

A Linguistic Landscape Analysis: Language and Meaning in Pakuwon Trade Center's Food Court

Fadly Dwian Sam¹ and Dona Rahayu Sugiharti²

Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: playerfds@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The linguistic landscape has emerged to be a significant field of research in terms of it depicting the visualization and socialization of languages by the community. With the ongoing globalization and cross-cultural migration in contemporary societies, commercial spaces are becoming more multilingual, using signs to convey both informational and symbolic messages. The study is guided by Linguistic Landscape theory, particularly the informational and symbolic functions introduced by Landry and Bourhis and developed further by Gorter and Pütz. These frameworks help explain how signs not only convey practical information but also express prestige, cultural identity, and ideological meanings. The study gathered photographic evidence of signs in the food court and classified them according to the language variety, and functional uses using a qualitative descriptive approach. The information was interpreted using visual, functional and semiotic interpretation. The findings, consisting of 65 data, reveal a highly multilingual environment dominated by English for both informational clarity and symbolic prestige. Other languages, such as Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Thai, Arabic, French, and Latin appear strategically to evoke cultural authenticity and enhance brand identity. The findings show that the language environment of PTC Food Court has a hybrid identity of localized accessibility, global orientation and cultural diversity.

Keywords: commercial space; language functions; language variety; linguistic landscape; multilingual signage

1. INTRODUCTION

Linguistic Landscape includes the ways in which languages are displayed in public, mostly using signs, advertisements, billboards, road names, shop signs and notices (Gaho, 2022). It may also include spoken and media-based language, according to the framework researchers use. Through its study of written language in public spaces, Linguistic Landscape (LL) studies forms a distinct and cross-disciplinary section of linguistics. Unlike the areas of linguistics looking at spoken language, grammar or learning, linguistic Landscape sees how language is used in society and reflects major issues of identity, power and culture. One emerging area of research in the sociolinguistics of multilingual communities is linguistic landscapes, or the visual manifestation of languages in the spaces of the city, in signs, billboards, advertisements, and graffiti (Wardhaugh, 2015). All these visual displays are not mere reflections of the official status of the languages, multilingual composition of the population, and interrelationship between various languages. Rather, the digitization of languages and their activities in the public domain reflects more basic social ideologies of the languages and their speakers (Wardhaugh, 2015).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Earlier works on linguistic landscape of Surabaya mostly concerned ethnic areas, transportation centers and tourism destinations, but little has been given to commercial inner environments like shopping malls and food court. As an example, Herianto (2020) studied multi-ethnic areas such as Ampel, Kya-Kya and Pakuwon and found the dominance of languages and their informational or symbolic roles but did not focus on the micro-linguistic setting such as a closed food court, where multilingual signs are interacting more dynamically with branding and consumer identity. Likewise, Eliza (2025) examined Kya Kya (Kembang Jepun), but her study focused on the outdoor and public spaces, rather than semi-private commercial settings. Hermoyo et al. (2023) on Pasar Turi Station and Laela (2021) on tourism sites in Surabaya studied the issue of diversity and role of language in transportation and tourism, finding patterns of monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signage and their functions as information or symbolic tools. Thus, a research gap exists in exploring how the language choices and functions of signs in indoor commercial environments such as food courts are indicative of consumer-targeting strategies, multicultural identities, and sociolinguistic attitudes of business owners.

2.1 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics can be defined as a linguistic field that investigates the interaction between language and society in terms of the influence of the social aspects on the language and the representation of the social identities and the social structures in language. Sociolinguistics looks at issues of how language use varies because of a variety of factors including social status, ethnicity, gender, and context (Wardhaugh, 2015). The variation in the language used is frequently related to identity and group affiliation; and the public use of language may manifest power dynamic between various communities of people of different languages. With regard to the world of public signage, sociolinguistics gives the rationale of why there may be a specific language of what determines the arrangement of that language as well as the implications of these decisions as far as social constructs within a particular setting is concerned. According to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015), sociolinguistics also refers to the study of everyday life, which deals with the way in which language operates in everyday communication, media, and institutional practices. They state that sociolinguistics is not only interested in how language is a mirror of social reality but also how language assists it to create and form such reality. Language in that respect is a product and producer of society. When individuals talk, they are not merely passing information but also completing social acts like respecting people, identifying, or indicating solidarity and distance.

2.1.1 Linguistic Landscapes

The term "Linguistic Landscape" was first used by Landry and Bourhis (1997) who explained it as the language of the road signs, the advertising billboards, the street names, the place names, the commercial shop signs, and the public signs on government buildings as well as others, which constitute the visible language environment of a particular area. This implies that linguistic landscape is the way languages are represented in the open areas which reflect the dominant, valued or marginalized languages in society.

Durk Gorter (2006) further elaborated this perception by highlighting the fact that the linguistic landscape is not merely concerned with the written form on the signs but also the ways in which the language manifestation shows identity, power and multilingualism in a group of people. Subsequent literature, including Putz and Mundt (2019), proposed the concept of multimodality, which implies that the language is not the only medium used to convey messages to the audience and to build identity through the use of colors, symbols, and layouts. Therefore, the study of linguistic landscape assists in highlighting the connection between the linguistic landscape, culture, and space.

