

Morphosyntactic Analysis on the Toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka

Norhazlina Husin^{1*}, Sailal Arimi², Mohd. Fadzeli Jaafar³, Sukma Erni Harahap⁴, Saliza Ismail⁵

^{1,5} Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

² Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

³ Centre for Research in Language and Linguistics, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

⁴ Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, Sulthan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.102100108>

Received: 09 July 2026; Accepted: 14 July 2026; Published: 05 August 2026

ABSTRACT

Toponymy is the study of place names. It studies the origins, linguistic forms, and historical background of a place. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Banda Hilir in Melaka has a long history that shapes its place names. Toponyms in Banda Hilir do more than simply identify geographical locations. Therefore, a study is conducted to (i) identify the morphological typology of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka and (ii) to analyse the syntactic patterns within these toponyms. The study analyses 629 unique toponyms collected and documented through photographic fieldwork in Banda Hilir, Melaka. A descriptive qualitative-quantitative content analysis is used to examine the dataset. The analysis focuses on grammatical levels: morphology and syntax structure. Findings from morphological analysis show that compound words dominate the naming of places in Banda Hilir, Melaka with 485 entries (77.11%). It is followed by single-word toponyms that represent 98 entries (15.58%) while derived forms account for 46 entries (7.31%) of the data collected. The findings also reveal that there is a clear polarisation of noun phrases between the retention of Malay grammatical ordering and foreign influences in naming places in Banda Hilir, Melaka. The Head-Modifier pattern, known as *Hukum D-M* in Malay, form an absolute majority with 412 entries (65.50%) and is strictly retained in official top-down toponyms to assert the sovereignty of the national language and geopolitical legitimacy. On the contrary, the inversion pattern is found in 217 entries (34.50%) of the toponyms particularly in colonial heritage sites and commercial premises. The findings show that toponyms in Banda Hilir reflect layers of colonial interaction, commercial activity and local linguistic practices. Findings also show that several names display hybrid structures.

Keywords: toponym, morphological typologies, syntactic structure, *Hukum D-M*, Banda Hilir.

INTRODUCTION

Banda Hilir, is a historical core zone of the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Melaka. It represents a prominent linguistic crossroad in Southeast Asia that shaped by centuries of cultural assimilation, maritime commerce and alternating colonial regimes (Hussain & Ujang, 2018; Mo, 2024). Functioning historically as a mechanism for economic revitalisation and urban tourism rejuvenation, the spatial design of this historic district showcases an intentional expression of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism (Bideau & Kilani, 2012; Goh, 2014; Mohamed et al., 2023). Physical territories are not simply marked by historical sites, street signage and landmarks within the landscape (Spolsky, 2020; An & Zhang, 2022; Al-Sofi, 2024). These are evident in the linguistic landscape of bandar Hilir, Melaka.

From a theoretical perspective, toponymy represents one of the branches of onomastics (Jaafar et al., 2025) that records linguistic evolution, stratification, and cross-linguistic borrowing (Imanberdiyeva et al., 2025;

Muradova, 2024). Place-naming practices, especially in colonial and post-colonial contexts, are seldom neutral. They often reflect processes of the institutionalisation of power, regime transition and territorial expansion (Seitova, 2025; Williamson, 2023).

Although global literature has extensively mapped the spatial distribution and socio-cultural narratives of toponymic landscapes (Li et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2024; Martina et al., 2025), studies in the Malaysian context have remain largely descriptive, focusing on etymology, historical legends, and cultural identity. Limited empirical attention has been given to how place names are structurally shaped through their internal linguistic mechanisms, morphemic segmentation, and phrasal organisation.

To address this gap, this paper discusses a morphosyntactic analysis of 629 unique toponyms collected through fieldwork study in Banda Hilir, Melaka. The objectives of this study are (i) to identify the morphological typology of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka and (ii) to analyse the syntactic patterns of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka. Through a systematic analysis of morphological and syntactic structures, this study illustrates how contrasting grammatical systems coexist within a single spatial ecosystem,

LITERATURE REVIEW

Toponymy as a Linguistic Artifact and Cognitive Anchor

In the field of onomastics, toponyms, or place names are understood not as neutral geographic markers (Sudrajat et al., 2021) only. Toponyms also act as linguistic repositories that contain evidence of lexical borrowing, social layers and language evolution (Imanberdiyeva et al., 2025; Jaafar et al., 2025; Muradova, 2024 & Suvankulov, 2024). The internal structures reveal how communities organise and conceptualise physical space into cognitive frameworks. As such, place names function as cognitive anchors that connect collective memory, emotion, and local identity within boarder communicative landscapes (Davletova et al., 2025; Imanberdiyeva et al., 2025). An analysis of the formal linguistic composition may reveal the grammatical systems and cognitive frameworks of past societies (Tent, 2015).

