

## THE FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE IN CULINARY ADVERTISING IN PUBLIC SPACES IN MEDAN CITY

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### Abstract

This study investigates the functions of language in the linguistic landscape of culinary advertisements displayed in shopping malls in Medan City, Indonesia. Culinary advertisements constitute an important component of commercial public spaces where language functions not only as a medium for delivering information but also as a resource for constructing identity, expressing values, and establishing interaction with consumers. This research aims to identify and analyze the language functions realized in culinary advertisements by employing the framework of linguistic landscape and language function theory. A qualitative descriptive approach was adopted. The data consisted of linguistic expressions collected from restaurant signs, promotional banners, menu boards, posters, digital displays, and other culinary advertisements found in several shopping malls in Medan City. Data were collected using Sudaryanto's observation method (*metode simak*) with the *simak libat cakap* technique and documentation. The data were analysed through classification and interpretation based on four language functions: informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional. The findings reveal that culinary advertisements simultaneously perform these four functions. The informational function is realized through menu names, prices, discounts, product descriptions, and promotional information. The expressive function is reflected in evaluative expressions that stimulate consumers' emotions and appetite. The symbolic function constructs cultural identity, modernity, authenticity, and brand image through language choice, code-mixing, and visual symbolism. Meanwhile, the interactional function is realized through greetings, invitations, imperative expressions, and promotional offers that encourage consumer engagement. The study concludes that culinary advertisements in shopping malls represent a dynamic commercial linguistic landscape in which language functions not only to communicate product information but also to construct meaning, identity, and social relationships. These findings contribute to the development of linguistic landscape studies by proposing an integrated analysis of informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional language functions within commercial public spaces.

**Keywords:** Linguistic Landscape; Language Functions; Culinary Advertisement; Commercial Public Space; Medan City; Sociolinguistics.

## 1. Introduction

Linguistic landscape is one of the important areas of sociolinguistic study because it shows how language is present, visible, and functional in public spaces. Language that appears on shop signs, billboards, banners, posters, displays, menus, and commercial advertisements does not merely function as a tool for conveying information, but also as a social sign that represents identity, power relations, communication strategies, and cultural values. Landry and Bourhis (1997) explain that linguistic landscape refers to the presence of language on public and commercial signs visible in a particular area. In addition, language signs in public spaces have two main functions, namely informational and symbolic functions (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Gorter (2006) states that linguistic landscape not only shows the presence of language, but also reflects social practices, multilingualism, and community dynamics. According to Gorter (2006), written language appearing in public spaces can be read as a social representation of the groups that use it.

In an urban context, shopping malls are modern public spaces that are rich in linguistic landscape practices. Malls do not only function as shopping centers, but also as spaces of consumption, entertainment, lifestyle, and social interaction. Various forms of culinary advertisements appear in malls through restaurant signs, promotional posters, digital menus, discount banners, price markers, slogans, and purchase invitations. The language used in culinary advertisements in malls is not a neutral text; rather, it is designed to attract consumers' attention, stimulate appetite, create brand image, and influence purchasing decisions. Backhaus (2007) emphasizes that language signs in public spaces can reveal the relationship between language, space, and the social identity of urban communities. Similarly, Shohamy and Gorter (2009) explain that linguistic landscape is a semiotic space that shows how language is used to construct social meaning in public spaces. Therefore, culinary advertisements in malls can be understood as part of a commercial linguistic landscape that combines language, visuals, space, identity, and marketing strategies.

This phenomenon is clearly visible in culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City. As a large multicultural city, Medan has diverse social and linguistic characteristics. Its society lives within the interaction of various languages, such as Indonesian, local languages, English, and foreign terms widely used in the culinary world. In shopping centers such as Sun Plaza, Centre Point, Delipark, and other malls, culinary advertisements display various forms of language, ranging from local food names, foreign terms, price numbers, persuasive slogans, expressions of taste, to direct invitations to consumers. For example, the use of words such as "premium," "combo," "crispy," "fresh," "best seller," "favorit," "hemat," "pedas," "nagih," and "yuk cobain" shows that the language of culinary advertisements does not only convey information, but also builds emotional, symbolic, and interactive impressions.

The language of culinary advertisements can be understood through the communicative functions it performs. Jakobson (1960) states that language has several functions, such as referential, emotive, conative, and phatic functions, which can be used to understand the role of language in advertising. The referential function is related to conveying information, making it relevant for analyzing menu names, prices, portions, and product descriptions in culinary advertisements (Jakobson, 1960). The emotive function is related to the expression of the speaker's feelings or attitudes, so it can be used to read expressions of taste in culinary advertisements, such as "delicious," "savory," "excellent," or "addictive" (Jakobson, 1960). Thus, culinary advertising language does not only convey facts, but also presents attitudes, tastes, and evaluations of the products being offered.

In addition, culinary advertising language can also be understood through a pragmatic approach. Searle (1969) views utterances as forms of social action, so language in advertisements can be understood as an act of inviting, offering, persuading, or influencing consumers. Leech (1983) explains that language meaning is strongly influenced by context, communication goals, and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. In the context of culinary advertisements in malls, the speaker can be understood as the brand owner or advertiser, while the hearer is the consumer who passes by, reads, sees, and potentially buys the product. Therefore, expressions such as “come and visit,” “try it now,” “choose your favorite,” or “enjoy a satisfying meal today” do not merely function as ordinary sentences, but also as communicative acts intended to generate consumer responses.

