

Pride, Profit, and Cultural Intimacy: Language Commodification and Register Indexicality in Central Javanese Coffee Shop Ergonyms

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ABSTRACT

Although commercial naming (ergonyms) plays a pivotal role in urban identity, how local entrepreneurs linguistically navigate the tension between globalization and regional heritage in developing non-metropolitan markets remains under-theorized. This study examines coffee shop naming strategies in Central Java, Indonesia, employing a convergent mixed-methods design. An empirical corpus of 571 unique establishments across five cities was compiled via geoweb scraping and analyzed through a nine-dimensional socio-onomastic coding scheme. Quantitative analysis reveals that concise names of one to three words dominate the landscape (73.03%). Monolingual Indonesian names comprise 50.79% of the corpus, while commodified monolingual English (32.92%) and Javanese (13.49%) names reflect competing glocal positionings. While English operates primarily as a prestigious lifestyle “ideofier” (47.11% of total names) to project cosmopolitanism, Javanese names are strategically deployed as anchors of local solidarity. Within the Javanese sub-corpus, owners overwhelmingly select the informal Ngoko speech register (89.25%) over the refined Krama register (10.75%), indexing cultural intimacy and community warmth over rigid traditional hierarchies. Morphological and orthographic creativity further manifest through lexical blending with haplology (6.13%) and spaceless concatenation (4.73%), supported by a front-vowel phonesthetic dominance (57.44%) projecting modern speed. This study contributes to the broader fields of linguistic landscapes and applied sociolinguistics by demonstrating that commercial naming is a selective, bottom-up process of glocal synthesis, wherein local heritage is actively commodified to negotiate social comfort rather than passively succumbing to globalizing homogenization.

1. Introduction

In contemporary urban societies, coffee consumption has transcended its traditional status as a mundane dietary habit, evolving into a highly visible lifestyle phenomenon and a core performance of modern social identity (Rachmad, 2025). This transition has catalyzed a rapid proliferation of specialty coffee shops across major urban and semi-urban centers throughout Indonesia (Anam & Hidayat, 2020; Rachmad, 2025). Far from serving merely as transactional sites for caffeine purchase, these establishments have emerged as crucial “third places” socially constructed public spheres that facilitate urban interactions, construct youth subcultures, and serve as prominent sites of socio-onomastic change (Liao & Chan, 2024). Within this commercial landscape, the signage of these shops, specifically their commercial names or ergonyms does more than identify the physical business space; it acts as a strategic

medium of branding, visual communication, and cultural positioning (Saban & Musnur, 2026). Consequently, the study of coffee shop names provides a compelling socio-onomastic lens through which researchers can examine the broader tensions of globalization, localization, and identity negotiation in rapidly developing economies (Felecan & Bugheşiu, 2021; Sjöblom, 2016).

To understand these dynamics theoretically, commercial naming must be analyzed at the intersection of commercial onomastics and linguistic landscape (LL) research (Sjöblom, 2016). While classical onomastics concentrates on the origin, classification, and etymology of proper names, linguistic landscape research conceptualizes public commercial signs as active, multi-modal sites where languages are visually negotiated and social meanings are produced (Amara, 2019;

Hazaea et al., 2025). Under conditions of late capitalism and market competition, language choice on commercial signage is heavily shaped by language commodification (Sjöblom, 2016). As sociolinguistic theorists argue, language in competitive markets has shifted from being solely an index of ethnic solidarity or cultural pride to functioning as an exchangeable economic and symbolic resource (Saban & Musnur, 2026). In this light, the deployment of prestigious languages, such as English, on storefronts represents a form of language display or linguistic fetish (Silviyanti et al., 2024). This practice prioritizes the symbolic, lifestyle-oriented styling of the business over literal, utilitarian communication to target upwardly mobile, cosmopolitan consumer segments (Zurriyati et al., 2025).

Conversely, regional and indigenous languages may also be strategically commodified. Rather than passively succumbing to globalizing homogenization, local business owners frequently draw upon heritage dialects, such as Javanese, to project cultural authenticity, regional pride, and historical depth (Adinatha & Hemas, 2021). This bottom-up onomastic negotiation results in a layered “glocal” commercial landscape, where foreign prestige markers and local identity symbols coexist and compete (Liao & Chan, 2024). Despite these insights, commercial naming studies within linguistic landscapes have frequently focused on capital cities or highly internationalized metropolitan areas, leaving regional, non-metropolitan, and semi-urban sociolinguistic ecosystems largely under-investigated (Felecan & Bugheşiu, 2021).

The province of Central Java, Indonesia, serves as a uniquely critical, yet under-explored, setting to examine these glocal naming dynamics. Sociolinguistically, Central Java represents a complex regional microcosm characterized by a high-density bilingual population comprising Javanese and Indonesian speakers undergoing rapid commercial modernization (Adinatha & Hemas, 2021). The region presents a diverse economic and geographic spectrum: from competitive, metropolitan capitals and historical heritage centers, such as Semarang and Surakarta, to developing semi-urban municipalities, such as Banjarnegara and Klaten. Crucially, Central Java also encompasses Temanggung, a major highland coffee-producing region. This geographic proximity to coffee agriculture uniquely links the local coffee shop landscape to themes of geographical authenticity, local farming heritage, and agricultural pride. Studying this region therefore provides a robust basis for exploring how different municipal economies varying in their exposure to global market forces and their proximity to local crop production shape the strategic choices of language, orthography, and cultural register in commercial naming practices.

While a growing body of scholarship has investigated coffee shop naming practices in Indonesia, existing studies exhibit several empirical and methodological limitations. Previous investigations have typically

focused on single metropolitan areas, such as Jakarta’s Kemang area (Anam & Hidayat, 2020), or have been restricted to smaller, localized samples (Silviyanti et al., 2024; Zurriyati et al., 2025). Methodologically, these studies often rely on descriptive, flat summaries of language choice without integrating structural, phonesthetic, or sociolinguistic speech levels into a cohesive analytical framework. Furthermore, international commercial landscape research frequently overlooks how localized honorific speech levels, such as Javanese register indexicality, and crossmodal sound symbolism are mobilized as marketing resources (Abalkheel, 2025; Liao & Chan, 2024). Consequently, there is a clear theoretical gap regarding how structural brevity, phonetic sound symbolism, visual orthographic play, and traditional register hierarchies collectively operate within a single commercial corpus.

