



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

WAFINDING DESIGN SYSTEM OF KUCHING CITY CENTRE

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Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
(Design Technology)
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**WAFINDING DESIGN SYSTEM OF
KUCHING CITY CENTRE**

WEE SZE SHEN

This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
(Design Technology)

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Final Year Project Report

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ABSTRACT

Wayfinding is a behaviour (Bechtel and Churchman, 2002) which refers to people's cognitive and behavioural abilities to find a way from an origin to a destination (Golledge, 1999). Wayfinding plays an important role when allocating resources and facilities to aid tourist navigating their way to enhance their travel experience in Kuching. This research discusses the function of wayfinding towards the tourist in Kuching. A case study will be conducted where the problem faced by the tourist will be observed while they are travelling in Kuching and especially around Waterfront, Kuching which is the main tourist spot in Kuching City. The findings show that most of the visitors/ tourists support the use of wayfinding design system as a guide for helping the tourist navigate.

ABSTRAK

Wayfinding adalah perilaku (Bechtel and Churchman, 2002) yang mengacu pada kemampuan kognitif dan perilaku orang untuk menemukan jalan dari asal ke destinasi (Golledge, 1999). Wayfinding memainkan peranan penting dalam membantu pelancong menavigasi dalam perjalanan mereka dan seterusnya meningkatkan pengalaman perjalanan mereka di Kuching. Penyelidikan ini membincangkan fungsi wayfinding terhadap pelawat di Kuching. Sebuah kajian kes akan dilakukan di tempat kejadian, Waterfront, Kuching iaitu tempat pelancong utama untuk memerhati masalah yang dihadapi oleh pelawat. Temuan penyelidikan ini menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan pelancong menggalakkan penggunaan system wayfinding sebagai panduan untuk membantu navigasi pelancong.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

How do you find your way when you travel to a totally strange new city? Do you look for signage, a directory or a map? We rarely realize that we use wayfinding system in everyday lives and how important it really is, until we rely on the infrastructure that has been put in place to guide us throughout the whole journey without frustration, anxiety or disorientation. This field is also known as environmental graphic design. Wayfinding systems is designed to guide traffic through a facility, building, store, or city. Wayfinding uses symbols and text to clearly illustrate and explain a path to find your way to your destination.

In 1960, Kevin Lynch, an American architect and urban planner has published the first book on wayfinding, *The Image of the City*. This book described

wayfinding from an urban perspective using the concept of spatial orientation and cognitive mapping. These concepts refer to the ability of a user to represent the physical environment mentally. Paths, edges, landmarks, nodes and districts are the important environmental components to provide information for navigation in a city.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Majority of the tourist would like to travel like a local, in a nod to the experiential travel needs. According to Maclean (2004), the younger travellers want to have more authentic, deeper travel experiences and this is the reason they are choosing local tour guide. Hence, walking was the preferred method of getting around in Kuching. Kuching Waterfront is the main tourist spot in Kuching, whereby there are many interesting local places of interest and food places that are hard to discover by tourist themselves when searching through the internet. They need local people to guide them to the hidden places in order to have more authentic, and deeper travel experiences. Paper maps acquired at accommodation establishments were the most common wayfinding tools used, but some of them are not updated. At the same time, mobile phone apps like Google Maps and Waze were rarely used by international tourists due to the cost of global roaming and there are many confusing and inconsistent wayfinding system in Kuching. Visitors felt ill-informed about where they should travel to when they came to Kuching, and it was not easy to find information about these places (Edwards & Griffin, 2013). Thus, this research is generally aimed to examine the function of wayfinding towards the tourist and how it solves the problems faced by the tourists.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research will be based on several research questions:

1. What are the problems faced by the visitors when they visit Kuching city centre?
2. Why is it important for wayfinding system as a way of solving navigation issues?
3. How can effective wayfinding design system ensures the tourists' needs are being met?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

There are three objectives to be achieved at the end of the study:

1. To identify the problems faced by the visitors when navigating Kuching City Centre.
2. To analyze the function of wayfinding to make sure the tourists' needs are being met.
3. To design a wayfinding system that is more appealing and directly benefits the tourists / visitor's needs.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

