

## A Content Analysis of A Malaysian Stamp Illustration of a Local Market Scene

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### Abstract

Malaysian stamps are typically issued to commemorate an event or to represent a specific theme. However, due to the use of digital technology, Malaysian stamps have become less popular among users. As a result, newer generations are unaware of its significance in cultural and historical contexts. . The purpose of this research is to provide valuable insights into the symbols and meanings associated with the four stamps produced by POS Malaysia Berhad in 2010. Methodology use to employ is semiotic theoretical framework, this research seeks to uncover the significance of these symbols and meanings, as well as how they relate to the local market. In order to comprehend the symbols and meanings of the stamps in relation to the local market, a content analysis and semiotic analysis approach were employed to examine four stamps that Pos Malaysia Berhad created in 2010. Semiotics, which concerns the interpretation of signs and symbols and their meanings within different contexts, is an appropriate theory for the analysis of stamps, as they frequently feature images and symbols that convey cultural and historical significance. The four stamps from 2010 depict various aspects of Malaysia's local market scene. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the economic, social, and cultural factors that are represented in these stamps and to shed light on their role in promoting the local market in Malaysia. Based on these findings, recommendations can be made for the development of future stamp designs that are better aligned with the needs and values of the local market and that can contribute to the growth and sustainability of the local market.

**Keywords:** Local market stamps, Symbol and Meaning, Local market

### Introduction

In recent years, the study of symbols and meaning in stamps has gained prominence in academic research. Scholars have recognized the importance of stamps in understanding the social, political, and cultural history of a nation (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). A stamp reflects the values, beliefs, and aspirations of a society and the visual language it employs can be analyzed

to reveal the social and cultural context in which it was produced (Kavanagh, 1998). Stamps are not just a means of communication, but also a reflection of a country's social, political, and cultural identity (Libera, 2020). The use of stamps as a medium of visual communication has been recognized as a way of expressing national identity and promoting cultural heritage (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). Malaysian stamps have played a crucial role in promoting the country's cultural heritage and diversity. The stamps produced by Pos Malaysia are often designed to highlight the unique cultural and natural resources of Malaysia.

However, due to the use of digital technology, Malaysian stamps have become less popular among users. As a result, newer generations are unaware of its significance in cultural and historical contexts. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the symbols and meanings of Malaysian stamps produced for the local market. The study of symbols and meaning in stamps can provide valuable insights into a country's social, political, and cultural history (Jansen, 2018). Stamps reflect the changing aspirations and values of a society and can be used to trace the evolution of its cultural identity over time (Raento & Brunn, 2005). The analysis of symbols and meaning in stamps can also reveal the political and economic forces that shape their production and distribution.

This study employs a qualitative content analysis of the four stamps produced in the year 2010. The analysis will focus on the visual and textual elements of the stamps, such as images, colours, and text, to interpret their cultural, social, and political meanings. This research study reflects the visions of the federal governments in different eras and reveals how visual culture contributes to the formation of national identities. This study will contribute to the growing body of literature on the visual culture of stamps and will provide valuable insights into the cultural heritage and identity of Malaysia. The findings of this study will be relevant to scholars and researchers in the fields of visual culture, communication, and cultural studies. The study will also be of interest to policymakers, stamp collectors, and the general public who are interested in the cultural heritage and identity of Malaysia.

### **Literature Review**

Malaysia is a rapidly developing country with a diverse economy, ranging from traditional agricultural industries to high-tech manufacturing and services. One of the crucial aspects of the Malaysian economy is Small, and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), several of the trading are in the local market, which plays a significant role in supporting the local market. Malaysia's local market is one of the key drivers of its economic growth and development. It encompasses a range of sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, and services (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2023). The examples of the local market in Malaysia are agriculture, which is one of the oldest and most important sectors of the Malaysian economy, contributing significantly to the country's income. It encompasses a wide range of activities, including the production of crops, livestock, and fisheries. The crops such as palm oil, rubber, cocoa, and rice. Additionally, the fishing industry is also a significant contributor to the economy, with Malaysia having a long coastline and numerous rivers.