Morphosyntactic Stratification, Power, and Colonial Impact

The development of toponymy across pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods has been strongly influenced by geopolitical change, territorial expansion, and successive political regimes (Kayigema, 2021; Seitova, 2025; Williamson, 2023). Within colonial contexts, geopolitical control was often accompanied by linguistic manipulation. This includes renaming and the anglicisation of indigenous toponyms. Such practices served tp legitimise colonial ideologies and at the same time, erasing native identities (Amrina, 2025; Boset, 2025; Williamson, 2023).

Morphosyntactically, within the Malaysian context, this manifestation is visible through the preservation of foreign inversion structures (Modifier-Head) that contradict the local grammatical system. It reflects ideological struggles within everyday spaces. Nevertheless, the resistance to modification or the rigid retention of original structural names by post-colonial societies functions as a decolonial effort to preserve etymological integrity and historical authenticity (Amrina, 2025; Williamson, 2023).

Urban Linguistic Landscapes and Multicultural Spatial Patterns

Past studies show that the spatial structures and distribution composition of toponyms frequently report the cultural narratives and socio-economic functions of a historical area. For instance, street names in the Hoan Kiem District of Hanoi and various urban centres in Indonesia exhibit linguistic reconstructions that immortalise historical heroes and past trading activities (Le, 2025; Martina et al., 2025). This critical urban linguistic landscape and toponymic framework is similarly detected in other regional contexts, such as Bengkalis, where place names record historical socio-economic interactions (Jaafar et al., 2025).

In Central Asian regions and traditional villages in China, toponyms are analysed as ethnocultural texts reflecting migration patterns, physical-geographical features, and the social memory of communities

(Laishkhanov et al., 2025; Li et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2024; Meirbekov & Meirbekov, 2023). Furthermore, the integration of real and mythical names in epic literature is linked to the expansion of imaginative space and the symbolism of ruling power (Kenbayeva et al., 2025).

In Banda Hilir, Melaka, the dynamic convergence between physical space, historical landmarks (such as A Famosa and St. Paul's Hill), and the tourism economy has formed a unique heritage landscape (Hussain & Ujang, 2014, 2018). Past studies have shown that docks along the Melaka River have a historical significance. They reflect the close relationship between maritime identity and urban morphology (Mo, 2024). Alongside the presence of street art and the commercialisation of souvenirs, the authenticity of the city remains to be a subject of ongoing scholarly discussion (Amin et al., 2024; Mohamed et al., 2023).

Given that Melaka's heritage status is built upon a strong foundation of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism (Bideau & Kilani, 2012; Goh, 2014), the toponymy of Banda Hilir exhibits a heterogeneous composition of lexical elements, including Malay, Sanskrit, Portuguese, Dutch, and English. Thus, a morphosyntactic analysis of the 629 toponyms in this area is highly important in observing how these geographical markers function as linguistic archives that preserve original syntactic structures (the *Hukum D-M*) while simultaneously documenting hybrid assimilations from external influences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilises a descriptive qualitative-quantitative content analysis to analyse the morphosyntactic typologies within the toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka. Data were gathered through linguistic fieldwork. Photographic documentation methods were used to record the data collected. These to ensure that the spelling, word structures, and syntactic arrangements of the place names were recorded verbatim, exactly as displayed on physical signage within the studied area.

Data Collection Procedure

Fieldwork data collection in Banda Hilir, Melaka, was carried out across two distinct phases (mid-August 2025 and early October 2025). Visual observation and photographic recording techniques were utilised to document physical signage in public spaces. Phase One involved data collection, while Phase Two involved field data verification.

Toponymic Data Corpus

The total corpus of data analysed in this investigation comprises 629 unique toponyms in the Banda Hilir area. The 629 data are gained from signages in Banda Hilir Melaka that display (i) commercial premises; (ii) road/pathways; (iii) buildings/institutions; (iv) heritage sites/monuments/museum; (v) settlements; (vi) places of worship and (vii) public spaces/structures.

Data Analysis

Each photograph was meticulously examined based on clear toponymic units. Each data entry underwent manual screening to remove duplicate entries before being classified according to its physical spatial function. A single photograph that contains more than one distinct place name was analysed as separate analytical entities. Contrary, non-toponymic displays, such as general advertisements, slogans, or promotional texts, were excluded from the analysis.

