

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES, AND
JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

LANGUAGE USE IN AKSUM LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE

BY

TEKLAY GUESH



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ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and all sources of materials used for this research work has been duly acknowledged.

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CONFIRMATION

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as thesis advisor

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to examine the language use in Aksum linguistic landscape. In order to meet this purpose the required data are collected through photographing, observation, semi-structured interviews held with business owners and customers. The result of the study has been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to determine the order of languages, prominence of languages, translation, transliteration, mixing of languages, characteristics of multilingual signs and language choice in the government and private signs.

According to the findings, Amharic and Tigrigna are the most prominent languages in the linguistic landscape. The distribution of these languages differs across government and private agencies in the language choice and categories on signs. In the government signs Tigrigna is more visible. This might be due to the language policy practices of the government agencies. Amharic is dominant in private signs. This is due to the objective of business owners to attract customers who come from different parts of Ethiopia. The findings also show that English is visible in the public space due to status as an international language and the fact that Aksum is a tourist destination. The study reveals that Tigrigna signs show structural variations in the position of heads in phrases. There is also code-mixing in translation of texts in signs. There are word for word translations and transliterations of texts in signs.

CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgments.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study.....	1
1.2. The Study Area.....	3
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.4. Objective of the Study.....	4
1.5. Significance of the Study.....	5
1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	5

CHAPTER TWO

Conceptual Framework and Review of Related Empirical Studies

2.1. Conceptual Framework.....	6
2.1.1. The Concept of Linguistic Landscape.....	6
2.1.2. Main Functions of Linguistic Landscape.....	8
2.1.3. Public Space.....	10
2.1.4. Language Use in Individual Signs.....	11
2.1.5. Structural Principles	15
2.2. Review of Related Empirical Studies.....	18

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Survey Areas.....21
3.2. Survey Items.....22
3.3. Coding Signs23

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Language Use in Aksum Linguistic Landscape.....26
4.1.1. Distribution of Monolingual Signs.....27
4.1.2. Distribution of Bilingual Signs.....30
4.1.3. Distribution of Trilingual Signs.....35
4.2. Language Choice in Government and Private Signs.....36
4.2.1. Categories of Signs in Government and Private Signs.....37
4.2.2. Language Use in Government and Private signs39
4.3. Language Visibility and Language Prominence43
4.3.1. Pattern of Language Appearance in Bi-/Trilingual Signs.....44
4.3.2. Font Size of Texts in Bi-/Trilingual Signs.....48
4.4. Translation, Transliteration and Mixing Situations.....51

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary and Conclusions.....56
5.2. Recommendations.....58

REFERENCES.....59

APPENDIXES

List of Tables

Table 1: Distribution of monolingual languages	27
Table 2: Distribution of bilingual languages.....	30
Table 3: Distribution of trilingual languages.....	35
Table 4: Categories of signs in government agencies.....	37
Table 5: Categories of signs in private agencies.....	38
Table 6: Distribution of languages in government and private agencies.....	40
Table 7: Distribution of languages in their order of appearance.....	44
Table 8: Font size in bi-/trilingual languages.....	48
Table 9: Translations, transliterations, and mixing in multilingual signs.....	51

List of Figures

Figure 1: Amharic sign.....	28
Figure 2: English sign	28
Figure 3: Geez sign	29
Figure 4: Tigrigna sign	29
Figure 5: Amharic- English sign.	32
Figure 6: Tigrigna-English sign	32
Figure 7: Geez-English sign	33
Figure 8: English-Italian sign	33
Figure 9: English- Fidäl sign.....	34
Figure 10: Amharic-Arabic-English trilingual sign.....	35
Figure 11: Tigrigna-Amharic-English trilingual sign.....	36
Figure 12: Government Tigrigna sign.....	39
Figure 13: Government Tigrigna sign.....	41
Figure 14: Government Tigrigna sign	42
Figure 15: Private English sign.....	42
Figure 16: Amharic-English vertical signs.....	45
Figure 17: Amharic-English horizontal signs	46
Figure 18: Tigrigna-English vertical signs.....	46
Figure 19: English-Tigrigna vertical signs.....	47
Figure 20: English-Italian vertical sign.....	47
Figure 21: Large Font Size for Amharic in Amharic-English Sign.....	49
Figure 22: Large Font Size for Tigrigna in Tigrigna-English Sign	50

