Russian Journal of Linguistics
ISSN 2687-0088 (Print), ISSN 2686-8024 (Online)

2026 Vol. 30 No. 3 682–710
http://journals.rudn.ru/linguistics

https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-46764
EDN: NWWFPV

Research article / Научная статья

Glocal signs in the city: English, Indonesian and foreign languages in Depok's linguistic landscape

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Abstract

In contemporary urban environments, public signage reflects not only language use but also broader processes of globalization, identity construction, and language commodification. This study investigates the linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, Depok, Indonesia, focusing on the representation of Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages in commercial signage. It aims to analyze how linguistic resources are displayed in urban commercial space and to identify the symbolic meanings and commercial values associated with their use. This study employed a mixed-methods case study design. Data consisted of 601 commercial signs documented through photographic observation and 40 semi-structured interviews with business owners or managers. Visual data were analyzed using the Linguistic Landscape framework, while interview data and field notes were examined through thematic analysis. The findings reveal that monolingual Indonesian signage remains the dominant form of commercial communication, followed by English, bilingual, multilingual, and hybrid signs. English was particularly visible in businesses associated with urban lifestyles, education, and services, whereas Japanese, Korean, and Arabic appeared in more specialized sectors. Interview findings indicate that language choice is influenced not only by communicative needs but also by symbolic and economic considerations. English is commonly associated with modernity, prestige, and global connectedness; Japanese with authenticity; Korean with popular culture; and Arabic with religious trust and legitimacy. The coexistence of these linguistic resources reflects a process of glocalization in which global and local influences are negotiated within a shared commercial environment. The study concludes that languages in commercial signage function simultaneously as communicative resources, symbolic capital, and economic assets. The linguistic landscape of Margonda Street demonstrates how foreign languages acquire commercial value while Indonesian continues to serve as a central marker of accessibility and local identity.

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Keywords: *linguistic landscape; glocalization; language commodification; linguistic capital; commercial signage*

For citation:
Supriatnoko, Nur Hasyim & Taufik Nur Hidayat. 2026. Glocal signs in the city: English, Indonesian and foreign languages in Depok's linguistic landscape. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 30 (3). 682–710. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-46764 EDN: NWWFPV

Глокальные знаки в городе: английский, индонезийский и иностранные языки в языковом ландшафте Депока

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Аннотация
В современных городских условиях публичные вывески отражают не только использование языка, но и более широкие процессы глобализации, формирования идентичности и коммерциализации языка. В данном исследовании изучается языковой ландшафт улицы Маргонда в Депоке, Индонезия, с акцентом на представлении индонезийского, английского и других иностранных языков в коммерческих вывесках. Цель исследования — проанализировать, как языковые ресурсы отображаются в городском коммерческом пространстве, и выявить символические значения и коммерческие ценности, связанные с их использованием. В исследовании использовался смешанный метод исследования на основе анализа конкретных случаев. Данные включали 601 коммерческий знак, задокументированный посредством фотосъемки, и 40 полуструктурированных интервью с владельцами или менеджерами предприятий. Визуальные данные анализировались с использованием концепции «лингвистического ландшафта», а данные интервью и полевые заметки изучались с помощью тематического анализа. Результаты показывают, что моноязычные индонезийские вывески остаются доминирующей формой коммерческой коммуникации, за ними следуют английские, двуязычные, многоязычные и гибридные вывески. Английский язык был особенно заметен в предприятиях, связанных с городским образом жизни, образованием и услугами, в то время как японский, корейский и арабский языки встречались в более специализированных секторах. Результаты интервью показывают, что выбор языка обусловлен не только коммуникативными потребностями, но и символическими и экономическими соображениями. Английский язык обычно ассоциируется с современностью, престижем и глобальной взаимосвязью; японский — с аутентичностью; корейский — с популярной культурой; а арабский — с религиозным доверием и легитимностью. Сосуществование этих языковых ресурсов отражает процесс глокализации, в котором глобальные и локальные влияния взаимодействуют в рамках общей коммерческой среды. Исследование приходит к выводу, что языки в коммерческих вывесках одновременно функционируют как коммуникативные ресурсы, символический капитал и экономические активы. Языковой ландшафт улицы Маргонда демонстрирует, как иностранные языки приобретают коммерческую ценность, в то время как индонезийский продолжает служить центральным маркером доступности и местной идентичности.
Ключевые слова: *языковой ландшафт; глокализация; коммерциализация языка; языковой капитал; коммерческая вывеска*

Для цитирования:
Supriatnoko, Hasyim N., Hidayat T.N. Glocal signs in the city: English, Indonesian and foreign languages in Depok's linguistic landscape. *Russian Journal of Linguistics.* 2026. Vol. 30. № 3. P. 682–710. https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-46764 EDN: NWWFPV

1. Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, language has become more than a medium of communication. In public spaces, languages displayed on signs, billboards, storefronts, and advertisements serve important symbolic and social functions, reflecting identity, cultural values, and economic aspirations. This phenomenon has attracted considerable attention in linguistic landscape research, which examines the visibility and salience of languages in public spaces and explores how language choices contribute to the construction of social meaning. As cities become increasingly interconnected through globalization while simultaneously maintaining local cultural identities, public signs often reflect the interaction between global and local linguistic resources. This phenomenon, commonly described as glocalization, is particularly visible in multilingual urban landscapes where global languages coexist with national and local languages.

Over the past two decades, linguistic landscape research has expanded significantly across different sociolinguistic contexts. Previous studies have examined the distribution of languages in urban spaces, the coexistence of global and local languages, and the symbolic meanings associated with multilingual signage. These studies have demonstrated that language choices in public signs often reflect broader social processes, including globalization, identity negotiation, and language commodification. As a result, linguistic landscapes are increasingly viewed as important sites where linguistic, cultural, and economic interests intersect.

In Indonesia, linguistic landscape research has similarly gained momentum. Existing studies have investigated language use in commercial districts, tourist destinations, educational institutions, and public recreational spaces. For example, Zahara and Wijana (2022) examined the linguistic landscape along Khatib Sulaiman Street in Padang, focusing on the distribution of monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signs as well as the functions of English in public signage. Muhlisin and Borgin (2025) analysed language use in tourism-related signage in Yogyakarta, highlighting the coexistence of Indonesian and foreign languages within a prominent tourist area. Studies conducted in Depok have also explored language use in public spaces. Supriatnoko et al. (2023) investigated linguistic signs and cultural symbols in village parks across Depok, while Supriatnoko (2024) examined language use and cultural representation in Depok City Square Park. Collectively, these studies have contributed to our understanding of language visibility and multilingual practices in Indonesian public spaces.