To construct a systematic analysis, all linguistic data points were analysed based on the objectives of the study, namely (i) to identify the morphological typologies of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka and (ii) to analyse the syntactic patterns of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka. Morphological structure of toponyms in Banda Hilir can be categorised into either (i) single word that consists of a morpheme without any morphological modification; (ii) derivations that formed from combination of root word and fixed morpheme or affixes; and

(iii) compound words that formed from combination of two of more morphemes. All these data were then classified according to its syntactic structure. The structure of the toponyms will be categorised according to whether they (i) conform to the *Hukum D-M* (Diterangkan-Menerangkan) pattern, which reflects the standard Malay syntactic structure; or (ii) follow Inversion Pattern, which reflects the influence of foreign language syntactic structures, where the modifier precedes the head element.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to identify and discuss the toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka based on the types and classifications of the toponyms. There are 629 toponyms collected and used as corpus of the study. The dataset was analysed accordingly to identify the morphological typologies and syntactic structures within the toponyms.

Morphological Typologies

This study analyses the morphological typologies of the toponyms found in Banda Hilir, Melaka. Findings from the analysis show that toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka can be classified based on the morphological typologies of the toponyms. There are three classifications of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka; (i) single-word, (ii) compound words and (iii) derived words. The distribution of each morphological type is tabulated in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Morphological Typologies of Toponyms in Banda Hilir

No.	Typology	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Compound / Composite Words	485	77.11%
2.	Single Words (Free Morpheme)	98	15.58%
3.	Derived Words (Bound Morpheme)	46	7.31%
4.	Total	629	100.00%

Single Words

Table 1 shows that 98 toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka are single-word toponyms. Single-word toponyms consist of an isolated free morpheme without any morphological modifications, such as affixation or compounding (Jaafar et al., 2025). Findings from the analysis show that single-word toponyms can be divided into two types of sub-lexical divisions:

Malay traditional lexicon

Malay traditional lexicon items refer to toponyms formed from native words or word that have become established within the Malay lexical system. In the context of this study, this category includes place names that do not display process of affixation, compounding, or combination with other lexical elements. Toponyms of this type usually function as markers of place identity that have long been used by local communities an inherited through traditional naming practices, settlement history and everyday community usage. For example, the word ***Semabok*** (Data No. 270).

Although ***Semabok*** is not administratively situated within the core area of Banda Hilir, its inclusion in the corpus is based on its appearance on directional signage in Banda Hilir, where it functions as a spatial navigational anchor indicating routes towards ***Semabok***. This data is an example of the characteristics of a toponym inherited through local naming traditions and functions as a marker of spatial identity associated with collective memory of the community and settlement history. Single-word toponyms that derived from traditional lexical items not only indicate locations, but also mirror the survival of Malay language usage in the naming of local spaces.

Colonial / Foreign lexicon

The analytical results show the presence of single-word toponyms derived from foreign languages that historically functioned as colonial tongues in Melaka. This phenomenon is apparently detected through the naming of historical structures, such as the *Stadthuys* (Data No. 490). *Stadthuys* means *townhall* in the Dutch. Historically, Melaka was occupied by the Dutch for 183 years (1641–1824). The *Stadthuys* is widely recognised as the oldest surviving Dutch colonial structure in the Melaka. It was built in 1645 (Weebers & Ahmad, 2007) to serve as the Dutch Governor's administrative headquarters in Melaka.

This data point was collected directly from the iconic terracotta-red administrative complex in central Banda Hilir. The data is an example of a linguistic fossil that safeguarding the original historical identity of the physical space without being assimilated or structurally adapted to Malay grammatical patterns.

Derived Words

Findings show that toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka, also formed from derived words. These derived place names are characterised by the presence of circumfixes. Circumfix is an affix which has two parts, one placed at the start of a word, and the other at the end (Nik Safiah, et.al., 2015). This affix functions to transform the grammatical class of the root word into a marker for a specific community space. There are 46 toponyms collected from the Banda Hilir, Melaka are derived words. For examples, toponyms *Perkampungan Portugis* (Portuguese Village; Data No. 268) and *Penempatan Portugis* (Portuguese Settlement; Data No. 266). *Penempatan Portugis* and *Perkampungan Portugis*, concurrently classified as compound words because of the merging of the derived morpheme (*penempatan* and *perkampungan*) with the free morpheme (*Portugis*).

The word *perkampungan* that means *village*, derives from the root word *kampung* (village) and circumfix *per...-an*. Meanwhile the word *penempatan* that means *settlement* derives from the word *tempat* (place) and circumfix *peN...-an*. The consonant /t/ in the word *tempat* is replaced with the consonant /n/ to form the new word, *penempatan*. It shows that the derivation also involves phonological adjustment. These examples show that derived words that used in places naming in Banda Hilir, Melaka are formed through systematic morphological processes. This demonstrates that Malay derived toponyms are not only lexical labels but are shaped by regular-word-formation rules in Malay language grammar.

