THE ROLE OF NAMING IN SHAPING HOUSING IDENTITY IN SUMEDANG

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Abstract

Housing names in Sumedang today often mix local and international words. This shows how developers try to connect with different kinds of people and follow modern trends. This research investigates the use of language in the naming of housing areas in Sumedang, a region where cultural heritage and urban development coexist. Employing an ethnolinguistic approach, the research aims to identify the language features present in housing names and examine how these names are used to attract specific buyer groups. The collected names were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, where lexical patterns were identified and interpreted to uncover their cultural, social, and linguistic meanings. The analysis revealed nine language features of housing names: *Griya*, *Bumi*, *Residence*, *Grand*, *Cluster*, *Regency*, *Village*, *location-based names*, and *unique names*. Each category reflects particular cultural meanings, social identities, and marketing strategies. The findings based on the analysis of nine naming features demonstrate that housing names are not merely functional but play a strategic role in shaping perceptions of lifestyle, modernity, and community values.

Keywords: *Housing Name, Language, Identity, Sumedang, Etnolinguistics*

INTRODUCTION

A growing issue in urban development today is how local languages and identities are being commodified through naming practices in the housing sector. In many Indonesian cities, especially in regions like Sumedang, new residential areas are given names that blend English with Indonesian or regional languages. While these names are designed to attract specific market segments, they also reflect deeper cultural and social tensions. When developers choose names such as *"Green Valley Residence"* or *"Harmony Village"*, they are not just naming a place but crafting an identity, one that often promotes modernity, exclusivity, and status. This trend can unintentionally marginalize local linguistic heritage, reshaping how communities see their environment and even themselves.

Buckingham (2015) and Hassan (2016) argue that place names shape perceptions and identities, especially in newly developed or transformed areas. In housing, naming is more than a branding tactic. It is a strategic decision that communicates prestige, affordability, cultural familiarity, or aspiration (Utami, 2018; Putra, 2019). The increasing use of English in Indonesian housing names, particularly in suburban and peri-urban developments, is often associated with upward mobility and a globalized lifestyle (Kurniawan, 2020; Sari and Telining, 2021). These choices influence who feels welcomed, what kind of life is imagined, and how places are valued.

From an ethnolinguistic perspective, these naming practices are especially important to analyze. Ethnolinguistics is the study of how language relates to cultural practices and social behavior (Fishman, 1999; Hornberger, 2003). It focuses on how linguistic choices reflect, reinforce, or challenge the identities of a community. In the case of housing names, ethnolinguistics helps uncover how language is used to shape imagined lifestyles, attract certain buyers' demographics, and signal belonging or exclusion. These names become markers of status and identity, embedded with ideologies about class, modernity, and locality (Ramadhani, 2022; Nurhayati & Santoso, 2023).

Several previous research have investigated housing name practices in Indonesia. Wijayanto and Nugroho (2017) examined gated community names in Central Java and showed how English names signalled exclusivity. Anisa (2019) found that housing names in Bekasi mixed Islamic and Western terms to appeal to young Muslim families. Pramesti and Hadikusuma (2020) revealed that naming in Bandung often drew on nature and lifestyle branding to suggest comfort and success. Wulandari and Adityo (2021) showed that developers in Tangerang used English to add value to high-density housing areas. Yuliana and Darmawan's research (2023) in Semarang argued that housing names helped frame buyer expectations around affordability or luxury. These researchers highlight the role of naming in shaping identity and marketing, but they primarily focus on large metropolitan areas or tourist zones.

Although many researches have explored naming practices in large cities, there is still limited attention on how these practices are used in smaller urban areas like Sumedang. In places where strong cultural traditions exist alongside rapid urban development, the meaning and purpose behind housing names may differ from those found in big metropolitan areas. Most existing research does not focus on how housing names are used to attract certain types of buyers, nor does it explain how these names reflect the balance between local identity and modern marketing trends.