Studies of advertising discourse also show that advertising is a complex form of communication. Cook (2001) states that advertising is a discourse that combines language, images, media, context, and audience experience. According to Cook (2001), advertising language cannot be separated from the visual elements and social situations surrounding it. In culinary advertisements, texts such as menu names, prices, slogans, and promotions usually appear together with food images, striking colours, attractive layouts, and brand symbols. Myers (1994) explains that advertisements often use personal address, imperative forms, and persuasive language styles to build closeness with consumers. This can be seen in the use of greetings and direct invitations in culinary advertisements, such as “yuk,” “you,” “your favorite,” “try it,” or “don’t miss it.”

From the perspective of marketing communication, culinary advertising language also plays a role in building relationships between brands and consumers. Fill and Turnbull (2019) emphasize that modern marketing communication aims to build engagement between brands and consumers. Therefore, culinary advertisements are not sufficient if they only mention products and prices; they must also be able to present experiences, images, and emotional closeness. The use of expressions such as “family favorite menu,” “premium taste,” “more affordable,” “satisfying meal,” or “the perfect companion for hanging out” shows that language works to shape consumer perceptions of the product. In this case, language becomes an important tool for creating commercial appeal as well as building brand identity.

Several previous studies have examined linguistic landscape and advertising language. First, Landry and Bourhis (1997) studied linguistic landscape as a marker of language presence in public spaces. Their study emphasized that language signs in public spaces have two main functions, namely informational and symbolic functions. Second, Gorter (2006) developed linguistic landscape studies by emphasizing the importance of written language in public spaces as a reflection of multilingualism and social practices. Third, Astuti (2012) showed that advertising discourse has various communicative functions, such as providing information, attracting attention, and influencing readers. This study is important because it shows that advertising language is not only informative, but also persuasive and communicative.

Fourth, Sholikhah (2019) stated that persuasive strategies in promotional discourse can be realized through attractive word choices, claims of superiority, and forms of invitation. This finding is relevant to culinary advertisements because food promotions often use language that stimulates appetite and the desire to buy. Fifth, Mulyanto (2023) explained that code-mixing in food and beverage advertisements can create a modern, attractive, and commercially valuable impression. The use of code-mixing in culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City can be found in the simultaneous use of Indonesian and English, such as “paket hemat combo,” “fresh drink,” “crispy chicken,” or “best seller menu.” Such

code-mixing does not only clarify the product, but also builds a modern impression and follows the consumption trends of urban society.

In addition to those five studies, research more closely related to the culinary context was conducted by Devina, Khasanah, and Sugiharyanti (2024). They found that the use of foreign languages in culinary business naming can function both informatively and symbolically. Foreign languages in culinary naming not only indicate the type of food or the origin of the product, but also create a modern, global, and marketable image. Meanwhile, Taufiq (2023) showed that language in culinary promotion often contains expressive speech acts, such as praising, greeting, recommending, and building closeness with audiences. These two studies strengthen the view that language in the culinary world does not merely name food, but also shapes experience, image, and social relations between sellers and consumers.

Although these studies have made important contributions, there remains a research gap that needs further investigation. Linguistic landscape studies generally focus on shop signs, the use of foreign languages, bilingualism, multilingualism, or language representation in public spaces. On the other hand, advertising language studies mostly discuss persuasion strategies, discourse structure, communicative functions, or code-mixing in advertisements in general. Meanwhile, pragmatic studies of culinary discourse more often focus on digital reviews, expressive speech acts, or promotional communication on social media. Thus, studies that specifically connect linguistic landscape with language functions in culinary advertisements in malls are still relatively limited, especially in the context of Medan City as a multilingual and multicultural urban space.

Another gap lies in how language functions in culinary advertisements are examined. Some studies still separate informative, persuasive, symbolic, and social functions. In practice, however, a single culinary advertisement can perform several functions at once. An advertisement that displays prices and menu names performs an informational function; the use of words such as “delicious,” “crispy,” “addictive,” or “fresh” performs an expressive function; the use of English, regional names, or ethnic terms performs a symbolic function; while greetings such as “yuk,” “try it,” “choose your favorite,” or “eat together” perform an interactional function. Therefore, an analytical framework is needed to read the functions of culinary advertising language in an integrated way.

The novelty of this article lies in its attempt to examine culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City as part of a commercial linguistic landscape by using four language functions: informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional. The informational function is used to see how advertisements convey facts about products, such as food names, prices, portions, ingredients, promotions, and locations. The expressive function is used to see how advertising language builds taste, emotion, evaluation, and affective appeal. The symbolic function is used to interpret how language choices represent local identity, modernity, prestige, authenticity, or brand image. Meanwhile, the interactional function is used to see how advertisements create closeness, greetings, invitations, and communicative relationships with consumers.

By focusing on shopping malls in Medan City, this article also offers contextual contribution. Medan, as a large city in North Sumatra, has distinctive social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. The presence of various local, national, and international culinary brands in malls creates a dynamic space of language contact. In this space, Indonesian, English, local languages, global culinary terms, price numbers, promotional slogans, and forms of invitation interact with one another. This diversity makes culinary advertisements in shopping

mall in Medan City an interesting object of study because they show how language works in the consumption practices of urban society.

Based on the explanation above, this article aims to describe language functions in the linguistic landscape of culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City. Specifically, this article aims to identify the linguistic forms used in culinary advertisements, classify language functions into informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions, and interpret how these functions build product image and relations with consumers. The research questions proposed are: how are informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions realized in culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City? What linguistic features mark each of these functions? How do language choices in culinary advertisements shape product image, identity, and closeness with consumers?

