذلك، هناك دراسة أقل بكثير تستكشف اللافتات وإيجاد الطرق في مواقع التراث التابعة لليونسكو. لذلك، كان الغرض من هذه الدراسة القيام بتحليل تصميم اللافتات من أجل إيجاد الطريق في موقع ملاكا للتراث في اليونسكو. ويكون الهدف من هذا البحث هو تحديد المحتوى والتكوين في اللافتات الموجودة في موقع التراث، وتحديد مستوى استخدام إرشادات التصميم العالمي للافتات في اللافتات الموجودة في موقع ملاكا للتراث التابع لليونسكو وتطوير التفكير في تصميم اللافتات لتعثر الطريق في تراث اليونسكو من موقع ملاكا. مع ذلك، تم جمع البيانات من خلال تجريد الموقع، والتنميط، والقائمة المرجعية، والمسح التجريبي، والمسح الرئيسي وتسجيل الفيديو في مواقع التراث في اليونسكو في ملاكا. قد أشارت نتائج هذا البحث إلى أن معظم اللافتات في مواقع التراث لم تكن فعالة بسبب الموقع غير المناسب والتصميم غير الفعال للافتات. وكانت بعض اللافتات الموجودة تتبع إرشادات التصميم العالمي في المحتوى والتكوين باستثناء نظام الأجهزة الذي يتضمن الشكل والحجم ومستوى العين والوضوح. وبالتالي، يقترح أن يتم وضع اللافتات بشكل حساس وقياسها وتفصيلها حتى لا تحجب الغموض أو تشتت سلامة الأشياء التاريخية. بخلاف ذلك، فإن اللافتات ذات السمات الوظيفية الجيدة والموقع المناسب ستجعل رحلة السائح الذي قام بزيارة موقع ملاكا التابع لليونسكو ممتعًا وأقل استهلاكًا للوقت. في الختام، يساهم هذا البحث في مجال السياحة من خلال توفير اعتبار تصميم لافتات حيث يمكن تكيفها من قبل السلطة المحلية لتصميم لافتات لموقع تراث اليونسكو في المستقبل.

APPROVAL PAGE

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Abdul Rahim bin Mat and Salmah bt Daud who always picked me up on time and encourage me to go on every adventure, especially this one.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

According to UMass Amherst Campus (2014) heritage is traditions, monuments, objects, activities, meanings, behaviour and culture that left by our ancestors. Heritage is more than just the preservation, excavation, exhibition or restoration of ancient collections. Songs, language, dances, arts and many other aspects of who and how individuals identify them as important as historical structures and archaeological sites are both touchable and untouchable in the sense of thoughts and memories. Thus, Malaysia has become a combination of cultures, having a intriguing history and being part of the global spice route many hundreds of years ago. Everything shows a colourful heritage and a mixed culture from its people to its architecture.

Malay, Chinese and Indians are the biggest ethnic groups in Malaysia. While there are numerous indigenous ethnic groups in Sabah and Sarawak with their own distinctive heritage and culture. The culture and heritage is shown some in the architecture. The cultural places with beautiful architecture, flora and fauna left by our previous ancestors in Malaysia such as historical city of Melaka, Georgetown, archaeological heritage of the Lenggong Valley, Gunung Mulu and Kinabalu Park.

One of the city that rich with culture and heritage is the historical city of Melaka. The strategic location of Melaka had attracted traders and people from the beginning of the time. Until now, Melaka had pull in quite a number of tourists

visiting in past few years. The increasing number of tourists makes the area crowded and more difficult for them to find their way through the heritage sites and buildings without getting lost and confused. With the difficulties of wayfinding experience among the tourist, the research studies on way-finding and focused on signage is less carried out. Therefore, more comprehensive research is required to explore the connection between way-finding ability of the tourist in heritage sites and users experience while exploring the sites by using the effective signage design.

Signage is one of the main factor in wayfinding experience. According to the College Dictionary (2010) of Random House Kernerman Webster, signage is a collective sign and also refers to several symbols used for display and advertising. Signage system is an important component of the room or building vital information completeness and instruction.

This chapter will enclose the relationship between the tourist experience on wayfinding and the UNESCO sites of Melaka. The research was formed through discovery multiple method of research including analyze the aim, objective, problem statement, research question, limitation of research, and structure of research. Understanding the relationships between the UNESCO heritage site, existing heritage sites signage design, signage design guidelines and tourist experience in the UNESCO heritage sites are the focus of the research.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Signage system is an essential part of the completeness of the data and guidance necessary in the space or building. A signage system can increase indoor wayfinding performance because it facilitates how people find destinations within a complex

building in everyday (e.g. Vilar, Rebelo, and Noriega 2012). Signage is a great deal more than a structure denoting the space. It's a mind boggling, intelligent medium of written communication. According to Yusita Kusumarini et al (2012), by following the signage it is called as way-finding, way-signing or sign-posting.