Despite these contributions, several gaps remain in the existing literature. First, previous studies have largely focused on documenting language distribution,

classifying signs according to language combinations, or examining language use in recreational and tourism settings. Comparatively less attention has been paid to how languages are strategically deployed in commercial environments to construct market-oriented identities and appeal to diverse consumer groups. Second, while the presence of English in Indonesian public signage has been widely documented, fewer studies have explored how English interacts with Indonesian and local languages within a single urban commercial space to create what may be described as a glocal linguistic landscape. Consequently, the relationship between multilingual signage, branding practices, and identity construction in micro-urban commercial environments remains insufficiently understood.

Although previous studies have documented the presence of English, Indonesian, and local languages in various public spaces, limited attention has been paid to how these linguistic resources interact to construct glocal meanings within commercial environments. Existing research has largely examined language distribution and visibility, whereas less is known about how language choices simultaneously communicate global aspirations, local identities, and market positioning. Consequently, the role of multilingual signage as a form of glocal practice in Indonesian urban commercial spaces remains insufficiently theorized.

This gap is particularly relevant in the context of Depok, a rapidly growing urban area located on the southern periphery of Jakarta. As an educational and commercial hub with a highly mobile and diverse population, Depok provides a unique setting in which global, national, and local linguistic resources coexist and interact. Margonda Street, one of the city's main commercial corridors, offers an especially rich site for investigating these interactions because its public signage displays varying combinations of Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages, including Japanese, Korean, and Arabic. These linguistic choices not only reflect communication needs but also reveal broader strategies of identity representation and audience targeting.

Against this background, the present study examines the linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, Depok, with particular attention to the representation of English, Indonesian, and other foreign languages in commercial signage. Rather than focusing solely on language distribution, the study investigates how different linguistic resources function as symbolic resources and contribute to the construction of glocal meanings within an urban commercial environment. By doing so, it seeks to contribute to current discussions on glocalization in linguistic landscape research while also expanding understanding of the symbolic functions and commercial value of multilingual practices in contemporary Indonesian cities.

By examining the interaction between English, Indonesian, and other foreign languages in commercial signage, this study contributes to linguistic landscape scholarship in three ways. First, it extends existing research on multilingual signage in Indonesia by focusing on a dynamic urban commercial environment. Second, it advances understanding of glocalization processes in urban commercial signage by demonstrating how global, national, and foreign linguistic resources coexist and

generate distinct symbolic meanings within a shared commercial space. Third, it illustrates how languages acquire symbolic and economic value within commercial environments, thereby linking linguistic landscape research with broader discussions of linguistic capital and language commodification.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. How are English, Indonesian, and foreign languages represented in the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, Depok?
2. What symbolic functions do these languages perform within the commercial environment?
3. How does the interaction of these linguistic resources reflect processes of glocalization in an urban commercial space?

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Linguistic landscape

Linguistic landscape (LL) refers to the visibility and salience of languages displayed in public spaces through road signs, street names, advertising billboards, commercial shop signs, public notices, and institutional signage. The concept was initially defined as the language appearing on public and commercial signs within a given territory and has since developed into a major area of sociolinguistic inquiry. Linguistic landscape research examines not only which languages appear in public spaces but also how language choices reflect broader social, cultural, economic, and political processes.

Two fundamental functions of linguistic landscape have been widely recognized: the informational function and the symbolic function. The informational function relates to the practical role of signs in conveying information, guiding movement, or identifying places and services. The symbolic function, by contrast, concerns the social meanings attached to language choices. The visibility of a particular language may signal prestige, identity, social status, cultural affiliation, or ideological orientation. Consequently, linguistic landscapes provide valuable insights into language hierarchies, multilingual practices, and power relations within a community (Landry & Bourhis 1997).

Contemporary linguistic landscape studies have expanded beyond the mere documentation of languages displayed in public spaces. Recent research increasingly views public signage as a site where social actors negotiate identities, represent cultural values, and communicate economic aspirations. Linguistic landscapes therefore function as semiotic spaces in which language interacts with images, typography, colour, and spatial arrangement to create meaning and influence public perception (Shohamy & Gorter 2009, Gorter 2013).

In contemporary urban environments, linguistic landscapes increasingly reflect the effects of globalization and transnational mobility. The coexistence of multiple languages within commercial spaces demonstrates how local communities engage with global cultural and economic influences through language. As a result,

linguistic landscapes have become important sites for examining glocalization, where global and local linguistic resources interact, coexist, and acquire new meanings within specific sociocultural contexts. This perspective is particularly relevant for understanding multilingual commercial signage in rapidly developing urban areas such as Depok.

2.2. Language, identity, and symbolic capital

Language choices in public signs are rarely neutral. Languages often carry symbolic meanings that extend beyond their communicative functions and become associated with particular social identities, cultural values, and forms of prestige. From a sociological perspective, language can be understood as a form of symbolic capital through which individuals and institutions position themselves within social hierarchies. Certain languages acquire greater symbolic value because they are associated with education, economic opportunity, modernity, or cultural authority (Bourdieu 1991). In Bourdieu's framework, linguistic resources possess unequal values within particular social fields, allowing certain languages to function as linguistic capital that can be converted into social recognition, symbolic prestige and, in contexts where particular linguistic resources are valued in the marketplace, contribute to economic opportunities.

Within multilingual societies, public signage frequently reflects processes of identity construction and identity negotiation. The selection of one language over another may indicate alignment with local traditions, national identity, or global culture. Public signs therefore become important symbolic resources through which social groups express belonging, distinction, and cultural positioning.

Research in linguistic landscape studies has demonstrated that multilingual signs often communicate more than information. They may signal social aspirations, cultural legitimacy, ethnic identity, or political authority. The symbolic value attached to a language frequently influences how individuals interpret businesses, institutions, and urban spaces. Consequently, linguistic landscapes offer a valuable lens for understanding the relationship between language, power, and identity in contemporary urban environments (Huebner 2006, Pütz 2020).

Recent studies further suggest that public signage contributes to the semiotic representation of cities. Through language choice, typography, visual design, and spatial arrangement, signs collectively construct what may be described as a semiotic portrait of urban life. In this sense, linguistic landscapes participate actively in shaping how cities are imagined, experienced, and represented by residents and visitors alike (Leontovich & Kotelnikova 2022).