Thus, this study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study enriches linguistic landscape studies by including culinary advertisements as an object of analysis that is not only informative, but also expressive, symbolic, and interactional. Practically, this study can provide an understanding of language-use strategies in culinary advertisements in commercial spaces, particularly in shopping malls in Medan City. In addition, this study can also serve as a reference for studies of advertising language, urban sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and marketing communication that place language as an important element in constructing meaning, image, and social relations in modern public spaces.

## 2. Literature

### 2.1 Linguistic Landscape

Linguistic landscape is a branch of sociolinguistics that examines the presence, visibility, and function of language in public spaces. The concept was introduced by Landry and Bourhis (1997), who define linguistic landscape as the language displayed on public and commercial signs in a particular territory, including road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, shop signs, and public signs on government buildings. This definition shows that written language in public spaces is not merely decorative, but also carries social meaning. Through linguistic landscape, researchers can observe how languages are represented, prioritized, and positioned in society.

Landry and Bourhis (1997) explain that linguistic landscape has two main functions, namely informational and symbolic functions. The informational function refers to the role of public signs in providing practical information to readers, such as directions, names of places, services, products, or regulations. Meanwhile, the symbolic function refers to the role of language signs in representing identity, status, power, and social belonging. In this sense, language signs in public spaces can show which languages are dominant, which groups are visible, and how cultural identity is constructed.

Gorter (2006) further develops the concept of linguistic landscape by emphasizing that written language in public spaces reflects multilingualism and social practices. According to Gorter, linguistic landscape is not only about the physical presence of language, but also about how language becomes part of social interaction in a particular place. Public signs can show language contact, language choice, and the social meanings attached to certain languages. Therefore, linguistic landscape is useful for analyzing urban spaces where different languages, cultures, and identities meet.

Backhaus (2007) also states that linguistic landscape can reveal the relationship between language, space, and urban identity. In urban areas, public signs often reflect

commercial interests, cultural diversity, and social change. The presence of different languages on signs may indicate globalization, modernization, or local identity. For example, the use of English in commercial signs may suggest modernity and prestige, while the use of local languages may indicate cultural rootedness and regional identity. Thus, linguistic landscape provides an important framework for understanding how language functions in public and commercial spaces.

In the context of this study, culinary advertisements in shopping malls are considered part of the linguistic landscape. They appear in public-commercial spaces and are designed to be seen by consumers. The language used in culinary advertisements, such as menu names, slogans, price information, promotional phrases, and invitations to buy, performs various communicative and social functions. Therefore, the linguistic landscape approach is relevant for examining how culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City convey information, express taste, construct identity, and build interaction with consumers.

## **2.2 Linguistic Landscape in Commercial Spaces**

Commercial spaces are important sites in linguistic landscape studies because they display language as part of business, branding, and consumer communication. In commercial areas, language signs are usually created by private actors, such as shop owners, restaurant managers, companies, or advertisers. These signs are not only intended to identify a business or product, but also to attract attention, persuade consumers, and build a certain image. Therefore, commercial linguistic landscape often reflects the relationship between language, economy, and identity.

Shopping malls are examples of modern commercial spaces where linguistic landscape practices are highly visible. In malls, consumers encounter various signs, such as store names, food advertisements, promotional banners, digital menus, price tags, and brand slogans. These signs are strategically placed to guide consumer attention and influence purchasing behavior. The language used in malls often combines Indonesian, English, local terms, and global culinary vocabulary. This mixture shows that malls are spaces of language contact and symbolic competition.

Shohamy and Gorter (2009) argue that linguistic landscape is a semiotic space where language contributes to the construction of social meaning. This view is important for analyzing malls because commercial signs usually combine verbal and visual elements. A culinary advertisement may contain food images, colours, logos, prices, and slogans at the same time. The meaning of the advertisement is created not only by words, but also by the interaction between language and visual design. Therefore, culinary advertisements should be understood as multimodal signs in the commercial linguistic landscape.

In culinary advertisements, language is closely connected to consumption. Words such as “premium,” “fresh,” “crispy,” “best seller,” “combo,” “hemat,” and “nagih” are not neutral expressions. They are selected to shape consumers’ perceptions of taste, quality, value, and experience. These words help construct the product as delicious, modern, affordable, prestigious, or worth trying. Therefore, the study of culinary advertisements in commercial spaces can reveal how language is used to create meanings that support marketing goals.

In Medan City, shopping malls provide a rich context for studying commercial linguistic landscape. Medan is a multicultural urban space where local, national, and global culinary brands meet. Culinary advertisements in malls may use Indonesian, English, local references, foreign food names, and promotional language. This linguistic diversity reflects not only the variety of products offered, but also the social and cultural identity of urban consumers. For

this reason, the commercial linguistic landscape of culinary advertisements in Medan malls deserves academic attention.

### 2.3 Language Functions

Language functions refer to the roles performed by language in communication. Jakobson (1960) proposes several functions of language, including referential, emotive, conative, phatic, metalingual, and poetic functions. These functions help explain how language works beyond simply transferring information. In communication, language may describe reality, express feelings, influence others, maintain contact, discuss language itself, or create aesthetic effects. This model is useful for analyzing advertising language because advertisements often combine several functions at the same time.

The referential function is related to the delivery of information. In culinary advertisements, this function appears in menu names, product descriptions, prices, portion sizes, ingredients, discounts, opening hours, and location information. For example, phrases such as “chicken rice bowl,” “20% discount,” “Rp25.000,” or “open 10.00–22.00” provide factual information that helps consumers understand the product or service. This function is closely related to the informational function in linguistic landscape studies.