To address these empirical and theoretical limitations, this study presents a comprehensive, multidimensional socio-onomastic analysis of 571 cleaned, unique coffee shop names across five cities in Central Java. The novelty and primary contribution of this study are twofold: first, the unprecedented scale of its regional corpus, which is rigorously cleaned to eliminate multi-branch franchise dominance and traditional non-specialist stalls (Bochynska et al., 2023); second, the integration of three distinct analytical dimensions into a single interpretive convergent mixed-methods framework (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Hirose & Creswell, 2023; Katz-Buonincontro, 2024).

This study pursues three interconnected research objectives: first, mapping the dominant morpho-orthographic structures and creative visual strategies in coffee shop names, such as word count brevity, spaceless concatenation, and lexical blending with haplology; second, examining how crossmodal sound symbolism (vowel and consonant phonesthetics) projects sensory expectations of physical space; and third, evaluating how Javanese ergonyms negotiate cultural heritage by indexing socio-stylistic speech register hierarchies (*Ngoko* versus *Krama*) within a competitive glocal commercial landscape.

By examining these intersecting dimensions, this study contributes to linguistic landscape theory and commercial onomastics, offering insights into how regional entrepreneurs navigate intense market competition by actively transforming local heritage and global capital into visible, marketable lifestyles.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Commercial Onomastics and the Linguistic Landscape

Linguistic landscape (LL) research has expanded its analytical focus from public regulatory signs to commercial signboards, conceptualizing shopfronts as highly dynamic semiotic spaces where languages are contested, displayed, and consumed (Gorter, 2013).

Within this paradigm, commercial onomastics (the study of business names, trademarks, and ergonyms) posits that proper names of enterprises are never neutral referential labels. Instead, as [Sjöblom \(2016\)](#) argues, ergonyms function as complex, multi-layered signs that convey both denotative meanings (identifying the category and location of the business) and connotative values (indexing prestige, identity, and target consumer lifestyles).

In modern urban landscapes, the naming of commercial facilities represents a critical interface of cultural and economic forces ([Felecan & Bugheşiu, 2021](#)). Shop signs do not merely reflect the demographic reality of a city; they actively construct its identity by projecting images of tradition, modernity, or globalization ([Zhang & Chan, 2017](#)). By analyzing ergonyms, researchers can decode the linguistic choices made by commercial actors as deliberate acts of social positioning, where different languages are mobilized as symbolic resources to navigate competitive markets ([Benu et al., 2025](#)).

2.2 Language Commodification and the Glocal Tension

Under the conditions of late capitalism and globalized market competition, languages are increasingly treated as valuable commodities rather than simple vessels of cultural heritage. This process of language commodification occurs when linguistic resources are systematically packaged and exchanged for economic and symbolic profit ([Heller, 2010](#); [Heller & Duchêne, 2012](#); [Highet, 2024](#)). In expanding-circle multilingual contexts like Indonesia, the choice between local, national, and foreign languages on commercial signs reflects a sharp glocal tension between what [Kelly-Holmes \(2014\)](#) defines as “pride” (local/national solidarity) and “profit” (global prestige).

The widespread utilization of English on storefronts in non-Anglophone countries exemplifies language display or linguistic fetish ([Eastman & Stein, 1993](#)). In these settings, English words are selected not for literal referential meaning as the local population may not speak English fluently but for their symbolic capacity to evoke an abstract, prestigious lifestyle associated with global modernity, elite cosmopolitanism, and high quality ([Zurriyati et al., 2025](#)). This practice has been extensively documented in commercial naming studies across diverse global contexts, from coffee shops in Shanghai ([Liao & Chan, 2024](#)) to retail signboards in Vietnam ([Le & Nguyen, 2025](#)), Najran ([Hazaea et al., 2025](#)), and Banda Aceh ([Silviyanti et al., 2024](#)).

However, the commodification of foreign languages in Indonesia is not limited to Western languages like English. In multilingual urban settings, other foreign tongues are strategically mobilized to index distinct socio-ideological capitals. For instance, [Aribowo \(2017\)](#), in his onomastic analysis of shops owned by

people of Arab descent in Pasar Kliwon, Surakarta, demonstrates that Arabic is systematically commodified to index religious authenticity, ethnic lineage, and commercial credibility. Rather than projecting Western-style secular cosmopolitanism, Arabic-derived brand names function as powerful semiotic tools to build consumer trust, establish owners’ Islamic identity, and crucially, assure consumers of *halālan thayyiban* (permissible and high-quality) standards. This indicates that the Indonesian commercial landscape is shaped by multiple competing prestige economies: one oriented toward globalized secular modernity (English), and another anchored in religious and spiritual assurance (Arabic) ([Aribowo, 2017](#); [Muassomah et al., 2025](#)).

Conversely, indigenous and regional languages are also undergoing strategic commodification. Rather than being completely displaced by the global prestige of English or the religious gravity of Arabic, regional heritage dialects (such as Javanese) are actively redeployed on commercial signboards to project cultural authenticity, regional pride, and historical depth ([Adinatha & Hemas, 2021](#); [Rachmad, 2025](#)). This glocal negotiation produces a hybrid commercial landscape where foreign prestige markers, religious trust signals, and local identity symbols are strategically combined to target distinct market niches.

2.3 Crossmodal Sound Symbolism and Phonesthetics in Branding

In commercial onomastics, a brand name is not processed solely as a semantic unit; it is also experienced as an acoustic and phonological stimulus. This phenomenon is grounded in sound symbolism (phonesthetics), which posits that individual speech sounds (phonemes) can systematically elicit crossmodal sensory and psychological associations independent of literal word meanings ([Lowrey & Shrum, 2007](#)). In consumer psychology, these phonetic symbols are powerful branding resources that shape consumer expectations regarding a product’s size, speed, weight, gender, and environmental atmosphere before physical exposure occurs ([Abalkheel, 2025](#)).

A critical phonetic distinction lies in vowel position, specifically the contrast between front and back vowels. Front vowels (such as /i/ and /e/) are phonetically characterized by high frequency and rapid acoustic transitions, which crossmodally project notions of lightness, modern speed, high energy, and crisp cleanliness ([Lowrey & Shrum, 2007](#)). Consequently, front-vowel dominant brand names (e.g., *Konnichiwa*) are frequently deployed to align with modern, minimalist, and fast-paced urban lifestyles ([Anderson, 2016](#)).

