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Analysis of Linguistic Strategies in Naming Restaurants and Street Food Stalls in Thailand: A Comparative Linguistic Landscape

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ABSTRACT

The linguistic landscape is a prominent issue that contributes to a better society and an understanding of human language use for communication. This research aims to analyze the linguistic strategies in naming restaurants and street food stalls, termed ergonyms, which are a subset of urbanonyms, in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand. Employing a critical toponymy framework, the study explores how these naming strategies reflect socio-cultural values, marketing practices, and power dynamics. Data consisting of 200 restaurant and stall names were collected. The analysis identified six key linguistic strategies, including code-switching, expressions of politeness and impoliteness, and the integration of logos with textual elements. This study elucidates how linguistic creativity is utilized for marketing purposes in this specific context. The findings contribute to understanding naming preferences and offer valuable insights for businesses seeking to name their establishments effectively, particularly for stall owners and customers. By incorporating these suggestions, this research provides valuable insights into the linguistic landscape of restaurants and street food stalls in Thailand. It is suggested that naming signboards depends on target groups of people and the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing related factors and strategies. Furthermore, the study contributes to the fields of linguistics, education, and business, offering practical knowledge for businesses operating in this niche market.

Keywords: Linguistic Naming; Linguistic Landscape; Critical Toponymy; Ergonyms; Urbanonyms; Restaurants; Street Food Stalls; Strategies

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1. Introduction

The restaurant business is a business that involves many factors. Thus, the number of stores has expanded rapidly. There are small businesses for example street food stalls, carts, hawkers, stalls, and businesses with commercial registration. According to the results of a study by Meemongkol who studied the linguistic landscape of Soi Nana Nuea and Soi Ekamai in Bangkok, Thailand, when considering the classification of signs by business and service type, it was found that there were the most restaurant signs in both areas ^[1]. In other words, doing business is inherently competitive. Thus, opening a new restaurant should compete with the existing restaurant business. Entrepreneurs should therefore rely on creativity in planning marketing strategies to attract customers. One of the significant strategies is “Naming a restaurant” is interesting as a distinctive restaurant name is one significant factor that helps encourage customers to enter the store and remember the restaurant. In this regard, Business Plus presents an article on “Techniques for naming restaurants that are funny and easy to remember” in which the author of the article mentions significant points and examples of names ^[2]. From the website concerned, naming a restaurant can be summarized as follows: 1) Creating a name that is short and easy to understand, using short words that are easy to read and spell. 2) Creating a new name that is unique or imitates an already famous shop. 3) Creating a name that is unusual, funny, and easy to remember so that customers can catch their eyes on such as What’s Food? /*ʔa:hǎ:n ʔal lai*/, Oh, seafood /*ʔáijǎʔ ʔa:hǎ:n tʰale*/, Tired Aunt /*ʔá: tʰó: náʔ*/, Enough to Eat /*ʔhó: dè:k dāi*/, Don’t complain if you like to eat /*jǎʔ kin jà: bòn*/, Cheating Noodle /*jenta:fo: to:lě*/, Stinging, Tear Off the Chicken’s Tongue /*sè:p dā:k kratəhâ:k lín*/, Crushable or Not Crushable /*lè:k mā: lè:k*/, A barbarian chef who is a great con artist /*ʔhô: kʰrua jô:t nák tǔ:n*/, Stealing and dumping at the corner of a building /*lák jùm mum tùk*/, Being hungry /*hǐu ʔadǐʔ*/, Prostitute and noodles /*kari: mǐ: tǐu*/, Red pussy /*jǐm dɛ:ŋ*/, Beast /*dɛ:rátʔəhǎ:n*/, Playing with eggs /*lên kʰài*/, etc. and 4) Naming a Thai restaurant with a Thai expression such as smashing rice pots /*tʰúp mō:kʰâ:u*/, shellfish- crab mouths /*ʔà:khoi ʔà:kpu*/, Cheaters /*sǐppè:t moŋkùt*/, horse skull flips /*má: dǐ:t kalòk*/, Eggs in stones /*kʰài nai hǐn*/, new rice and oily fish /*kʰâ:u mài pla: man*/, Eating blood and eating flesh /*kin lû:at kin nú:a*/, etc.

From the techniques for naming restaurants as in the examples of restaurant names discussed above and in addition to unusual names that are funny and easy to remember, the researchers noted that it was a marketing-focused naming of the store that used a language strategy that did not take

politeness into account. It was also found that words are used at the colloquial level; colloquialism, slang, spoonerism, taboo, or words with implied meanings/connotations (connotation) which can be seen from the results of the analysis of the use of language in Thai social caricatures collected from the political caricature website of Ngamluang that categorized the words “fuck /*ʔâi*/, fuck /*ʔi*/, I /*ku*/, you /*muŋ*/, eat /*dè:k*/, super /*kʰô:t*/, shit /*wáʔ*/, bloody shit /*wó:i*/ including the expletives “crazy /*bâ:*/” and “shit /*təhǐp hǎ:i*/” in the category of “Using impolite words” ^[3].

However, even though society requires that we avoid or abstain from impolite or forbidden words, as it goes against good values. But forbidden words are commonly found in various forms of communication as aside from the fact that forbidden words convey meaning according to language, they also function to clearly convey various emotions, for example using vulgar words or showing the intensity of the tone in literature to emphasize the meaning while conveying the emotions of the characters in accordance with the situation and atmosphere of the story ^[4]. This includes the violation of the use of “forbidden words” in various public media, both in the entertainment circles and in the retail business circles so that the language can fully function to communicate in marketing.