These data are examples of morphosyntactic overlap. Findings from the analysis of the toponyms indicates an intersection of morphosyntactic processes. It was observed that most words undergoing affixation do not stand isolated. They are also involved in the formation of phrasal-level compound structures.

Compound Words

Compound word is the most frequent form of toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka. It contributes **77.11%** of the overall toponyms. Compound words combine two or more free morphemes to form new meanings (Jaafar et al., 2025). It is very common that compound words in Malay language consist of a noun functioning as the head element, followed by a noun or adjective functioning as modifier. This structure reflects the Malay *Hukum D-M (Diterangkan-Menerangkan)* pattern, in which the main element precedes the element that describes, specifies or qualifies it.

The findings indicate that the compound toponyms identified in the corpus can be classified into three structural categories: (i) two-word compounds, (ii) three-word compounds and (iii) four-word compounds.

Two-word compound is the most basic structure of compound words in Malay language. *Jalan Bendahara* (Data No. 71) dan *Gudang Kastam* (Data No. 12) are two examples of compound-word toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka. The structure of these compound words can be shown as follows:

Jalan + Bendahara = Jalan Bendahara

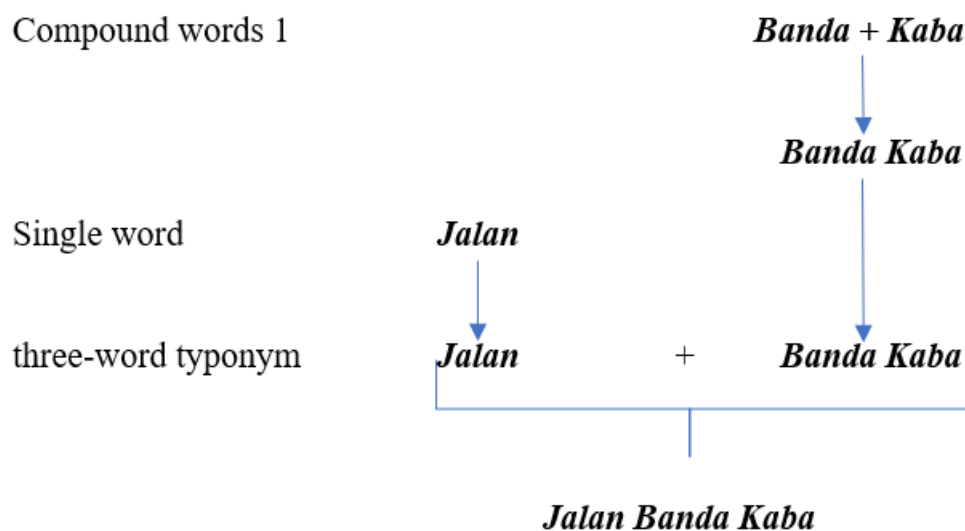
Gudang + Kastam = Gudang Kastam

In ***Jalan Bendahara***, the word ***Jalan*** functions as the head noun, indicating the type of place or spatial entity, namely a road. The word ***Bendahara*** functions as the modifier, specifying the identity of the road by referring to a historical or administrative title associated with the Malay system of governance. Similarly, in ***Gudang Kastam***, the word ***Gudang*** functions as the head noun, referring to a building or storage facility, while the second noun, ***Kastam***, acts as the modifier that specifies the institutional or administrative function of the place.

Jalan Bendahara and ***Gudang Kastam*** are examples that show toponyms in Banda Hilir are also shaped by the Malay grammatical patterns. The structure of the toponym reflects orderly system of spatial naming according to Malay language. The nouns ***Bendahara*** and ***Kastam*** which act as modifiers, carry important historical, administrative, and functional meanings. At the same time, these help to define the identity of the places.

Three-word compounds. The findings also found that that toponyms in Banda Hilir are also formed of **three-word compounds**. For example, the data ***Jalan Banda Kaba*** (Data No. 67) which refers to a place name.

Jalan Banda Kaba is a name of a road in Banda Hilir, Melaka. Morphologically, this road name is categorised as compound word. The structure of this toponym is more layered than a simple combination of three separate words. A detailed analysis shows that ***Banda Kaba*** first forms a compound unit that functions as a place name. This unit is then combined with ***Jalan*** to form the name of a road in Banda Hilir. The structure can be shown as follows:



Within this structure, ***Jalan*** serves as the head element that identifies the type of spatial category, namely a road. On the other hand, ***Banda Kaba*** acts as the modifier, gives the road its specific identity. Therefore, ***Jalan Banda Kaba*** can be characterised as a layered compound toponym, that is formed through the combination of an existing compound unit with an additional lexical element to create a new place name.