Figure 23: Geez-English equal font size	50
Figure 24: Partial translation in Amharic-English sign	52
Figure 25: Fidäl for English texts.....	53
Figure 26: Languages mixing Tigrigna with Amharic sign	54
Figure 27: Mixing of English signs in Amharic text	54
Figure 28: Fidäl for English words (Transliteration Amharic).....	55

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In Ethiopia, and around the world, there are multiple languages in use in a community. When walking through certain parts of a city in Ethiopia today, see signs written in a number of languages. The linguistic content of visible signs has caught the attention of researchers as a unique area of linguistics that deserves investigation.

Within the field of multilingualism, linguistic landscape has emerged as an area of study that specifically investigates the content of public signage. A landmark study was conducted by Landry and Bourhis (1997), which contains the first usage of the term 'linguistic landscape' originally defined as, "the language of public space in a given territory or urban. The linguistic landscape of a territory can serve two basic functions; an informational function and a symbolic function" (Landry and Bourhis, 1997: 25).

This definition has been used in several other studies under linguistic landscapes (Backhaus 2005, Huebner 2006, Cenoz and Gorter 2006, Ben-Rafael and Shohamy 2006).

Gorter (2006a: 2) holds that linguistic landscape research is concerned with 'the use of language in its written form in public space'. By the same token, Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) define linguistic landscape as "Any sign of announcement located outside or inside a public institution or a private business in a given geographical location" (2006:7).

Examining public signs accessible to everyone give us an insight into the function, status and spread of a certain language. Within a confined area, languages displayed on public signs give information about the language being used, about possible differences between practice and official language policy as depicted on signs; the function different languages in different contexts and the influence of ethnic and social factors on patterns of language use.

The basis of linguistic landscape analysis is the fact that visual language use in public spaces represents observable manifestations of circulating ideas about multilingualism (Shohamy, 2006: 110). Linguistic landscape constitutes the scene made of streets, corners, parks, buildings where a society's public life takes place. As such linguistic landscape carries crucial socio-symbolic significance as it actually identifies and thus serves as a symbol of societies, communities and regions (Hult; 2009: 90).

The presence or absence of a language in public space communicates symbolic messages about the importance, power, significance and relevance of certain languages (Shohamy, 2006: 110). It showed the circulating socio-political communications and the degree of multilingualism in a community. Linguistic landscape is concerned with how a specific public space is symbolically constructed by public and private signs (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006: 8) and by what takes place behind the scenes in the construction of billboards.

The aim of this study is to see the patterns of language use in the linguistic landscape of Aksum, the prevalent language choice, the translations and code mixing features, the patterns of languages on public and private organizations.

1.2. The Study Area

The study was conducted in Aksum town which has the status of special woreda (Axumite Megazine. Vol. 1. 2012). According to many historians, Aksum was the capital of the kingdom of Aksum. It is now the administrative centre of Central administration Zone of Tigray 1024 km North of Addis Ababa.

According to the national census conducted by the Central Statistics Agency of Ethiopia (CSA, 2007), the town has a total population of 44,647, of whom 20,741 are men and 23,906 women. The majority of the inhabitants 88.03% are Ethiopian Orthodox Christians, while 10.89% of the population is Muslim. The largest ethnic group is that of Tigrayan (98.54%) and Tigrigna is the first language for 98.8% of the population.