2.1.1.1 Language Pattern and Language Variety

The way languages are represented and how languages collide on signs in the public is one of the primary concerns of language landscape. This is called language pattern or language variety that denotes how a certain language or languages are displayed in one or more signs, or in a public area. Gorter (2006) says that the place of social significance of certain languages in the public space as well as the symbolic authority the language possesses is manifested by the visibility of these languages in the physical world. As an illustration, in most of the cities, English is common and can be found alongside the local languages to demonstrate modernity or global interest whereas the national languages are used to demonstrate authority or formality. The use of language in the public signage can broadly be categorized into monolingual, bilingual and multilingual patterns of usage (Gorter, 2006).

a. Monolingual Signs

These signs contain single language. For instance, monolingual signage in Tokyo, where many local shops and official signs use Japanese only, showing the dominance of the national language in daily communication (Gorter, 2006). Such monolingual displays are common in contexts where a single language dominates public and social life or where the intended audience shares the same linguistic background. Landry and Bourhis (1997) point out that monolingual signs consist of dominance and institutional control in languages and are particularly official or government made signs.

b. Bilingual Signs

There are bilingual signs, which have two languages. As an example, shop and restaurant signs in Bangkok often combine Thai and English, illustrating contact between local and international cultures (Gorter, 2006). This bilingual presentation not only broadens the target audience but also conveys modernity and cosmopolitan appeal. Bilingual signs are often seen in the business environment to lure more people and demonstrate contemporary or international belonging. bilingual signs are usually an indication of language contact between the local and international cultures (Gorter, 2006).

c. Multilingual Signs

Multilingual signs are those that have three or more languages. For example, Gorter (2012) discuss signage in Donostia–San Sebastián, where Basque, Spanish, and English appear together on public and commercial signs, symbolizing inclusiveness and sociolinguistic diversity. Multilingual signage in globalized cities where multiple languages coexist visually to represent the multicultural fabric of society. Such signs indicate openness, social diversity, and identity negotiation among linguistic communities within shared spaces (Putz, 2019).

2.1.1.2 Sign Functions

The other major concept in the study of linguistic landscape is the functions of signs in other words what the sign is to do or say. Linguistic signs have two significant functions, which are informational and symbolic (Landry and Bourhis, 1997). Here are the explanations:

a. Informational Function

The informational function refers to the practical purpose of a sign, to inform, guide, or identify something. For instance, signs such as “Exit,” “Toilet,” or “Information Desk” in

urban shopping centers clearly guide people within commercial environments (Gorter, 2023). Multilingual cities are forced to strongly use informational signage to ease movement and access to services in common public areas. These signs allow people to orientate, find shops or institutions and comprehend how a place is social or physical.

b. Symbolic Function

The symbolic role is the social and cultural connotation to the use of language. It demonstrates the attitudes, identity and values of the people who make the sign. As an example, when the shop signs are predominantly written in English in European and Asian cities, it is a sign of globalization, modernity, prestige, and so on, despite local citizens speaking a different language (Gorter, 2023). On the other hand, local languages, which include Basque in Donostia San Sebastian or Frisian in the Netherlands, represent the heritage and local identity (Gorter, 2012).

3. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach. Qualitative Approach focuses on description and interpretation rather than numbers (Creswell, 2018). In this study, the qualitative approach is used to understand how language is used in public signs at Pakuwon Trade Center's food court and how it shows language pattern and variety, and sign function. The researcher observes and interprets the signs to explain how language works in real situations. This approach is suitable because it helps the researcher describe and understand the function and meaning of the signs in their actual context. The research design used in this study is observation. Observation is a way of collecting data by watching and recording behaviors or things as they naturally happen (Creswell, 2018).

In this study, the researcher only observes the public signs in the Pakuwon Trade Center food court without interacting with the people or shop owners. The observation is non-participant, meaning the researcher does not take part in any activity but only records what is seen. The data are collected by taking photographs and notes of the signs that appear in the area. These signs are then analyzed based on the languages pattern and their functions. The written texts and visual elements of language appearing on the public signs in the Pakuwon Trade Center food court in Surabaya are the data in this research. The data sources are from the signs themselves, store name boards, menu boards, banners and posters and any other written language display. The data are selected, as they reflect the way language is employed in the commercial space and the way language identifies and conveys style of communication in the polylingual context. The study only considers visible written signs in the food court area.

The researcher made firsthand observations and took notes in the form of photographs of all the signs that had written language in the food court setting. The images were captured with a handphone camera in order to make them easily accessible and convenient in the process of collecting the data. All the signs have been included on the name boards of the store, menu boards, posters, adverts, direction boards and banners. The signs were noted accompanied by their respective location and context to help make the correct classification on analysis. A total of 65 images of visible written signs were gathered and stored to be analyzed further. By using Microsoft Excel, the research easily sorted the data out based on the language and function that will be later added to Google Drive. Lastly, the researcher uploaded images of the signs to Google Drive and sorted all of them out on folders based on groups of their language pattern and variety, and sign functions.