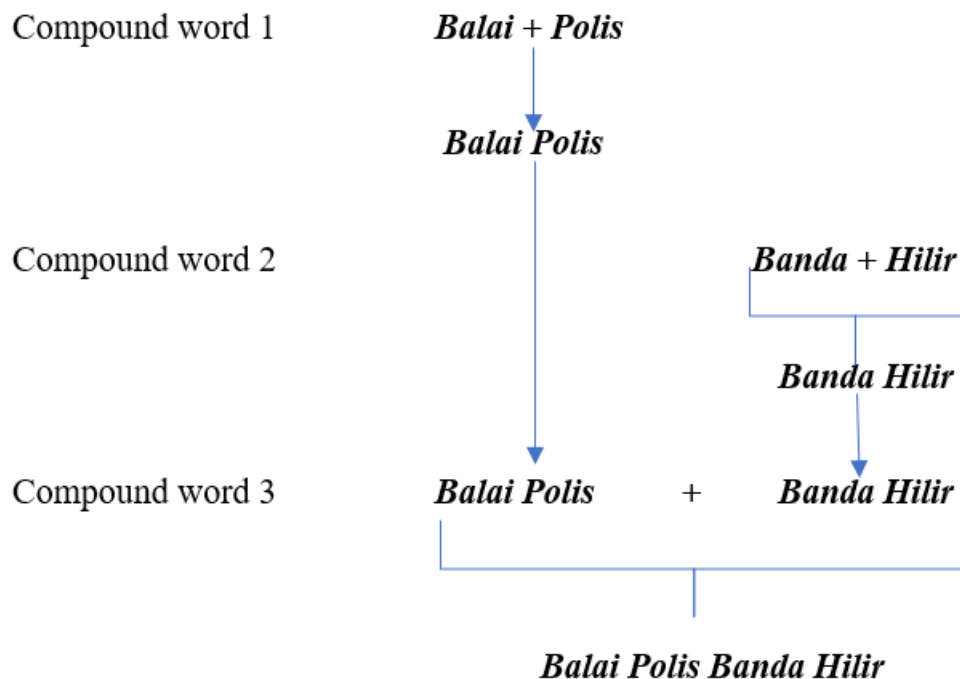
Four-word compounds. What is interesting about the toponyms in Banda Hilir is the variations of the formation structures. The toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka are not limited to two-word and three-word compound structures. The findings also show the presence of toponyms that consist of four lexical elements which indicates a more complex pattern of compound formation within the local naming system.

Four-word toponyms represent the most complex compound structure identified in the findings. This morphological structure involves the combination of four lexical elements. It usually gives a more specific description of a spatial entity, especially in relation to named locations, institutional buildings and administrative functions.

One example that can clearly show this four-word compound structure is *Balai Polis Banda Hilir* (Data No. 4). The structure of this example can be analysed at the surface level as follows:

Balai + Polis + Banda + Hilir = Balai Polis Banda Hilir

A detailed analysis can show that this toponym is formed through the combination of two basic compound units. *Balai Polis*, the first compound, means a police station, whereas, *Banda Hilir*, the second compound, is a name of a place particularly the location of this study. These two compound units are then combined to form a more specific institutional toponym. The structure of this toponym can be shown as follows:



In this structure, *Balai Polis* functions as the head element, that indicates the type of spatial entity. *Balai Polis* is an institutional building with an administrative and security function. *Banda Hilir* serves as the modifier that specifies the geographic location of the building. Accordingly, *Balai Polis Banda Hilir* can be categorised as a layered four-word compound toponym. Its formation relies on structural combination of two compound units that collectively produce a more specific place name.

Syntactic Structure of Toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka

The syntactic analysis of Banda Hilir's toponyms reveals two principal patterns. These patterns are identified based on whether the toponyms conform to the Malay *Hukum D-M* (*Diterangkan-Menerangkan* / Head-Modifier) structure or their retention of foreign syntactic structures, in which the modifier precedes the head element. The distribution of these typologies is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Syntactic Structure of Toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka

No.	Typology	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	<i>Hukum D-M</i>	412	65.50%
2.	Inversion Pattern	217	34.50%
	Total	629	100.00%

Based on the data, the *Hukum D-M* (*Diterangkan-Menerangkan*) pattern represents the clear majority of the corpus, with 412 items, representing 65.50% of the corpus. The findings show that linguistic landscape in Banda Hilir remains strongly shaped by the standard Malay syntactic structure, with the head element precedes the modifier. The structure is shown below:

Head (D) + Modifier (M)

In contrast, the Inversion Pattern records 34.50% of the corpus with 217 items. This pattern inverts the Malay syntactic structure. This pattern places the modifier before the head element which follows a structure commonly found in English:

Modifier (M) + Head (D)

Hukum D-M Pattern

Hukum D-M (Diterangkan-Menerangkan) in Malay grammar, is a fundamental principle in noun phrase formation, in which the noun that acts as the head element (Diterangkan/D) precedes the modifying element (Menerangkan/M) (Nik Safiah Karim et al., 2015). The findings reveal that this syntactic pattern is consistently used in official toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka, as demonstrated in the following example.