Manufacturing is another important sector of the bargain in Malaysia. It includes the production of various goods, ranging from electronics to textiles. The notable industries include textiles and clothing, food processing, and construction materials. After that, tourism which is under the category of the services sector is a major contributor to the local market of Malaysia, with millions of visitors attracted each year due to the country's diverse culture and natural beauty. Another important aspect of the local market in Malaysia is the presence of traditional markets operating in every state of the country and are well-known for offering

a wide range of goods at affordable prices. It is a significant contributor to the economy and culture, representing the unique cultural and economic diversity of the region. These markets play a vital role in providing goods and services, promoting local entrepreneurship, and preserving traditional cultural practices (Mitra Madanchian et al., 2015).

In identifying the symbols and meanings of Malaysian stamps in the context of the local market, this study uses the semiotic theory. The semiotics theory is used to analyse the various symbols and signs that are used to convey messages about the importance of the local market. Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and their interpretation in a particular context (Gretzel & Collier de Mendonça, 2019). It is a powerful tool for understanding the communication process and the meaning behind it (Hershberger, 2014). Social semiotics is concerned with the ways in which individuals create and interpret meaning from their surroundings. This field of study investigates the processes by which physical structures are given significance, specifically how people connect forms and structures to particular meanings (Bezemer & Cowan, 2021). The use of symbols conveys the importance and significance of the local market in Malaysia. The symbols used in the advertisements are analysed using the semiotic theory, which suggests that symbols are powerful tools for communication and can convey meaning beyond their literal representation (Peña-Alves, 2020). Symbols are used to emphasise the variety and affordability of goods available at the local market, as well as the cultural significance of the market (Abdul Razak, 2022).

### **Methodology**

The methodology of this study involves conducting a content analysis of four stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010, using the semiotic theoretical framework. The content analysis is a systematic process of examining the symbols and meanings associated with the stamps in the context of the Malaysian local market. Content analysis is a method used in semiotic research to examine the content of communication and the meanings conveyed through the use of symbols and signs. This method involves a systematic examination of the text or image and the identification of themes and patterns that emerge from the analysis (Krippendorff, 2018). It is used to examine the content of communication in a systematic and objective manner. It involves analyzing texts or images to identify patterns, themes, and meanings that emerge from the analysis. The purpose of content analysis is to uncover the underlying messages and symbols used in a particular communication, and to gain a deeper understanding of the context and culture in which they are situated. The process of content analysis typically involves several steps. First, the researcher selects a sample of texts or images to analyze. This sample may be drawn from a larger population or may be the entire population of texts or images available. Next, the researcher develops a coding scheme, which is a set of categories and codes used to identify and classify the content of the texts or images. The coding scheme should be based on the research questions and objectives, and should be developed through an iterative process of testing and refinement. Once the coding scheme is in place, the researcher begins the actual coding process, which involves systematically examining the texts or images and assigning them to the appropriate categories and codes. In the case of the local market in Malaysia, content analysis can be used to identify the symbols and signs used to convey the importance and significance of the local market in Malaysia. The protocol for the content analysis is as follows (Elo et al., 2014):