In the past 5–10 years, there has been studies of the language and symbols on various signs, which are considered public media-based Linguistics Landscape, including government agency signs, for example, traffic signs, directional signs, as well as commercial business signs. Due to the fact that signs are a form of communication that reflects thoughts, beliefs, and values of people in each culture, studying signs, therefore, is equivalent to studying the behaviour of groups of people living in the same environment and it is discussed that communication on signs is also a medium to reflect the image of the community and society. This phenomenon can be seen in the study of Zeng & Luo which studied various signs in Shenzhen city, China and it was found that the signs have an effect on communicating the image of the city ^[5]. This study is consistent with the study by Zhang & Shen which found that road signs in the ancient city of Anchang have an effect on the perspective and image of tourism in this ancient city ^[6]. Thus, Thai people who make marketing through restaurant name signs as in the examples above reflect the way of thinking, perspectives, and values of Thai people that have changed according to the current world trend.

From the study and review of related literature, no work has been found that compares restaurant signboards and food stall signboards in Thailand. Based on the concept of sociolinguistics to analyse sounds, words, and meanings of language on signs in addition to being able to explain the currently changing language phenomena, the resulting empirical

data will help explain the relationship between social variables and language use so that entrepreneurs can use the results of the research to name their shops or make business plans to be more successful. Because various signs in two different locations do not only present the content contained in the sign but can also serve as a teaching tool and represent the face of the agency that owns the sign, and the signs are also images that reflect Thai culture and identity as well.

For this reason, the researchers were interested in collecting data from restaurant and food stall signboards located in the vicinity of Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand, to study linguistic strategies for using language in naming restaurant and food stall signs within a specific environment known as the Linguistic Landscape.

2. Literature Review

The researchers review the related studies in terms of naming signs and use of language (polite and impolite words) in restaurant signboards and food stall signboards as follows.

In the study of Chongbanchob which is about the language used in naming commercial businesses [7]. The results of the research found that values that reflect from the meaning of the name of a commercial business, namely prosperity, auspiciousness Sustainability, power, victory, morality, quality, wealth, wealth, nature and the environment. From the study, the values found from all meanings are good values that are desirable to the general public. A study by Tangthikharak which investigated a comparative study of the meaning of shop names that reflect beliefs about Auspiciousness of Thai and Chinese people by collecting data from store names in the education category, clothing and beauty category and food and beverage categories for Thai people in Bangkok and surrounding areas, 300 shops and the names of Chinese shops in the People's Republic of China [8]. The results of the research found that for naming stores in the education category, Thai people chose to use vocabulary units that have the most meaning about goodness and prosperity. As for Chinese people, they chose to use vocabulary units that have the most meaning related to nature. For clothing and beauty, Thai people chose to use words that have the most meanings related to wealth. As for Chinese people, they chose to use vocabulary units that have the most meanings related to goodness and prosperity. For food and beverage categories, Thai people chose to use words that have the most meanings related to wealth. As for Chinese people, they chose to use vocabulary units that have the most meaning related to nature. This shows that both Thai and Chinese people believe that naming names with meanings related to goodness and prosperity, wealth, and nature is considered the highest auspiciousness. In a similar vein, Ngamluang studied and analysed caricatures of Thai society on social media by collecting data from political caricature websites by using the

theoretical framework of semiology to study types and formats, content, tools and methods of play. as well as the use of language in the caricatures [3]. The results of the study of the words found that in the caricatures the language was used at the conversational and colloquial level, using short words, simple, uncomplicated sentences, brevity, conciseness, to the point and meaning. It was also found that there were 15 outstanding characteristics in the use of words, including 1) the use of words to create imagery, 2) the use of impolite words, for example, “I” /*ʔāi*/, “E” /*ʔi*/, “Gu” /*ku*/, “Mung” /*mun*/, “Daek” /*dē:k*/, “Khot” /*k^hô:t*/, “Wa” /*wáʔ*/, “Woy” /*wó:i*/, and the swear words, for example, “Ba Chipai”. /*bâ: tɕ^híphǎ:i*/ (damn). 3) Using idioms 4) Using words with similar pronunciations 5) Using words with rhyming sounds 6) Using words with conflicting meanings 7) Using newly created words 8) Using a particular word which repeats for emphasis. 9) Using slang or colloquial language, for example, “Krien Khodspa Thai” /*krian k^hô:t sapa: t^hai*/. In this regard, “Krien” /*krian*/ is a slang word that means a person or group of people who behaves in an aggressive, disruptive, irrational manner or who considers themselves to be the centre of society. This group of people uses emotion more than reason, and the slang “Khot” /*k^hô:t*/ is a slang word that means very much 10) Using local words 11) Using transliterated words 12) Using foreign languages 13) Using shortened words or abbreviations 14) the use of abbreviations and 15) the use of nicknames. In some caricatures, more than one characteristic language may be used. The results of the study reflect the caricatures on social media. It arises from advancements in technology that allow creating media or creating caricatures more conveniently. And some types of media in Thai society are still controlled or have a monopoly on publishing power. But social media is still poorly regulated and the public has free access to it. Thus, words that are unusual, word plays, or transformations of meaning are used to communicate humour and arouse interest from the public. However, the researchers further proposed that producers of caricatures should reflect reality in their images and content. They should not slander or embellish. They should express opinions and critiques with a neutral mind, without bias, avoid using harsh or vulgar language, and pay attention to the correct use of language including avoiding the use of images that are impolite or obscene. This is just to make the caricature a true reflection of the social context at that time correctly and fairly and help record events, stories, and feelings of people in society through the art of conveying meaning through images and using language with humour.