After uploading it on Google Drive, the analysis was started by sorting and systematizing all the linguistics features on each sign and then the classification of the signs by their linguistic

structure and functionality. The researcher uses Microsoft Excel as an instrument to sort the data of the signs. Each of these signs was then interpreted and identified according to the language pattern and variety, and sign function found out how language application portrays identity, modernity, and cultural meaning in the PTC food court. The researcher makes a data code used to identify the data that is used in both discussion and appendix. The coding formula is Data Number AB (A refers to the language variety, and B refers to the sign function). The data has a number that shows the amount of data found and as an order based on the appearance on the discussion and appendix. The language variety consists of Mo (Monolingual), Bilingual (B), and Multilingual (Mu). The Sign function coding consists of Informational (I), Symbolic (S), and Symbolic & Informational (SI). For instance, if a sign is Monolingual Informational, the coding will be MoI, or if a sign is Bilingual Symbolic, the coding will be BS. Lastly, conclusions were drawn to demonstrate the preponderant language trends and the social linguistic significance of the language use in the business society context.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section exhibits and reads data of linguistic landscape in Pakuwon Trade Center (PTC) Food Court in Surabaya. The different ways of using language and the meanings contained in language are looked at through 65 signboards, banners and directional signs that are located in the food court. Some fundamental sociolinguistic dimensions are used to make up the discussion, they include language pattern and language variety, and sign functions. Through the multilingual and stylistically eclectic signage, this research paper provides insight into how the language selection in PTC Food Court acts as an extension of the general ideological standpoints, sociocultural preferences and commercial policies in the constantly changing urban environment.

4.1 Language Pattern & Language Variety

This section presents the overall patterns of language use found in the linguistic landscape of the PTC Food Court. Based on the collected 65 data, the analysis focuses on identifying the languages displayed on sign and examining how these languages are combined within individual signs. The classification includes monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signs, allowing for a systematic overview of linguistic diversity in the food court environment.

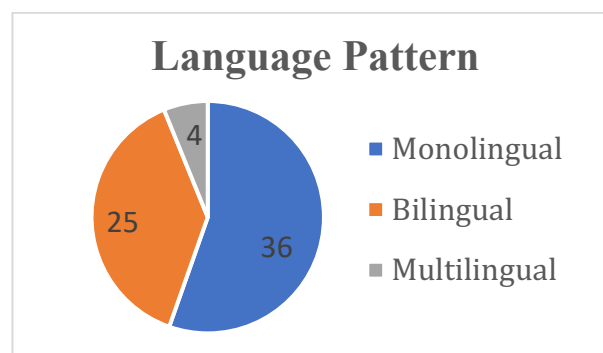


Figure 1 Chart of Language Pattern

The pie chart indicates that monolingual signs are in majority in the PTC Food Court, with the largest proportion of 36 signs, and then there are 25 bilingual signs, and the final 4 multilingual signs. This shows that majority of business owners would rather identify their brand with one language that can be English or Indonesian. The use of bilingual and multilingual signs demonstrates effects of globalization and multiculturalism in the food court set up. The dominant signs are monolingual, representing the fact that the majority of the shop or brand boards are written in a single language and then it is either English or Indonesian, depending on the target

groups and the image of the brand. The bilingual signs suggest that there is a common blend of English and another language (Indonesian, Chinese or Japanese) indicating the impact of the global business tendencies and multicultural identity in the mall.

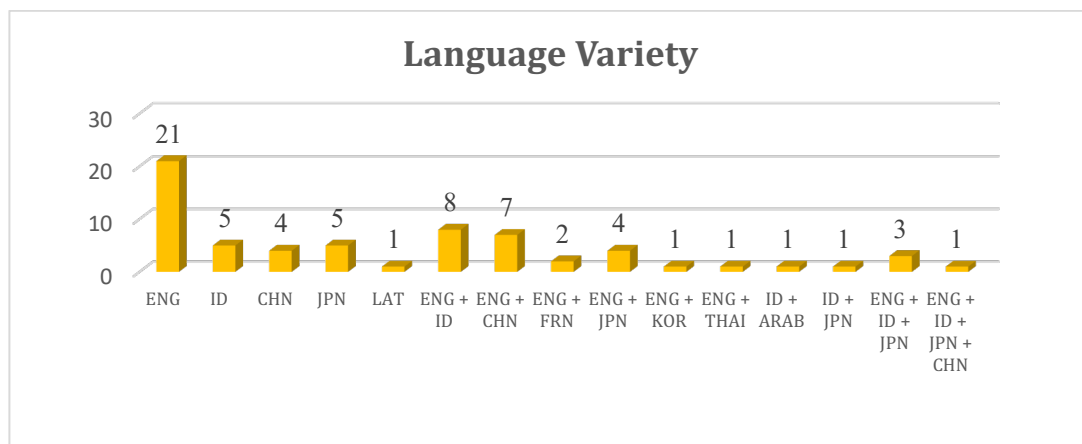


Figure 2 Chart of Language Variety

The bar chart has shown that the most used language is English which appears in 21 signs either as an individual language or as a mixture of languages. English-Indonesian and English-Chinese are the most widespread bilingual variations, then there are English-Japanese bilingual combinations. These findings are important because English is a symbol of being modern and prestigious, whereas inclusion of local and Asian languages is an indication of cultural diversity and business approaches to appeal to diverse audiences. The most common language, in monolingual and mixed versions, is used in 21 signs; English. This points to its high status in business naming and marketing. The most common pairs of English and other languages are English-Indonesian (8 signs), and English- Chinese (7 signs).