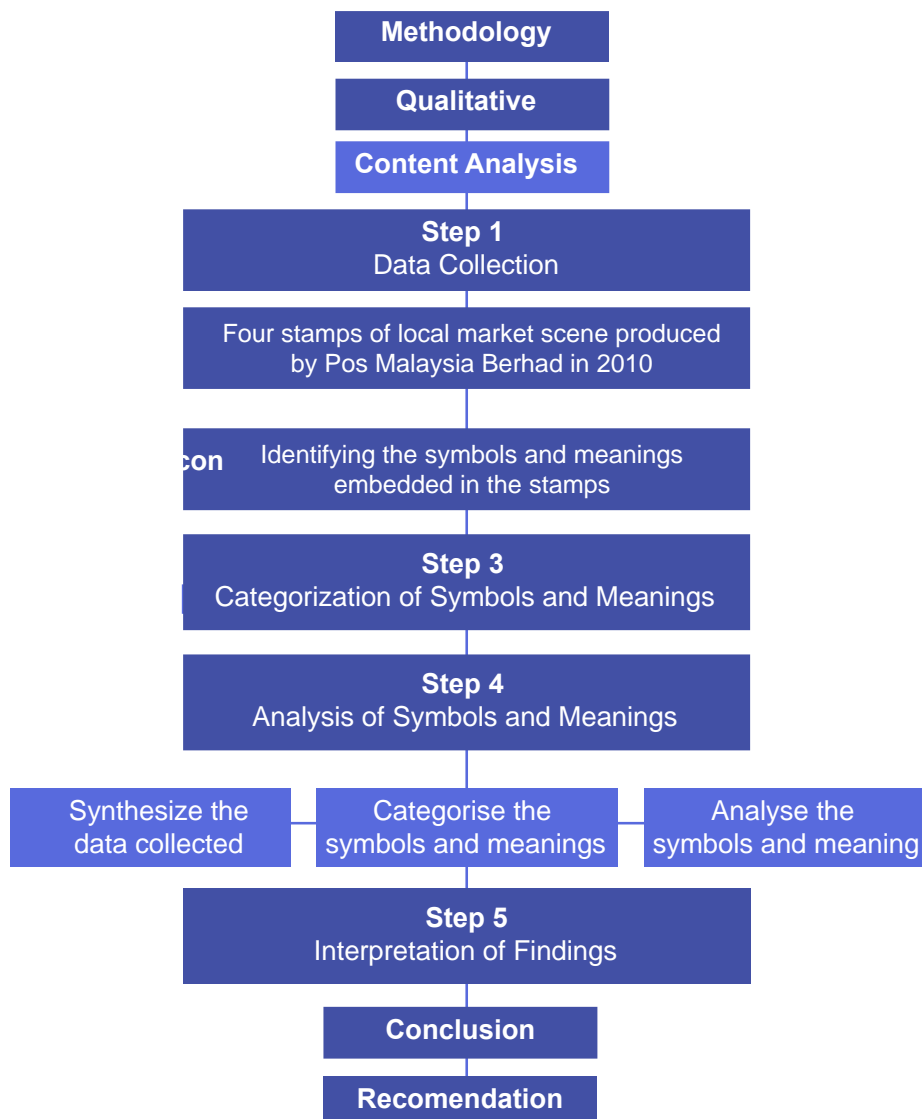


Diagram 1: Content analysis of the symbols and meaning of four local market stamps in Malaysia

### Step 1: Data Collection

The first step involves collecting the four stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010. The stamps will be examined to identify the symbols and meanings associated with the Malaysian local market. The stamps will be collected in high resolution to allow for detailed analysis.

### Step 2: Identification of Symbols and Meanings

The second step involves identifying the symbols and meanings embedded in the stamps. The semiotic theoretical framework will be used to identify the icons, index, and symbols used in the stamps. The identification of symbols and meanings will be guided by the research questions, which aim to identify the symbol and meaning of Malaysian stamps in the context of the local market.

### Step 3: Categorization of Symbols and Meanings

The third step involves categorising the symbols and meanings into themes. The categorization will be based on the identified symbols and meanings in the stamps. The themes will be used to organise the data and facilitate analysis.

### Step 4: Analysis of Symbols and Meanings

The fourth step involves analysing the symbols and meanings identified in the stamps. The analysis will involve a detailed examination of the icons, index, and symbols used in the stamps. The analysis will be guided by the semiotic theoretical framework, which will be used to interpret the symbols and meanings identified in the stamps.

**Step 5: Interpretation of Findings**


The final step involves the interpretation of the findings. The interpretation will involve synthesising the data collected, and analysing the symbols and meanings in the stamps. The interpretation will be guided by the research questions and will aim to identify the symbol and meaning of Malaysian stamps in the context of the local market.



In summary, the methodology of this research involves a systematic process of examining the symbols and meanings associated with four stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010, using the semiotic theoretical framework. The protocol for the content analysis involves data collection, identification of symbols and meanings, categorization of symbols and meanings, analysis of symbols and meanings, and interpretation of findings. This methodology will provide valuable insights into the symbols and meanings associated with Malaysian stamps in the context of the local market.