In another perspective, Prapobratanakul studied language usage patterns and the influence of English on shop signs around Sriyan Market which is a local commercial area in Bangkok in terms of vocabulary and syntax by studying information from photographs and interviews with business

owners^[9]. The results of the language analysis in naming the shop found that Thai letters, Thai vocabulary and grammar which were used are the most common, followed by shop names that have a mix of Thai and English letters. Use vocabulary or grammar Shop names written in English letters, English vocabulary and grammar come in third. The shop name was not found using Thai words or sentences written in English letters. The results of interviews with business owners found that the person who named the shop using Thai and English letters and most English vocabulary or grammarians are not aware of the presence of English in store names. The results of this study reflect that the mixing of English words with the Thai language is not only evidence from the globalization of the English language but it has shown the influence of English that has come into the Thai language so naturally that Thai speakers are not even aware of the prevalence of English in the Thai language. In another study, Bowonpechayanurak explored Chinese store name signs^[10]: A case study in the Saphan Khwai and Yaowarat areas to study the linguistic elements of store signs, the relationship between the meaning of the store name and the products and services as well as multiculturalism by surveying data from 180 shop signs in the Yaowarat and Saphan Khwai areas, divided into 150 signs in the Yaowarat area and 30 signs in the Saphan Khwai area, the results of the study found that there are two sides to the popularity of Chinese store names: the language component side and the relationship between store names and products and services. In terms of language elements, two types of store signs were found: single-language signs and mixed language signs. For types of multilingual signs and bilingual signs, the most common type is multilingual signs. Multilingual sign types include Chinese, Thai, and English. The least common sign was a single language sign, namely Chinese, in terms of relationships between the store name and the products and services, it was found that most stores named their stores with similar meanings or related to products and services rather than naming a store with the name of a person or place.

In this regard, Wirunpan & Panyametikhun studied roadside restaurant signs in Yaowarat and Chatuchak areas: Analysis along the lines of landscape semiotics by collecting data from 47 roadside restaurant signs in the Yaowarat area, 42 signs in the Chatuchak area, for a total of 89 signs^[11]. The results of the analysis of the elements of roadside restaurant signs found that they have the following characteristics: 1) Colour: Entrepreneurs prefer to use white as the base colour and the latter is on signs in both Yaowarat and Chatuchak areas. The font colours that entrepreneurs like to use in both the Yaowarat and Chatuchak areas are red and black. 2) Store names: Yaowarat area has more signs with shop names than signs in Chatuchak area which demonstrates importance of the name 3) Food and beverage items: Yaowarat area sign and the food item appear in the second most position after

the restaurant name. As for Chatuchak area, food and beverage items always appear at the top of the sign. 4) Additional details/information in Yaowarat area signs: Entrepreneurs give importance to messages related to time/place/contact and unique/special characteristics. As for signs in the Chatuchak area, operators give the most importance to unique/special characteristics. 5) Price of signs in the Yaowarat area: The most right-hand price placement appears. As for the Chatuchak area, the price placement on the lower right side appears the most. 6) Symbols/logos signs: Yaowarat area uses more symbols/logos than Chatuchak area and 7) Pictures of food and drinks: roadside restaurant signs in Chatuchak emphasize images of food and drink more than those in Yaowarat.

In terms of euphemistic words, Qin & Saengkla studied comparative study of euphemistic words in Thai and Chinese in terms of language structure^[12]. The results of the study revealed that the construction of euphemistic Thai and Chinese words in terms of language structure has both similarities and differences. There are 4 methods for creating euphemistic words: 1) pronunciation, including changing the sound of the initial consonant to reduce the harshness of the language, for example, changing the initial consonant “H” /h/ of the word “Hia” /hîa/ to “Cho” /tɕʰ/ “O” “To” is pronounced as “Chia” /tɕʰîa/ “Aia” /ʔîa/ “Tia” /tîa/ instead of changing vowels or tones from the word “Klaui” /klûai/ changing to “Kwai” /kwai/ or separating words from 1 to 2, for example the word “Klaui” /klûai/ is separated into “Kruwai” /kruwai/ meaning which is still a curse word. But scolding is more polite. This makes the speaker not shy or the listener may not be as irritated as the original cursing. 2) Grammatical 3) Vocabulary. In the Thai language, it has been found that words are created to replace prohibited words by changing words in order to make the word more pleasing to the ear, for example, using the words “Laui Tae Krue” /luai tɛː kʰuːa/ instead of saying “Raui Tae Klaui” /lûːa tɛː kʰuːai/ which is impolite and 4) Rhetoric as for the Thai language, there are comparisons by referring to certain animals or things that are clearly used to refer to the male/female genitals, for example, /plaː/tɕʰôːn/ (snakehead fish),” /klûa/(banana),” /makʰûːa jaːu/(eggplant), /ɲuː/ (snake),” /maŋkɔːn/(dragon)” instead of the male genitalia as /plaː salîːt/(Gourami) and /hɔːi/(shellfish)” instead of female genitals. But many euphemistic and rhetorical phrases in Chinese are comparisons related to historical stories or figures, rather than direct comparisons of one thing for another which are impolite.