The emotive function is related to the expression of feelings, attitudes, or evaluations. In culinary advertisements, this function appears through evaluative words and expressions of taste, such as “delicious,” “savory,” “fresh,” “spicy,” “crispy,” “tasty,” or “addictive.” These expressions are used to stimulate appetite and create emotional appeal. They do not merely describe the product objectively, but also suggest how consumers should feel about it. Therefore, the emotive function is important in analyzing how culinary advertisements build desire and attraction.

The conative function is oriented toward the addressee and aims to influence behavior. In advertisements, this function often appears in imperative forms, invitations, or persuasive expressions, such as “try it now,” “come and visit,” “choose your favorite,” or “don’t miss it.” These expressions encourage consumers to take action, such as buying, tasting, visiting, or choosing a product. This function is related to the interactional function because it establishes a communicative relationship between the advertiser and the consumer.

The phatic function is used to establish or maintain contact between speaker and hearer. In culinary advertisements, this function may appear in casual greetings, friendly expressions, or conversational phrases such as “yuk,” “hai food lovers,” or “ready to eat?” These forms create a sense of closeness and friendliness. They make the advertisement sound more personal and interactive. Thus, Jakobson’s model helps explain how culinary advertising language performs informational, expressive, persuasive, and relational roles.

### 2.4 Advertising Discourse

Advertising discourse refers to the language and communication strategies used in advertisements. Cook (2001) argues that advertising is a complex discourse because it involves language, images, music, media, participants, and social context. Advertisements are not only texts, but also communicative events that aim to shape audience perception and behaviour. This idea is relevant to culinary advertisements because food promotion often combines words, images, colours, logos, and spatial placement to create persuasive meaning.

In advertising discourse, language is carefully selected to produce certain effects. Advertisers often use attractive vocabulary, short slogans, repetition, imperative forms,

exaggeration, and emotional expressions. In culinary advertisements, such strategies are used to make food appear delicious, special, affordable, modern, or prestigious. Words such as “fresh,” “crispy,” “premium,” “spicy,” “authentic,” and “special promo” are commonly used because they can quickly communicate value and appeal to consumers.

Myers (1994) explains that advertisements often use personal address and conversational style to create closeness with audiences. This is visible in culinary advertisements that use expressions such as “your favorite,” “try it,” “don’t miss it,” or “let’s eat.” Such expressions make the advertisement appear more interactive and friendly. They reduce the distance between the brand and the consumer, making the message feel more personal. This strategy is important in modern advertising because consumers are not only treated as buyers, but also as participants in brand communication.

Advertising discourse is also closely related to persuasion. Sholikhah (2019) shows that persuasive strategies in promotional discourse can be realized through word choice, claims of superiority, and invitations. In culinary advertising, persuasion may appear through claims such as “best seller,” “number one,” “most favorite,” or “limited promo.” These expressions are designed to convince consumers that the product is valuable and worth buying. Therefore, persuasive language is central to the function of culinary advertisements.

From this perspective, culinary advertisements in malls can be analysed as advertising discourse within a linguistic landscape. They are displayed in public-commercial spaces and are meant to be read quickly by consumers. Their language must be short, attractive, informative, and persuasive. This makes culinary advertisements an important object for studying how language functions in urban commercial communication.

## **2.5 Culinary Advertising and Expressive Language**

Culinary advertising has a strong relationship with expressive language because food is closely connected to taste, emotion, memory, and bodily experience. Unlike some advertisements that focus mainly on technical information, culinary advertisements must create sensory appeal. They need to make consumers imagine taste, smell, texture, freshness, spiciness, sweetness, or satisfaction. For this reason, expressive language is frequently used in culinary advertisements.

Expressive language in culinary advertisements appears through evaluative adjectives, emotional phrases, intensifiers, and hyperbolic expressions. Words such as “delicious,” “savory,” “crispy,” “creamy,” “spicy,” “juicy,” “fresh,” and “addictive” do not simply describe food. They create positive evaluation and invite consumers to imagine the eating experience. In Indonesian culinary advertisements, expressions such as “bikin nagih,” “mantap,” “lezat,” “pedas nampol,” or “gurihnya pas” are often used to build emotional and sensory attraction.

Taufiq (2023) shows that language in culinary promotion often contains expressive speech acts, such as praising, greeting, recommending, and building closeness with audiences. This finding is relevant because culinary advertisements often praise their own products through positive evaluations. Expressions such as “menu favorit,” “rasa terbaik,” or “paling enak” are examples of praise used for promotional purposes. These expressions function to convince consumers that the product has high value.

Expressive language is also connected to consumer identity and lifestyle. A phrase such as “teman nongkrong paling pas” does not only describe food, but also connects the product with social activity and lifestyle. Similarly, “menu favorit keluarga” connects the product with family warmth, while “spicy challenge” connects it with youth culture and excitement.

Therefore, expressive language in culinary advertisements does not only build taste appeal, but also constructs social meaning.

In the present study, expressive function refers to the role of language in presenting attitudes, emotions, evaluations, and sensory appeal toward culinary products. This function is important because food advertisements rely heavily on emotional stimulation. By analyzing expressive language, this study can show how culinary advertisements in Medan malls create desire, pleasure, and positive perception among consumers.