The symbolic value attached to particular languages may also generate economic value in commercial contexts. Languages associated with prestige, authenticity, cosmopolitanism, or cultural authority are often strategically employed to enhance product appeal, attract consumers, and differentiate businesses from competitors. Consequently, linguistic resources may function not only as markers of identity but also as valuable assets within commercial and

market-oriented environments, linking questions of language, identity, and symbolic capital to broader processes of language commodification (Heller 2010, Duchêne & Heller 2012).

2.3. Glocalization and commercial signage

One of the most significant developments in contemporary linguistic landscape research concerns the concept of glocalization. Glocalization refers to the simultaneous interaction between global and local forces, where global influences are adapted, negotiated, and reinterpreted within local contexts. In linguistic landscapes, this process is often visible through the coexistence of global languages, national languages, and other foreign languages within the same public space.

English occupies a particularly prominent position within this process because it is widely associated with globalization, international mobility, technological advancement, and modern lifestyles. However, other foreign languages may also acquire symbolic significance within specific commercial sectors. Languages such as Japanese, Korean, and Arabic often evoke associations with authenticity, popular culture, cultural prestige, or religious values. Consequently, the presence of foreign languages in commercial signage frequently extends beyond communicative purposes and contributes to the construction of symbolic meanings and consumer appeal (Piller 2016, Kelly-Holmes 2005).

National languages contribute to inclusiveness, accessibility, and local relevance, while foreign languages often index modernity, authenticity, cosmopolitanism, cultural prestige, or religious affiliation. The coexistence of these linguistic resources creates what may be described as a glocal linguistic landscape in which global influences and local identities are simultaneously expressed, negotiated, and reinterpreted.

2.4. Language commodification and commercial value

Recent studies of urban linguistic landscapes suggest that multilingual signage functions not merely as a communicative tool but also as a mechanism of language commodification. In commercial contexts, languages become marketable resources that can enhance the attractiveness of products, services, and places. Language choice therefore reflects strategic decisions regarding audience targeting, market positioning, and symbolic representation (Heller 2010, Zoumpalidis & Simsek 2025).

Language commodification refers to the process through which linguistic resources acquire exchange value and become marketable assets within economic activities. In contemporary economies, languages are increasingly treated not only as means of communication but also as resources that can generate profit, attract consumers, and enhance the marketability of products and services. As a result, particular languages may be strategically employed because of the symbolic values

they carry rather than their communicative necessity (Heller 2010, Duchêne & Heller 2012).

The commodification of language is closely connected to Bourdieu's notion of symbolic and linguistic capital. Languages associated with prestige, modernity, authenticity, cosmopolitanism, or cultural authority often possess higher symbolic value within particular social fields. In commercial contexts, these symbolic meanings can be converted into economic value when businesses utilize specific languages to enhance brand attractiveness, differentiate themselves from competitors, and appeal to desired consumer groups (Bourdieu 1991).

Research has shown that foreign languages frequently function as valuable commercial resources in multilingual marketplaces. English is commonly associated with modernity and global connectedness, while other foreign languages may evoke authenticity, cultural prestige, trendiness, or religious legitimacy depending on the sociocultural context. Consequently, language choice in commercial signage often reflects broader attempts to transform symbolic meanings into economic advantages (Kelly-Holmes 2005, Piller 2016).

This perspective provides an important framework for understanding the use of English, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, and Arabic in the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street. Rather than viewing these languages solely as communicative resources, the present study examines how they acquire symbolic meanings and economic value within a rapidly developing urban commercial environment. Through this lens, commercial signage becomes a site where language, identity, globalization, and market interests intersect.

3. Data and methodology

3.1. Research design

This study employed a mixed-methods case study design to investigate the linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, Depok. The study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine both the distribution of languages in commercial signage and the meanings associated with language choices. The mixed-methods approach was selected because linguistic landscape research benefits from the integration of numerical patterns and contextual interpretation. Quantitative data provide information regarding language frequency and distribution, whereas qualitative data facilitate the interpretation of symbolic meanings, linguistic values, glocal identities, and commercial functions associated with language use in urban public spaces (Creswell & Plano Clark 2018).

The case study approach was considered appropriate because Margonda Street represents a distinctive multilingual urban environment where Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages coexist within a highly commercialized setting. As one of Depok's principal commercial corridors, the area offers a rich context for examining how linguistic resources are represented, negotiated, and commodified within contemporary urban life. The case study design therefore enabled an in-

depth investigation of the relationships between language choice, symbolic meaning, glocalization, and commercial activity within a specific sociocultural context (Yin 2018).

3.2. Research site and data sources

The study was conducted along Margonda Street, Depok, West Java, Indonesia. The area was selected because it functions as one of the city's principal commercial and educational corridors, attracting a highly diverse population that includes local residents, university students, commuters, and visitors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As a rapidly developing urban space characterized by intensive commercial activity and multilingual public communication, Margonda Street provides a particularly suitable setting for examining the interaction between Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages within a glocal linguistic landscape.

The primary data consisted of 601 commercial signs documented from business storefronts along Margonda Street, Depok, West Java, Indonesia. The survey area was defined as the commercial corridor along Margonda Street, covering the continuous stretch of the road in which business establishments and their publicly visible signage were located. Data collection followed the street corridor systematically, with observations conducted along both sides of the road. Commercial signs were included when they were publicly visible from the street and were associated with an identifiable business establishment. Each eligible sign encountered along the observation route was photographed and recorded as a separate observation. Where identical or repeated signs belonging to the same business occurred at the same location, they were treated as a single signage unit to avoid duplication; however, visually distinct signs serving different communicative functions were recorded separately. The resulting dataset comprised 601 signage units, including restaurants, cafés, retail stores, clinics, educational institutions, printing services, financial establishments, and other commercial enterprises. Following common practices in linguistic landscape research, commercial signage was treated as a visible manifestation of language use in public space through which social, cultural, and economic meanings can be observed (Landry & Bourhis, 1997; Shohamy & Gorter, 2009).

To complement the visual data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 40 business owners or managers who were directly involved in naming, branding, or promotional decisions. The interviews were intended to explore the motivations underlying language choice and the meanings associated with the use of Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages in commercial signage. In addition, field observations were carried out to document the broader sociolinguistic context in which the signs were displayed.