In addition, Meemongkol studied the linguistic landscape of Soi Nana Nuea and Soi Ekkamai by comparing the linguistic landscape of Soi Sukhumvit 3 (Nana Nuea) with Soi Sukhumvit 63 (Ekkamai) and studying the linguistic and

cultural diversity reflected in the linguistic landscape of Soi Sukhumvit 3 (Nana Nuea) and Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Ekkamai)^[11]. The data used in the study were obtained from photographing signs in Soi Sukhumvit 3 (Nana Nuea) and Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Ekkamai), 100 signs per alley, totalling 200 signs, and then applying the concept of linguistic landscape of Landry & Bourhis^[13]. The results of the study found that there were 4 types of signs with the highest number of signs having only English in Soi Sukhumvit 3 (Nana Nuea) and Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Ekkamai). As for signs in 5 languages, only 1 sign was found in Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Ekkamai). In terms of size and clarity of letters, it was found that English letters tend to be larger and most conspicuous in both Soi Sukhumvit 3 (Nana Nuea) and Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Ekkamai). When considering signs by type of business and service, the most restaurant signs were found in both Soi Sukhumvit 3 (Nana Nuea) and Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Ekkamai), followed by the hotel sign. In terms of cultural diversity, three outstanding issues were found to be reflected from the study of the linguistic landscape: the aspect of imitating the typeface of one language to be similar to that of another language; pets are part of the family and in the aspect of writing, transliterating words related to culture into Roman letters to make it easier for foreigners to read and remember the name of the shop. Furthermore, Hayeeni studied the use of language on coffee shop signs in a multilingual community area to analyse the function of language on coffee shop signs in multilingual communities in Yala Municipality which are 65 signs according to the concept of linguistic landscape^[14]. The study is both quantitative and qualitative research. The results found that coffee shop operators used monolingual shop names the most (56.92%), while bilingual signs are the second most common (40%). The language most often found on coffee shop signs is English (64.89%), followed by Thai (30.85%), where the function of the language on store signs is to display the name of the store and display details of the store. The results of this study showed the influence of English that has spread into the beverage business, both in displaying store names and store details to show the service provider's status as international and raising the image of the coffee shop which has led to the development of a format for creating English signs for other businesses that need to promote themselves through signs.

In a study, Chatwangkiri conducted a comparative study of restaurant naming in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province and Fuzhou City, China^[15]. The objective of the study was to compare language characteristics and social expressions and the culture of restaurant names in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province and Fuzhou City using the perspective of verbal style. The research results found that language for naming restaurants in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province is less complicated than the name of a restaurant

in Fuzhou, China in terms of both the structure, meaning, and language strategies as follows: 1) For the structure of the restaurant's name, it was found that restaurant names can be words, phrases, or sentences, with most restaurant names being noun phrases. From this study, names of restaurants in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province that are mostly noun phrases consist of a main unit followed by an expansion unit. And there can be at most 2 expansion units, but the names of restaurants in Fuzhou, China, are mostly noun phrases which consist of a modifier followed by a main unit, which is the structural characteristic of Chinese grammar units. and there can be a maximum of 3 expansion units. 2) In terms of the meaning of the restaurant name, it was found that restaurant names have direct and indirect meanings. There are more restaurant names in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province that have a direct meaning than restaurant names in Fuzhou, China. 3) For linguistic strategy of restaurant names, it was found the names of the restaurants in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province, and Fuzhou City, China mostly use the semantic strategy of metonymy. In addition, the names of restaurants in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province were also found which use fewer linguistic tricks than the name of a restaurant in Fuzhou, China. As for the social and cultural aspect of the restaurant's name, it was found that most restaurant names in Mueang District, Chiang Mai Province, express their local character whereas most restaurant names in Fuzhou, China, express values about prosperity.

From reviewing related studies, there are many studies that study the naming of business shops in various areas in Thailand, such as those by Chongbanchob^[7], Chatwangkiri^[15], Sukkasem^[16], Saengsawaeng^[17], Saerae^[18] and there are many studies which studied the issue of the meaning of auspicious names and compare naming meanings between languages or study the relationship between the shop's name and the way of life of people in the community and it was found that there was research that studied the linguistic elements of store signs to study the meaning and multilingualism or multiculturalism that focuses on analyzing the mix of languages in shop signs in various areas that reflects the importance of foreign languages that have influenced the way of life of Thai society, for example, Bowonpechayanurak, Prapobratanakul, Muangkaew & Kaewbutr and Mee-mongkol found that more restaurant signs were found than other businesses^[1,9,10,19].

When reviewing studies that studied restaurant signs, there are works that analyze the elements of signs using the concept of semiotics landscape, for example, Wirunpan & Panyametikhun^[11]. Work that studied the semiotics of restaurant names includes Banjongsawat who found the name of a restaurant found in Paris which can reflect the values, culture, and characteristics of Thai people in another way as well^[20].

When reviewing all studies related in this field, it is found that the studies of signs, names and semiotics landscape are investigated in different contexts around the world, but no specific studies have been done in terms of comparative studies in the areas of signboard naming in the restaurants in the department stores and street food stalls.

As far as it is concerned, the linguistic landscape (LL) is a significant and increasingly studied area, playing a role in fostering a better societal understanding of human language use in communication. This study is grounded in onomastics, the branch of linguistics that studies the history and origin of proper names. Specifically, it focuses on the names of commercial entities in urban settings, known as urbanonyms. An urbanonym is the proper name of any intra-city topographic object. The restaurant and street food stall names analyzed in this research fall under this category. This study is significant in enhancing understanding within linguistics, education, and business, as initially stated.