## **2.6 Four Language Functions in Culinary Advertisements**

Based on linguistic landscape theory, language function theory, pragmatics, and advertising discourse, this study uses four language functions as the analytical framework: informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions. These four functions are selected because they are relevant to the nature of culinary advertisements in shopping malls. Culinary advertisements do not only provide information, but also express taste, construct identity, and interact with consumers.

The informational function refers to the role of language in providing factual information about culinary products or services. This function appears in menu names, prices, discounts, package offers, ingredients, portion sizes, operating hours, and locations. It helps consumers understand what is being offered and supports practical decision-making. In linguistic landscape theory, this function is closely related to the informational function proposed by Landry and Bourhis (1997).

The expressive function refers to the role of language in presenting feelings, attitudes, evaluations, and sensory impressions. This function is marked by evaluative adjectives, intensifiers, exclamatory expressions, and taste-related vocabulary. It is used to create emotional appeal and stimulate appetite. This function is related to Jakobson's emotive function and pragmatic studies of expressive speech acts.

The symbolic function refers to the role of language in constructing identity, prestige, authenticity, modernity, locality, or global image. This function can be seen in language choice, code-mixing, foreign terms, local names, regional references, and brand naming. It is closely related to the symbolic function in linguistic landscape studies. Through this function, culinary advertisements can position products as traditional, modern, premium, local, global, or culturally authentic.

The interactional function refers to the role of language in creating contact and closeness with consumers. This function appears through greetings, personal pronouns, imperatives, invitations, rhetorical questions, and phatic expressions. It encourages consumers to respond, visit, choose, buy, or try the product. This function is related to Jakobson's conative and phatic functions, as well as Searle's speech act theory. By using these four functions, the study can analyze culinary advertisements in an integrated and systematic way.

## **3. Research Method**

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method because the main focus is to describe and interpret the language functions found in the linguistic landscape of culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City. The qualitative approach is considered appropriate because the data are in the form of words, phrases, clauses, slogans, menu names, price information, promotional expressions, and invitation forms displayed in culinary

advertisements. The analysis does not focus on numerical calculation, but on the meaning, function, and communicative role of language in public-commercial spaces.

The data of this study are linguistic units found in culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City. The data include restaurant signs, menu boards, promotional banners, digital menu displays, posters, price tags, slogans, and other written texts related to culinary products. The data sources are culinary advertisement texts found in several shopping malls in Medan City, such as Sun Plaza, Centre Point, Delipark, and other malls that display food and beverage advertisements. These locations are selected because malls represent modern commercial spaces where local, national, and international culinary brands interact through language.

The data collection technique used in this study is the observation method or metode simak as proposed by Sudaryanto. According to Sudaryanto, metode simak is used to obtain data by observing language use. In this research, the researcher observes the use of language in culinary advertisements displayed in mall spaces. The specific technique used is simak libat cakap, in which the researcher is involved in the speech situation while observing the language data. In the context of this study, involvement means that the researcher is present in the culinary area, observes the advertisement texts directly, and may interact naturally with the commercial space, for example by reading menu displays, asking about menus when needed, or paying attention to how the advertisement is presented to consumers.

In addition to simak libat cakap, this study also uses documentation techniques to support the collection of data. The researcher records, photographs, and notes the linguistic forms found in culinary advertisements. Each data item is documented based on its location, type of advertisement, linguistic form, and possible communicative function. This documentation is important because culinary advertisements in malls are visual and spatial texts; therefore, the surrounding context, such as brand name, image, colour, layout, and placement, can help interpret the meaning and function of the language used.

The data analysis is conducted through several stages. First, the researcher identifies and selects linguistic data from culinary advertisements. Second, the data are classified based on four language functions: informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions. The informational function includes language that provides factual information, such as menu names, prices, discounts, portions, ingredients, and operating hours. The expressive function includes language that expresses taste, emotion, evaluation, or sensory appeal. The symbolic function includes language that represents identity, modernity, locality, prestige, authenticity, or global image. The interactional function includes language that creates contact with consumers through greetings, invitations, imperatives, personal address, and persuasive expressions.

The results of the analysis are presented descriptively by explaining the linguistic forms, their functions, and their meanings in the context of culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City. The interpretation is supported by theories of linguistic landscape, language functions, pragmatics, and advertising discourse. Through this method, the study is expected to reveal how culinary advertisements in mall spaces use language not only to inform consumers, but also to express taste, construct brand identity, and build interaction with consumers in a multicultural urban setting.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Result

The findings of this study show that culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City perform four main language functions: informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions. These functions appear through various linguistic forms, such as product names, menu labels, prices, slogans, promotional expressions, code-mixing, foreign terms, local references, greetings, and invitation forms. The data also show that language in culinary advertisements does not work separately from visual elements. Text, images, colours, typography, logos, icons, and spatial placement work together to construct meaning and attract consumers' attention. Therefore, culinary advertisements in malls can be understood as multimodal signs within the commercial linguistic landscape.

#### 4.1.1 Informational Function

The informational function is the most visible function in the culinary advertisements analysed. This function appears in texts that provide factual and practical information to consumers, such as menu names, product categories, prices, discounts, promotional periods, restaurant rules, halal or non-halal status, and service information. In this study, the informational function is found in several culinary advertisements, including Es Teler 77, Steak 21, buffet advertisements, Song Ya, and The Coffee Crowd.