Conversely, back vowels (such as /u/ and /o/) are characterized by low frequency and resonant acoustic depth, which crossmodally index physical warmth, rich flavor, comfort, and cozy environments ([Anderson, 2016](#)). In the coffee shop industry, back-vowel

dominant names are strategically employed to evoke spatial and emotional expectations associated with a cozy, relaxing “third place” environment, where customers can comfortably engage in prolonged social gatherings, casual interactions, and leisure activities.

Additionally, the manner of articulation of consonants plays a critical role: continuant and smooth consonants (e.g., fricatives and nasals like /s/, /m/, /n/, /l/) evoke smooth, relaxing, and soothing sensory expectations, whereas plosives and stops (e.g., /p/, /t/, /k/) project high commercial energy, modern efficiency, and structural decisiveness (Abalkheel, 2025).

2.4 Morphological Innovation and Graphemic Wordplay

To achieve visual prominence and optimize cognitive recall in highly competitive commercial environments, business owners frequently utilize unconventional linguistic structures. Rather than relying on standard, plain orthographies, modern ergonyms increasingly exhibit creative morphological and graphemic manipulations (Sjöblom, 2016). In branding linguistics, these creative forms function as visual wordplay, forcing consumers to actively decode the sign, which subsequently enhances brand distinctiveness and memory retention (Renner, 2015).

A prominent structural mechanism is spaceless concatenation (orthographic merging), which involves the deliberate omission of orthographic boundaries to merge multiple distinct words into a single continuous visual unit (Sjöblom, 2016). This visual merging creates a distinctive, logographic mark while preserving the underlying phonology of the constituent words. At the morphological level, this is closely linked to lexical blending, a word-formation process where two or more source words are fused, with at least one word undergoing segmental clipping (Mattiello, 2022; Renner, 2015). When lexical blending is coupled with haplology (the systematic elision of one of two consecutive phonetically similar syllables) it produces a highly efficient, seamless visual and phonological merger of two distinct semantic units (DiGirolamo, 2012). By framing these structures within established morphological categories, visual brand creativity is shown to rely on systematic, cognitive wordplay rather than random orthographic errors.

2.5 Sociolinguistic Registers and Javanese Honorific Hierarchies

When local Javanese cultural heritage is mobilized in commercial spaces, it must negotiate the complex socio-stylistic register hierarchies (*tingkat tutur*) of Javanese society. Traditionally, Javanese linguistic interaction is highly organized, requiring speakers to continuously select between different speech levels based on social status, age, familiarity, and social distance (Adinatha & Hemas, 2017). The two primary poles of this register hierarchy are *Krama* (the refined, formal,

and high-status register that indexes respect, politeness, and social distance) and *Ngoko* (the colloquial, informal, and lower-status register that indexes intimacy, equality, familiarity, and social solidarity) (Adinatha & Hemas, 2021).

In the contemporary commercial landscape of Central Java, the use of these registers on shop signs undergoes a significant functional shift. In feudal Javanese society, *Krama* was the mandatory vehicle for public and formal prestige, while *Ngoko* was restricted to informal, private domains. However, under conditions of late modernization and youth-led consumerism, local entrepreneurs are performing cultural intimacy and indigenization (Rachmad, 2025). By selectively using the *Ngoko* register rather than the highly formal *Krama*, business owners transform Javanese heritage into a branding resource. Instead of presenting local culture as a distant symbol of status, they use *Ngoko* to index solidarity, egalitarian warmth, and rustic authenticity. This register choice redefines coffee-house spaces as accessible, welcoming, and community-oriented environments aligned with the relaxed social practices of modern urban consumers.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

To examine the linguistic patterns and strategies of coffee shop naming in Central Java, this study adopts a convergent mixed-methods research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters et al., 2013; Katz-Buonincontro, 2024). This methodological paradigm is epistemologically grounded in pragmatic, problem-centered research, which posits that commercial business names (ergonyms) are simultaneously quantitative, countable market units and qualitative, meaning-bearing socio-cultural signs (Saban & Musnur, 2026).

Through this design, the quantitative strand evaluates the distribution, frequency, and morphological structures of naming features across a large-scale corpus, while the qualitative strand interprets the symbolic, phonesthetic, and socio-onomastic meanings indexed by those choices within the local-global commercial tension (Magarelli & Filograsso, 2025; Saban & Musnur, 2026). By concurrently executing and integrating both strands during the analytical phase, this study mitigates the limitations of single-method onomastic designs namely, the contextual flattening of quantitative surveys and the lack of generalizability in close qualitative readings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Saban & Musnur, 2026).

3.2 Geographic Setting and Target Population

The research was conducted across five purposively selected cities in the province of Central Java, Indonesia: Semarang, Surakarta, Banjarnegara, Klaten, and Temanggung. This geographic setting represents a sociolinguistic microcosm of contemporary Javanese

society, reflecting diverse levels of urbanization, commercial activity, and linguistic demographics. Semarang (the provincial capital) and Surakarta (a historical royal center) represent competitive urban environments shaped by rapid modernization and global–local branding dynamics.

Conversely, Banjarnegara, Klaten, and Temanggung represent developing, semi-urban economies. Temanggung, in particular, is a globally recognized coffee-producing highland, making its local coffee shop landscape uniquely tied to geographic authenticity and local agricultural identity. Crucially, the selection of these five municipalities is not designed for a cross-city comparative experiment, but rather to achieve a comprehensive corpus breadth that captures a wide spectrum of socio-commercial realities in Central Java. The target population of interest consists of active, locally operating retail coffee establishments within these administrative regions, defined systematically to ensure empirical representativeness (Hashimoto & Nelson, 2024).

3.3 Data Harvesting and Ethical Compliance

Primary linguistic data were harvested on February 23, 2023 utilizing Google Maps Scraper (elevmoveon, 2022) an automated web-scraping protocol targeting Google Maps (Aribowo et al., 2025), in line with modern geoweb mapping research standards (Dalton, 2015). Google Maps was selected as the primary sampling frame due to its high density, geoweb accuracy, and extensive coverage of small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia, which are frequently underrepresented in traditional government business

registries (Sjöblom, 2016). The search queries were restricted to the Indonesian term “*kedai kopi*” and the English equivalent “*coffee shop*” to capture the full spectrum of local and foreign-oriented businesses.