**Data Analysis**

In recent years, the local market in Malaysia has been a significant contributor to the country's local market. As such, understanding the symbols and meanings associated with the local market is crucial in comprehending the role it plays in the country's economic development. This study focuses on four stamps depicting the local markets of Pekan Rabu in Kedah, Pasar Siti Khadijah in Kelantan, Pasar Minggu Satok in Sarawak, and Pasar Kraf Tangan Sabah. The data analysis is to provide valuable insights into the symbols and meanings associated with the four stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 within the context of the local market and uncover the significance of these symbols and meanings and how they relate to the local market. Each of the stamps will be divided into four tables which will clearly analyse the symbols and meaning of the stamps. Table 1 is the Content analysis of the symbols of local market stamps in Malaysia:

Table 1:  
*Content Analysis of The Symbols and Meaning of Four Local Market Stamps In Malaysia*

Stamps 1	Symbol	Categories	Theme	Meaning
	1. Dry food	Food production	Agriculture	- Local Market
	2. Chips	Food production		
	4. Spices	Farming		
	3. Pickle fish	Food production	Local food security	- Tourism Promotion
	6. Basket	Bamboo and woven	Handicraft and arts	- Culture preservation
	7. Serving lid	Bamboo and woven	Handicraft and arts	
	8. Women trading	Women empowering	Household income	
	9. Wearing a scarf	Women empowering	Household income	
	10. Kedah House	Exterior	Architecture	
	11. Signboard			

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. People buying</li> <li>13. Mom and son</li> <li>14. Medium shots</li> <li>15. Narrative</li> <li>16. Wearing baju kurung</li> </ol>	Environment	Local culture	
<b>Stamps 2</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vegetable</li> <li>2. Fruits</li> <li>3. Spices</li> <li>4. Eggs</li> </ol>	Food and animal farming	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Market</li> <li>- Tourism Promotion</li> <li>- Culture preservation</li> </ul>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Women trading</li> <li>6. Wearing a scarf</li> </ol>	Women empowerment	Household income	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Pasar Siti Khadijah interior</li> </ol>	Interior	Architecture	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. People buying</li> <li>9. A family</li> <li>10. Closed-up shots of the women's trading</li> <li>11. Wide shots of the environment</li> <li>12. Narrative</li> <li>13. Wearing baju kurung</li> <li>14. Wearing kain batik</li> </ol>	Environment	Local culture	
<b>Stamps 3</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vegetables</li> <li>2. Fruits</li> <li>3. Plants</li> </ol>	Food and animal farming	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Market</li> <li>- Tourism Promotion</li> <li>- Culture preservation</li> </ul>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Women trading</li> </ol>	Women empowerment	Household income	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Bag</li> </ol>	Bamboo and woven	Handicraft and arts	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Sarawak Roof</li> </ol>	Interior	Architecture	

	7. People buying 8. Wearing tshirt 9. Wide shots of the environment	Environment	Local culture	
<b>Stamps 4</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
	1. Vegetable 2. Fruits 3. Spices	Food production	Agriculture	- Local Market
	4. Fabric	Textile	Handicraft and arts	- Tourism Promotion - Culture
	5. Pickle fish 6. Anchovy	Food production	Local food security	
	6. Basket 7. Serving lid	Bamboo and woven	Handicraft and arts	
	8. Beads Handicraft	Beading	Handicraft and arts	

### Findings and Discussion

#### The Symbols and Meanings of Local Market Stamps in Malaysia: Insights into the Local Market

##### Analysis of Malaysian Stamp Illustration of Pekan Rabu Markets.

The Pekan Rabu Markets stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 depict several symbols that hold significant meaning in the context of the domestic economy of Malaysia. Pekan Rabu is a popular traditional market located in Alor Setar, Kedah, Malaysia. The market has a rich history and is an important part of the cultural heritage of Kedah. This market has been in operation for over 100 years and has become a significant symbol of the cultural identity of Kedah. The stamps feature handicrafts and a variety of dry food options available in Pekan Rabu.