3.3 Data collection

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: photographic documentation, semi-structured interviews, and field observation. First, photographic documentation was conducted to capture all visible commercial signs along the selected sections of Margonda Street. The photographic data were collected from **7 May to 5 July 2025**, during which a total of 601 signs were photographed and catalogued. Each sign was recorded with information concerning its location, business category, language composition, and visual characteristics. Semi-structured interviews with **40 business owners** were subsequently conducted from **2 to 23 July 2025** to obtain contextual information about language choices and signage practices. Field observations were conducted throughout the data-collection period to document the broader linguistic and commercial context of the surveyed area. Accordingly, the 601 signs represent the linguistic landscape of the surveyed corridor during the specified data-collection period

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 40 business owners or managers selected through random sampling from eligible business establishments identified in the surveyed area. The selected participants were approached directly at their business premises and invited to participate. The interviewees represented 25 business sectors, including restaurants, food establishments, photocopying and printing services, clinics, showrooms, optical businesses, supermarkets, beauty salons, coffee shops, fashion businesses, workshops, building-material stores, travel and adventure services, interior-decoration businesses, offices, delivery services, food stalls, electronic repair services, pharmacies, laundries, pawnshops, training institutions, music studios, and massage services. The distribution of the 40 interviewees across these sectors is presented in Table 1. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian from 2 to 23 July 2025 and lasted approximately 30–45 minutes, depending on participants' availability and the depth of discussion. The interviews explored participants' motivations for language selection, perceptions of target consumers, symbolic meanings associated with different languages, and the perceived commercial value of Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages in business signage. Depending on the circumstances and participants' consent, responses were either audio-recorded or documented through contemporaneous notetaking. Recorded interviews were transcribed, while notes from non-recorded interviews were subsequently organized into written accounts. The Indonesian interview data were then translated into English for analytical reporting. Formal thematic saturation was not assessed as a separate sampling criterion; instead, the study relied on the predetermined sample of 40 randomly selected participants to obtain perspectives from a range of business sectors represented in the surveyed area.

Third, field observations were undertaken to document the broader sociolinguistic environment in which the signs were situated. Observational notes focused on business characteristics, customer profiles, surrounding commercial activities, and contextual factors that could influence language choice and signage practices.

Table 1

Distribution of 40 Informants

No.	Business sector	Interviewees
1	Restaurants	3
2	Food establishments	3
3	Photocopying services	2
4	Printing services	2
5	Clinics	2
6	Showrooms	2
7	Optical businesses	1
8	Supermarkets	1
9	Beauty salons	2
10	Coffee shops	2
11	Fashion businesses	2
12	Workshops	2
13	Building-material stores	2
14	Travel and adventure services	2
15	Interior-decoration businesses	1
16	Offices	1
17	Delivery services	1
18	Food stalls	2
19	Electronic repair services	1
20	Pharmacies	1
21	Laundries	1
22	Pawnshops	1
23	Training institutions	1
24	Music studios	1
25	Massage services	1
Total		**40**

The use of multiple data sources enabled methodological triangulation, allowing findings from signage analysis, interviews, and observations to be cross-validated and thereby enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Denzin 1978, Creswell & Poth 2018).

3.4. Data analysis

The visual data were analysed using the Linguistic Landscape framework developed by Landry and Bourhis (1997). The individual commercial sign constituted the unit of analysis, with each sign treated as a distinct, visually identifiable signage unit associated with a particular business establishment. The 601 signs were coded according to their observable linguistic composition and classified as monolingual, bilingual, multilingual, or hybrid. Monolingual signs contained identifiable linguistic material from one language; bilingual signs contained clearly distinguishable linguistic elements from two languages; and multilingual signs contained elements from three or more languages. Hybrid signs were distinguished from conventional bilingual or multilingual signs by the creative integration of lexical elements from different languages within a single business name, brand name, or commercial expression. Thus, hybridization referred to the

structural combination of identifiable linguistic elements rather than simply the co-presence of two or more languages. Examples in the dataset include *Ketok Magic*, combining Indonesian *ketok* and English *magic*; *Rodalink*, combining the identifiable Indonesian element *roda* with the English element *link*; *Bulu Eyes*, combining Indonesian *bulu* and English *eyes*; and *Hello Bingsu*, combining English *hello* with the Korean lexical item *bingsu*. Brand names and business names were included in the coding when their constituent linguistic elements were identifiable from the visible form of the sign; brand origin or assumed nationality was not used to determine language classification. Script and language were coded separately, and script was not used as a proxy for language. Accordingly, the coding was based on identifiable lexical and linguistic features rather than on script alone. The coding scheme also recorded the presence of Indonesian, English, and other foreign languages to facilitate comparison of language distribution across different categories of commercial establishments. Following the quantitative classification, qualitative analysis was conducted to investigate the symbolic and communicative functions of language choice. Particular attention was paid to language prominence, language combination, typography, lexical selection, and the ways in which linguistic resources contributed to the construction of symbolic meanings within commercial space.

Interview transcripts and field notes were analysed using a theory-informed thematic analysis based on the six-phase approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for potential themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the analytical account. The analysis was guided from the outset by the study's conceptual framework, with initial coding informed by the concepts of linguistic capital, symbolic value, glocalization, authenticity, urban aspiration, and language commodification. The researcher first read the Indonesian interview transcripts and field notes repeatedly and coded relevant segments according to these conceptually informed categories. The coded segments were then compared across participants and refined through iterative review to identify recurring patterns, relationships, and variations within and across the initial categories. The resulting themes were subsequently compared with patterns identified in the photographic signage data to examine convergence and divergence between participants' accounts and the observed linguistic landscape. The coding and thematic development were conducted by the researcher, who repeatedly checked the codes and themes against the original transcripts and field notes to ensure consistency and maintain a clear connection between the interpretations and the empirical data. No second independent researcher was involved in the coding process, and therefore formal inter-coder reliability was not calculated. The integration of visual, interview, and observational data enabled a comprehensive interpretation of how languages function as communicative, symbolic, and commercial resources within Depok's urban linguistic landscape.

3.5. Ethical considerations

Participation in the interviews was entirely voluntary. Prior to data collection, participants were informed about the objectives of the study and provided verbal consent. They were assured that their responses would remain confidential and that no personally identifying information would be disclosed. To protect participant anonymity, respondents were identified using codes rather than personal names in all interview transcripts and research reports.

Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. All data were stored securely and used exclusively for research purposes. The study adhered to generally accepted ethical principles for social science research, including respect for participant autonomy, confidentiality, and responsible data management.

4. Results

4.1. Distribution of language types in commercial signage

A total of 601 commercial signs were documented along Margonda Street, Depok. The signs were classified into five categories based on their linguistic composition: monolingual Indonesian, monolingual English, bilingual, hybrid, and multilingual signs. Table 1 presents the distribution of these categories.