Ethically, this study strictly utilized publicly available commercial listings voluntarily published by business owners for marketing purposes (Dalton, 2015). In compliance with the ethical standards for geoweb and internet-based linguistic research, the data harvesting process was entirely non-intrusive. No private user profiles, consumer reviews, or personally identifiable information (PII) were extracted, thereby bypassing the necessity for human subjects review and ensuring absolute privacy protection (Aribowo et al., 2025).

3.4 Data Cleaning

To guarantee methodological reproducibility and corpus transparency, a rigorous data-cleaning pipeline was established (Bochynska et al., 2023). The raw scraper output captured 795 listings across the five cities. First, 108 duplicate rows were removed using OpenRefine (Huynh, 2022). Second, systematic exclusion criteria were applied to the remaining 687 unique listings to isolate modern specialty coffee establishments from traditional culinary formats or unrelated listings. This filtering process resulted in the exclusion of 116 entries, leaving a final analytical corpus of 571 valid, unique coffee shop names. In calculating these proportions, the study utilized the exact number of applicable names as the denominator to ensure transparency. The precise attrition reconciliation pathway is detailed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Data cleaning and exclusion pathway

Step	Data Filtering Stage	Criteria for Exclusion	Entries Removed	Remaining Dataset
0	Raw Scraper Output	Initial bulk data scraped from Google Maps across five cities	-	795
1	Technical Deduplication	Removal of exact coordinate, name, and municipal duplicates	108	687
2	Socio-Onomastic Exclusion I	Removal of traditional street-food vendors, non-specialist stalls (<i>warung</i> , <i>angkringan</i> , <i>HIK</i>), and single-beverage stands (e.g., <i>es teh</i> , <i>boba</i>) lacking dedicated cafe infrastructure	65	622
3	Franchise Consolidation	Standardizing national/international mega-chains (e.g., <i>Starbucks</i> , <i>Point Coffee</i> , <i>Janji Jiwa</i>) to a single representative entry per city to avoid corporate statistical dominance	35	587
4	Socio-Onomastic Exclusion II	Removal of industrial wholesale coffee bean distributors, machinery suppliers, and non-retail agricultural processors	11	576
5	Data Integrity Check	Discarding invalid listings, typographical errors, and spam/broken URLs	5	571

Source: Google Maps (2023)

3.5 Inter-Coder Reliability

Because human judgment is central to coding complex socio-linguistic and metaphorical categories in commercial onomastics, a rigorous double-coding protocol was established to minimize single-coder bias (Larsson et al., 2020). A second independent linguist blindly coded a randomly selected sub-sample of 15% of the total dataset ($n = 85$ coffee shop names) using the operationalized codebook (Bochynska et al., 2023). The level of agreement between the two coders was statistically evaluated using unweighted Cohen's Kappa (κ) (Cohen, 1960). Cohen's Kappa is superior to simple percentage agreement as it mathematically corrects for agreement occurring by random chance alone (McHugh, 2012). The statistic was calculated as follows:

$$\kappa = \frac{p_o - p_e}{1 - p_e}$$

Where p_o represents the relative observed agreement proportion between the coders, and p_e is the hypothetical probability of chance agreement calculated using the marginal proportions of the contingency table (Cohen, 1960).

The resulting inter-coder reliability test yielded an overall Cohen's Kappa of $\kappa = 0.88$ (with raw observed agreement at 94.1%), signifying "almost perfect" agreement according to established interpretive standards (McHugh, 2012). Disagreements primarily concentrated in distinguishing highly ambiguous boundaries between metaphorical and locational motivations were thoroughly discussed and resolved through a consensus-based Focus Group Discussion (FGD) before finalizing the dataset. The precise operational definitions, specific categories, and the per-dimension reliability scores (Cohen's Kappa) for all nine dimensions are detailed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Multidimensional linguistic and socio-onomastic coding schema

No	Coding Dimension	Operational Definition	Categories	Examples	Cohen's Kappa (κ)
1	Language Choice	Linguistic origin of name elements	Indonesian; English; Javanese; Hybrid	<i>Anak Panah Kopi; Almamater Coffee; Ajar Ngopi; Aman Jiwa Coffee</i>	0.92
2	Word Count Complexity	Number of orthographic words	1; 2; 3; 4; ≥ 5	<i>Alugaracoffeeshop</i> (1); <i>Anagata Cafe</i> (2); <i>28 Coffee Klaten</i> (3)	0.98
3	Structural Feature	Graphic or orthographic manipulation	Standard; Concatenation; Symbol; Numeric	<i>Ajar Ngopi; Alugaracoffeeshop; Aman Jiwa Coffee & Eatery; 28 Coffee Klaten</i>	0.88
4	Semantic Motivation	Main conceptual motivation of the name	Descriptive; Locational; Personal; Metaphorical	<i>Arabika Coffee Shop; Kata Kopi Semarang; Andy Nyoma Coffee; Anak Panah Kopi</i>	0.81
5	Phonesthetic: Vowels	Dominant vowel type	Front; Back; Balanced	<i>Konnichiwa; Omah Tua; Almamater Coffee</i>	0.86
6	Phonesthetic: Consonants	Dominant consonant type	Continuant; Plosive; Balanced	<i>Asmarasa; Kopi Kawan; Anso Kopi</i>	0.85
7	Language Commodification	Functional vs. symbolic use of language	Identifier; Ideofier	<i>Ajar Ngopi; Almamater Coffee</i>	0.84
8	Javanese Register	Social indexicality of Javanese register	Ngoko; Krama	<i>Sang Ngoro Coffee House, Omah Kopi; Kopi Sabin; Nglaras Ngopi</i>	0.89
9	Wordplay Mechanism	Morphological/orthographic wordplay	Spelling deviation; Blending; Homophony	<i>Koffee; Kopinggirjalan; Kedai Kopi & Kuliner Numani</i>	0.83

Source: Google Maps (2023)

4. Results

4.1 Word Count Complexity and Structural Frequencies

To establish a baseline structural profile of ergonyms within the Central Javanese coffee shop landscape, the absolute word count of the 571 unique establishments was quantitatively analyzed. This structural metric provides crucial insights into the branding efficiency and communicative conciseness preferred by business owners. As summarized in Table 4.3 the statistical distribution proves that a significant majority of coffee shop names prefer brevity, with names ranging from one to three words accounting for 73.03% of the entire corpus.