Therefore, the researchers were tremendously interested in collecting data from food stalls and restaurant signboards located in the vicinity of Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand to study the linguistic strategies and politeness and impoliteness used in naming those restaurants and food stalls which are in a certain environment called the Linguistic Landscape or Urbanonymic landscape or in another term of Ergonym which is a scientific general term for the names of cafes and restaurants which is important and valuable in the Thai contexts [21–28].

3. Research Questions

- (1) What are the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies of naming signboards of restaurants and street food stalls in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand, which create a linguistic landscape?
- (2) What is the frequency use of the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies of signboards of restaurants and street food stalls in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand, which create a linguistic landscape?
- (3) How are the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies used in naming the signboards of restaurants and street food stalls in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand, which create a linguistic landscape?

4. Materials and Methods

In this study, the following theoretical frameworks are employed; 1) Linguistics landscape: It is a field of study that studies language and society aiming to study the use of language on signs in a certain area in conjunction with other sciences [29]. 2) Polite words and impolite words: They are words that society has determined they are polite and impolite when communicating in public. That is, polite words re-

fer to expressions or linguistic forms that convey respect, consideration, or attentiveness toward the feelings of the listener. Their purpose is to maintain smooth interpersonal relationships and to avoid potential conflict in communication [30, 31]. Conversely, impolite words are linguistic forms that signal disrespect or communicate in a way that threatens or undermines the listener.

4.1. Research Procedures

In this study, the researchers divided the study into four main research phases: Phase I Constructing a research framework; 1. Literature review; Phase II Conducting a pilot project; 1. Pilot research on a small set of data 2. Presentation of a research on an international conference; Phase III Conducting a research project; 1. Data collection 2. Data analysis; Phase IV Presentation of results; 1. Results 2. Conclusion and discussion 3. Recommendations for further studies.

4.2. Phase I: Literature Review on Related Studies and Constructing a Research Framework

In this phase, the researchers reviewed studies related to construct a research framework and a research gap and finalized a real research project. That is, the researchers conducted a literature review related and then constructed a research framework to work on data analysis. In this regard, the researchers consulted and sought advice from experts in related fields to design an appropriate research framework.

4.3. Phase II: Conducting a Pilot Project

In this phase, once a clear research framework was constructed, the researchers collected the 50 names of the signboards of food stalls and 50 names of the signboards of restaurants in the areas of Kamphaeng Saen district, Nakhon Pathom province for the preliminary research. Then all data were analyzed in terms of comparison in percentage in terms of the strategies of naming on signs of both types of food stalls and restaurants. The preliminary results of the study showed that there are six strategies of naming on the signs of food stalls and restaurants; 1. Mixture of Thai and foreign words 2. Politeness and impoliteness of the use of words 3. Use of logo in signboards 4. Use of Thai and foreign alphabets 5. Use of different letters of different languages 6. Use of Roman letters mixed with different languages.

To make the results of the study more valid, the researchers were invited to present this preliminary research work online at the International Conference on Green Sustainable Technology and Management (ICGSTM 2024) during 19–20 June 2024 at INTI International University, Malaysia. Then the researchers brought the comments and suggestions gained from the research presentations to be applied

to further improve the research framework and design.

4.4. Phase III Conducting a Research Project

In this phase, the researchers divided the data into two sections as follows.

4.4.1. Data Collection

For data collection, the researchers collected 200 names of signboards of food stalls and restaurants in the areas which are away 5 Kilometers from Nakhon Pathom district center (Pra Pathom Chedi pagoda). That is, 100 names of signboards of food stalls were collected and 100 names of signboards of restaurants were collected by a purposive sampling. The concept of saturation of data by Guest, Bunce & Johnson, Creswell, Fusch & Ness was used when collecting data^[32–34]. That is, when the researchers collected data of signboards and found that there were similar and repetitive data, the researchers stopped collecting data. As discussed by Fusch & Ness^[34], data saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate the study when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained, and when further coding is no longer feasible. Thus, the total of 200 names in this study; 100 each for the two types of signboards were collected. In this regard, the researchers collected data by means of observation on publicly available information which does not relate to personal information (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services^[35]; World Medical Association^[36]; National Research Council of Thailand^[37]. Thus, this study was not supposed to relate to the issues of consent form and review of ethical review committee concerned. In addition, to consider the ethical issue, this study was free from the conflicts of interest with any people or institutions and organizations involved. That is, the study focuses only on academic contribution, not commercial one. All names collected and analyzed in this research were retrieved exclusively from public signage displayed in open, publicly accessible spaces (local markets and shopping malls). According to the principles outlined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki^[35,36], research involving publicly available data that do not involve personal identifiers is generally exempt from the requirement for informed consent or ethical review.

Although specific examples of shop names were discussed in the manuscript for the purpose of academic analysis, no personal data, individual owners' information, or sensitive commercial details were collected or disclosed. The names were used purely to illustrate linguistic strategies, and no evaluative or defamatory commentary was made about individual businesses.

The methodological approach in this study aligns with best practices in linguistic landscape research, where the

analysis of language use in public spaces—such as signs, advertisements, and shop names—is standard and ethically accepted without requiring consent^[13,33]. That is, the study follows ethical guidelines established by the National Research Council of Thailand^[37]. A declaration of no conflict of interest and adherence to research ethics was already included in the manuscript.

To further ensure ethical compliance, all data were treated confidentially, used solely for academic purposes, and reported in a manner that respects the businesses' public image without causing any harm or misrepresentation.

In light of these considerations, we respectfully submit that the research was conducted ethically and in compliance with international standards.