**Figure 1** Culinary Advertisement of Es Teler 77

The advertisement of *Es Teler 77* displays various menu names, such as *nasi goreng*, *bakso*, *roti bakar*, *mie ayam pedas*, *otak-otak*, *paket ayam goreng*, and *es teler*. The phrase “Menu Favorit” also functions as selective information because it directs consumers’ attention to menu items considered popular or recommended. In this case, the advertisement helps consumers recognize the available products quickly without asking the seller directly. The repeated use of the number “77” in the menu names also strengthens the brand identity and makes the advertisement easier to remember.



**Figure 2** Culinary Advertisement of Steak 21

The informational function is also found in the Steak 21 advertisement. The phrase *“Menu Nikmat Lebih Hemat”* informs consumers that the restaurant offers a more economical menu package. The information is strengthened by the mention of *“Combo 1”* and the price reduction from 285K to 274K. The advertisement also presents *“Pasta Menu”* with the label *“New,”* which introduces new products to consumers. The use of menu names such as spaghetti and fettuccine provide specific information about the type of food being offered. This shows that the informational function in culinary advertisements does not only provide product details, but also introduces promotions, menu innovation, and brand positioning.



**Figure 3** Culinary Advertisement of Buffet Menu

Another clear example of the informational function appears in the buffet advertisement. The text *“All you can eat Japanese BBQ”* informs consumers about the type of service and food category offered. The advertisement also presents information about time, such as *“Monday–Friday 10.00–17.00,”* and price variations such as 89, 95, 99, and 119. Other phrases, such as *“Mix & Match Meat Recommendation”* and *“Set Includes,”* provide information about menu options and package contents. In addition, visual elements, such as food images, price grids, recommendation icons, halal labels, and QR codes, support the linguistic information. Thus, informational meaning is built through both verbal and non-verbal elements.

#### 4.1.2 Expressive Function

The second function found in the data is the expressive function. This function appears through language that expresses attitudes, emotions, evaluations, and sensory impressions toward food products. In culinary advertisements, expressive language is important because food promotion must stimulate appetite and create emotional attraction. Expressive function is found in advertisements such as Pizza Hut and Menu Level Up.



Figure 4 Culinary Advertisement of Pizza Hut

In the Pizza Hut advertisement, the phrases “*Pasti Enak, Kenyang & Hemat*” and “*Rasanya Juara*” show positive evaluation of the product. These expressions do not only describe the menu, but also express confidence, satisfaction, and superiority. The word “*Juara*” suggests that the product has excellent taste and high quality. The expressive function in this advertisement is also strengthened by visual elements. The use of bright colours, especially red, yellow, and white, creates a sense of energy, warmth, and appetite. Images of pizza, rice, drinks, and snacks are displayed attractively to create the impression of completeness and satisfaction.



Figure 5 Culinary Advertisement of Menu Level Up

Another example of the expressive function appears in the advertisement containing the phrase “*Enaknya makanannya buat nagih..!*” This sentence strongly expresses positive evaluation and emotional response toward the food. The word “*enaknya*” functions as an evaluative expression that highlights the deliciousness of the product. The phrase “*buat nagih*” is informal and hyperbolic because it suggests that the food is so good that consumers want to try it again. This expression creates a casual and friendly tone, making the

advertisement sound close to everyday language. The expressive meaning is also supported by the image of food served with sauce and drinks, which creates a visual impression of deliciousness and satisfaction.

#### 4.1.3 Symbolic Function

The third function found in the data is the symbolic function. This function refers to the role of language in constructing identity, cultural meaning, social image, modernity, authenticity, locality, and brand value. In this study, symbolic function is found in advertisements such as *Pulang Rumah*, *Jala Jala–Nelayan*, *Starbucks*, and *Ayam Rempah*.



Figure 6 Culinary Advertisement of Pulang Rumah

In the *Pulang Rumah* advertisement, the symbolic function is shown through the logo and menu names. The logo, which presents the image of an adult woman and a child, symbolizes family warmth, home cooking, and emotional closeness. The name “*Pulang Rumah*” strengthens the symbolic meaning because it suggests the experience of returning home and enjoying familiar homemade food. The menu items, such as *Ayam Penyet*, *Tahu Walik*, *Empal Gentong*, and dishes related to fish with soft bones, symbolize the diversity of Indonesian culinary traditions. Therefore, this advertisement does not only sell food, but also represents the warmth of home and the richness of Indonesian cuisine.



Figure 7 Culinary Advertisement of Jala Jala–Nelayan

The symbolic function is also visible in the *Jala Jala–Nelayan* logo. The words “*Jala Jala*” and “*Nelayan*” represent the identity of coastal communities and the maritime culture of Medan Malay society. The image of a fisherman with a net symbolizes hard work, solidarity, and the relationship between coastal people and the sea. The use of colours, such as red, black, orange, yellow, and green, also carries symbolic meanings related to courage, identity, natural wealth, and harmony. The combination of traditional symbols and modern visual design shows that the advertisement functions not only as a commercial sign, but also as a representation of ethnic and cultural identity.



**Figure 8** Culinary Advertisement of Starbucks

The Starbucks advertisement “Sumatra Treasure” shows symbolic function through the combination of English and Indonesian. English appears in phrases such as “Sumatra Treasure” and “Salted Caramel Espresso Con Crema with Starbucks Single-Origin Sumatra.” The use of English symbolizes globalization, modernity, prestige, and international lifestyle. Meanwhile, Indonesian appears in the sentence “Rayakan 80 tahun Kemerdekaan Indonesia dengan kopi Sumatra, kebanggaan dari tanah air.” This Indonesian text symbolizes national identity, local pride, and emotional connection with Indonesian consumers. The use of the word “Sumatra” and the image of the Sumatran tiger also strengthens the symbolic meaning of locality. This shows a form of glocalization, where a global brand uses local identity to build closeness with consumers.