Table 2

Distribution of language types in commercial signage

No.	Category	Number	Percentage, %
1	Monolingual (Indonesian)	251	41.76
2	Monolingual (English)	144	23.96
3	Bilingual	179	29.78
4	Hybrid	22	3.67
5	Multilingual	5	0.83
Total		**601**	**100**

As shown in Table 2, monolingual Indonesian signs constituted the largest category, accounting for 251 signs (41.76%) of the total dataset. Monolingual English signs formed the second-largest category with 144 signs (23.96%), followed by bilingual signs with 179 signs (29.78%).

The remaining categories occurred less frequently. Hybrid signs accounted for 22 cases (3.67%), while multilingual signs represented only 5 cases (0.83%) of the total sample. These findings indicate that the linguistic landscape of Margonda Street is primarily characterized by the use of one or two languages within commercial signage.

Overall, the data reveal that monolingual signage remains the most common form of commercial communication in the study area. At the same time, bilingual, hybrid, and multilingual signs are also present, reflecting linguistic diversity within the commercial environment of Margonda Street.

4.2. Indonesian-language signage

Of the 601 commercial signs documented along Margonda Street, 251 signs were classified as monolingual Indonesian signage, representing 41.76% of the total dataset. This category constituted the largest proportion of signs identified in the study. Indonesian-language signs were found across a wide range of business sectors, including food services, healthcare, retail stores, educational institutions, beauty services, and other locally oriented enterprises.

Examples of Indonesian-language signage include *Kopi Kenangan* ("Coffee Memories"), *Resto Mie Ayam Berkat* ("Blessing Chicken Noodle Restaurant"), *Rumah Makan Sederhana Masakan Padang* ("Padang Cuisine Restaurant"), *Toko Buku Gramedia* ("Gramedia Bookstore"), *Praktik Dokter Gigi* ("Dental Practice"), *Griya Inan: Salon Khusus Perempuan* ("Women-Only Beauty Salon"), *Cemerlang Foto* ("Brilliant Photo Studio"), and *Universitas Gunadarma* ("Gunadarma University"), *Soto Betawi Tulen ("Authentic Betawi Soto"), Kantor Layanan Zakat* ("Zakat Services Office"), *Taman Balai Kota Depok* ("Depok City Hall Park"), or *Bank BJB Cabang Depok ("Bank BJB Depok Branch")*. Indonesian-language signage was also observed in business names such as *Honda Murni Putramas* and *PT Al Imran Carpets*.



Figure 1. Strategic use of the Indonesian
Source: Authors' documentation (2025).

The distribution of Indonesian-language signs indicates that the national language remains widely used in commercial communication across different types of businesses. The use of Indonesian was observed in both small-scale local enterprises and larger established institutions operating within the study area.

Interview data further showed that business owners frequently selected Indonesian because it was easily understood by local consumers and was considered

appropriate for communicating with the surrounding community. Several participants stated that the use of Indonesian facilitated accessibility and enabled businesses to reach a broader local customer base.

Field observations also revealed that Indonesian-language signs were particularly common among businesses targeting local residents and family-oriented consumers. Such signs were frequently found in traditional restaurants, neighborhood services, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and retail establishments serving everyday community needs.

4.3. English-language signage

Among the 601 commercial signs documented in the study area, 144 signs were identified as monolingual English signage, representing 23.96% of the total dataset. This category constituted the second-largest group after monolingual Indonesian signage, indicating a substantial presence of English within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street.

English-language signs were observed across a variety of business sectors, particularly those associated with food and beverage services, beauty and personal care, fitness and wellness, education, retail, and lifestyle-oriented enterprises. Examples of monolingual English signage include *Domino's Pizza*, *Holland Bakery*, *Starbucks*, *Yolia Dental Care*, *Your Glasses Optic*, *Beauty Space Nail Art*, *Daniel Barbershop*, *Purwa Caraka Music Studio*, *Hana Tours & Travel*, *Asus Service*, *Anugerah Print Shop*, *Kinderfield School*, *Will Fitness*, and *Ganesha Operation*.



Figure 2. Strategic use of English
Source: Authors' documentation (2025).

The distribution of English-language signage suggests that English is widely utilized across both local and nationally recognized businesses operating in the

study area. Its use was not restricted to multinational brands but was also evident among locally owned enterprises that adopted English names as part of their business identity.

Interview data revealed that business owners frequently selected English because it was perceived as attractive to younger consumers, university students, and customers associated with urban and internationally oriented lifestyles. Several participants stated that English-language signage was considered effective in enhancing the visibility of a business and increasing its appeal to target customer groups.

In addition, business owners reported that English was often chosen to create a distinctive business image and to differentiate their establishments from competitors operating within the same commercial environment. Field observations further indicated that English-language signs were particularly common in businesses targeting consumers seeking products and services associated with contemporary lifestyles, education, leisure, and personal well-being.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that English occupies a prominent position within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street and is used across a diverse range of business sectors and market segments.

4.4. Bilingual and multilingual signage

The analysis identified 179 bilingual signs, accounting for 29.78% of the total commercial signage documented along Margonda Street. Bilingual signage constituted the third-largest category after monolingual Indonesian and monolingual English signs. The majority of bilingual signs combined English and Indonesian, reflecting the coexistence of local and international linguistic resources within the commercial environment.



Figure 3. Strategically combined use of bilingual
Source: Authors' Documentation (2025).

Examples of English Indonesian bilingual signage include *d'Acrylic Craft: Huruf Timbul Akrilik*, *Scuto Your Laminating Partner: Laminating Mobil*, *Sumber Papera Mas: Wallpaper*, *de'Press: Percetakan & Packaging*, *Coffee Corner: Kopi dan Teman*, *Raditya Medical Center: Klinik Utama Rawat Jalan*, *Simply: Travel Haji & Umroh Berizin*, *Kiara Mobil: Otospector Dealer Partner*, *Beauty House: Klinik Kecantikan*. In these examples, English and Indonesian were used together to present business names, service descriptions, or promotional information.

Field observations indicated that bilingual signage was employed across a variety of business sectors, including automotive services, healthcare, beauty and personal care, education, travel services, printing businesses, and food and beverage establishments. The use of two languages within a single sign enabled businesses to present information in multiple linguistic forms while maintaining accessibility to local consumers.

