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Author : Mhd. Pujiono dan Murniati Br. Barus  
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# Linguistic Landscape of Japanese Culinary in Medan

Mhd. Pujiono, Murniati Br. Barus

*Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia*

[mhd.pujiono@usu.ac.id](mailto:mhd.pujiono@usu.ac.id)

## Abstract

In Medan, there are many culinary businesses with the theme of Japanese culture. Numerous symbols and linguistic units serve as cultural markers in Japanese society. This study seeks to identify the language variants that occur and to determine what will be constructed from the predominant language variants. This study examines the linguistic landscape using a qualitative approach and sociolinguistic analysis. The data provides a visual representation of the linguistic landscape of a culinary business in Medan, Indonesia, that focuses on Japanese culture. The findings of this study indicate that the Japanese linguistic landscape employed by culinary businesses in the city of Medan varies across monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual languages, namely Bahasa Indonesia, Japanese, and English. The predominance of Japanese and English indicates that the Japanese culinary business in Medan is aimed at Indonesians who are familiar with or interested in Japanese culture. Japanese and English predominate, indicating that Medan's culinary business caters to Indonesians who are familiar with or interested in Japanese culture.

Keywords: Linguistic Landscape; Japanese Language; Japanese Culinary; Medan City

## 1. Introduction

Japan has enormous cultural influence. In addition to the vigorous promotional efforts, its uniqueness also contributes to its success. Due to this, numerous Japanese cultural products are well-known in other nations, including Indonesia.

Japanese culinary delicacies are among Indonesia's major cities' most popular cultural products. There are Japanese-themed restaurants and snacks in Indonesia's major cities, such as Medan. The Japanese theme is presented as linguistic signs that are traditional and popular in Japanese culture.

The characteristics of linguistic signs that mark public spaces, such as street signs, site names, roads, buildings, places, and institutions, as well as billboards, advertisements, and even personal business cards, are known as linguistic landscapes [1]. Written language features in public spaces serve various purposes, including commercial matters. Signs of language intended for commercial matters are frequently observed in business entities such as restaurants. Cenoz and Gorter [2] stated that many language signs posted on the street have an economic meaning. These language signs can inform about the location of the shop or what types of goods are sold.

The study in this paper was inspired by research conducted by Huebner [3], who examined the linguistic landscape in Bangkok, Thailand. Huebner analyzes multilingualism, code-mixing, and language changes that occur. Therefore, this study focuses on language variations in the public sphere that shape the linguistic landscape of Japanese culinary businesses. The language sign was taken from a culinary business in Medan. This study was conducted to determine "what is the linguistic landscape of Japanese restaurants in the city of Medan?" Therefore, this study aims to describe the language variations used in the names of Japanese restaurants in Medan that describe Japanese cultural identity.

Research related to the linguistic landscape in Indonesia has been studied by Darmawan et al [4]. They found forms of language used in public signs around tourist objects in Samosir Regency, North Sumatra, in the form of multilingual, bilingual, prominent translation results and language politeness strategies. Furthermore, Sahril, et al. [5], who researched Linguistic Landscapes in Medan, found that there was competition between Indonesian and English. The choice of English in the linguistic landscape of the city of Medan is driven by commercial elements, which cause Indonesian to be sidelined.

The novelty of this research is to look at the Linguistic Landscape of Japanese culinary businesses in the city of Medan, which is growing fast and popular. Based on the linguistic situation utilized in Landscape Linguistics, Japanese culinary business can

reveal a representation of Japanese cultural identity in restaurants, providing an understanding of the linguistic landscape forms that influence the economic value of a place. Thus, this research contributes to the advancement of Landscape Linguistics studies in Indonesia and provides an overview of the cultural identity of Japanese chefs.

The analysis is based on [1] the theory of language contact, and the concept of identity. According to Landry and Bourhis [1], a linguistic landscape refers to the visibility and salience of language on public and commercial signs in a particular region or area. Meanwhile, according to Shohamy and Gorter [5], a linguistic landscape refers to language and other things around it, such as pictures, sounds, buildings, clothes or even people. In Landscape Linguistics, the language in the environment, the words and images that are displayed and exposed in public spaces, take centre stage.