(Diterangkan/D) precedes the modifying element (Menerangkan/M) (Nik Safiah Karim et al., 2015). The findings reveal that this syntactic pattern is consistently used in official toponyms in Banda Hilir, Melaka, as demonstrated in the following example.

Jalan (D) + Laksamana (M) (Data No. 109)

In this toponym, the word **Jalan** serves as the head element (*Diterangkan*) and is a common noun. Its initial position establishes the physical entity or category of the space. The word **Laksamana**, is also a noun. By contrast, it appears as the second element and functions as the modifier (*Menerangkan*). In this compound word, **Laksamana** refers to a historical title or figure associated with the Melaka Malay Sultanate. **Grammatically**, this modifier provides a specific identity and historical attribute to the head element. Thus, the combination of Common Noun (Head) + Proper Noun (Modifier) accommodates the syntactic structure of the Malay noun phrase.

Inversion Pattern.

The Inversion Pattern embeds a foreign syntactic structure. It reverses the typical Malay noun phrase structure by placing the modifier ahead of the head element. It reflects foreign syntactic influences, especially those associated with Germanic languages such as English. It also directly contrasts with the local *Hukum D-M* structure. This distinction can be seen in the examples below:

Queen Victoria's (M) + Fountain (D) - (Data No. 231)

Craft (M) + Centre (D) - (Data No. 9)

Based on the examples, it is clear that these examples display a structure that reverses the Malay grammatical structure and adopting an English word-order pattern, namely:

Modifier (M) + Head (D)

In terms of word arrangement, the proper noun **Queen Victoria's** and the common noun **Craft** are the modifying elements. They are placed in the initial position. In *Queen Victoria's Fountain*, the proper noun *Queen Victoria* is combined with the possessive marker –'s to act as a possessive modifier. On the other hand, **Fountain** and **Centre**, are the head elements in these toponyms. They represent the main spatial entities and are placed in the second position. From the perspective of grammatical analysis, this inverted structure carries different meanings depending on its spatial function within the linguistic landscape. These structures illustrate how tourism communication influences naming practices. Therefore, the shift away from the Malay *Hukum D-M* pattern, particularly in the commercial sector, can be seen as an intentional strategy to construct a modern, global, and market-oriented identity.

These examples show that the inversion pattern creates a syntactic abnormality within the physical space of Banda Hilir. The word structure, which places the modifier before the head element, demonstrates the layered influence of Western colonial power and the forces of economic globalisation that challenge the dominance of the national language.

Based on the examples given, it is obviously seen that the findings demonstrate that the place-naming system in this UNESCO heritage site is not random. It reflects an internal grammatical organisation that is complex, systematic, and layered. From a morphological standpoint, the dominance of compound words (77.11%) suggests that local and authorities tend to organise space through combinations of free morphemes that are descriptive, functional, and readily identifiable. In terms of syntactic structure, the findings identify two main patterns in toponym formation, namely the *Diterangkan-Menerangkan* (D-M) pattern and the Inversion Pattern. The higher frequency of the D-M pattern reflects continued adherence to Malay grammatical structure, especially in the naming of roads, buildings, institutions, and official spaces. In contrast, the Inversion Pattern shows the retention of foreign syntactic structures, especially in place names associated with colonial heritage, commercial premises, and tourist attractions. Overall, the percentage of 65.50% for the D-M pattern compared with 34.50% for the Inversion Pattern reveals that Banda Hilir is a space marked by a dynamic syntactic encounter. The physical space of this world heritage site is not monolingual. Instead, it displays a hybrid linguistic ecosystem. On the one hand, the preservation of *Hukum D-M* reflects an effort to maintain the sovereignty of the national language in the system of spatial naming. On the other hand, colonial historical legacies and the demands of the tourism economy continue to preserve the visible presence of foreign inversion structures within the same public space.