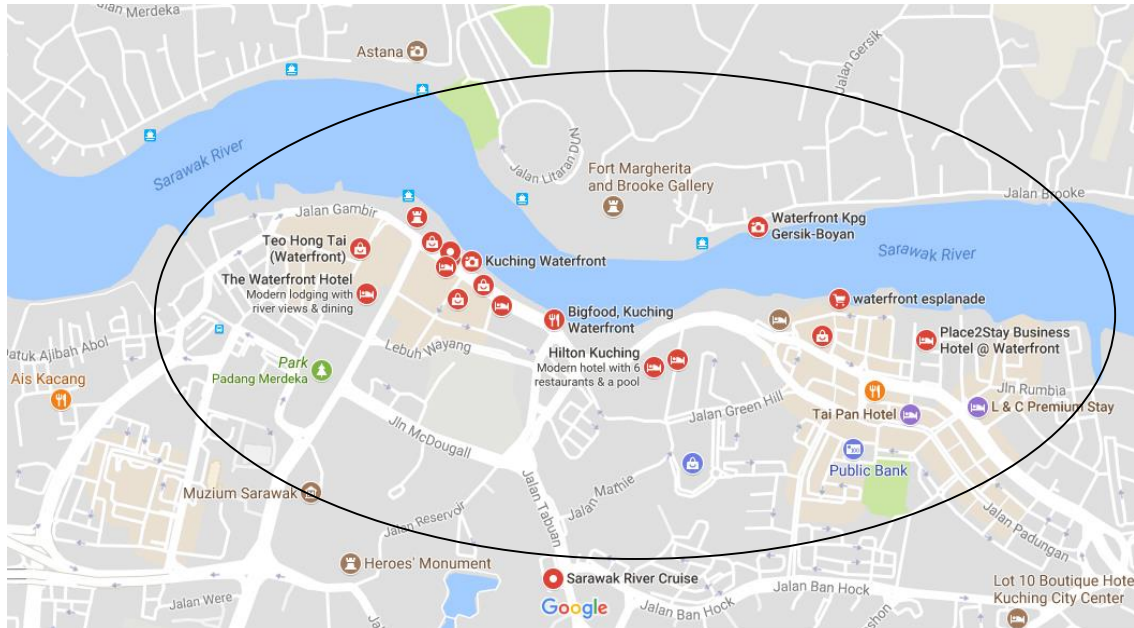


Figure 1.1: Waterfront, Kuching Map

The research main focus is on the pedestrian in Kuching. Figure 1.1 shows the research main location, Kuching Waterfront which is the main tourist spot in Kuching. The validation test will also be carried out at the same location. According to the official travel website for Sarawak, Waterfront in Kuching today is the most popular meeting place in the city because of the major restoration and land reclamation project.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the research is aimed to examine the function of wayfinding towards the tourist. The insights from this study may be useful for developing a good and effective wayfinding that can help to solve the tourist main problem which is where to visit while they travel in Kuching in order to have more authentic, and deeper travel experiences. As the problem is solved, the tourism in Kuching will be increased due to the tourist feel safe and their travelling experience in Kuching city can be enhanced.

1.6 SUMMARY

Based on the research conducted by the researcher, researcher aims to design an effective wayfinding design system to ensure the tourist' needs are being met. In addition, factors and principles of wayfinding design system need to be analyzed in order to produce a wayfinding design system that making information spaces effectively navigable.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the literature review on tourist expectation, issues in navigation, wayfinding design system to meet the tourists' needs, design principle of wayfinding system and mental mapping. This literature review includes a full inventory of current wayfinding signage, recommendations for key locations for new signage to direct people where to visit, and recommendations to reduce sign clutter in Waterfront, which is the main tourist spot in Kuching. These knowledges served as the basis for the primary research.

2.1 TOURIST EXPECTATION

This inconsistent design tends to confuse visitors and lead to travel experiences (Luca and Narayan, 2016). Mobile apps like Google Maps and Waze were rarely used by the international tourists due to the cost of global roaming (Edwards & Griffin, 2013), while the GPS chip is power consuming which drains battery very fast. This requires battery replacement or recharge.