This research is focusing on two main questions: (1) What are the language features of housing names in Sumedang? (2) What do the housing name features mean, and how do they attract buyers? As for the theoretical framework, the research uses an ethnolinguistic approach to explore how developers select certain words to build a distinct identity for housing areas and connect with potential residents. It highlights how language is used not only for naming and communication but also to express lifestyle, values, and social status. The strength of this research lies in its focus on Sumedang, a non-metropolitan area where local traditions and global trends meet. By analyzing housing names, the research offers a new perspective on how language functions as a tool for cultural meaning, identity shaping, and marketing in urban development.

Ethnolinguistics

Ethnolinguistics studies how language connects with the culture, identity, and values of a community. According to Alqahtani (2017), language is not only a communication tool but also a symbol of group identity. When people use or choose certain words, they are often expressing who they are and what they believe. This is especially important in public signs, advertisements, and naming. Liu and Zhang (2020) explain that in today's globalized world, language choices are often influenced by both local culture and global trends. Housing names are part of this dynamic. The names used in public spaces, like residential areas, show how people negotiate between tradition and modernity.

Naming

From an ethnolinguistic perspective, naming is not simply about giving something a label. It is a cultural act that reflects how a community sees the world and defines itself. Ethnolinguistics focuses on how language is shaped by culture and how it, in turn, shapes cultural identity. Fishman (1999) argues that names serve as symbols of ethnic and social belonging. They carry shared meanings, values, and histories that connect people to a place or group. In multilingual societies like Indonesia, naming often involves a blend of languages. In the case of housing names in urban areas, as Oktaviani and Supriyadi (2021) explain, they frequently combine English, Indonesian, and local languages such as Sundanese. This combination is not only practical but also symbolic. It reflects a desire to appeal to a wide audience while signaling modernity, tradition, or social class.

Naming also plays a role in constructing imagined identities. Arifin and Zulkarnain (2020) found that names chosen for residential areas are often designed to match the lifestyle and values of the target residents. These names may suggest peacefulness, luxury, religious values, or local pride, depending on the audience. Through the use of language, developers are not only naming a place but also shaping how it will be perceived.

In regions like West Java, Firdaus (2019) observed that developers often use Sundanese elements to evoke familiarity and cultural connection, while English is used to suggest prestige or

modern living. The choice of words in a housing name reflects a negotiation between preserving local identity and following market trends. Naming, therefore, is not just a technical or marketing decision. From an ethnolinguistic point of view, it is a way of expressing social values, building identity, and communicating meaning within a cultural context.

Language and Marketing in Housing Development

Language plays a central role in marketing, especially in real estate where first impressions are often shaped by names and labels. In the housing sector, developers use language to create a specific image of the property they are selling. Hartono and Putri (2019) explain that names are carefully selected to match the lifestyle, values, and aspirations of the target market. For example, names that include words like "green," "royal," or "harmony" are used to create positive associations such as nature, luxury, or peace. These associations help attract buyers by giving them an emotional connection to the property before they even visit.

Moreover, in many Indonesian cities, housing names often use English to suggest modernity and higher social status. According to Yusran and Amelia (2020), English words are commonly used in real estate marketing to appeal to middle and upper-class buyers who associate a foreign language with a global lifestyle. This shows how language is not just used for information but also as a tool to influence perception and behavior.

Language choice in marketing also reflects deeper social trends. Suryani and Khalid (2021) found that in urban areas, developers tend to avoid local languages in naming because they are seen as too traditional or less marketable. As a result, English and Indonesian terms dominate housing advertisements, shaping how people understand value, quality, and identity in urban space.