The language pattern and language variety refer to the way specific languages are presented and mixed in the form of the sign boards of the general use (Gorter, 2006). The language environment of the Food Court in Pakuwon Trade Center forms part of the linguistic landscape in this research to illustrate how languages co-exist and interact to form social meaning. The manifestation of language in the open space is a reflection of the social reality in the community, and it shows the way multilingualism works in an urban context (Wardhaugh, 2015).

4.1.1 Monolingual

Monolingual signs that have only one language show linguistic superiority and governmental power in the public space (Gorter, 2006). Such signs are frequently used in the PTC Food Court using only English or Indonesian to gain a definite identity and branding. The selection of language implies social meaning; in this way, the fact that English is used represents the notion of modernity and prestige, and Indonesian emphasizes nationalism and ease of use (Holmes, 2013). Monolingual signage is the most commonly utilized signage in this business environment, and this is the evidence of the sociolinguistic hierarchy at work, where a single language is used to create the image of oneness and purposeful intentions to a target audience.

- 1) English



Figure 3 Data 1

The “PICK UP” sign is written entirely in English and functions as a simple instruction for customers to collect their orders at a specific counter. The wording is clear, short, and easy to understand, which makes it highly effective for communication in a busy food court environment. The use of English instead of Indonesian indicates that the shop aims to create a modern and international impression.



Figure 4 Data 2

The “Order Here” sign is also written fully in English and serves as an instruction for customers to place their orders at a specific counter. Its short and polite phrasing makes it easily recognizable to anyone familiar with basic English expressions, especially in a commercial setting. Like “PICK UP,” this phrase is widely used in many international food chains, which helps to create a sense of familiarity and consistency in customer experience. The use of English reflects an effort to make the brand appear more global, appealing to modern consumers who associate English with good service.



Figure 5 Data 3

The sign “BAMBOO Traditional Food” uses English as its main language to represent the name and identity of the establishment. The word “BAMBOO” is presented in bold red letters beside a green bamboo illustration, visually reinforcing the brand name. The phrase “traditional food” gives customers an immediate understanding of what the place offers, which is a local-style dish, and its use of English adds a modern touch to the overall presentation. This combination of English words with a local cultural concept suggests that the establishment wants to highlight tradition while maintaining a global and contemporary image.

2) Indonesian



Figure 6 Data 4

The “Roti’O” is a monolingual Indonesian display with a word “roti” meaning “bread” and this tells the people to what the primary product being sold is. Although the name has the foreign-styled apostrophe and uppercase letter “O”, the major name is still in the Indonesian language, which demonstrates that the brand accepts the local language, but still allows a modern and fashionable look. This shows how the Indonesian language can be adapted to show national identity and at the same time adapt to the modern globalized commercial setting of the PTC Food Court.



Figure 7 Data 5

Another such sign of the monolingual Indonesian display, incorporating elements of foreign culture, is the sign of the “Kebab Turki Baba Rafi”. The term “Kebab Turki” is a blend of an Indonesian word with a foreign borrowed one and this illustrates the way local language has a natural absorbing nature of foreign foods.

3) Chinese



Figure 8 Data 6

The “X.O Suki” sign is a combination of the Romanized Chinese with modern typography. “Suki” is a Chinese term used to refer to a hot pot dish in China. The brand name “X.O” can have a reference to high quality which will put the restaurant in a position with excellence and sophistication. Therefore, it fuses both Chinese food vocabulary and international brands to appeal to the local and foreign clients.



Figure 9 Data 7

The Sign “Nam Heong” is a mixture of Chinese characters (南香) and Romanized letters. Despite the sign has two different scripts (Roman and Mandarin Scripts), the sign is still considered as a monolingual. Dual communicative nature of the two writing systems is that both Chinese and non-Chinese customers can be attracted by the writing systems either using their native characters or using the Roman alphabet.

4) Japanese



Figure 10 Data 8

The “Tori-YO” sign consists of a mixture of Romanized Japanese and graphics. “Tori” is the Japanese word meaning chicken and it is in line with the specialization of the restaurant. The font is stylized and the colors are vivid, which makes the environment friendly and relaxed, which is a characteristic feature of the Japanese culture of street food.

5) Latin



Figure 11 Data 9

The restaurant name “Solaria” is derived from the Latin root “Solaris”, meaning “of the sun”. According to the owner, Aliuyanto, the term conveys warmth, brightness, and vitality, qualities that are appealing in the food and hospitality industry.

4.1.2 Bilingual

Bilingual signs are used which involve the use of two languages and reflect the interaction of local and global speakers (Gorter, 2006). The attempts at reaching different audiences with preserving the international image, the combinations like English-Indonesian or English-Chinese are offered in the PTC Food Court. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) believe that this type of variation indicates the level of social identity and recognition by the audience. These bilingual signs are not only informative, but symbolic, they represent a compromise between prestige in the world and familiarity in the local.