## 2. Method

This is a qualitative study employing sociolinguistic analysis. The data consists of linguistic characteristics of culinary businesses' names, decorations, and menus. The data sources include photographs of menus, signs, and décor in Japanese restaurants in Medan. Photographs of restaurant signs, decorations, and menus in Japanese restaurants in Medan are used to collect the data. The data in the form of photographs are then categorized and analyzed based on the language variation.

## 3. Method

According to research conducted by Cenoz and Gorter [2], the linguistic landscape is a description of the state of language in a specific location. This research utilizes photographs of Japanese restaurants in the city of Medan.

### 3.1. The use of language on the signboards of Japanese restaurants in Medan

Ten data represent the name of the culinary business board, which is the subject of this study. 1 data uses a combination of Indonesian and Japanese, 5 data uses a combination of Japanese and English, and 4 data uses Japanese, as determined by the classification of data according to the language used on restaurant signage.

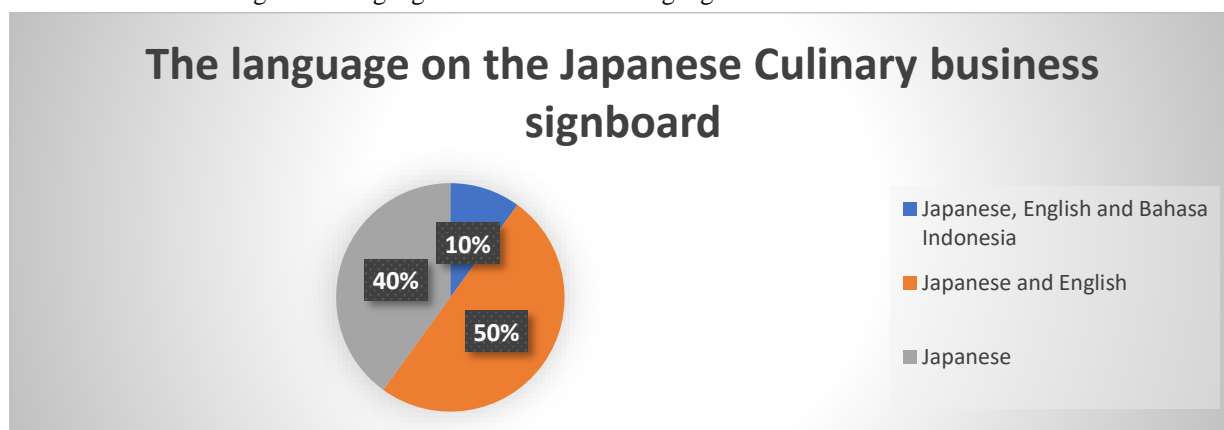


Figure 1. Percentage of language use on Japanese culinary business nameplates

The languages Indonesian, English, and Japanese are those that are used to denote the linguistic landscape in the figure that is located above. Japanese and English are the languages that are used most frequently.

### 3.2. Language Variations on Japanese Restaurant Signboards in Medan

The following will provide an explanation of the various language options available in Japanese culinary businesses in Medan, including monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual options.

#### 3.2.1. Monolingual Variation

Monolingual variation is when speakers use the same language in communication. Figure 2 shows the name of a Japanese culinary business that sells sushi as the main menu. Both establishments use standard Japanese, such as "tomo sushi" and "sushi mentai." Both are Japanese and written in Latin characters. On sushi mentai, the Japanese character (kanji) 寿司明太 is also displayed, which has the same reading method as the Latin letters. Meanwhile, for tomo shushi, only one Japanese character (kanji) is used, 友 which reads "tomo," which is the same as part of the business name.



Figure 2. Example of a signboard for a Japanese culinary business in Medan with monolingual variations

3.2.2. Bilingual Variation

Bilingual variation is when speakers use two different languages in communication. Bilingual on linguistic landscape means that there are two languages on landscape signage. Figure 3.1 is a ramen restaurant called Ramen So Joy. This restaurant sells various types of ramen, such as original ramen and bulgogi ramen. The languages used in Figure 3 are Japanese and English, with various standard languages. Variety of standard language on the words "ramen" and "so joy". In terms of language, the restaurant uses Latin letters.