In contrast, multilingual signage was considerably less common. Only five multilingual signs were identified, representing 0.83% of the total dataset. These signs incorporated three or more languages, typically combining Indonesian, English, and another foreign language such as Korean. Examples included restaurant signage featuring Korean, English, and Indonesian texts as well as beauty-product advertisements displaying multiple language combinations on storefronts and promotional displays, such as "*Sogogi: shabu & Grill Makan Sepuasnya*" (sogogi [Korean lexical item sogogi] = beef; shabu = Japanese hot pot; makan sepuasnya = eat one's fill), "Griya Sehat: Reflexiology & Shiatsu/Modern" (griya = house; sehat = healthy; shiatsu [Japanese lexical item shiatsu] = acupressure).



Figure 4. Strategically combined use of multilingual
Source: Authors' documentation (2025).

Interview data revealed that business owners selected bilingual and multilingual signage to accommodate diverse customer groups and communicate

with audiences possessing different linguistic backgrounds. Several participants stated that the inclusion of multiple languages was intended to broaden customer reach and enhance the attractiveness of their businesses within a highly competitive commercial environment.

Overall, the findings indicate that bilingual signage constitutes a significant component of the linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, whereas multilingual signage remains relatively limited in number. Nevertheless, both forms demonstrate the presence of linguistic diversity within commercial communication practices in the study area.

4.5. Hybrid signage

A total of 22 hybrid signs were identified in the dataset, representing 3.67% of the 601 commercial signs documented along Margonda Street. Compared with monolingual and bilingual signage, hybrid signs constituted a relatively small proportion of the linguistic landscape. Nevertheless, they represent a distinct category characterized by the integration of linguistic elements from different languages within a single lexical item, phrase, or brand name.

Examples of hybrid signage include *Rodalink* (roda = wheel), *Bulu Eyes* (bulu = hair), *Hello Bingsu* (bingsu [Korean lexical item bingsu] = shaved ice dessert), *Waroeng Steak and Shake* (waroeng = small food stalls), *Ketok Magic* (ketok = knocked), *Lintas Shuttle* (lintas = crossing), *Sulam Eyelash* (sulam = embroidery), *Satu Dental* (satu = one), and *Sepatu Clean* (sepatu = shoes). These signs combine lexical, orthographic, or semantic elements originating from different languages, most commonly Indonesian and English. In some cases, local linguistic forms were incorporated into English expressions, while in others English lexical items were embedded within Indonesian naming structures.



Figure 5. Hybrid language strategy in business signage
Source: Authors' Documentation (2025).

Field observations showed that hybrid signs were primarily found in food and beverage businesses, transportation services, retail establishments, automotive services, and personal care businesses. The use of hybrid forms was evident in both locally owned enterprises and franchise-based businesses operating within the study area.

Unlike bilingual signage, which presents information in two separate languages, hybrid signage integrates elements from different languages within a single naming unit. This linguistic blending was observed in business names, product labels, and service descriptions displayed in commercial spaces along Margonda Street.

Overall, the findings indicate that hybrid signage constitutes a minor yet noticeable component of the commercial linguistic landscape. The presence of such signs demonstrates the use of mixed linguistic forms in commercial naming practices across different business sectors within the study area.

4.6. Target audience segmentation through language choice

Interview data revealed that language choice was closely associated with the target audience envisioned by business owners. Participants consistently indicated that the language displayed on commercial signage was selected with consideration of the customer groups they intended to attract. As a result, different languages were used to address different segments of consumers within Margonda Street's commercial environment.

Businesses primarily targeting local residents and family-oriented customers tended to employ Indonesian-language signage. According to several participants, Indonesian was considered the most effective means of communicating with customers from diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds because it was widely understood and easily accessible. Such signs were commonly observed in local restaurants, healthcare services, neighborhood retail stores, and community-based enterprises.

In contrast, businesses targeting university students, young professionals, and consumers associated with urban lifestyles frequently adopted English-language signage. Interview participants reported that English was perceived as appealing to younger customer groups and was often associated with contemporary trends, education, and modern lifestyles. English-language signs were particularly common among cafés, fitness centres, beauty services, educational institutions, and lifestyle-oriented businesses located near university areas and commercial centres.

The use of bilingual and multilingual signage was often associated with businesses seeking to reach multiple customer groups simultaneously. Participants explained that combining two or more languages allowed businesses to communicate with both local consumers and customers from different linguistic or cultural backgrounds. Such signage was commonly found in travel agencies, healthcare services, beauty clinics, educational institutions, and businesses offering internationally oriented products and services.

Overall, the findings suggest that language choice formed an integral component of commercial communication practices in the study area. The selection of Indonesian, English, bilingual, or multilingual signage was frequently aligned with the characteristics of the intended customer base and the market segment targeted by individual businesses.

5. Discussion

5.1. Foreign languages as linguistic capital in Margonda street

The findings reveal that foreign languages occupy a visible position within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street. While Indonesian remains the most frequently used language, English appears extensively in monolingual, bilingual, and hybrid signage across various business sectors. Japanese, Korean, and Arabic are also present, although to a lesser extent, particularly in businesses associated with specific cultural products, popular culture, and religious services.

From the perspective of linguistic capital, the use of foreign languages extends beyond their communicative function. According to Pierre Bourdieu (1991), languages possess different symbolic values within particular social and economic markets. Certain languages acquire greater prestige and legitimacy, allowing them to function as symbolic resources that can be converted into social and economic advantages.

The interview findings indicate that business owners frequently associated English with modernity, professionalism, and urban lifestyles. Similarly, Japanese was linked to authenticity and product quality, Korean to contemporary popular culture, and Arabic to religious credibility and trustworthiness. These associations demonstrate that foreign languages carry symbolic meanings that exceed their informational content.

The widespread presence of English-language signage, particularly among cafés, beauty clinics, educational institutions, and lifestyle-oriented businesses, suggests that English functions as a valuable symbolic resource within Margonda Street's commercial environment. In this context, foreign languages operate as forms of linguistic capital that contribute to the construction of business identity and commercial visibility.

5.2. Language commodification and economic value

The findings indicate that language choice in commercial signage extends beyond its communicative function and serves important economic purposes within Margonda Street's commercial environment. Interview data revealed that business owners deliberately selected particular languages to enhance business visibility, attract specific customer groups, and create distinctive commercial identities. In this sense, language functions not merely as a medium of communication but also as a marketable resource that contributes to the economic value of a business.