1) English & Indonesian



Figure 12 Data 10

The banner is in both the Indonesian and English language to convey precise and interesting information. The title, “Mari Berbagi Kebahagiaan” (Let’s share happiness) is written using Indonesian so as to emotionally touch the local consumers whereas the names of the products such as Special Shrimp Spicy and Great Braised Chicken are written using English to depict sophistication and standardization.



Figure 13 Data 11

This signboard is written in both English (No Outside Food or Drinks) and Indonesian (Halal Indonesia) to ensure that everyone who has visited is able to understand the message. The official certification of “Halal Indonesia” is depicted in the upper part to enforce national religious standards and consumer confidence. Under it, the phrase is written in English that speaks directly to the population in a polite but strict manner so that even the non-Indonesian speakers would be able to abide by the rules.

2) English & Chinese



Figure 14 Data 12

The sign “Onde Onde Maker” is a combination of a Chinese word “Onde Onde” and the English word “Maker”. The word “Onde” is derived from Chinese script which means “round”. This combination forms a modern and catchy brand image that glorifies the local cuisine and attracts modern consumers. “Onde Onde” is repeated to emphasise familiarity and national pride and Maker is used to enhance creativity and internationalism.



Figure 15 Data 13

The “海底捞火锅 Haidilao Hot Pot” sign has a perfect representation of the bilingual system with both English and Chinese being used together. The Chinese (海底捞火锅/ Hǎidǐ lāo huǒguō)

writing emphasizes the origin and authenticity of the restaurants and will attract any customers who speak the Mandarin language or understand Chinese foods. In the meantime, the English version “Haidilao Hot Pot” has an informational role to non-Chinese readers, which is very inclusive.



Figure 16 Data 14

The mark “三六九 369 Shanghai Dumpling and Noodle” is a mixture of both numerical and linguistic elements which are a combination of Chinese as well as English. Chinese numerals are shown in the red vertical rectangle on the left (三六九/sān liù jiǔ), which directly translates to “369” which stands out in English next to this number.

3) English & French



Figure 17 Data 15

The sign of “Monsieur Spoon” directly reflects the French aspects but can be easily read by the English speakers. “Monsieur”, which is “Mister” in English, has cultural implications of elegance and formality, which creates the image of the French patisserie culture. “Spoon”, on the other hand, is English and allows the non-French audience to receive a semantic clarity between the style and understanding.

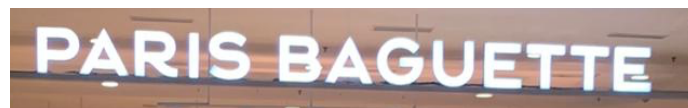


Figure 18 Data 16

The sign “Paris Baguette” combines both English and French words to create the image of authenticity and the world quality. The use of “Paris” as a symbolic allusion to the culinary excellence immediately makes people associate the concept of elegance, romance, and high-quality bakery. At the same time, the name of the brand, “Baguette” gives the name a distinctly French meaning to the brand, despite the fact that some of the customers may not speak French.

4) English & Japanese



Figure 19 Data 17

The signage "Gold Cake" has a writing in Japanese Katakana on top (ゴールドケーキ) and English on the is written as "Original Japanese Cake". These two languages labeling supports the cultural nature of the product, underlining its Japanese heritage, and yet making sure that non-Japanese users of this product can tell what it is all about.



Figure 20 Data 18

The sign "Chikuro" fuses English letters with Japanese Katakana characters (チクロ/Chikuro) with the help of the tagline "WORLD'S 1st LONG FILLED CRUNCHY CHICKEN". The combination of scripts and linguistic associations of the brand with Japanese culinary creativity makes it readable across the international audience as well. The Katakana text is authentic and makes it seem like it was created or inspired by the Japanese, but the English tagline is future-directed, providing lexical clarity and encouraging innovation.

5) English & Korean

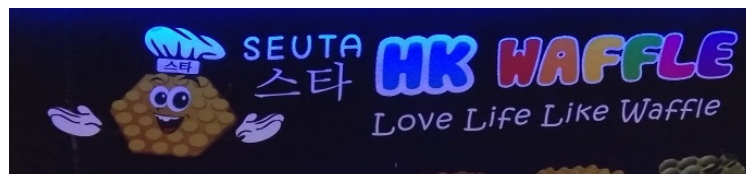


Figure 21 Data 19

The sign combines the elements of English and Korean language with colors and the playful design that catches the eyes. "SEUTA", or "스타" in Korean, means "star" and the brand name is visually enforced in two alphabets. "HK WAFFLE", which means "Hong Kong Waffle" and "Love Life Like Waffle" are used as English words and slogans, which introduce a globalized and light-hearted tone, which welcomes the audiences, both local and international.

6) English & Thai



Figure 22 Data 20

The sign " Thai Coconut Pancake" is written in big and white English letters with a Thai translation under it (แพนเค้กมะพร้าวไทย/Phæn khêk maphrâw thiy). The English usage is useful as those who do not speak Thai can find the name of the product and its nationality with ease since it is spelled Thai.

7) Indonesian & Arabic



Figure 23 Data 21

The sign has the logo of the “Majelis Ulama Indonesia” (MUI) with the word “Halal” written in big Arabic letters in the center and encircled by the Indonesian text “Majelis Ulama Indonesia”. This two-language presentation has an informational role. Arabic means religious cleanness and compliance with Islamic food regulations whereas Indonesian can be used to give institutional clarity to local listeners. The circular design and green color of the sign have a cultural meaning, they represent faith, safety and harmony that is linked to Islam and the national identity of Indonesia.