**Figure 9** Culinary Advertisement of Ayam Rempah

The symbolic function is also found in the Ayam Rempah advertisement through the phrase “Ayam Indonesia dengan Rempah asli Nusantara.” The phrase “Ayam Indonesia” symbolizes national culinary identity, while “Rempah asli Nusantara” represents authenticity, cultural heritage, and the richness of Indonesian spices. The use of visual elements such as chicken, chili, garlic, shallots, leaves, and spices strengthens the symbolic representation of Indonesian cuisine. The colours red and white also support the meaning of nationalism because they are associated with the Indonesian flag. Thus, the advertisement does not only promote food, but also constructs the product as part of Indonesian cultural identity.

#### 4.1.4 Interactional Function

The fourth function found in the data is the interactional function. This function appears through language that creates contact, closeness, and direct communication between the brand and consumers. Interactional function is realized through greetings, invitations, imperatives, promotional offers, personal address, and social-media contact. In this study, interactional function is found in advertisements such as Chicken Holic, Lunch Deals, Burger King, and HokBen.

**Figure 10** Culinary Advertisement of Chicken Holic

In the Chicken Holic advertisement, the phrase “Hello Guys...” functions as a phatic expression that greets consumers and creates a friendly atmosphere. The phrases “Buy 1 Get 1” and “Free Drink” function as direct persuasive expressions that encourage consumers to take action. The use of casual English expressions creates a modern and youthful image, especially for urban consumers. The presence of the Instagram account also extends interaction from physical space to digital space, allowing consumers to connect with the brand through social media.



**Figure 11** Culinary Advertisement of Lunch Deals

The interactional function also appears in the restaurant poster containing the greeting “Hai, Foodies!” This greeting positions consumers as part of a culinary community. The word “Foodies” creates a sense of shared identity among people who love food. Promotional expressions such as “Lunch Deals” and “Discount 30%” invite consumers to respond to the offer. At the same time, information such as “11.00 AM–02.00 PM,” “Berlaku Dine-In,” and “Hanya berlaku pada pembelian Offline” regulates consumer behavior by explaining when and how the promotion can be used. This shows that interactional function can be both persuasive and regulative.



**Figure 10** Culinary Advertisement of Burger King

The Burger King advertisement demonstrates interactional function through the phrase “Yuk, Makan Bareng Keluarga!” The word “Yuk” creates an informal and friendly invitation, while “Makan Bareng Keluarga” connects the product with the social activity of eating together with family. This expression does not only invite consumers to buy food, but also encourages them to imagine a collective eating experience. The large food packages displayed in the advertisement support this meaning visually because they indicate that the menu is suitable for group or family consumption. Therefore, the advertisement builds interaction by linking food promotion with emotional and social experience.



**Figure 12** Culinary Advertisement of HokBen Oishii Deals

The HokBen advertisement “Oishii Deals” also shows strong interactional function. The large number “41” represents a celebration and invites consumers to participate in the anniversary moment. The phrase “The Best Deals Await You!” directly addresses consumers and encourages them to respond to the promotion. Offers such as “Beli 4 Gratis 1,” “Diskon 41%,” and “Special Price Rp41.000” give consumers several options and create a sense of benefit. The friendly mascot, bright colours, and attractive food images strengthen the interactive atmosphere. In this case, language and visual elements work together to create emotional and rational engagement with consumers.

## 4.2 DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City do not only function as commercial texts, but also as linguistic signs that construct meaning in public spaces. The four functions found in the data, namely informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions, show that language in culinary advertisements works in an integrated way. A single advertisement can provide product information, express taste and emotion, construct cultural or brand identity, and at the same time invite consumers to respond. This finding strengthens the idea that culinary advertisements in malls are part of the commercial linguistic landscape because they combine language, visual design, space, and consumer communication.

This finding is in line with Landry and Bourhis (1997), who state that linguistic landscape has informational and symbolic functions. In this study, the informational function appears in menu names, prices, discounts, package offers, operating hours, and product categories, while the symbolic function appears through brand names, foreign terms, local culinary references, national identity, and cultural symbols. However, this study expands Landry and Bourhis' view because the data show that culinary advertisements do not only perform informational and symbolic functions. They also contain expressive and interactional functions, such as *"Rasanya Juara," "Enaknya makanannya buat nagih," "Hello Guys,"* and *"Yuk, Makan Bareng Keluarga."* Therefore, the present study shows that commercial signs in culinary advertisements are more complex because they combine factual information, identity construction, emotional appeal, and direct consumer engagement. This is consistent with the paper's framework, which classifies culinary advertising language into informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions.

The results also support Gorter's (2006) study, which emphasizes that linguistic landscape reflects multilingualism and social practices in public spaces. In the context of Medan malls, the use of Indonesian, English, local references, and foreign culinary terms reflects the multilingual and multicultural character of urban consumers. For example, advertisements such as Starbucks *"Sumatra Treasure"* combine English with Indonesian references to create global prestige and local pride. Compared with Gorter's study, this research is more specific because it does not only examine the presence of languages in public spaces, but also interprets how these languages function in culinary promotion. Thus, this study shows that multilingualism in culinary advertisements is not merely a linguistic phenomenon, but also a marketing strategy used to construct modernity, locality, authenticity, and consumer lifestyle.