Woven bamboo handicrafts in Kedah are a significant part of Malaysia's cultural heritage. The semiotics of symbols associated with these handicrafts reflect the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the region. The intricate patterns and designs woven into the bamboo baskets and containers hold significant meaning and are a reflection of the region's cultural and artistic traditions. According to Wilson, signs and symbols are used to convey meaning, and their interpretation is based on cultural and societal conventions (Wilson, 2021).

One of the primary symbols associated with woven bamboo handicrafts in Kedah is the use of geometric patterns. These patterns are believed to represent the balance between nature and human beings, as well as the cyclical nature of life (Haron et al., 2014). The use of geometric patterns is also a reflection of the region's Islamic heritage, where symmetry and geometric patterns are often used in Islamic art and architecture (Syed Jan Abas, 1995). Another symbol associated with woven bamboo handicrafts is the use of natural dyes. The dyes used to colour the bamboo are often made from natural materials like turmeric, jackfruit, and indigo (Widiawati, 2009). The use of natural dyes not only adds to the aesthetics of the handicrafts but also reflects the region's belief in living in harmony with nature. The woven bamboo handicrafts in Kedah also incorporate symbols associated with local beliefs and traditions (Muhammad et al., 2013). The intricate designs woven into these containers

often feature local flora and fauna, reflecting the region's biodiversity and natural beauty. The semiotics of symbols and meanings associated with woven bamboo handicrafts in Kedah are a reflection of the region's cultural, artistic, and spiritual traditions. The use of geometric patterns, natural dyes, and local beliefs and traditions all contribute to the cultural significance of these handicrafts. The intricate designs and patterns woven into the bamboo containers and baskets not only add to their aesthetic appeal but also serve as a testament to the region's rich cultural heritage.

The architecture of Pekan Rabu Kedah is an important signifier of its cultural significance. The market is built using traditional Malay architecture with elements of Chinese and Indian influences. The use of these elements in the construction of Pekan Rabu Kedah is an indication of the importance of tradition and cultural identity in the market.

The baju kurung that wearing by the woman is a traditional Malay attire worn by Muslim women in Malaysia that symbolizes the cultural and religious identity of Malaysian Muslims. As a symbol of modesty, piety, and adherence to Islamic values, the loose-fitting attire covers the entire body except for the face and hands in accordance with Islamic teachings on modesty (Hassan, 2016). The significance of the baju kurung lies in its representation of the religious and cultural values of Malaysian Muslims through its design and purpose. Tudung, also known as hijab, is a headscarf worn by Muslim women in Malaysia. The term "Hijab" has its roots in the Arabic language and is commonly utilized in English to denote a headscarf worn by women as a religious practice to cover their hair and head. (Kavakci & Kraeplin, 2017) The tudung is a significant symbol of the cultural identity and religious affiliation of Malaysian Muslims. It is a symbol of modesty, piety, and adherence to Islamic values. The tudung covers the hair and neck of the wearer, which is in line with Islamic teachings on modesty. Wearing tudung is a form of religious and cultural expression that is practiced by Malaysian Muslim women. It is a symbol of their adherence to Islamic values and their cultural heritage. According to Islamic law, the Qur'an instructs women to dress modestly, meaning that they should cover their entire body except for their face, hands, and feet in the presence of men who are not related through blood or marriage (The Holy Qur'an 24: 30-31). The idea of modesty is closely associated with concepts such as honor, piety, propriety, as well as gender relations, the protection of a young woman's virginity, and sexuality (Waltorp, 2015). Wearing tudung is also a way for Malaysian Muslim women to express their identity and assert their place in society. The tudung is thus a symbol of empowerment and pride for Malaysian Muslim women.