Overall, language in marketing does more than describe a place. It builds desire, creates identity, and helps position the product in a competitive market. In the context of housing, the words used in names are often the first step in persuading buyers to see the property not just as a house, but as part of a lifestyle.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to examine the naming patterns of housing complexes in Sumedang. The goal is to explore the types of names used and how they reflect language features that target specific buyer groups. Data were collected through digital observation using Google Maps and other online map applications. The research was conducted in the following steps:

1. The research focused on housing complexes located in Sumedang, West Java. The area was observed using the search tools in Google Maps by entering language features such as *"perumahan," "residence," "griya," "cluster," "grand,"* and other common housing terms. The language features align with naming patterns found in nationwide property listings and promotional materials, indicating their widespread use in the Indonesian real estate industry.
2. A list of housing names was collected by looking at residential areas that appear on Google Maps. The names came from both official business listings and labels added by users. Only names that clearly showed formal housing complexes or residential clusters were included. After that, the researcher checked the list again to remove any duplicates or unclear names.
3. The collected housing names were grouped into some categories based on dominant language features found in the names. These included words such as *Griya, Bumi, Residence, Grand, Cluster, Regency, Village, Location-based names*, and *Unique* names. These language features often carry meanings related to modernity, prestige, nature, or Western influence, reflecting the image or lifestyle of the housing name.
4. Data were collected using documentation techniques through internet browsing, where the researcher explored digital maps to gather the housing names. This browsing activity served as a digital observation method to identify and classify linguistic patterns found in the names.
5. After classification, the names were grouped into housing name categories that reflect the lifestyle values and social classes, and the social or cultural meanings.

This method allows the researcher to explore naming practices that are visible in public and digital space, particularly in a city like Sumedang, where both local tradition and modern development are actively shaping residential identity.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Language Features of Housing Names in Sumedang

Table 1 presents the different types of language used in naming housing areas across the region. These categories show how various words and styles are chosen for specific purposes. Each naming type carries meaning beyond just a label. It reflects how developers use language to shape residential identity, connect with local or global culture, and attract different groups of buyers.

Table 1. Language Features of Housing Names in Sumedang

No	Category	Total
1	Griya	10
2	Bumi	12
3	Residence	31
4	Grand	5
5	Cluster	8
6	Regency	15
7	Village	2
8	Location	26
9	Unique	22

Interpretation of Housing Name Categories in Sumedang

Understanding the meaning behind each housing name category is important for analyzing how language is used to shape identity and attract different types of buyers. In Sumedang, developers choose names not only for practical purposes but also to reflect certain lifestyles, values, and social classes. Each type of name carries its meaning and shapes how people view the place. These naming choices reveal how language is used to reflect cultural traditions and support marketing aims. Nine categories of housing names are identified, each with distinct cultural and social meanings, which are explained below.

1. **Griya**

   The word *griya* comes from Sanskrit and is often used in Javanese and Sundanese languages to mean "house" or "home". In housing names, this word creates a familiar and local feeling. It sounds warm and traditional, and this can attract people who want a peaceful, simple place to live. Examples such as *Griya Tomo Asri, Perumahan Griya Pesona Alam,* and *Permai Griya Raharja* reflect this naming pattern.

   The names *Griya Tomo Asri*, *Perumahan Griya Pesona Alam*, and *Permai Griya Raharja* all use the word *griya* to create a warm and traditional feeling. In *Griya Tomo Asri*, *Tomo* is likely the name of the place, and *Asri* means peaceful or beautiful, so the full name gives the idea of a peaceful home in Tomo. *Perumahan Griya Pesona Alam* uses *Pesona Alam*, which means "natural charm," to show that the housing is close to nature and calm. *Permai Griya Raharja* combines *Permai* (pleasant) and *Raharja* (prosperous or safe), giving the impression of a safe and comfortable home. All of these examples use local words and meanings to make the housing feel friendly, natural, and suitable for families.

2. **Bumi**

   Bumi is an Indonesian word that means "earth" or "land." In Sundanese, *bumi* carries a similar meaning, often referring to land as a place of "origin", "home", and "belonging". This word is

commonly used in housing names to show a deep connection to nature, local identity, and the cultural value of harmony with one's environment. In the context of Sumedang, the use of *Bumi* in housing names reflects values such as rootedness, community, and respect for the land as part of one's heritage.