Figure 3. Example of a Japanese culinary business signboard in Medan with a bilingual language variation

Then figure 3 shows a culinary business called Tako Takoyaki. This restaurant sells traditional Japanese food, namely takoyaki. The languages used in Figure 3 are Japanese and English. Japanese is written in Latin characters. This shows that the nameplate for this culinary business translates Japanese characters. The word "Japanese Cuisine" is an affirmation in English that Takoyaki is a typical Japanese food.

3.2.3. Multilingual Variation



Figure 4. Example of a Japanese culinary business nameplate in Medan with multilingual language variations

Multilingual language variation is the use of several languages in communication. Multilingual on landscape linguistics displays multiple languages on landscape nameplate. Figure 4 is a picture of a culinary business with a combination of Indonesian, English and Japanese on the nameplate. The word "Takoyaki" is Japanese and refers to a typical Japanese meal. While the sentence "kami menyediakan menu istimewa, silahkan mampir ya guyssss" is a combination of Indonesian and English, which is useful



for explaining the uniqueness of the Takoyaki being sold. The word “guysss” at the end of the sentence and menu names that appear like “chicken holic” is in English. The variety of languages used in figure 4 is standard and casual languages.

### 3.3. Language Dominance

According to an analysis of the linguistic diversity present on Japanese culinary industry business boards in Medan, English and Japanese are the two most frequently used languages. This is just one illustration:



Figure 5. Example of a Japanese culinary business in Medan dominated by Japanese and English

Figure 5 displays Japanese restaurants with "shaburi" and "Mirai." "Shaburi" sells grilled meat and the traditional Japanese dish *shabu-shabu*. The target consumers are not only Japanese or people who understand Japanese culture but also Indonesians and foreign immigrant communities. This can be seen from the use of Japanese and English in Figure 5. The Japanese language is also displayed in two characters, Latin and Japanese characters (kanji).



Figure 6. Example of a Japanese culinary business in Medan dominated by Japanese and English

Figure 6 shows an image of the menu from *Warung Ramen So Joy*. *Warung Ramen So Joy* uses Indonesian, English and Japanese to explain their menu. In addition, there is the word *halal* and a logo of a hijab-wearing woman eating ramen. It can be concluded that the target visitors are predominantly Muslim Indonesians.

### 3.4. Character Contest

Based on data analysis, various characters are used on the signboards of Japanese restaurants in Medan, namely Latin and Japanese characters. On the nameplate of a Japanese culinary business, a positive language attitude is shown in the use of a single character, Latin. For example, in figure 6, this Japanese restaurant only uses Latin characters to describe the restaurant. Whereas in the bilingual variation, the nameplate for Japanese culinary businesses in Figure 5 shows character contestation, namely the use of Japanese characters combined with Latin characters. The construction of this character combination aims to highlight the characteristics of a Japanese restaurant as a restaurant identity.

Due to the prevalence of Japanese and English on the nameplates of Japanese culinary businesses and the linguistic landscape of the nameplates, it can be concluded that Japanese culinary businesses in Medan cater to Indonesians and foreigners unfamiliar with Japanese culture. Cenoz and Gorter's opinion [2] states that many language signs posted on the street contain economic

meanings. Japanese linguistic signs with existing characters aim to attract interest and introduce Japanese cultural identity to Indonesian society.

#### 4. Conclusion

The linguistic landscape of Japanese culinary businesses in Medan exhibits monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual variations, as shown by the results of the preceding analysis. Indonesian, English, and Japanese are the languages utilized. The dominance of Japanese and English shows that the Japanese culinary business in the city of Medan is intended for Indonesians who are familiar with Japanese culture or want to know Japanese culinary culture. This can represent that Japanese cultural identity in the dominance of language and character variations is considered to be able to provoke consumer interest. However, the tendency to use foreign languages (Japanese and English) also shows a negative attitude toward using the National language (Indonesian). Foreign cultural symbols tend to be more attractive and attractive than Indonesian.

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