Another interesting finding of this study is a mixture of languages found in the toponyms of Banda Hilir. The findings reveal that the place naming in this area is not limited to Malay. Place naming in Banda Hilir, Melaka also includes lexical elements from other languages. Words such as *Stadthuys*, for example, reflect the influence of colonial languages on the toponymic landscape of Banda Hilir. This suggests that Melaka continues to retain foreign lexical elements in some of its place names, especially those connected to its colonial history. These names are meaningful because they do more than identify locations. They also preserve traces of historical contact, colonial administration, and cultural interaction. In this sense, the toponyms of Banda Hilir reflect the multilingual and historically layered character of Melaka.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully mapped the morphosyntactic typology of the linguistic landscape in Banda Hilir, Melaka, based on an empirical corpus of 629 unique toponyms. There are three morphological typologies and two syntactic structures of the toponyms with compound words recorded as the most frequent morphological typology. On the other hand, *Hukum D-M* is more frequently practiced in the place naming in Banda Hilir, Melaka. This study shows that toponyms in Banda Hilir function not only as markers of location, but also as linguistic evidence that records the relationship between language, history, administrative power, heritage identity, and the tourism economy. Future studies on the use of foreign languages in the linguistic landscape of Banda Hilir, Melaka may be conducted to examine more deeply the influence of foreign languages on place-naming systems, heritage preservation strategies, and the formation of spatial identity in a historic urban setting.

REFERENCES

1. Abd Hamid, M. F., Mokhtar, D. S., & Haron, R. (2022). Analisis kesalahan tatabahasa dalam teks keputusan khas Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) untuk mengawal wabak COVID-19. *PENDETA*, 13(1), 84–102. <https://doi.org/10.37134/pendeta.vol13.1.8.2022>
2. Al-Sofi, B. (2024). Linguistic landscape and multilingualism in tourist destinations: A sociolinguistic analysis. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jchmsd-02-2024-0034>
3. Amin, S., Parid, D., Adenan, H., & Zaid, D. (2024). Role of perceived authenticity in souvenir buying decisions among tourists in Bandar Hilir Melaka. *Information Management and Business Review*. [https://doi.org/10.22610/imbr.v16i4\(i\).4254](https://doi.org/10.22610/imbr.v16i4(i).4254)

4. Amrina, L. (2025). Place name changes and threats to cultural preservation: An anthropolinguistic study in Bantul Regency Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Epigram*. <https://doi.org/10.32722/epi.v22i2.7973>
5. An, R., & Zhang, Y. (2022). Language choice and identity construction: Linguistic landscape of Jiangnan Road in Wuhan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 45, 4236–4253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2152456>
6. Bideau, F., & Kilani, M. (2012). Multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and making heritage in Malaysia: A view from the historic cities of the Straits of Malacca. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 18(6), 605–623. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2011.609997>
7. Boset, S. (2025). Translating colonial legacies: The Anglicization of place names in Aden during the British occupation. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2025.8.7.10>
8. Davletova, S., Bizhenkova, A., & Burkova, T. A. (2025). Place, memory, and language: Vernacular toponyms as cognitive anchors in global communication. In *Proceeding International Symposium on Global Education, Psychology, and Cultural Synergy*. <https://doi.org/10.30651/psychoseries.v1i1.28848>
9. Goh, D. (2014). Between history and heritage: Post-colonialism, globalisation, and the remaking of Malacca, Penang, and Singapore. *TRaNS: Trans-Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia*, 2, 79–101. <https://doi.org/10.1017/trn.2013.17>
10. Hussain, K., & Ujang, N. (2014). Visitors' identification of landmarks in the historic district of Banda Hilir, Melaka, Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 153, 689–699. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.100>
11. Hussain, K., & Ujang, N. (2018). Identification of landmarks in the historic district of Banda Hilir, Melaka, Malaysia. *AjQoL - Asian Journal of Quality of Life*, 3(9), 99–110. <https://doi.org/10.21834/ajqol.v3i9.81>
12. Imanberdiyeva, S., Nurdauletova, B., Koshimova, B., Kulamanova, Z., & Alimkhan, A. (2025). Lexico-semantic aspect of ancient Turkic toponyms of Kazakhstan. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i8.9760>
13. Jaafar, M.F., Arimi, S., Erni, S., & Husin, N. (2025). Tipologi toponimi bahasa Melayu di Bengkalis. *Jurnal Bahasa*, 25(1), 159–178. [https://doi.org/10.37052/jb25\(1\)no6](https://doi.org/10.37052/jb25(1)no6)
14. Kayigema, J. (2021). Cultural and historical preservation through onomastic materials: A case of toponyms and anthroponyms in Kinyarwanda. *International Journal of Business and Social Science Research*. <https://doi.org/10.47742/ijbssr.v2n8p1>
15. Kenbayeva, A., Abisheva, S., & Amangalieva, A. (2025). Representing a national concept of space in epic literature. *Bakhtiniana: Revista de Estudos do Discurso*. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2176-4573e67597>
16. Laishanov, S., Kaimuldinova, K., Tobajanov, R., Aliaskarov, D. T., Issakov, Y., Nizamatdinova, Z., & Baltabaev, O. (2026). Studying landscape transformation in the territory of Kazakhstan using the toponymic method. *Frontiers in Environmental Archaeology*, 5, 1816569. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fearc.2026.1816569>
17. Le, T. (2025). Linguistic and cultural aspects of Hanoi's administrative place names: Insights from Hoan Kiem District in Hanoi Vietnam. *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijlll.2025.11.4.598>
18. Li, J., Xiao, Y., Yan, J., Liang, C., & Zhong, H. (2025). Spatiotemporal evolution characteristics and causative analysis of toponymic cultural landscapes in traditional villages in Northern Guangdong, China. *Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17010271>
19. Liu, Y., Liu, L., Xu, R., Yi, X., & Qiu, H. (2024). Spatial distribution of toponyms and formation mechanism in traditional villages in Western Hunan, China. *Heritage Science*, 12, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40494-024-01297-z>
20. Martina, M., Duli, A., Armin, M., Darheni, N., Katubi, Sariah, S., Nurfaidah, R., Budihastuti, E., Nitayadnya, I., & Sutrisno, D. (2025). Cartographies of meaning: Toponymic language reconstruction of socio-cultural narratives in an Indonesian urban context. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i6.9566>
21. Meiirbekov, A., & Meirbekov, A. (2023). Nomadic place names. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 13(1), 272–280.
22. Mo, Z. (2024). Urban morphology and identity: The dock spaces of Melaka on the maritime Silk Road. *Journal of City: Branding and Authenticity*. <https://doi.org/10.61511/jcbau.v2i1.2024.911>