8) Indonesian & Japanese



Figure 24 Data 22

The sign "RamenYA!" combines Japanese Katakana and Kanji (ラーメン屋/Rāmen-ya) with Indonesian linguistics. The Japanese text is translated as “Ramen”, and the word “YA!” at the same time serves both as a Japanese particle (屋) and also as an Indonesian interjection that can be translated as “yes!” or a friendly exclamation. It is a very smart linguistic game that allows crossing two cultures in the same word, which makes the brand have a distinctive bilingual personality.

4.1.3 Multilingual

Multilingual signs use three or more languages and depict the inclusiveness and cultural diversity visually (Gorter, 2012). These signs are not numerous in the PTC Food Court and usually pertain to international or fusion brands, which focus on cosmopolitan identity. The fact that there is more than one language written down represents a globalized language environment where more than one identity can successfully coexist together (Gorter, 2023). Therefore, the usage of multilingual signs here depicts the multicultural nature of the city of Surabaya in terms of commercial character and shows how linguistic diversity serves as a semiotic means of expression, which conveys openness, creativity, and international orientation.

1) English, Indonesian, & Japanese



Figure 25 Data 23

The sign has the name of the restaurant “Yoshinoya Japanese Restaurant” displayed in English which is the most widely spoken language in the world hence it identifies its international brand name and it is easily recognizable to the international customers. The English slogan, “serving over 200,000,000 bowls a year, Yoshinoya is fast becoming a cultural icon in Japan”, serves to be a marketing slogan that makes the brand more successful and culturally valuable. The informational purpose of this paragraph is to provide the background information and link the Japanese brand with the Indonesian audience. Lastly, the Japanese aspect, the name of the restaurant: Yoshinoya and the smaller Japanese characters have cultural significance, connecting the brand with the Japanese cultural background in which it is a restaurant.



Figure 26 Data 24

The sign is a promotional sign displayed in English, Indonesian, and Japanese. The English slogans, which are “Yoshinoya Tori Don Crispy Chicken Bowl”, and the menu name below the bowls, shows to international customers to expand the brand’s identity more. The Indonesian scripts, such as the hashtag at the bottom of the sign, serve as a addition for local customers to find out what’s the dishes are. As for the Japanese script, it functions as a cultural heritage for a Japanese restaurant and as a symbol of Japanese dishes.

2) English, Indonesian, Japanese, & Chinese



Figure 27 Data 25

The sign, with a list of different restaurants, is a navigation tool sociolinguistic report on the rich culinary and cultural diversity of the place where it is found. It is a combination where English, Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese interact functionally to display a local identity that is constructed around global tastes and localized tradition. The most dominant one is the depiction of East Asian culinary, mostly denoted by Japanese and Chinese words. Brand names such as the “Okiwilla Sushi” and “Ippudo” show the status and reputation of authentic Japanese food worldwide. The Chinese touch is also present in the names like “Sauerkraut Fish”, “Chien Kang Tang”, and “XO Suki”. The sign is placed in the local context by means of the inclusion of Indonesian names. The national brand is popular, “Kopi Kenangan”, which means “Coffee of Memories” in English and makes the international offerings of the company be related to a well-known and heritage-based beverage. Another Indonesian term, which defines local ownership or localized theme, is the word “Fajar”, or (Dawn) in English. It uses English as the lingua franca and the main media of international brands. Words such as Signature, Fish, the use of English alphabet in all transliteration and so forth, make it universally legible. English offers an unifying and neutral platform on top of the varied language bases, enabling fast access and wayfinding among a cosmopolitan client base.

4.2 Sign Functions

This section discusses the functional roles of the signs identified in the PTC Food Court’s linguistic landscape. Drawing on the distinction between informational and symbolic functions, the analysis categorizes each sign based on its primary communicative purpose. The distribution of sign functions is presented through graphical data to illustrate the extent to which signage is used for practical communication or for expressing identity, prestige, and branding.