The name *bumi* gives a sense of peace, balance, and simplicity. Buyers who are looking for a family-friendly and calm environment may feel more connected to names that include this word. *Bumi* represents a local worldview that values the land and community. It is not about showing wealth but about creating a home that feels natural and rooted. This name is usually attractive to buyers who appreciate local language and are looking for affordable, grounded living spaces. Some examples include *Bumi Cikubang Asri*, *Bumi Cipacing Permai*, and *Bumi Cipacing Indah*.

The housing names *Bumi Cikubang Asri*, *Bumi Cipacing Permai*, and *Bumi Cipacing Indah* all use the word *bumi* to show a connection to nature and local culture. In *Bumi Cikubang Asri*, the word *Asri* means beautiful or peaceful, which makes the name sound calm and natural. *Bumi Cipacing Permai* and *Bumi Cipacing Indah* also use positive Indonesian words like *Permai* (pleasant) and *Indah* (beautiful), which create a warm and family-friendly feeling. These names show that the housing areas are meant to feel peaceful, simple, and close to the earth. They are not trying to sound modern or luxurious, but instead focus on comfort, nature, and community.

3. Residence

The word *residence* is taken from English and is commonly used in Indonesian real estate. It brings the idea of a modern living and global lifestyle. When developers use *residence* in housing names, they want to make the project sound exclusive, organized, and upper-class. From an ethnolinguistic perspective, using English in this way reflects a desire to create a modern and international image. It is often used to attract young professionals or urban buyers who want to feel like they are part of a higher social class. These buyers may see English as a symbol of success, progress, and better living standards. The use of *residence* creates a strong contrast with names that use local languages. Some examples are *Rajasanagara Residence*, *Sky Garden Residence*, *Perumahan Permata Residence*, and *Mekarjaya Residence*.

The names *Rajasanagara Residence*, *Sky Garden Residence*, *Perumahan Permata Residence*, and *Mekarjaya Residence* show how the word *residence* is often mixed with local or English words to create a modern image. *Rajasanagara Residence* combines a traditional-sounding name with the English word *residence*, showing a mix of local culture and global style. *Sky Garden Residence* uses full English, which sounds more international and may attract buyers who want a modern and high-class image. *Perumahan Permata Residence* mixes Indonesian and English by using *Perumahan* (housing), *Permata* (gem), and *residence*, showing a local meaning with a modern touch. *Mekarjaya Residence* also uses a local word with *residence* to keep local identity while sounding more modern. These names reflect how housing projects try to balance tradition and modernity to attract buyers.

4. Grand

The word *grand* also comes from English and is often used to suggest something elegant, important, or luxurious. When a housing name begins with *grand*, it gives the impression that the housing complex is special or above average. This word is used to create a feeling of pride and social status. Ethnolinguistically, it shows that developers are not just offering a place to live but an identity of success and high position. Buyers who are attracted to this kind of name are usually middle to upper-class families who want their house to reflect their achievements. The word *grand* appeals to the emotion of wanting to be respected and admired in society. For example, *Grand Park Cimalaka*, *Klaras Grand Village*, and *Grand Giri Pasanggrahan* all use *grand* to make the housing sound more luxurious and attractive to buyers who want a high-class image.

The names *Grand Park Cimalaka*, *Klaras Grand Village*, and *Grand Giri Pasanggrahan* all use the word *grand* to make the housing projects sound more elegant and high-class. In *Grand Park Cimalaka*, the word *park* adds a modern and green image, while *grand* makes it feel exclusive.

Klaras Grand Village combines a local name (*Klaras*) with English words to give a balance between local identity and global luxury. *Grand Giri Pasanggrahan* uses *grand* to raise the status of the housing, while still keeping local culture in the name. All of these examples use *grand* to attract buyers who want their homes to reflect pride, respect, and social success.