4.4.2. Data Analysis

For the data analysis, the researchers analysed all data based on the linguistic strategies in the preliminary study as a guideline for the textual analysis in the final research project. That is, the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies of naming food stalls and restaurants were categorized based on the framework set up. For the quantitative method, the analysis used the percentage to compare the naming of food stalls and restaurants and for the qualitative method, the analysis used linguistic description to interpret the signboards in both contexts of restaurants and food stalls.

4.5. Phase IV Presentation of Results

In this phase, the researchers presented the results in the following section accordingly.

5. Analysis and Findings

In order to answer the research questions, the findings were presented accordingly.

Question 1: What are the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies of naming signboards of restaurants and street food stalls in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand, which create a linguistic landscape?

Question 2: What are the frequencies of the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies of signboards of restaurants and street food stalls in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand, which create a linguistic landscape?

Question 3: How are the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing-related strategies used in naming the signboards of restaurants and street food stalls in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand which create a linguistic landscape?

From the analysis, six key linguistic strategies were used in naming the signboards of food stalls and restaurants.

When compared the linguistic strategies used in naming the food stalls and restaurants in terms of percentage, the results were shown as follows.

From **Table 1**, it is shown that for the use of languages in naming food stalls and restaurants, the use of Thai language is the most food stalls with 44% and 66% in food stalls. For the use of Thai language mixed foreign languages, it

showed that the signboards of restaurants in department stores use the loan words from Chinese for 30% and the subsequent use of Thai language mixed with English is 8% while the signboards of food stalls in local markets uses Thai language mixed with English for 12% and the use of English in food stalls for 10%. However, there is no use (0%) of Chinese, Japanese and Korean in food stalls in local markets.

Table 1. Mixture of Thai and Foreign Words.

Naming & Strategies	Thai	English	Chinese	Japanese	Korean	Thai & English	Thai & Chinese	Thai & Japanese	English & Korean
100 signboards of restaurants	44%	4%	6%	2%	2%	8%	30%	2%	2%
100 signboards of food stalls	64%	10%	0%	0%	0%	12%	8%	4%	2%

From **Table 2**, when considered the issue of polite words and impolite words in naming food stalls in local markets and restaurants in department stores, it was found that there are more uses of polite words than impolite words.

However, it is noted that signboards of food stalls in local markets use more impolite words than polite words for 26% while the signboards of restaurants in department stores use impolite words for only 2%.

Table 2. Polite and Impolite Words.

Naming & Strategies	Polite words	Impolite words
100 signboards of restaurants	98%	2%
100 signboards of food stalls	74%	26%

From **Table 3**, it was found that only 17% of the signboards of restaurants does not contain logos. Most logos found are pictures (46%) and logos with Thai language and

letters are 20%. For the signboards of the food stalls, it was found that most of the food stalls do not contain logos (57%) and the logos have more pictures than letters (22%).

Table 3. Use of Logo in Signboards.

Naming & Strategies	No use of a logo	Use images in logos	Logo has Thai Letters	Logo has Foreign Language Characteristics	Logo has Thai Letters mixed with foreign Language
100 signboards of restaurants	17%	46%	20%	7%	10%
100 signboards of food stalls	57%	22%	8%	6%	7%

From **Table 4**, when considering the use of letters between Thai and foreign languages in restaurant signs to be consistent with the commercial sign tax rate, it was found that 56% of restaurant signs in local food stalls uses only Thai characters, which is more than restaurant signs in mall food courts (21%). Meanwhile, there were no restaurant signs in the food court that had Thai characters lower than those in foreign languages. (Mostly, very small Thai letters

are written above the foreign language letters.)

In addition, it was found that shops in food centers used more name signs with Thai characters and logos than shops sold in local food stalls, accounting for 56% and 18%, respectively (logos may have foreign language characters). And restaurant signs that did not appear to use Thai characters were found in store signs at food centers at 7%, which is higher than those found in stores at local food stalls (2%).

Table 4. Use of Thai and Foreign Alphabets.

Naming & Strategies	Thai Alphabets (less tax)	Thai before Roman Alphabet (more tax)	Thai before Chinese Alphabets (more tax)	Thai Alphabets & Logo (more tax)	Thai Roman Alphabet (most tax)	None of Thai Alphabets (most tax)
100 signboards of restaurants	21%	16%	0%	56 %	0%	7%
100 signboards of food stalls	55%	16%	2%	18%	7%	2%

From **Table 5**, it was found that the most common strategy used to translate Chinese into Thai characters was 38% of restaurant signboards, while the signboards in food stalls showed no Chinese to Thai translation at all (0%). Next, the

strategy used to translate English into Thai characters was found in restaurant signboards at 18% and 29% of food stall signboards, which was equivalent to the strategy of using Chinese with Roman characters, respectively.

Table 5. Use of Different Letters of Different Languages.

Naming & Strategies	English translation into Thai letters	Chinese translation into Thai letters	Japanese translation into Thai letters	Thai with foreign language characters	Chinese with Chinese letters	Korean with Korean letters	Thai with Roman letters	All languages with Roman letters	English with Roman letters	Chinese with Roman letters	Japanese with Roman letters	Korean with Roman letters
100 signboards of restaurants	18%	38%	3%	0%	3%	3%	8%	5%	18%	3%	3%	3%
100 signboards of food stalls	29%	0%	3%	12%	3%	0%	15%	3%	29%	0%	6%	0%

From **Table 6**, it was found that English was used with Roman script the most in restaurant signboards at 47%, while food stall signboards used English with Roman script at 56%. Chinese was used with Roman script the least in restaurant signboards at 7%, while Chinese with Roman script in food stall signboards was used at 0%, which was the same as Korean with Roman script in both types of signboards.