Specifically, single-word names represent 6.13% of the dataset (e.g., *Alugaracoffeeshop*, *Asmarasa*), while two-word names (e.g., *Anagata Cafe*, *Ajar Ngopi*) represent the single largest category at 36.25%, followed closely by three-word names (e.g., *28 Coffee Klaten*, *Anak Panah Kopi*) at 30.65%. Longer, multi-word names consisting of four words represent 18.74%, while names with five or more words constitute a minor share of 8.23%. Reconciling these figures validates the core assertion that Central Javanese coffee shop branding heavily relies on highly concise, memorable lexical lengths of one to three words to optimize cognitive recall in competitive commercial environments.

Table 4.3 Statistical summary of ergonomic structures and word counts (n=571)

Structural Feature	Category	n	%	Examples
Word Count	1 word	35	6.13	<i>Alugaracoffeeshop</i> , <i>Dolkopi</i> , <i>Asmarasa</i>
	2 words	207	36.25	<i>Anagata Cafe</i> , <i>Ajar Ngopi</i> , <i>Aming Coffee</i>
	3 words	175	30.65	<i>28 Coffee Klaten</i> , <i>Anak Panah Kopi</i> , <i>Anso Kopi</i>
	4 words	107	18.74	<i>Kedai Kopi Dudu Luwak</i> , <i>Andy Nyoma Coffee Shop</i>
	≥5 words	47	8.23	<i>The Hidden Swargi Coffee Roastery</i> , <i>Banaran 9 Resto Coffee & Tea</i>
Graphemic/Orthographic Feature	Standard orthography	454	79.51	<i>Anak Panah Kopi</i> , <i>Andy Nyoma Coffee Shop</i>
	Stylistic punctuation/symbols	68	11.91	<i>Almamater Coffee & Eatery</i> , <i>Aman Jiwa Coffee & Eatery</i>
	Spaceless concatenation	27	4.73	<i>Alugaracoffeeshop</i> , <i>Dolkopi</i> , <i>Kopinggir-jalan</i>
	Numeric representation	12	2.10	<i>28 Coffee Klaten</i> , <i>Kopi 99</i> , <i>Kopi 18</i>
	Combined creative features	10	1.75	<i>Spiegel.co</i> , <i>Kopi Laku 2.0</i>

Source: Google Maps (2023)

4.2 Language Choice and the Glocal Tension of Language Commodification

The distribution of primary language choices in the corpus reveals a complex linguistic landscape shaped by the tension between local, national, and foreign linguistic capital. Monolingual Indonesian names comprise the majority of the dataset at 50.79% ($n = 290$), reflecting the pervasive use of the national language as a stable, cross-ethnic baseline for commercial communication. Monolingual English names represent the second largest category at 32.92% ($n = 188$), functioning as highly commodified symbols of global

modernity and cosmopolitanism. Monolingual Javanese, representing the local indigenous language, is utilized in 13.49% of names ($n = 77$), while bilingual or hybrid names combining Javanese and English elements constitute 2.80% ($n = 16$) of the corpus.

To evaluate the underlying sociolinguistic function behind these language choices, the names were classified using the binary framework of Language Commodification. Establishments were coded as Identifiers if their names fulfilled a primarily utilitarian, literal, and product-focused communicative function (e.g., using explicit descriptors like *Kopi* or *Kedai* along with

literal locations or personal names). Conversely, names were coded as ideofiers (Linguistic Fetish) if they utilized foreign languages or creative orthographies symbolically to project an abstract lifestyle, elite prestige, and modern commercial identity rather than literal product descriptions.

The results show a nearly balanced split: 52.89% ($n = 302$) of the coffee shops operate as identifiers, whereas 47.11% ($n = 269$) function as ideofiers. This indicates that while the utilitarian need to explicitly signal product category and geographic location remains dominant in the Central Javanese market, nearly half of the local entrepreneurs actively commodify language particularly English as a symbolic branding instrument to target upwardly mobile, lifestyle-oriented consumer segments.

4.3 Orthographic Deviations and Visual Wordplay

While 79.51% ($n = 454$) of the coffee shop names adhere to standard orthographic rules, a substantial portion of the corpus exhibits creative graphemic and visual manipulations designed to catch consumer attention. A critical correction must be made regarding prior observations: contrary to suggestions of widespread underscore usage in digital brand names, the actual empirical data reveals that this phenomenon is characterized by spaceless concatenation (orthographic merging).

Spaceless concatenation, which occurs in 4.73% ($n = 27$) of the corpus, involves the deliberate omission of word boundaries to merge multiple distinct words into a single continuous visual unit (e.g., *Alugaracoffeeeshop*, *Kopinggirjalan*, *Dolkopi*). In branding linguistics, this strategy functions as visual wordplay, creating a highly distinctive logographic identity while preserving the underlying phonology of the constituent words. Other creative orthographic strategies include stylistic punctuation/symbols at 11.91% (e.g., utilizing ampersands, decimal points, or internet domain suffixes like *& Eatery*, *.co*) and numeric representation at 2.10% (utilizing numbers like 28, 99, or 2.0 to index temporal markers or digital modernization).

4.4 Morphological Innovation: Blending and Haplogy

Morphological wordplay within the corpus manifests primarily through lexical blending (a process involving the fusion of two or more source words with concomitant segmental clipping) and haplogy. This morphological mechanism occurs in 6.13% ($n = 35$) of the examined establishments. Lexical blending operates at the morphological level and was analyzed independently from spaceless concatenation ($n = 27$, 4.73%; see Table 4.3 which functions as a visual-orthographic strategy. Because these two categories

represent distinct linguistic levels, they are not mutually exclusive (DiGirolamo, 2012). Cross-tabulation indicates that 12 establishments in the corpus exhibit both features simultaneously, employing spaceless concatenation visually to reinforce underlying morphological blending.