5. **Cluster**

Cluster is a term often used in Indonesian housing to describe a small group of homes in a gated or private area. It is originally an English word, but it has become familiar in Indonesian urban language. A *cluster* usually means a neighborhood with more privacy, security, and quietness. From an ethnolinguistic point of view, this word shows a lifestyle choice. Buyers who choose a house in a cluster usually value personal space, modern design, and a clean environment. They may not want to live in a busy or traditional area. This kind of name is targeted toward middle-class buyers who want a more private and safer place for their family, but not necessarily something too luxurious. Some examples like *Cluster Islamic*, *Cluster Mekarsari*, and *Cluster Sindang Raja* use the word *cluster* to show this idea.

The names *Cluster Islamic*, *Cluster Mekarsari*, and *Cluster Sindang Raja* show how the word *cluster* is used with different themes to attract certain buyers. *Cluster Islamic* adds a religious identity, showing that the housing may follow Islamic values or offer a Muslim-friendly environment. *Cluster Mekarsari* uses a natural-sounding name (*Mekarsari* means blooming essence), giving a peaceful and green image. *Cluster Sindang Raja* combines *cluster* with a local or cultural name, which helps keep the local identity while still sounding modern. All three names use *cluster* to show privacy and security, while the second part of each name gives a special character that matches the target buyer's lifestyle or values.

6. **Regency**

The word *regency* is English and is often used to refer to areas with historical or royal connections. In housing, it is used to create the impression of an elite or high-class place. From an ethnolinguistic perspective, using the word *regency* shows that the name is not just functional but symbolic. It tries to show power, beauty, and order. This name type is meant to attract buyers who see themselves as part of an exclusive or successful social group. People who choose homes in *regency*-named complexes often want to live in a place that feels secure, clean, and high in status. It reflects how English is used to build a strong, modern identity that may feel more valuable than local alternatives. Some examples like *Royal Ketib Regency*, *Dano Permai Regency*, and *Fajar Jasmin Regency* all use *regency* to suggest elegance and higher social standing, combining English with local or nature-inspired words to balance prestige with local culture.

The names *Royal Ketib Regency*, *Dano Permai Regency*, and *Fajar Jasmin Regency* show how the word *regency* is used to create a sense of luxury and high status. In *Royal Ketib Regency*, the word *royal* adds to the feeling of nobility and wealth, making it attractive to buyers who want to live in an elegant place. *Dano Permai Regency* combines a local name (*Dano*) and a positive Indonesian word (*Permai*, meaning beautiful or pleasant), and then adds *regency* to make the name sound more exclusive. *Fajar Jasmin Regency* uses soft and natural words like *fajar* (dawn) and *jasmin* (a flower) to create a peaceful image, while *regency* adds a touch of class. These names show that *regency* is used to make housing areas feel safe, clean, and prestigious for buyers who want a strong and high-class identity.

7. **Village**

Even though *village* is taken from English, it gives a natural and peaceful image. In housing names, it is used to create the feeling of a quiet and friendly place, even if the housing is in an urban area. From an ethnolinguistic perspective, the *village* reflects a desire to bring traditional, rural

values into the city. It shows that people still want homes that feel calm, close to nature, and good for family life. Buyers who are interested in this type of name are usually people who value comfort and togetherness over status. They may be middle-income families who want a modern home but still enjoy a peaceful environment that reminds them of a simpler life. For examples are Dago Village Green and Village Anugrah.

The name *Dago Village Green* uses the word *Dago*, which is a well-known area in Bandung, and combines it with *village* and *green.* The word *Dago* comes from Sundanese, where dagoan means "to wait." This name has historical and cultural roots, as people in the past often had to stop and wait in this area because the road was steep. The word *green* also suggests a clean and fresh environment. Meanwhile, *Village Anugrah* uses the word *anugrah*, which means "blessing" in Indonesian, to give a warm, positive feeling. The use of *village* in both names helps make the housing feel friendly, family-oriented, and close to nature, even though the homes may be in busy or growing areas. These names are likely meant to attract buyers who want a quiet and comfortable life, not just luxury or status.