There are, different languages displayed in the public space of the town. People from different parts of the country come and lived in the city and this has influenced the use of languages in the town. Such influence is featured in names of streets, commercial shops, advertizing billboards, private and governmental buildings and institutions.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Linguistic landscape is a recent field within sociolinguistics which focuses on study of language policy, planning as well as aspects of linguistic diversity. Linguistic landscape focuses more on written communication in public spaces. Its significance lies in the fact that it is about language that is made visible. In spite of its being limited to written signs, it reflects language attitude, language choice, and prominence. Therefore, taking this as a research gap, the present study attempts to answer the following basic questions.

1. What languages are displayed in the linguistic landscape of Aksum?
2. What is the role of Tigrigna in the linguistic landscape of Aksum given its status as the working language of the Tigray Regional State?
3. Are there differences in private and government oriented signs?
4. How are choices of languages made in the linguistic landscape of Aksum?
5. What are the factors that influence signage in the linguistic landscape of Aksum?

1.4. Objective of the Study

This study has the following objectives:

General Objective: The general objective of this study is to identify and describe the features of the linguistic landscape of Aksum in relation to the domain of language use in the public space.

Specific Objectives: The specific objectives of the study include:

- To investigate the choices of languages for commercial and institutional purposes.
- To identify the language used in the government and private signs.
- To describe the pattern of language use in the linguistic landscape.
- To see the differences between government and private use of language and language choice.
- To find out how signs are translated, transliterated and how codes are mixed.

1.5. Significance of the Study

There has not been any study in Aksum regarding to the linguistic landscape and hence, the significance of the present study lies in filling in a gap by providing researched facts about linguistic landscape. Such facts would be useful for planners and language policy makers. Specifically the research would be useful for the Bureau of tourism and culture of Aksum. The study would be also providing information to researchers on the sociolinguistics of the town in particular and of the region in general.

1.6. Scope and limitations of the Study

This study focuses on the linguistic landscape of the town of Aksum only. Its focus is the description of pattern of language use in public space. In assessing the language use pattern, it takes into account advertising billboards, street names, place names, café and restaurants, hotels, electronic shops and signs on government and private buildings on the main two streets of the town. The focus does not extend to traffic signs, postcards, and posters on taxies, walls, and other prints. Furthermore, due to shortage of time comprehensive research on the linguistic landscape was not possible. Therefore, the focus was on the two streets, namely Niqodimos Tesfay and Denver Street.

CHAPTER TWO
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF RELATED
EMPIRICAL STUDIES

2.1. Conceptual Framework

2.1.1. The Concept of Linguistic Landscape

Linguistic landscape is a recent development in the field of sociolinguistics, whose focus specifies language policy, planning as well as aspects of linguistic diversity in public spaces. Landry and Bourhis were among the first to establish the concept as a research field. According to them the concept includes “The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration” (Landry and Bourhis, 1997: 25).

Although many authors quote the Landry and Bourhis’s (1997) definition, now well known, the definition of linguistic landscape varies in scope from researcher to researcher. Ben-Rafael et al. (2006: 14) for example defines linguistic landscape as “Any sign or announcement located outside or inside a public institution or a private business in a given geographical location.” This definition goes beyond that given by Landry and Bourhis (1997) as it also encompasses signs inside buildings. Shohamy and Waksman (2009) think that their notion of linguistic landscape is somewhat radical, hence in to very broad view, the concept incorporates all possible discourses that emerge in public spaces, including texts, images, objects, and placement of time and space as well as human beings.

The definition of linguistic landscape has also not been stabilized yet, although there is enough correspondence among most studies in

identifying linguistic landscape as the use of language in its written form in the public sphere (Gorter, 2006b: 2). As pointed out by Backhaus (2007: 12, 54), although several studies have been conducted on linguistic landscape, it was only with Landry and Bourhis' (1997) study that the field was established as a coherent discipline.