The small and medium food industries selling at Pekan Rabu Kedah are a significant aspect of Malaysia's local market. The semiotics of symbols associated with these industries reflect the region's cultural heritage, beliefs, and values. The food sold at these industries is not only a reflection of the region's culinary traditions but also serves as a symbol of the country's cultural diversity and economic growth. Tourists often consider food as a crucial factor in choosing their travel destination. The utilisation of locally sourced ingredients, particularly the traditional dishes cooked by locals, can provide a unique and alluring experience to tourists, which in turn, can increase the likelihood of them visiting the destination (Sims, 2013) The food sold at these industries also incorporates symbols associated with local beliefs and traditions. For example, the use of spices like ginger, turmeric, and cumin is believed to have medicinal properties and is used in traditional medicine practices (Savergave, Gadhav & Pandit, 2012). The use of these spices not only adds to the flavor of the food but also reflects the region's belief in the healing power of natural remedies.



Pekan Rabu Markets stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 depict symbols and meanings that are significant in the context of the local market of Malaysia. The stamps reflect the agricultural richness of Malaysia, the importance of handicrafts, and the role of local markets in Malaysia. The stamps are not only a celebration of local culture and traditions but also serve as a promotion of the country's economy. Furthermore, the semiotics of symbols and meanings associated with the small and medium food industries selling at Pekan Rabu Kedah are a reflection of the region's cultural, culinary, and economic traditions. The use of local ingredients, traditional cooking methods, and symbols associated with local beliefs and traditions all contribute to the cultural significance of the food sold at these industries. The food serves as a symbol of the region's cultural diversity, culinary traditions, and economic growth.

### **Analysis of Malaysian Stamp Illustration of Siti Khadijah Markets.**

*The Pasar Siti Khadijah* stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 depict a woman selling agricultural products in a market. The woman is shown surrounded by various agricultural resources, such as fruits, vegetables, and livestock. In this context, the stamp can be interpreted as a symbol of the importance of agriculture and the local market in Malaysia. Economic empowerment is a significant aspect of women trading in Pasar Siti Khadijah. Women in Kelantan have traditionally been involved in small-scale trade, but the emergence of Pasar Siti Khadijah as a major marketplace has allowed women to expand their economic activities and earn a livelihood. Personal attributes were found to be the primary factors that influenced the success of women entrepreneurs in Pasar Siti Khadijah, Kelantan. The acknowledgement of these attributes as fundamental to success led to the development of an acceptable model for creating successful women entrepreneurs, based on observations of the association between personal attributes, environmental dimensions, and family dimensions (Rashid et al., 2015).

Wearing batik sarongs by women in Kelantan is not just a fashion statement, but also a form of communication that expresses cultural identity, social status, and personal taste. Batik sarongs are seen as an important aspect of Kelantanese culture, and wearing one is a way for women to express their identity and pride in their cultural heritage (Rafeah Legino, 2012). Batik making is a craft that is only practised in a limited number of locations in Malaysia, specifically in Kelantan and Terengganu. One of the remarkable products of this craft is the batik sarong, which is designed with the local customer in mind (Sobri & Legino, 2020).

In Malaysia, traditional markets, such as the Pasar Siti Khadijah in Kota Bharu, are an important aspect of the local market. These markets provide a space for small-scale farmers and vendors to sell their products directly to consumers, which supports local agriculture and fosters community connections (Mohd Suhaimi et al., 2015). The depiction of the woman in the stamp may also be interpreted as a nod to the important role that women play in the domestic economy, particularly in small-scale agriculture and food production (Mokhena et al., 2016). Through the image of a woman selling agricultural products in a traditional market, the stamp highlights the role of local agriculture and small-scale vendors in the local market, as well as the important role that women play in these sectors.