23. Mohamed, N., Hamid, S., Jabar, M., & Mukhtar, Z. (2023). The importance of street art in rejuvenating urban tourism in Bandar Hilir, Melaka. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13(5). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v13-i5/14888>
24. Muradova, S. (2024). The linguistic and cultural significance of hydronyms in English toponymy. *TAMADDUN NURI JURNALI*. <https://doi.org/10.69691/b3tzhp32>
25. Nik Safiah Karim, Farid Mohd. Onn, Hashim Hj. Musa, & Abdul Hamid Mahmood. (2015). *Tatabahasa Dewan (Edisi ke-3)*. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
26. Rahman, S. A., Omar, N., & Aziz, M. J. A. (2014). Extraction of compound nouns in Malay noun phrases using a noun phrase frame structure. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Information Technology and Multimedia*, 3(1), 23–32. <http://www.ftsm.ukm.my/apjitm>
27. Saparov, K. T., Yeginbayeva, A. Y., Nurgalieva, G. Z., Kulzhanova, S. M., Atasoy, E., & Wendt, J. A. (2017). The question of Kazakh national and geographical toponymy as a potential factor of tourism development. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 19, 115–125. https://gtg.webhost.uoradea.ro/PDF/GTG-1-2017/234_Wendt.pdf
28. Seitova, S. (2025). Linguistic and historical features of place names of East Kazakhstan region. *Tiltanym*. <https://doi.org/10.55491/2411-6076-2025-1-35-42>
29. Spolsky, B. (2020). Linguistic landscape. *Linguistic Landscape: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ll.00015.spo>
30. Sudrajat, R., Setiana, D., Rejito, J., Pradana, A., Suryana, I., Suryani, M., Zakaria, M. M., Permana, F. C., Ruchjana, B. N., & Abdullah, A. S. (2021). Toponymic information system for description and classification of ethno-informatics of “kampung” naming in the East Priangan of West Java. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1722, 012018. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1722/1/012018>
31. Suvankulov, B. (2024). Exploring toponyms in Russian philology: A linguistic and cultural perspective. *American Journal of Philological Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.37547/ajps/volume04issue03-12>
32. Tent, J. (2015). Approaches to research in toponymy. *Names: A Journal in Onomastics*, 63(2), 65–74. <https://doi.org/10.1179/0027773814Z.0000000000103>
33. Tleuberdiev, B., Karayeva, B., Taspolatov, B., Tolegenova, A., Zhanysbayeva, A., & Shakiyeva, A. (2026). Ethnolinguistic transformations in Kazakh and English toponymy in the context of globalization. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.22034/ijsc.2026.2087334.4484>
34. Triana, H., Kustati, M., Nelmawarni, N., & Reflinaldi, R. (2022). West coastal toponyms of Sumatra Island: A corpus linguistics study. *OKARA: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ojbs.v16i1.6163>
35. Williamson, B. (2023). Historical geographies of place naming: Colonial practices and beyond. *Geography Compass*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12687>
36. Weebers, R. C. M., & Ahmad, Y. (2009, April 14–16). The Dutch Fort of Melaka. 4th ASEAN Post Graduate Seminar in Built Environment, Faculty of Built Environment, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247773715_THE_DUTCH_FORT_OF_MELAKA