From the analysis, it was found there is a variety use of linguistic strategies as shown in the previous tables. For the first strategy, it can be seen that the influence of Thai languages plays a significant role in naming both food stalls and restaurants, for example, ONE ONE CHICKEN FRIED วันวันทอดแต่ไก่ สไตส์เกาหลี/ กัวยเตี่ยวเรือพ้อมะลิ Pormali Boat Noodle. The examples are shown in **Figures 1** and **2**.

Table 6. Use of Roman Letters Mixed with Different Languages.

Naming & Strategies	Thai with Roman letters	All languages with Roman letters	English with Roman letters	Chinese with Roman letters	Japanese with Roman letters	Korean with Roman letters
100 signboards of restaurants	20%	13%	47%	7%	7%	7%
100 signboards of food stalls	28%	6%	56%	0%	11%	0%



Figure 1. Mixture of Thai and Foreign Words in Food Stalls in Local Markets: ONE ONE CHICKEN FRIED วันวันทอดแต่ไก่ สไตส์เกาหลี [ONE ONE CHICKEN FRIED, Wan Wan Thot Tae Kai, Style Kaw-li] “ONE ONE CHICKEN FRIED, Wan Wan (Every Day), Frying Only Chicken, Korean Style”

For the second strategy, it can be observed that use of polite and impolite words also plays a significant role in naming food stalls and restaurants with different portions of percentage. The examples of the language use are Yes! เจ้/ กัวยเตี่ยวปากหม้อ น้าล่อนสวน. The examples are shown in **Figures 3**

and **4**.

For the third strategy, it can be observed that the use of logos on signboards of food stalls in local markets and restaurants in department stores plays a significant role in naming these premises, for example, KONG เบอร์เกอร์/ไข่มุกรวทะเลน้ำพริก as shown in **Figures 5** and **6**.



Figure 2. Mixture of Thai Foreign Words in Restaurants in Department Stores: กัวยเตี่ยวเรือพ้อมะลิ Pormali Boat Noodle [Kuay Tiew Ruea Phor Mali] “Phor Mali (Father Jasmine's) Boat Noodles”



Figure 3. Polite and Impolite Words on Signboards of Food Stalls in Local Markets: Yes! เขี เนื้อจะเข้ย่าง เนื้อโคขุนย่าง หมูนมสด [Yes! Khe Nuea Jorakay Yang, Nuea Kho Khun, Moo Nom Sod] “YES! Crocodile, Grilled Crocodile, Meat Grilled Beef, Fresh Milk Pork”



Figure 4. Polite and Impolite Words on Signboards of Restaurants in Department Stores: ก๋วยเตี๋ยปากหม้อ นาสลอสวน [Kuay Tiaw Pak Mor, Na Lor Nai Suan] “Tempting Steamed Dumpling Soup in the Garden”



Figure 5. Logo on Signboard of Food Stalls in Local Markets: คอง เบอ์เกอร์ [Khong Burger] “Kong (King Kong) Burger”



Figure 6. Logo on Signboard of Restaurants in Department Stores: ไข่เจียวกะเสนหน้าพริก [Khai Jiaw ka Saneh Nam Prik] “Thai Omelette with the Charm of Chili Paste”

For the fourth strategy, it can be observed that the use of Thai and foreign alphabets is evident on signboards in both food stalls in local markets and restaurants in department stores, for example, คิง ออคโตปัส King Octopus ราชาปลาหมึก/ชาหมูโบราณ กะหู้ KHA MOO BORAN KATHU as shown in **Figures 7 and 8**.



Figure 7. Thai and Foreign Alphabets on Signboards of Food Stalls in Local Markets: คิง ออคโตปัส King Octopus ราชาปลาหมึก [King Octopus Racha/Raja Pla-muek] “King Octopus, the Octopus King”



Figure 8. Thai and Foreign Alphabets on Signboards of Restaurants in Department Stores: ชาหมูโบราณ กะหู้ [Kha Moo Boran Kathu] “Traditional Pork Leg of Kathu (Kathu is a district in Phuket, a famous province in Thailand)”

For the fifth strategy, it can be observed that the use of different letters of different languages is also significant in naming on both signboards of food stalls and restaurants, for example, หม่า Chicken ศูนย์รวมไก่กรอบ & ไก่ริงซ์แซบ / 元銘缘牛肉米粉 YUAN MING YUAN BEEF RICE NOODLE as shown in **Figures 9** and **10**.



Figure 9. Use of Different Letters of Different Languages on Signboards in Food Stalls in Local Markets: หม่า Chicken ศูนย์รวมไก่กรอบ & ไก่ริงซ์แซบ [Mam Chicken, Sun Ruam Kai Krop & Kai Wing Zaap] “Mam (Eat) Chicken, The Hub for Crispy Chicken & Spicy Wings”



Figure 10. Use of Different Letters of Different Languages on Signboards in Restaurants in Department Stores: 元銘缘牛肉米粉 YUAN MING YUAN BEEF RICE NOODLE “Yuan Ming Yuan (Destined Famous Origin) Beef Rice Noodle”

For the sixth strategy, it can be observed that use of Roman letters mixed with different languages is also significant in some degree in naming in both food stalls and restaurants, for example, ส้มตำ E. เป้ / SIAM KINNAREE สยาม กินนรี อาหารตามสั่ง as shown in **Figures 11** and **12**.