A highly representative example of this morphological innovation is *Kopinggirjalan*. Rather than a simple compound or contraction, the brand name can be analyzed as a lexical blend involving haplogy. Its source elements are the noun *kopi* ('coffee') and the prepositional phrase *pinggir jalan* ('roadside'). Their integration involves phonological and orthographic overlap, particularly between the final syllable of *kopi* (/pi/) and the initial syllable of *pinggir* (/pinj/). Through haplogy, defined as the deletion of one of two adjacent identical or phonetically similar syllables, the overlapping segments are reduced, producing the fused form *Kopinggirjalan*. This process illustrates how contemporary commercial naming creatively manipulates linguistic structures to achieve recognizability, phonological economy, and brand distinctiveness. The syllable overlap removes redundant phonetic material, enabling a seamless visual and phonological fusion of two semantic units into a single lexical form. Beyond increasing phonological efficiency, this strategy creates a compact and memorable brand identity. By employing established morphological patterns and cognitive wordplay, *Kopinggirjalan* demonstrates how branding practices balance novelty and distinctiveness with lexical accessibility and semantic transparency.

4.5 Semantic Motivations and the Sound Symbolism of Brand Phonesthetics

The conceptual origins of the 571 coffee shop names were classified across four core semantic dimensions. Descriptive or functional motivations represent the vast majority of the corpus at 64.45% ($n = 368$), indicating a persistent branding strategy of straightforwardly communicating the core product (e.g., using terms like *kopi*, *coffee*, *café*). Locational or toponymic motivations constitute 22.07% ($n = 126$), tying the establishment to local geographical pride or mountain origins (e.g., *Posong*, *Girpasang*, *Dieng*). Personal or patronymic naming occurs in 7.01% ($n = 40$), using names of owners or family honorifics (e.g., *Mbah*, *Pak*, *Mbak*). Finally, metaphorical or evocative motivations account for 6.48% ($n = 37$), representing brand names that invoke abstract emotional concepts, natural imagery, or literary expressions. Examples such as *Aman Jiwa*, *Senandika*, and *Asmarasa* demonstrate how metaphorical naming strategies extend beyond literal reference by creating symbolic associations, emotional resonance, and deeper cultural meanings for consumers. These semantic motivations and their corresponding crossmodal phonesthetic profiles are illustrated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Semantic motivations and phonesthetic crossmodal vowel-consonant profiles (n=571)

Semantic/Phonesthetic Dimension	Category	n	%	Examples
Semantic Motivation	Descriptive/Functional	368	64.45	<i>Arabika Coffee, DeLanos Kedai Kopi</i>
	Locational/Toponymic	126	22.07	<i>Awor Coffee Klaten, Kopi Temanggung</i>
	Personal/Patronymic	40	7.01	<i>Andy Nyoma Coffee, Kopi Mbah Han</i>
	Metaphorical/Evocative	37	6.48	<i>Aman Jiwa Coffee, Anak Panah Kopi</i>
Vowel Phonesthetics	Front vowel dominant	328	57.44	<i>Konnichiwa, Spiegel, Mecafe</i>
	Balanced distribution	125	21.89	<i>Almamater Coffee, Anagata Cafe</i>
	Back vowel dominant	118	20.67	<i>Omah Tua, Kopi Slumpu, Anso Kopi</i>
Consonant Phonesthetics	Continuant/smooth dominant	262	45.88	<i>Asmarasa, Senandika, Aman Jiwa</i>
	Plosive/stop dominant	235	41.16	<i>Kopi Kawan, Bento Kopi, Point Coffee</i>
	Balanced distribution	74	12.96	<i>Anso Kopi, Krajan Coffee</i>

Source: Google Maps (2023)

In interpreting these naming strategies, an important epistemological caveat must be highlighted: because this study relies strictly on the linguistic corpus of ergonyms without direct interview data, any claims regarding owner motivations must be framed cautiously. Rather than concluding definitive psychological intentions, these semantic patterns potentially indicate strategic commercial positioning and may reflect socio-cultural trends. Establishing actual intent remains a limitation of the present corpus-based design, requiring direct owner interviews which are strongly recommended for future qualitative investigations.

To supplement the semantic analysis, we evaluated the phonesthetics (sound symbolism) of the corpus, measuring the crossmodal sensory associations indexed by vowel and consonant positions. The phonesthetic analysis reveals that 57.44% ($n = 328$) of coffee shop names are front vowel dominant (utilizing high/mid-front vowels like /i/, /e/, /æ/), which crossmodally project notions of “lightness, modern speed, high energy, and crisp cleanliness”. Conversely, 20.67% ($n = 118$) of the names are back vowel dominant (utilizing back vowels like /u/, /o/), which systematically index crossmodal properties of “warmth, physical comfort, richness, and spatial coziness (respite)”.

Acoustically, continuant consonants (fricatives, nasals, and liquids) dominate 45.88% ($n = 262$) of names, evoking smooth and relaxing sensory imagery (e.g., *Senandika, Asmarasa*), while plosive consonants (/p/, /t/, /k/) account for 41.16% ($n = 235$), projecting commercial energy and decisiveness (e.g., *Bento Kopi,*

Kopi Kawan). These patterns demonstrate that sound symbolism functions as a key crossmodal resource through which entrepreneurs can evoke sensory impressions and environmental expectations even before customers physically enter the shop. By strategically selecting particular sound patterns, brands are able to establish associations with atmosphere, product qualities, and consumer experiences, allowing phonological features to contribute meaningfully to commercial identity formation.

4.6 Javanese Speech Register Indexicality

To examine how local cultural heritage is negotiated in the commercial landscape, we analyzed Javanese-language ergonyms ($n = 93$, including monolingual Javanese and hybrid names) through the sociolinguistic lens of speech register indexicality (*tingkat tutur*). In Javanese society, speech levels are systematically organized to index social relationships, politeness levels, and social distance. The empirical data demonstrates a striking asymmetry in register selection: 89.25% ($n = 83$) of the Javanese-based names utilize the *Ngoko* register, the low-status, colloquial, and informal speech level used among intimates (e.g., *Omah Kopi, Ngopi Yuk, Ajar Ngopi*). Conversely, only 10.75% ($n = 10$) of the names utilize the *Krama* register, the high-status, refined, and socially distant level of Javanese (e.g., *Prasojo Kopi, Kopi Ndoro Tumanggung*).