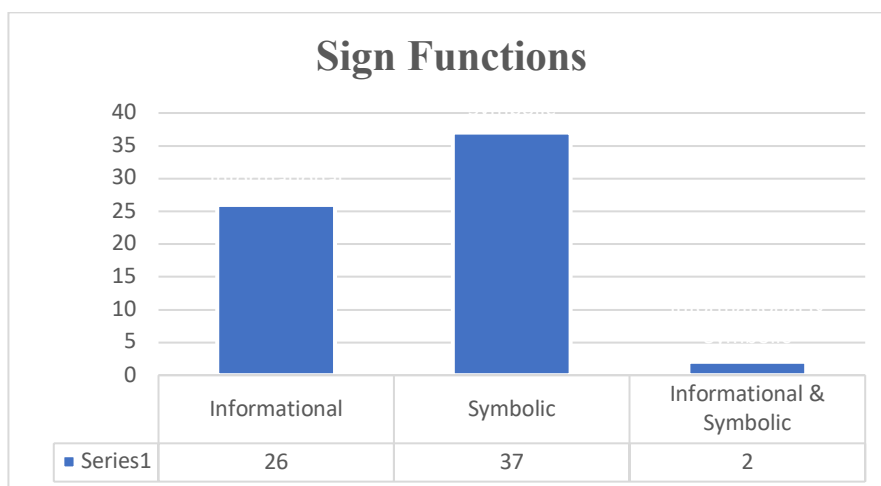


Figure 28 Chart of Sign Functions

The chart proves that the symbolic signs (37) are more than informational ones (26) as only two signs are used both. This implies that the majority of the signs in the food court of PTC are not only meant to deliver information, but also to elicit identity and style as well as brand image. The symbolic role takes the pre-eminence of 37 signs, indicating that the majority of signs are to convey image, identity or cultural values instead of merely informing. These contain the names of shops in English, or other foreign scripts that demonstrate either modern or ethnic identity. Informational signs (26), like menu or directions are aimed at being clear and accessible and two signs combine both functions, in most cases, menu signs that combine aesthetic design with useful information.

4.2.1 Informational

Informational signs are meant to guide, identify or give commands with practical communicative roles (Gorter, 2006). This can be in the form of menu boards, direction signs or advertisements that give the customers the necessary information. With the assistance of such linguistic performances, people can navigate commercial facilities, orienting and interacting in the open space (Putz, 2019). The informational signage in the PTC Food Court is most likely to be written in Indonesian to make sense or English to be understood by everyone, which demonstrates the role of language in establishing a communicative gap between different customers.



Figure 29 Data 26

This sign is written in Indonesian and is directly telling the customers about certain rules, that is, not to bring outside food and drinks and do not allow to bring animals to the dining area. The message is composed in a polite but firm way, at first it starts with the word “Mohon Maaf” to express courtesy and then with the definite prohibitive words in capital letters to make it clear. Its clarity is explained well by the use of familiar objects (like a red prohibition circle with crossed-out photos). This is an indication of the informational role because it provides simple guidelines to ensure cleanliness and order in the food court. Its location at the entrance or at the dining area makes it visible and it does not create a misconception amongst the visitors.



Figure 30 Data 27

This English sign is a direct and visually attractive way of displaying information about the products. It has an image of a roasted chicken with brief descriptive statements that show the texture and quality of the food. The huge font size of product name attracts attention instantly, whereas the tag line is rather small and does not affect the product in any way, except describing it in an explicit manner using bright adjectives, such as crispy, juicy, and perfect. Having the price in the Indonesian currency also serves its informational function so that the customers have no doubts as to the nature of the offered product and its price.



Figure 31 Data 28

This sign is a huge promotional billboard where vital business and product information is expressed. It is primarily written using the English language, but is mixed with Indonesian phrases such as the one known as “Hadir di 12 Negara and Di Seluruh Dunia”, as it focuses on the word global presence and global success of the restaurant. The key message in bold writing that includes the “6000+ outlet” and the number “40,000,000,000 Porsi Terjual” gives statistical information that supports the success and credibility of the brand. Existing in these details, the sign assumes a distinct informational task, it tells the customers the size of the brand, its fame, and its existence since 1878.

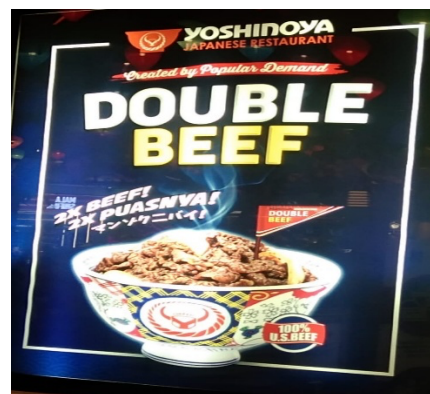


Figure 32 Data 29

This sign is a food promotion with the combination of text, images, and bilingual expressions. The most important informational element is the key phrase that is the “DOUBLE BEEF”, which helps to understand clearly what product is being sold. Such supporting texts such as as “2x Lebih Puasnya” and “100% U.S. Beef” are additional descriptions which help customers to know the quality and quantity. Use of English makes the sign look international and modern whereas the Indonesian features render it familiar to the local customers. Overall, this display is a good informational sign, it provides the customers with what is being sold, highlights its main characteristics and supports the message.

4.2.2 Symbolic

Sign has symbolic meaning, which has values, prestige, and identity associated with the use of language (Landry and Bourhis in Gorter, 2006). The symbolic meaning goes beyond literal information and it is a cultural and ideological expression (Gorter, 2023). The prevalence of English and other foreign languages in the PTC Food court indicates a tendency to modernity and global acceptance and is also an indication of local scriptures which are culturally genuine. This conforms to Holmes (2013), who concludes that language choice executes social actions of identity creation. Therefore, the symbolic signs in this setting denote the way language is used as aesthetic and ideological signifier in branding.



Figure 33 Data 30

The sign "Fried Chicken Master" has a symbolic meaning of professionalism and the competence in preparing food. The association carried by the word "Master", which is a symbol of superiority, confidence, and high-quality, places the brand in a superior position to compete in its category. The modern and international image projected here is assisted by the English language, which creates an impression in the mind of the customers that the brand is of global standards.