8. Location-Based Names

This category includes housing names that use the name of the place where the housing is located, such as *Perumahan Cibeusi* or *Perumahan Cimanggung*. These names do not try to sound luxurious or modern but instead show a strong connection to local identity. From an ethnolinguistic view, this naming style reflects pride in regional or community-based belonging. It tells buyers exactly where the housing is and makes it easier to identify. Buyers who prefer this kind of name are usually local people who are already familiar with the area and want to live near family, work, or their hometown. The language in these names expresses practical values like location, connection, and local familiarity.

The names *Panorama Jatinangor*, *GreatLand Pasanggrahan*, and *Golden Park Parigi* all include the name of the place where the housing is located, which helps show a strong local identity. In *Panorama Jatinangor*, the word *Jatinangor* clearly tells us the location, and *Panorama* gives the feeling of beautiful views of nature. This name is good for buyers who want to live in a peaceful place they already know. *GreatLand Pasanggrahan* uses *Pasanggrahan*, a local place name, with the English word *GreatLand* to make it sound modern but still connected to the area. *Golden Park Parigi* includes *Parigi*, the local place name, and adds *Golden Park*, a name that sounds like a mix of *golden* and *garden*, to create a more attractive and comfortable image. These names show that even when English words are used, the main identity comes from the local place name, which makes the housing feel familiar and meaningful for people who already know or belong to the area.

9. Unique

The unique category includes names that are creative or uncommon, often combining words from different languages, nature themes, or personal names. These names are used to make the housing stand out and sound more modern or attractive. From an ethnolinguistic perspective, unique names reflect a mix of identities. They show how developers are using language not only to inform but to create emotional appeal and branding. These names may include English, Indonesian, or even symbolic words that suggest beauty, luck, or success. Buyers who are drawn to these names are often younger or middle-class families who want a home that feels different, stylish, and matches their lifestyle.

The names *Perumahan Tirta Quanta*, *Perumahan Emerald Green Park*, and *Harmoni Heaven Home* are examples of unique and creative housing names. *Tirta Quanta* mixes the Indonesian word *tirta*, which means "water" or "holy water," with *quanta*, a word that sounds scientific or modern. This creates a name that feels both traditional and futuristic. *Emerald Green Park* uses natural words like *emerald* and *green* to show freshness and beauty, and *park* adds the idea of an open and relaxing space. *Harmoni Heaven Home* combines three English words that suggest peace, happiness, and

comfort. These names are not tied to location but are made to sound attractive and special. They show how language is used creatively to make buyers feel emotionally connected and excited about the housing. Buyers who choose these names often want a home that fits their modern and stylish lifestyle.

CONCLUSION

Among these categories, *Residence* appears most often. Its frequent use shows that many developers prefer English words that sound modern and high-class. The word *Residence* gives a formal and stylish impression, which can attract buyers who want to live in a place that feels exclusive and modern. It reflects a current trend where English names are used to show modern values and social status. In a place like Sumedang, which has strong Sundanese culture, housing names can also help keep cultural identity alive. When developers choose names that combine local values and market appeal, they support the growth of communities that are both modern and still connected to their roots.

Reflecting on the cultural richness of West Java, it is clear that housing names carry more than just a practical meaning. They also act as cultural and social markers in the development of growing urban areas. Based on the results, this research identifies nine language features used in housing names across Sumedang. These include *Griya, Bumi, Residence, Grand, Cluster, Regency, Village, location-based names*, and *unique* names. Each category shows that naming is not only about labeling but also about showing tradition, modern values, comfort, and social identity. These names demonstrate how language is used to express culture and to reach specific groups of buyers. However, this research is limited to analyzing lexical features from online sources and does not include interviews with developers or buyers. Future research could explore these perspectives and expand to other regions to better understand the cultural and marketing aspects of housing names.

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