The widespread use of English-language signage among cafés, fitness centres, beauty clinics, educational institutions, and lifestyle-oriented businesses illustrates

how language is strategically employed to increase commercial attractiveness. Business owners frequently associated English with modernity, professionalism, innovation, and urban lifestyles. These symbolic associations were considered beneficial for attracting university students, young professionals, and consumers seeking products and services associated with contemporary urban culture.

Similarly, the use of other foreign languages such as Japanese, Korean, and Arabic was linked to particular symbolic meanings and consumer expectations. Japanese was often associated with authenticity and product quality, Korean with popular culture and youth-oriented consumption, and Arabic with religious trustworthiness and credibility. These linguistic associations enabled businesses to communicate specific brand images and market identities through signage.

Such findings support the argument advanced by Heller (2010) and Duchêne and Heller (2012) that language increasingly functions as a commodity in contemporary economies. Rather than being valued solely for its communicative capacity, language acquires economic significance through its ability to generate symbolic value, attract consumers, and differentiate products and services within competitive markets. In this process, linguistic resources become part of broader commercial strategies designed to enhance competitiveness and profitability.

The case of Margonda Street demonstrates that foreign languages are actively mobilized as economic resources within urban commercial spaces. Their value lies not only in conveying information but also in producing desirable meanings and associations that influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. Consequently, language becomes integrated into processes of branding, market differentiation, and value creation, illustrating a clear form of language commodification in the contemporary urban economy.

5.3. Globalization, consumer culture, and symbolic consumption

The findings reveal that the use of foreign languages in commercial signage is closely connected to broader processes of globalization and contemporary consumer culture. The presence of English, Japanese, Korean, and Arabic across different business sectors demonstrates how linguistic resources circulate alongside global flows of goods, cultural products, and lifestyles. As argued by Jan Blommaert (2010), globalization has transformed language into a mobile resource that travels across geographical and cultural boundaries, creating new forms of linguistic practice in urban spaces.

Interview data indicate that business owners intentionally selected particular languages because they were believed to evoke desirable associations among consumers. English was frequently associated with modernity, professionalism, and global connectedness; Japanese with authenticity and product quality; Korean with contemporary popular culture; and Arabic with religious legitimacy and trustworthiness. These findings are consistent with Kelly-Holmes' (2005) argument that foreign languages in advertising and commercial communication often function symbolically rather than informationally. Consumers are expected to recognize the

cultural meanings attached to particular languages even when they do not fully understand them.

The findings further suggest that consumers do not simply purchase products and services; they also consume the symbolic meanings attached to linguistic signs. This phenomenon reflects what Bourdieu (1991) describes as the social value embedded in symbolic resources and what Baudrillard (1998) refers to as the consumption of signs. In contemporary consumer societies, products are frequently valued not only for their functional characteristics but also for the symbolic identities and lifestyles they represent. Consequently, language becomes part of the symbolic package through which businesses construct desirable market identities.

The prominence of English-language signage among cafés, beauty clinics, educational institutions, and lifestyle-oriented businesses illustrates this process particularly clearly. Interview participants reported that English was perceived as attractive to university students and young professionals because it conveyed an image of modernity and urban sophistication. Similar patterns were observed in the use of Japanese and Korean linguistic elements, which were employed to evoke cultural authenticity and popular cultural trends. These findings support Pennycook's (2007) observation that global languages are frequently appropriated within local contexts to construct new forms of identity and cultural meaning.

The coexistence of Indonesian and foreign languages within commercial signage also reflects processes of glocalization. According to Robertson (1995), glocalization refers to the adaptation of global influences within local contexts. Rather than replacing Indonesian, foreign languages are incorporated alongside the national language to create commercial messages that are simultaneously local and global. This pattern is evident in the widespread use of bilingual and hybrid signage throughout Margonda Street.

Taken together, these findings suggest that foreign languages function as symbolic resources within urban consumer culture. Their value lies not only in their communicative capacity but also in their ability to evoke aspirations, identities, and lifestyle associations that influence consumer perceptions and commercial practices. Through these processes, foreign languages become embedded in the symbolic economy of urban commercial space.

5.4. Indonesian as local capital in a glocal commercial space

Although foreign languages occupy a visible position within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, Indonesian remains the most widely used language in commercial signage. The findings show that monolingual Indonesian signs account for the largest proportion of the dataset, representing 41.76% of all documented signs. This dominance demonstrates the continuing importance of the national language in everyday commercial communication and public visibility.

Interview data indicate that business owners frequently selected Indonesian because it was easily understood by local consumers and enabled effective communication with diverse customer groups. Indonesian was particularly common among businesses serving local residents, families, and community-based

markets. According to the participants, the use of Indonesian enhanced accessibility and ensured that information could be understood by a broad range of consumers regardless of educational or socioeconomic background. These findings support the argument that language choice in commercial spaces is often shaped by considerations of audience accessibility and communicative effectiveness (Landry & Bourhis 1997).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the findings suggest that Indonesian functions as a form of local linguistic capital. While foreign languages provide symbolic value associated with prestige, modernity, authenticity, and global orientation, Indonesian offers symbolic resources linked to familiarity, inclusiveness, and social proximity. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1991) concept of linguistic capital, languages possess different forms of value depending on the social market in which they operate. Within the local commercial context of Margonda Street, Indonesian retains considerable value because it facilitates trust, social connection, and community engagement.

The prominence of Indonesian signage also reflects its role in expressing local identity and cultural belonging. Previous linguistic landscape studies have shown that national and local languages often function as important markers of identity and social affiliation within multilingual public spaces (Ben-Rafael et al. 2006, Shohamy & Gorter 2009). In the case of Margonda Street, Indonesian serves not only as a practical means of communication but also as a visible representation of the local sociocultural environment in which businesses operate.

The coexistence of Indonesian and foreign languages throughout Margonda Street illustrates the operation of a glocal commercial space in which local and global linguistic resources perform complementary functions. Rather than being displaced by foreign languages, Indonesian continues to occupy a central position within commercial communication, while foreign languages contribute additional symbolic and economic value. This finding is consistent with Robertson's (1995) concept of glocalization, which emphasizes the adaptation of global influences within local contexts rather than the replacement of local cultural resources.

Furthermore, the findings resonate with Pennycook's (2007) observation that global linguistic resources are frequently localized and reinterpreted in ways that reflect local social realities. The commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street demonstrates that businesses strategically combine Indonesian and foreign languages to balance local accessibility with broader symbolic appeal. Consequently, Indonesian remains a crucial linguistic resource within the urban commercial economy, functioning alongside foreign languages in the construction of business identities and consumer relationships.