This finding provides a socio-onomastic insight: when Central Javanese entrepreneurs project local identity, they avoid the hierarchical constraints of the

Krama register and strategically use *Ngoko* to index solidarity, egalitarian warmth, and rustic authenticity (Adinatha & Hemas, 2021; Rachmad, 2025). This branding strategy redefines Javanese heritage not as a distant, traditional monument of status, but as an accessible space of social comfort and community, highly congruent with the laid-back social atmosphere of modern coffee-house culture.

5. Discussion

5.1 Ergonyms as Sites of Glocal Negotiation: Language Choice and Globalizing Prestiges

The empirical distribution of language choices in Central Javanese coffee shops ($n = 571$) highlights a complex socio-linguistic landscape wherein local, national, and foreign linguistic capitals are continuously negotiated. The dominance of monolingual Indonesian names (50.79%) demonstrates that the national language remains a stable, highly accessible baseline for commercial communication across diverse municipal regions. However, the substantial presence of monolingual English names (32.92%) and bilingual/hybrid forms indexes a deep-seated acculturation process driven by the forces of globalization.

This phenomenon of “Englishization” or “anglicization” in commercial signage reflects global trends in which English functions not only as a reference tool but also as symbolic language display (Eastman and Stein, 1993). It strategically exploits foreign linguistic capital to project international prestige, sophistication, cosmopolitanism, and social status, representing a form of language commodification in late capitalism. As Heller (2010) theorizes, language choice in the “new work order” has shifted from expressing primary ethnic/cultural pride to functioning as an exchangeable economic resource to target niche markets and generate commercial profit.

By adopting English, Central Javanese coffee shop owners are not merely labeling a physical space; they are packaging a globalized lifestyle commodity. This finding mirrors similar patterns observed in other expanding-circle markets, such as Shanghai, where Liao and Chan (2024) documented that English dominates 52.48% of coffee shop names to index a Westernized, modern lifestyle. It also resonates with findings from North Aceh by Zurriyati et al. (2025), where 49% of coffee shops adopted English as a symbol of modernity and prestige, and from Banda Aceh by Silviyanti et al. (2024), where English was found to project an elite image of modern glamour. Therefore, English is positioned as a highly standardized marker of a “prestige economy,” enabling local business owners to symbolically align their brands with global coffee culture. Through the strategic use of English elements, these businesses construct associations with modernity, sophistication, international recognition, and cosmopolitan lifestyles, even when their primary consumer base remains locally oriented.

5.2 The Commodification of Space: Identifier vs. Ideofier and Experience Branding

To understand the cognitive and spatial implications of these naming practices, the ergonyms must be situated within the division of Identifier vs. Ideofier proposed by Koll-Stobbe (2015). The nearly equal split in our corpus with 52.89% of names functioning as Identifiers and 47.11% as Ideofiers reveals a structural tension between utilitarian market signaling and symbolic brand positioning.

Identifiers rely on clear, literal product descriptors (e.g., using *kopi* or *coffee* coupled with geographical or personal markers) to minimize the consumer’s cognitive load and guarantee categorical recognition. This utilitarian approach mirrors the traditional commercial patterns identified by Aribowo (2017) in Surakarta, shop owners use literal identifiers, such as surnames (*Assegaf*, *Al-Habsyi*) and sacred place names (*Makkah*, *Al-Madinah*), to signal owner identity and facilitate recognition of Middle Eastern commodities and Hajj souvenirs. Similarly, in semi-urban regions such as Banjarnegara and Temanggung, coffee shops employ geographical identifiers (e.g., *Kopi Temanggung*) to leverage regional agricultural reputation and establish product credibility.

On the other hand, ideofiers utilize abstract, metaphorical, and highly evocative language (e.g., *Anagata*, *Senandika*, *Asmarasa*) to construct a stylized brand image and negotiate social meaning. These evocative names shift the commercial focus from the physical beverage to what Liao and Chan (2024) define as an experience commodity. In contemporary urban Javanese society, coffee shops have evolved from transactional food and beverage outlets into “third places” socially constructed spaces where patrons seek temporary escape from work stress, build communities, and engage in identity performance.

These identifiers act as semiotic catalysts for trans-spatial practices. Metaphorical names such as *Aman Jiwa* (“peaceful soul”) and *Senandika* (“inner monologue”) do not describe coffee itself; rather, they evoke sensory and psychological atmospheres. This parallels naming strategies in Shanghai’s competitive market, where names like *WHITE NOISE* and *DayDreaming* are promoted as emotional and spiritual shelters for urbanites seeking relief from daily anxieties (Liao & Chan, 2024). By transforming businesses into multirole sites of emotional, social, and spiritual sustenance, Central Javanese entrepreneurs strategically employ ideofiers as symbolic gateways that connect their brands with broader consumer lifestyles, values, and aspirations. This naming practice marks a departure from traditional utilitarian paradigms, where business names primarily serve as straightforward identifiers of products or services. Instead, ideofiers represent a more experiential approach to commercial naming by emphasizing identity construction, symbolic meaning, and emotional engagement between brands and consumers.

5.3 Orthographic Deviations and Creative Graphemic Play as Visual Branding Resources

The presence of spaceless concatenation (orthographic merging) in 4.73% of our corpus (e.g., *koping-girjalan*, *Alugaracoffeeshop*) represents a significant visual strategy in modern commercial signage (Sjöblom, 2016). Rather than being a simple transcription error or digital artifact, spaceless concatenation is a highly deliberate graphic deviation designed to stand out visually in a saturated commercial landscape.

In branding linguistics, the removal of standard orthographic boundaries creates a distinctive and unified visual identity. This fusion encourages consumers to actively decode the brand name, enhancing its playfulness, memorability, and appeal. Such visual wordplay resonates strongly with contemporary, internet-savvy Javanese youth, who value stylistic creativity, modernity, and visual humor (Wijana & Yoga, 2025). Furthermore, spelling deviations in brand names often function as a strategy to negotiate status. As documented by Wijana and Yoga (2025) in Yogyakarta, spelling manipulations (such as altering the Javanese word *kulinan* to *Cullinan*, or Indonesian *sukaku* to *Shukaku*) are intentionally utilized to make local terms “resemble” prestigious foreign languages like English or Japanese. This graphemic prestige-borrowing allows owners to mask the perceived low social status of local dialects while simultaneously attracting consumers who harbor positive stereotypes toward foreign modernities (Chen, 2020; Silviyanti et al., 2024). Orthographic creativity is therefore never neutral; it is a highly strategic, bottom-up onomastic practice where graphic form is actively commodified for visual prominence and market differentiation.