### **Analysis of Malaysian Stamp Illustration of Sarawak, Minggu Satok Markets.**

*Pasar Minggu Satok*, Sarawak stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 feature images of women buying and selling agricultural and handicraft resources. These stamps also depict the unique architecture of Pasar Minggu Satok, which is an important marketplace in

Sarawak, Malaysia. The symbols and meanings associated with these stamps can be analyzed using semiotic analysis, which is a method of studying signs and symbols and their meanings. In this essay,

The *Pasar Minggu Satok*, Sarawak stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 contain a number of symbols that are important for understanding the local market of Sarawak. The first symbol is the image of women buying and selling goods. This symbol represents the important role that women play in the local market of Sarawak. Women are actively involved in the informal economy of Sarawak, and they are responsible for a significant amount of economic activity (Selamat, N. H and Abd. Gapor, 2000). The image of women buying and selling on these stamps reinforces this important role of women in the local market

The second symbol on these stamps is the image of agricultural and handicraft resources. These as an important sector in the economy of Sarawak (Lee & Voon, 2022). The handicraft industry is also an important sector in the and it is a significant source of income for many people (Gapor et al., 2020). The images of agricultural and handicraft resources on these stamps highlight the importance of these industries in the Sarawak

.The third symbol on these stamps is the unique architecture of Pasar Minggu Satok. This symbol represents the importance of this marketplace in Sarawak. Pasar Minggu Satok is an important marketplace for agricultural and handicraft products, and it is a significant source of income for many people in Sarawak. The unique architecture of this marketplace reflects the local culture and traditions of Sarawak, and it is an important symbol of the state's identity. Pasar Minggu Satok, Sarawak stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 contain a number of symbols that are important for understanding the local market of Sarawak. The images of women buying and selling, agricultural and handicraft resources, and the unique architecture of Pasar Minggu Satok all represent important aspects of the local market of Sarawak. These symbols highlight the significant role that women, agriculture, handicrafts, and local marketplaces play in the economy of Sarawak. Through semiotic analysis, we can gain a deeper understanding of the symbols and meanings associated with these stamps, and their significance for the local market of Sarawak.

### **Analysis of Malaysian Stamp Illustration of Sabah, Kraf Tangan Markets.**

The *Pasar Kraf Tangan*, Sabah stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 depict various images associated with the local market of Sabah, Malaysia. The stamps feature women engaging in the buying and selling of goods, as well as agricultural and handicraft resources that are important to the local economy. Through a semiotic analysis of these symbols and their associated meanings, we can gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and economic significance of these stamps.

The central image of the Pasar Kraf Tangan, Sabah stamp depicts a woman engaged in the buying and selling of goods. This image is a symbol of the important role that women play in the local economy, particularly in the context of small-scale market transactions. As noted by Sabah Women Action Resources, women in Sabah are often involved in the informal economy, which includes activities such as selling produce and handicrafts in local markets. By featuring a woman engaged in such activities, the stamp highlights the vital role that women play in sustaining the local economy.

The background of the stamp features images of agricultural resources such as fruits and vegetables, as well as dried fish and anchovies. These images are symbols of the diverse range of resources that are important to the Sabahan economy. The fruits and vegetables depicted in the stamp are likely a reference to the agriculture sector, which is a major source of income

for many Sabahans (Ali et al., 2018). Fisheries are one of the economic resources of the state of Sabah, in addition to the natural resources of flora and fauna in the coastal zone of the eastern coast of Sabah (Suadik et al., 2018).

Another image featured on the Pasar Kraf Tangan, Sabah stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 depicts various handicrafts that are produced in Sabah. The image features woven bags of various shapes, as well as handicrafts made using beads and fabric. Through a semiotic analysis of these symbols and their associated meanings, we can gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and economic significance of Sabahan handicrafts. In Sabah's society, the importance of handicrafts can be seen in their usage during ritual ceremonies, weddings, and ethnic customs. For instance, the Kadazandusun ethnic group produces handicrafts made of bamboo and rattan for use in agricultural activities, such as the wakit, seraung, or hats, which provide shelter from the scorching sun while working on the farm. Additionally, they produce ropes and baskets for carrying crops. Meanwhile, the Iranun community produces woven goods used as headgear, blankets, traditional clothing, and more. Therefore, it is evident that culture and tradition play a crucial role in the production of ethnic handicrafts in Sabah as essential items for their daily lives. (Jemaslin & Arif, 2019).