Figure 34 Data 31

The House of Matcha sign consists of a mixture of English and Japanese writing and has a solid cultural and aesthetic identity. The Japanese characterizes provide the sense of authenticity and origin and the English below translation allows letting more people in and understand of what the Japanese letter means.



Figure 35 Data 32

It is a symbol that reflects the prestige of the brand and its nationality, with the advantage to be Japanese with the phrase of its being "JAPAN'S No. 1 Beef Bowl". Its massive font is very white and prominent on red, which represents national colors of Japan, as well as a powerful pride. The

message of the brand of “No.1” provides not only a sense of excellence and leadership but also transforms the use of language into a metaphor of superiority and genuineness.

4.2.3 Informational & Symbolic

There are signs that do an informational and symbolic role at the same time. In multilingual cities, the boundary between these functions is not always very clear since the visual language creates meaning both in content and form (Gorter, 2023). Readable information is mixed with style foreign expressions in some of the menus and promotional boards within the PTC Food Court with regard to clarity and prestige. In this case, there are semiotic resources of language and design employed in such multimodal displays to capture attention and create identity (Putz, 2019). Thus, these two-purpose signs represent the example of how useful communication and cultural symbolism can co-exist in the commercial linguistic environment.



Figure 36 Data 33

The “Ci Pork” sign serves both informational and symbolic functions. From an informational standpoint, the sign provides essential business details such as the location “PTC Lt. UG blok E7 no 32–33”, contact numbers, and social media handle “@ciporkkerryuk”, which help customers easily find and reach the establishment. These practical elements show the sign’s role in direct communication, offering clarity and accessibility to potential customers. At the same time, the sign carries a strong symbolic dimension through its name and visual design. The playful pink pig character wearing a chef’s hat and apron represents friendliness and humor, creating a lighthearted and welcoming image. The choice of the word “Ci Pork”, a creative blend of local and English expression, gives the brand a catchy and memorable identity while signaling the type of food being served.

4.3 Language Identity and Attitude

The findings presented in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 reveal that the linguistic landscape of the PTC Food Court is shaped by deliberate language choices that reflect both the identity of the businesses and the attitudes of the community that occupies the space. The dominance of English, followed by Indonesian and several foreign languages such as Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Arabic, indicates that the food court functions as a cosmopolitan commercial environment rather than a purely local eating space.

From the perspective of business identity, the frequent use of English and other foreign languages, particularly Asian languages associated with specific cuisines, suggests that vendors aim to construct images of modernity, authenticity, and global belonging. Language choice is not neutral but performs social actions, including identity construction (Holmes, 2013). In this context, English symbolizes international prestige and trendiness, while languages such as

Japanese or Chinese symbolize culinary authenticity. The fact that symbolic signs outnumber informational ones further implies that visual language is primarily used to project brand image and cultural value, not merely to convey practical information.

From the perspective of customer attitude, the acceptance and prevalence of multilingual signage imply that the food court community holds a positive attitude toward linguistic diversity and global culture. Customers are expected to recognize, tolerate, or even value foreign languages, even when full comprehension is not required. This aligns with Landry and Bourhis's (1997) notion that symbolic functions of language reflect how a linguistic environment shapes and mirrors collective attitudes. The presence of Indonesian alongside foreign languages also suggests that while global identity is emphasized, local accessibility and national identity remain important

The linguistic landscape of the PTC Food Court reflects a community that is urban, consumption-oriented, and globally aware. Language is used as a semiotic resource to align businesses with customer expectations of modern lifestyle, cultural diversity, and international taste. Thus, the findings imply that the food court is not only a place of eating but also a site where social identity, language attitude, and globalization intersect in everyday commercial practice.

5. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The linguistic landscape of the PTC Food Court indicates how language can be used as a means of communication and as a way of cultural signification in a multicultural commercial setting. The multilingual signs in evidence, including Indonesian, English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Arabic, and Latin-form based languages along with local languages like Javanese demonstrates that the space is influenced by a wide range of languages. Both languages are used to achieve a different goal based on the circumstances under which they are used. English is the most dominant and practical language that is used equally in the signs that contain directions, prohibitions or simple details about the products. This is an implication of its status as international language and primary means of the clarity and accessibility among the masses, and English is a prestigious and modern and branding language. The additional symbolic value is added by such foreign languages as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, French and Arabic. In food related signage, languages bring out a sense of genuineness and aid in the creation of some cultural identities relating to food. The numerous signs are executed both informational and symbolic functions. They do not only give useful information about their menus or product names but also give stylistic foreign phrases, scripts and design features to show prestige or authenticity of a culture. This intertwining of roles is indicative of the characteristics of multimodal commercial signage in which the use of language, typography and imagery combined to achieve attention and influence brand identity. The interaction between informational and symbolic functions demonstrates that signage does more than convey practical messages; it also shapes perceptions, identities, and cultural meanings within space. The findings support the idea that linguistic landscapes are socially constructed and reflective of the attitudes, values, and identities of both businesses and their customers. Overall, the linguistic diversity of the PTC Food Court illustrates how language becomes a strategic resource in commercial settings, facilitating communication while simultaneously constructing cultural authenticity, market distinction, and a vibrant multilingual identity.

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