2.2 ISSUES IN NAVIGATION

We have been using wayfinding in everyday lives, but we are unaware of the importance of wayfinding, until we rely on the infrastructure that is put in place to guide us (Christine, 2012). Tourist often depends on wayfinding to reach their destination successfully, without frustration, anxiety and disorientation. An effective wayfinding system in Kuching will give tourist a good impression to our city (Koo, 2017). Effective wayfinding is important for the tourist to know where to look for wayfinding information when they need it, understand the way in which the information is communicated, and to obtain the information they want quickly, intuitively and without fuss (Koo, 2017). Besides that, it also keeps you from decreasing frustration, stress anxiety, late arrivals and looking for direction way to the destination (Christine, 2012).

2.3 WAYFINDING DESIGN SYSTEM TO MEET THE TOURISTS' NEEDS

A good wayfinding system is much more than putting a few signs up at various locations. Indeed, it is a well-considered process involving various studies of the space,

the movement within that space, the anticipated traffic, the destinations and the overall purpose (Francescangeli, 2017). A wayfinding can be successful only if you know where you are, know your destination and following the best route to your destination, recognizing your destination and finally being able to find your way back (Carpman and Grant 1993).

According to Arditi (2017), there are six main factors to be considered in wayfinding design:

1. Visibility

The signage background, color, font size and the mounting location have to be examined to ensure the signage to be seen from all reachable directions.

Element that can compromise the sign's usage must be avoided.

2. Accessibility

The language used for the content should be easily understandable by all people, English as a second language, or the elderly.

3. Consistency

Tourist anticipate to see signage in particular locations/decision point such as the corner of the alley, three-way junction. The colors chosen are also important.

4. Clarity

It is important that wayfinding signage is easy to understand. Simple words and menus that can easily been read are used and followed by the tourist can help ensuring a better wayfinding experience.

5. Lighting

Consider if the signage needs to be placed under direct sunlight, indoors with or without ambient lightning, or in a dark place. Where the signage is to be mounted is important to avoid these lighting choices affect the materials chosen.

6. Usability

The signage is placed at locations such as foyer entrances. An effective wayfinding system will help with the decision-making process as users approach an intersection.

2.4 DESIGN PRINCIPLES OF WAYFINDING SYSTEM

Kevin Lynch (1960) described his concept of environmental legibility with the element of the built environment that allows pedestrian to navigate themselves successfully through complex spaces like cities and towns (Hodrtton, n.d.). Three criteria determine the navigability of a space are:

1. Successful recovery of location and orientation

The navigator knows exactly how to answer the question, “Where am I?” and “Which way am I facing?”

2. Ability to successfully perform wayfinding tasks

A successful wayfinding occurs when the navigator can make correct navigation decisions that take the pedestrian from his present location to another destination that fulfils his larger purpose. Arthur and Passini (1992)

define wayfinding spatial problem solving, in which the navigator finds a satisfactory solution to a larger task through navigation.

3. How well the navigator can accumulate wayfinding experience in the space

Kevin Lynch, an urban planner, is the first person who investigated how the characteristics of an urban space affected and how well people remembered features in it (Lynch, 1960). Lynch compared the imageability of the cities that he obtained from the interview session: how well the sketch maps and interviews reflected the actual layout of each city from these sketch maps and verbal interviews. Lynch found that the respondents organized their city images using a set of common features: paths, landmarks, regions, edges (barriers), and nodes (intersections). (Hodgon 2012, Lynch, 1960)

2.5 MENTAL MAPPING

According to Lynch's conclusion in the book, *The Image of the City* (1960), the people formed mental of their surroundings consisting of five basic elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks (Lange, 2009; Lynch, 1960).

In an imaginable space, a coherent mental picture of the information environment and the content therein can be built by each episode of successful navigation. Ideally, users will be able to meet their information needs more effectively each time they navigate through the environment (Hodgon, 2012).