There are 5 primary architectural wayfinding elements as stated in the book Universal Design New York, 2001 such as (1) paths/circulation, (2) markers, (3) nodes, (4) edges, and (5) zones/districts shown in Figure 1.1. These are the design criteria for extremely legible and comprehensible urban settings, together with visual accessibility. Internationally, signage is one of the biggest element in wayfinding purposes falls under the markers category. But wayfinding is not only depends on the signage only. There are few types of wayfinding such as printed map, GPS, landmark and etc. This as stated in Signage and wayfinding book by Chris, C & David, V.E (2015) , The main goal of a signage program is to assist individuals find their way through the setting, while efficient ways of finding alternatives often involve more than just signage.

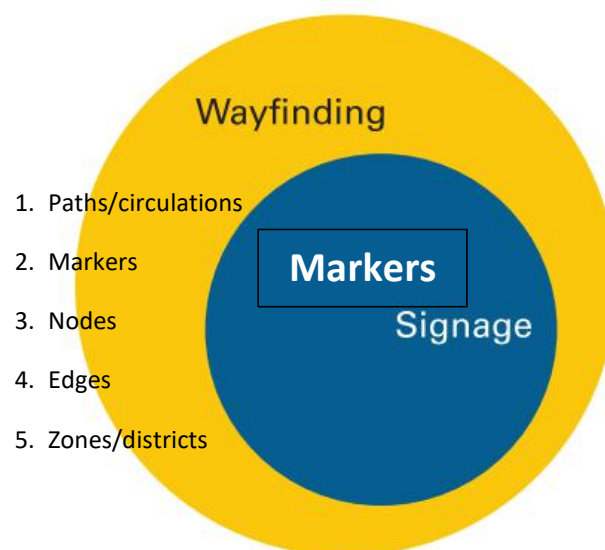


Figure 1.1 Signage plays a major role within the broader realm of wayfinding.

Within last few year, the issues about signage in Malaysia have been appeared in the local newspaper headlines. Among which are, “ Signage just a decoration” (Harian Metro, 2014), “ Signage affected by sun rays” (Harian Metro, 2014) and “ the usage of multilingual signage” (Berita Harian, 2014). Poor signage management and existing signage condition in Malaysia is very concerning and need to be improve to ensure the effectiveness of the wayfinding especially in tourism area. This is because the signage in tourism area will help the tourist finding their way easier to explore and acquire knowledge about the culture and heritage in the heritage site. In addition, with a good wayfinding system, the tourist can explore more places in their stimulated time plan.

The reason for this research is to explore the tourist experience for designing wayfinding in UNESCO heritage site of Melaka. The research specifically, adds to propel thinks to tackle the issues of lacking component on signage in Melaka heritage sites.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are the increasing number of tourist from local and international in the UNESCO heritage site of Melaka. This has been stated by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Idris Haron, Of the total number of international tourists visiting Malacca in 2015, 1.1 million were tourists from Singapore, followed by 711,800 from China, 484,738 from Indonesia, 121,799 from Taiwan and Japan (R.S.N. Murali,2016). There are attempts of solving the issues by installing the new signage in the site area. But, this still now are not solving the wayfinding issues among the tourists in the UNESCO heritage site of Melaka area.

UNESCO heritage site of Melaka is known as the multicultural heritage that evolved from their strategic location along the trade routes from Great Britain and Europe through the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, and the Malay Archipelago to China. With this amazing cultural experience the tourist will encounter in the site area, they have no choice but to let themselves lost in the site area due to the non-effective signage and wayfinding system. The tourist used various alternative ways of wayfinding in the site area such as map, apps, tourist guide and etc.

Because of this, the tourist will have lack of experience throughout their journey in the UNESCO heritage site area. They need to spend more than a day to have full experience of the UNESCO heritage site of Melaka.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The research focuses on analyzing the signage design consideration for wayfinding in UNESCO sites of Melaka .

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are as :-

1. To identify the content and composition in existing signage of heritage site.
2. To identify the functional attributes of existing signage design in UNESCO heritage site of Melaka.
3. To determine the level of usage of signage design guideline in existing signage in UNESCO heritage site of Melaka.