5.5. A Model of foreign language commodification in Margonda street

The findings of this study informed the development of a descriptive conceptual model of foreign language commodification within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street. The model was not specified as a formal model before the analysis and was not developed or tested as a causal model.

Rather, it was developed after the visual, interview, and observational data had been analysed and recurring relationships among the identified categories had been interpreted. The model brings together linguistic resources, symbolic meanings, commercial strategies, consumer perceptions, and potential economic implications as interconnected dimensions of language commodification in the observed commercial context. These relationships are intended to provide an interpretive representation of patterns identified in the data rather than to establish causal relationships or predict economic outcomes. The model therefore functions as a descriptive and explanatory conceptual framework for understanding how foreign languages may acquire symbolic and commercial value in Margonda Street's urban linguistic landscape.

The findings demonstrate that foreign languages are not selected solely for communicative purposes. Rather, business owners associate particular languages with specific symbolic meanings that are believed to enhance the attractiveness of their businesses. English is commonly linked to modernity, professionalism, and global orientation; Japanese to authenticity and quality; Korean to youth culture and contemporary trends; and Arabic to religious legitimacy and trustworthiness. These symbolic associations constitute valuable linguistic resources that businesses strategically mobilize in commercial communication.

The study further reveals that such symbolic meanings are incorporated into branding, market differentiation, and audience segmentation strategies. Through commercial signage, businesses utilize foreign languages to construct distinctive identities and position themselves within competitive urban markets. In this process, language functions not merely as a communicative medium but as a symbolic asset capable of generating market value.

Consumer responses play a crucial role in this process. The interview findings suggest that customers often associate foreign-language signage with particular lifestyles, cultural identities, and quality expectations. Consequently, the symbolic meanings attached to foreign languages contribute to consumer attraction and influence purchasing decisions.

Based on these relationships, a model of foreign language commodification can be proposed. The model suggests that foreign languages first acquire symbolic value through social and cultural processes. These symbolic values are subsequently incorporated into commercial strategies, shaping consumer perceptions and generating economic benefits. Through this transformation, language becomes an economic resource that contributes to branding, competitiveness, and value creation within urban commercial spaces.

The proposed model extends previous discussions of linguistic capital (Bourdieu 1991) and language commodification (Heller 2010, Duchêne & Heller 2012) by illustrating how different foreign languages acquire distinct symbolic functions within a localized commercial environment. The case of Margonda Street demonstrates that language commodification is not limited to English alone but involves multiple foreign languages whose symbolic values are strategically exploited in contemporary urban commerce.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the commodification of foreign languages within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street, Depok. The findings demonstrate that language choice in commercial signage extends beyond its communicative function and serves important symbolic and economic purposes. While Indonesian remains the most visible language in the study area, foreign languages—particularly English, as well as Japanese, Korean, and Arabic—occupy significant positions within commercial communication and business branding practices.

The analysis reveals that foreign languages function as forms of linguistic capital that carry distinct symbolic meanings. English is commonly associated with modernity, professionalism, and global orientation; Japanese with authenticity and quality; Korean with youth culture and contemporary trends; and Arabic with religious credibility and trustworthiness. These symbolic associations are strategically employed by business owners to construct brand identities, differentiate their businesses from competitors, and attract specific consumer segments.

The study further shows that foreign languages are associated with perceived commercial value within the commercial linguistic landscape of Margonda Street. According to the participants' accounts and the observed signage practices, foreign languages are used not only to communicate information but also to enhance business visibility, support market positioning, and shape perceptions of target consumers. These findings suggest that foreign languages may function as marketable symbolic resources within commercial branding and value-creation practices. However, the study does not directly measure sales, consumer willingness to pay, revenue, or other economic outcomes; therefore, the findings should not be interpreted as evidence of demonstrated economic effects. Rather, they provide empirical evidence of the perceived and symbolic dimensions of language commodification in an urban commercial environment.

At the same time, Indonesian continues to play a crucial role as a form of local linguistic capital. Its widespread use reflects its importance in ensuring accessibility, inclusiveness, and cultural familiarity for local consumers. The coexistence of Indonesian and foreign languages illustrates a glocal commercial environment in which local and global linguistic resources perform complementary functions rather than competing with one another.

Based on these findings, this study proposes a model of foreign language commodification in which foreign languages acquire symbolic value, are incorporated into branding and market-positioning strategies, shape consumer perceptions, and ultimately generate economic benefits. This model contributes to the growing literature on linguistic capital and language commodification by demonstrating how multiple foreign languages are strategically mobilized within an Indonesian urban commercial context (Bourdieu 1991, Heller 2010, Duchêne & Heller 2012).

Future research may expand this investigation by comparing linguistic landscapes across different Indonesian cities, examining consumer interpretations of foreign-language signage, or exploring how digital commercial spaces contribute to the commodification of language in contemporary society.

Ethics Statement

This study was conducted as part of an institutional research program at Politeknik Negeri Jakarta under a formal research agreement administered by the Center for Research and Community Service (Pusat Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat), under Research Agreement No. 397/PL3.A.10/PT.00.06/2025, dated 16 April 2025. In accordance with the institutional research procedures applicable at Politeknik Negeri Jakarta, research projects involving interviews conducted under this scheme were not subject to separate institutional IRB or ethical-clearance procedures. Photographic documentation of commercial establishments along Margonda Street was conducted as part of the field research activities, with an institutional letter supporting photographic access issued by the Department of Business Administration, Politeknik Negeri Jakarta (Letter No. 1652/PL.3.A.7/PM/2025, dated 23 June 2025). The study involved semi-structured interviews with 40 business owners or managers. Before each interview, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to decline to answer questions or withdraw from the interview. Information consent was obtained from all participants before the interviews. Audio recording was conducted only with participants' consent; when recording was not permitted or feasible, responses were documented through contemporaneous notes. Participants' identities and business-specific information were treated confidentially, and no personally identifiable or sensitive information was included in the analysis or reporting. Interview data, field notes, and photographic materials were securely handled and used solely for research purposes. No separate ethics approval or exemption number was therefore issued for this study.

Acknowledgments

The author gratefully acknowledges the institutional support provided by Politeknik Negeri Jakarta through the Center for Research and Community Service (Pusat Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat) for the implementation of this research. Appreciation is also extended to the Department of Business Administration and to the business owners and managers along Margonda Street who generously facilitated the fieldwork and participated in the interviews.

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Article history:
Received: 30 October 2025
Accepted: 15 April 2026

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