Figure 11. Use of Roman Letters Mixed with Different Languages on Signboards in Food Stalls in Local Markets. ส้มตำ E. เป้ [Som Tam E. Pae] “E. Pae's Papaya Salad”



Figure 12. Use of Roman Letters mixed with Different Languages on Signboards in Restaurants in Department Stores: สยาม กินนรี อาหารตามสั่ง [Siam Kinnaree, Ahan Tam Sang] “Siam Kinnaree (a mythical half-bird, half-woman from Thai literature) à la carte”

6. Conclusions, implications and Recommendations

In summary, the analysis of restaurant and food stall eronyms in Nakhon Pathom reveals distinct patterns in language choice, politeness levels, and visual branding, which, when viewed through a critical toponymy lens, reflect interesting cultural negotiations, marketing strategies, and social dynamics. The six identified strategies demonstrate diversity and creativity in naming, with entrepreneurs adapting language to communicate identity, attract customers, and position themselves within a competitive urbanonymic landscape.

Therefore, from the study, it is discussed that naming both food stalls in local markets and restaurants in department stores is significantly different from each other as of

different strategies, locations and target groups. Thus, it is discussed that naming signboards depends on target groups of people and the linguistic, socio-cultural and marketing related factors and strategies. In other words, communicating with people with appropriate strategies can draw attentions the target groups more effectively. It can be discussed that linguistic landscape reflects a characteristic of different groups of people in the two places; in local markets and department stores. For the issue of the use of polite and impolite words, it is discussed that level of use of languages in different linguistic landscapes shows different registers of the use of languages in each society. Thus, it can be concluded for further implications in the following sections.

6.1. Implications

6.1.1. Business Naming

The current study can assist restaurant owners and food vendors in choosing names that better attract their target audience by selecting words that resonate with specific customer groups, for example:

Restaurants in shopping malls: Names should be polite and creative, reflecting the quality and atmosphere of the establishment. This helps enhance the restaurant's image, making it appear more luxurious or international.

Restaurants in local markets: Names could play with humour or use slang that is more accessible, appealing to customers familiar with the local culture.

6.1.2. Marketing and Branding

Incorporating foreign languages: The study showed that using Thai in combination with foreign languages, for example, English, Chinese, or Korean, can increase appeal and attract international customers. A globalized name can also give the restaurant a modern image, making it more attractive to tourists.

Using logos and typography: The choice of a logo that stands out and is appropriate for the target audience is crucial. For instance, a logo that combines both imagery and text can make the restaurant's name more memorable.

6.1.3. Marketing Communication Management

Businesses can apply the findings of this study to design signs and advertisements that cater to specific customer groups. For example:

Signs with polite language: They are suitable for restaurants aiming to create a luxurious ambiance, for example, those in malls or upscale cafés.

Signs with informal (but humorous) language: They might be suitable for local eateries or market vendors aiming to create a fun and friendly vibe with their customers.

6.1.4. Linguistic Studies and Research

For researchers and students, the findings can be applied to the study of Linguistic Landscapes, which examines language use of behaviours in various communities. This reflects people's thoughts, beliefs, and values in different societies.

6.1.5. Creating a Competitive Edge

Businesses can use distinctive naming strategies, for example, mixing languages or incorporating slang, to differentiate themselves in highly competitive markets. This approach can attract new customers and promote long-term brand recognition.

6.1.6. Presenting Data to Relevant Authorities

The research can also be utilized in making recommendations to government agencies or related business registration and marketing authorities. It can help guide or set policies regarding business naming to ensure cultural appropriateness and relevance to target audiences in various areas.

6.2. Recommendations for Future Research

From the study, we recommend the following for people involved for future research as follows:

6.2.1. For Restaurant Owners and Food Vendors

They should implement naming strategies that suit the target audience and context, for example, combining Thai with foreign languages for restaurants in shopping malls to attract a diverse customer base. They should consider using polite or informal language that aligns with the restaurant's image. For example, restaurants in malls should primarily use polite language, while food stalls can adopt a more casual tone. And they should use multilingual logos and typography to create a unique identity and capture attention, particularly for restaurants in shopping malls.

6.2.2. For Marketers and Brand Designers

They should design naming and branding strategies that align with the target audience and linguistic environment and creatively combine languages and cultures to make the brand stand out. And they should carefully use local languages or slang to create a friendly connection with certain customer groups.

6.2.3. For Urban Planners and Policy Makers

They should be aware of the impact of linguistic landscapes on the ambiance and identity of public spaces and consider establishing guidelines for the use of language on public signage to maintain a balance between cultural diversity and local identity.

6.2.4. For Academics and Researchers

They should further explore the effects of linguistic landscapes on consumer behaviour and brand perception and

analyse trends in linguistic landscape changes within the context of social and economic transformations.

6.2.5. For Educators and Language Teachers

They should use real-world examples from linguistic landscapes to teach language and culture and promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity in contemporary Thai society.

6.2.6. Additional Suggestions

Additional suggestions for future research should specifically build on the critical toponymy and ergonym frameworks, such as comparative studies with other Thai regions or other ergonym types, in-depth investigations of consumer perception and interpretation of these names, and longitudinal studies of naming trends.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, O.K.; investigation, U.S., O.K. and P.S.; formal analysis, U.S., O.K. and P.S.; writing—original draft preparation, U.S.; writing—review and editing, O.K., U.S. and P.S.; supervision, U.S. and P.S.; project administration, U.S. and P.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

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