The woven bags depicted in the image are a symbol of the rich tradition of weaving in Sabah. Weaving has been an important part of Sabahan culture for centuries, and the region is known for producing a variety of intricate and beautiful woven items, including baskets, mats, and bags (Manap & Abd Aziz, 2022). Tombonuos are renowned for their exquisite handicrafts and wide range of motives that can be found in hand-woven crafts such as tudung saji, mengkuang mats, and pillowcases with fine and many styles of embroidery, lace, and weave. One of the wedding ceremony's artistic bridal decorations is called a serimpak, which is a colourful patchwork decoration that can be used to adorn a home's walls and ceiling (Jemaslin & Arif, 2019).

The ethnic Rungus of the Kudat district produce an interesting and vibrant handicraft known as beadwork. Beadwork is a renowned craft produced by the Rungus community, and is frequently used as jewelry for weddings and public events within their circles. This multicolored craft is utilized in the creation of various products including sashes, bracelets, necklaces, and headdresses. (Jemaslin & Arif, 2019). The use of these materials in handicraft production is a symbol of the importance of traditional techniques and materials in Sabahan culture. The depiction of Sabahan handicrafts in the Pasar Kraf Tangan, Sabah stamps is a powerful symbol of the cultural and economic importance of these traditions in the region. Through the representation of woven bags, beadwork, and fabric handicrafts, the stamps celebrate the rich and diverse heritage of Sabahan handicrafts.

Overall, the Pasar Kraf Tangan, Sabah stamps produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010 are a powerful symbol of the local economy and the diverse range of resources that sustain it. Through the depiction of women engaged in market transactions, as well as the representation of agricultural and fishing resources, the stamps celebrate the rich cultural and economic heritage of Sabah. Furthermore, the craft art in Sabah is closely related to ethnic culture and develops in parallel with the changes that occur in the lives of the ethnic communities. In addition, the production of handicrafts is also influenced by the use of raw materials, namely natural resources found in the environment of the area where an ethnic group resides.

**Conclusion**

In summary, semiotics, also known as the study of signs and symbols, is a valuable tool for understanding the meaning and significance of visual and linguistic representations in communication. In the context of the local market in Malaysia, symbols and meanings are present in various forms of stamps and visualised in everyday interactions with local markets. The content analysis of the symbols and meanings associated with local market stamps in Malaysia, produced by Pos Malaysia Berhad in 2010, revealed that these stamps depict various aspects of the local economy. Each stamp showcases unique cultural and economic aspects of the respective states, highlighting the significance of the local markets. The semiotic analysis of these stamps demonstrated to serve as powerful symbols of the local economy, reflecting the values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the local people. Through these stamps, the importance of the local markets as a vital component of the is highlighted. For instance, the symbol of the "Pasar" or market is one of the most prominent and significant in the local market of Malaysia. Pasar, which means market in the Malay language, is a symbol of economic activity and cultural significance in Malaysia. As previously mentioned, markets such as Pasar Siti Khadijah in Kelantan and Pekan Rabu in Kedah are popular destinations for locals and tourists alike, highlighting their importance in the local market. These markets offer a wide variety of goods at affordable prices, including traditional Malay food, handicrafts, and textiles, among other items. The cultural significance of these markets is also reflected in the various forms of traditional craft, diverse cultures, and other cultural activities that take place in and around the markets. In addition, the use of realism designs on stamps is also a symbol of cultural identity and heritage, as it reflects the diversity of Malaysia's population and its rich cultural history.

In conclusion, the symbols and meanings associated with the local economy in Malaysia are significant in the context of semiotic theory as they play a crucial role in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards economic activity and cultural significance. The symbols and meanings associated with the realism image in Malaysia reflect the diverse cultural heritage of Malaysia and can be used to promote both domestically and internationally. As Malaysia continues to develop and grow its economy, it is essential to recognize the significance of these symbols and meanings in shaping perceptions of the small business and promoting its unique cultural identity.

These symbols not only reflect the cultural values and practices of the local people but also serve as a reminder of the importance of the local economy. Local markets play a critical role in the of Malaysia, as evidenced by the symbols and meanings depicted in the local market stamps. For future research, therefore, policymakers and businesses should continue to support the growth and development of the local market as it contributes significantly to the overall economic well-being of the nation.

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