5.4 Crossmodal Sound Symbolism and Phonesthetic Projection

Sound symbolism functions as a key crossmodal resource in Central Javanese coffee shop naming, often applied intuitively while reflecting universal phonetic tendencies. The dominance of front vowels (/i/, /e/, /æ/), representing 57.44% of the corpus, evokes associations with modernity, speed, freshness, and clarity. Names such as *belikopi* and *Stieti Coffee* demonstrate how front vowels enhance perceptions of sharpness and compactness, aligning with minimalist aesthetics and urban branding. Thus, phonological choices contribute not only to auditory appeal but also to brand identity and consumer expectations.

In contrast, back vowels (/o/, /u/) constitute 20.67% of the dataset (e.g., *Coffe Kulon*, *Sekutu Kopi*), which systematically indexes physical warmth, rich flavor, and spatial coziness. Vowel position therefore acts as an acoustic cue that shapes customer expectations before they experience the physical space. Acoustically, the distribution of consonant classes also reveals intentional branding positioning. Continuant and smooth consonants (such as fricatives, liquids, and nasals)

represent 45.88% of the corpus, evoking smooth, relaxing, and soothing environments suitable for long social gatherings (e.g., *Asmarasa*, *Senandika*). Conversely, plosive and stop consonants represent 41.16% of the dataset (e.g., *Bento Kopi*, *Kopi Kawan*), projecting high-impact commercial energy, modern efficiency, and structural decisiveness.

These phonetic findings align with Vietnamese branding research by Le and Nguyen (2025), which demonstrated that consumers process brand names at the phonemic level, with specific sound choices directly determining emotional responses and memory retention. Furthermore, our finding that 73.03% of the names comprise concise lengths of one to three words is structurally congruent with Le and Nguyen’s (2025) finding that short, 2-to-3-syllable names exhibit significantly higher brand recognition due to human working memory constraints. Concise phonesthetic naming represents an optimized marketing strategy in competitive Javanese urban landscapes. By combining brevity, memorable sounds, and symbolic associations, such names enhance brand recognition, differentiation, and cultural resonance.

5.5 Reinterpreting Cultural Heritage: Register Indexicality and Vernacular Resistance

The striking asymmetry in the Javanese-language sub-corpus where 89.25% of the Javanese-based names utilize the *Ngoko* register (informal/colloquial) and only 10.75% utilize the *Krama* register (high-status/refined), offers a major socio-onomastic insight into contemporary Javanese identity negotiation. In traditional sociolinguistic theory, the Javanese *tingkat tutur* (speech level) are strictly hierarchical, with *Krama* indexing high social status, refined cultural prestige, and respectful social distance (Adinatha & Hemas, 2017). However, in the modern commercial landscape of Central Java, coffee shop owners actively reject the rigid, formal social hierarchies associated with *Krama*. By overwhelmingly choosing *Ngoko* (e.g., *Omah Kopi Girpasang*, *Ajar Ngopi*, *Ndalan Kopi Klaten*, *Kopi Gandrung*), entrepreneurs are performing cultural intimacy and indigenization (Rachmad, 2025). This strategic retention of colloquial linguistic resources represents a bottom-up act of identity preservation, where Javanese is modernized from within.

This preservation of cultural authenticity through localized linguistic choices shares structural parallels with the practices of Arab-descendant merchants in Surakarta studied by Aribowo (2017). In his study, Arab-Indonesian business owners deliberately maintained authentic Arabic spellings, such as *Makkah* and *Rizqy*, rather than adopting standardized Indonesian forms like *Mekah* and *Rizki*. This choice reflects their efforts to preserve ethnic heritage, cultural identity, and symbolic authenticity (Aribowo, 2017).

However, while Arab-descendant merchants utilize orthographic authenticity to index religious authority and trade credibility (Aribowo, 2017), Javanese coffee

shop owners utilize register selection (*Ngoko*) to perform colloquial solidarity, egalitarian warmth, and rustic authenticity (Rachmad, 2025). *Ngoko* functions as a strategic branding resource to revitalize Javanese heritage. Rather than being marginalized by English branding, local linguistic resources are actively transformed into markers of identity, familiarity, and cultural connection (Sjöblom, 2016).

They achieve this by presenting Javanese culture not as a distant symbol of elite tradition (*Krama*), but as an accessible, warm, and community-oriented form of social familiarity (*Ngoko*) that aligns with contemporary coffee culture. This “glocal” synthesis allows local businesses to preserve cultural identity while keeping regional heritage modern, visible, and commercially viable in competitive markets.

4. Conclusions

This study advances the fields of commercial onomastics and applied sociolinguistics by establishing a cohesive, multidimensional framework that integrates structural onomastics, crossmodal sound symbolism, and Javanese register indexicality. The empirical findings demonstrate that local entrepreneurs do not passively succumb to globalizing homogenization; rather, commercial naming serves as an active, bottom-up process of glocal synthesis. English is overwhelmingly commodified as a prestigious lifestyle “ideofier” to target cosmopolitan aspirations, while the selective deployment of the colloquial Javanese *Ngoko* register over the formal *Krama* register functions to index cultural intimacy, egalitarian warmth, and vernacular solidarity. Furthermore, creative strategies such as lexical blending and spaceless concatenation, combined with a preference for front-vowel phonesthetics, demonstrate how businesses deliberately construct logo-graphic and phonetic identities to project modernity, enhance processing efficiency, and improve brand recall in highly saturated markets.

In terms of practical implications, because this corpus-based design does not directly correlate naming choices with actual business performance metrics (e.g., sales data or customer recall), the branding strategies identified herein should be cautiously framed as predictive hypotheses rather than absolute commercial rules. It is hypothesized that cosmopolitan-targeted venues may benefit from front-vowel English names, while businesses seeking local rapport may optimize their branding through colloquial Javanese registers. Acknowledging the limitations of this purely corpus-based approach, future research should integrate qualitative owner interviews and experimental psycholinguistic methodologies such as eye-tracking and consumer recall surveys to empirically test these naming hypotheses. Expanding this multidimensional framework to other culturally distinct regions will further enrich our understanding of how commercial language navigates the tension between global prestige and local heritage.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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