This study also corresponds with Astuti's (2012) finding that advertising discourse has communicative functions, such as providing information, attracting attention, and influencing readers. The culinary advertisements analysed in this study clearly perform those functions through promotional expressions, menu labels, discounts, and persuasive slogans. However, this study differs from Astuti's work because it places advertising discourse within the framework of linguistic landscape. In other words, the advertisements are not only analysed as written promotional texts, but also as signs displayed in mall spaces. Their meaning is formed through the relation between language, image, colour, logo, layout, and physical location. For example, food images, bright colours, and large price numbers strengthen the persuasive power of the verbal text. Therefore, this study adds a spatial and visual dimension to the analysis of advertising discourse.

Furthermore, the findings are relevant to Mulyanto's (2023) study on code-mixing in food and beverage advertisements. Mulyanto explains that code-mixing can create a modern,

attractive, and commercially valuable impression. This study confirms that finding through the use of English expressions such as “Lunch Deals,” “Buy 1 Get 1,” “Free Drink,” “All you can eat Japanese BBQ,” and “The Best Deals Await You.” These expressions do not only provide information, but also create a modern, youthful, and global image. However, the present study shows that code-mixing has broader functions. English and foreign terms can function informationally by naming products, symbolically by representing prestige, expressively by creating emotional attraction, and interactionally by inviting consumers. Thus, code-mixing in culinary advertisements is not only a style of language use, but also a multifunctional strategy in commercial communication.

The present study also has similarities with Taufiq’s (2023) research, which found that culinary promotion often contains expressive speech acts, such as praising, greeting, recommending, and building closeness with audiences. The expressive function in this study appears in phrases such as “*Pasti Enak, Kenyang & Hemat*,” “*Rasanya Juara*,” and “*Enaknya makanannya buat nagih*.” These expressions show that culinary advertisements rely strongly on emotional and sensory appeal. Nevertheless, this study differs from Taufiq’s research because it does not only focus on expressive speech acts. It also connects expressive language with informational, symbolic, and interactional functions. For instance, the phrase “*Rasanya Juara*” expresses positive evaluation, while at the same time supporting brand superiority and persuading consumers to buy the product.

Based on the comparison with those four previous studies, this research contributes to the development of linguistic landscape and advertising discourse studies in several ways. First, it shows that culinary advertisements in malls are not only signs that provide information, but also multimodal texts that construct taste, identity, lifestyle, and consumer relations. Second, it demonstrates that the functions of language in culinary advertisements are overlapping and mutually supporting. Third, it provides a specific contextual contribution by examining Medan City as a multilingual and multicultural urban space, where Indonesian, English, local cultural symbols, and global culinary terms interact in commercial advertisements. This point is important because the article itself emphasizes that Medan malls are dynamic spaces of language contact involving Indonesian, English, local languages, global culinary terms, price numbers, promotional slogans, and invitation forms.

In conclusion, the discussion shows that culinary advertisements in shopping malls in Medan City function as more than promotional media. They are linguistic and visual signs that reflect commercial strategy, urban identity, cultural representation, and consumer interaction. Compared with previous studies, this research offers a more integrated analysis by combining linguistic landscape, language functions, pragmatics, and advertising discourse. The four functions found in this study prove that culinary advertising language works simultaneously to inform, attract, symbolize, and interact with consumers in modern public-commercial spaces.

## 5. Conclusion

This study investigated the functions of language in the linguistic landscape of culinary advertisements displayed in shopping malls in Medan City. The findings reveal that culinary advertisements perform four major language functions, namely informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional functions. These functions are realized through various linguistic forms, including menu names, prices, promotional offers, slogans, evaluative expressions, code-mixing, local and foreign lexical choices, greetings, and invitations. Rather than functioning independently, these four language functions frequently overlap within a single

advertisement, creating integrated messages that simultaneously inform consumers, evoke emotions, construct brand identity, and encourage consumer engagement.

The informational function is primarily realized through factual elements such as product names, menu categories, prices, discounts, package offers, and restaurant information. The expressive function is reflected in evaluative and emotional expressions that stimulate consumers' appetite and create positive perceptions of the advertised products. Meanwhile, the symbolic function demonstrates how language represents cultural identity, locality, modernity, authenticity, and brand prestige through the use of Indonesian, English, regional references, and visual symbols. Finally, the interactional function establishes communication between advertisers and consumers through greetings, persuasive invitations, promotional messages, and social media references, creating a sense of closeness and encouraging purchasing behavior. These findings confirm that culinary advertisements are not merely informational texts but multimodal communicative resources operating within the commercial linguistic landscape.

Theoretically, this study extends previous linguistic landscape research by integrating four language functions—informational, expressive, symbolic, and interactional—into a single analytical framework. Unlike previous studies that generally focused on informational and symbolic functions or persuasive language separately, this research demonstrates that the four functions operate simultaneously and complement one another in culinary advertising discourse. Consequently, this study contributes to the development of linguistic landscape studies, advertising discourse analysis, pragmatics, and marketing communication by providing a more comprehensive understanding of how language functions in commercial public spaces.

Practically, the findings provide useful insights for restaurant owners, advertisers, and marketing practitioners in designing more effective culinary advertisements. The strategic combination of informative content, emotional appeal, cultural symbolism, and interactive language can strengthen brand identity, increase consumer engagement, and improve promotional effectiveness. Future research is recommended to expand the scope of investigation by comparing culinary advertisements across different cities, commercial environments, or digital platforms, as well as examining multilingual practices and multimodal communication from broader sociolinguistic and semiotic perspectives.

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