Although some studies have moved beyond commercial focus, including, for example, signs erected by government agencies, an urban focus is inherent in the current understanding of the term. Gorter (2006b: 2) suggests the term “linguistic cityscape” instead of linguistic landscape, since the majority of studies focus on cities, where signage is at its densest. Gorter (2006b: 1-2) proposes the use of the term “multilingual cityscape” instead of linguistic landscape, as the word landscape relates to the countryside whereas collections of signs with texts are encountered predominantly in urban areas. Cityscape is indeed more precise than landscape, but multilingual cityscape excludes monolingual ones. Moreover, these new terms have not really caught on among researchers in the field whereas as linguistic landscape is still very widespread (Shohamy and Gorter, 2009). For these reason, in the present study the term linguistic landscape is used.

Linguistic landscape is also essentially written, and is also an expansion of sociolinguistics whose current focus is spoken language. This is possible because written communication in the public space has unique semiotic properties, which are stated in Backhaus (2007: 1, 4-8). Another aspect emphasized in the definition of linguistic landscape is the symbolic or indexical nature which Ben-Rafael (2009: 41) states as a symbolic construction of public space and which Backhaus (2005: 2), refers to a meaning-making process of visible language in public space. Shohamy (2006: 110-112; 123) considers linguistic landscape as a language policy mechanism.

The term linguistic landscape is often abbreviated as LL. Itagi and Sigh (2002) distinguish the noun “linguistic landscape” and the gerund “linguistic landscaping”. Backhaus (2007: 10) infers from Itagi and Sigh (2002) that the term in its gerund form refers to the planning and implementation of actions pertaining to language in signs, whereas the noun denotes the result of these actions. Although the term linguistic landscape is used more frequently than linguistic landscaping, the latter term has also been taken up by some scholars.

2.1.2. Main Functions of Linguistic Landscape

According to Landry and Bourhis (1997: 25) linguistic landscape has two major functions: informative and symbolic. The informational function refers to the broader territory of a linguistic group. The signs of the territory show that a specific language or languages are available for communication for such activities as for example. This most basic function of linguistic landscape shows that certain information is presented on a specific space and that it also serves to demarcate linguistic boundaries. In other words, linguistic landscape marks territory.

According to Landry and Bourhis (1997: 25-29), linguistic landscape gives information on the sociolinguistic composition of various groups in an area as well as the power and status relations among such groups. Scollon and Scollon (2003: 117-120) discuss this function as “Indexicality of the geopolitical world”. According to Scollon and Scollon, how the languages in the linguistic landscape index the groups present or the readership intended at a certain time and place. The occurrence of a specific language on signs indicates that the language is expected to be in use in a certain area. However, the more unstable the status, and the functions of the language in an area, the greater the difference

tends to be between the expectation and the actual language use on the ground.

The symbolic function refers to the value and status of languages as perceived by the members of a language group in comparison to other language groups (Cenoz and Gorter, 2009: 56). The symbolic function of the linguistic landscape lies in the choice of message, and more specifically in the choice of language, in public space. Scollon and Scollon (2003), in their study of geosemiotics, refer to this function as “systems of social positioning and power relationship both at the level of interpersonal relationships and at the level of struggle for hegemony amongst social groups in any society precisely because there are no systems of choices that are neutral in the social world” (Scollon and Scollon, 2003: 7).

Thus linguistic landscape reflects the obvious language policies of a state or the more localized language practices of a community and provides a window into the power relations in the community (Huebner, 2006: 32).

Symbolic function is connected to identity of language users and inhabitants of a specific area. Linguistic landscape can represent the strength and weakness of competing ethno-linguistic groups in intergroup settings (Landry and Bourhis, 1997: 28). Spolsky and Cooper (1991) capture the issue of identity stating the fact that writers prefer to write signs in their own languages or in a language with which they wish to identify themselves. This symbolic value accounts for the language choice and the order of language use on multilingual signs.

According to Spolsky and Cooper (1991) some state and regional authorities have included in their language policy rules about languages

to be used on signage. Regulations related to linguistic landscape are consistent with language policies that regulate the use of languages in education, the media, social and economic life or other domains. The use of different languages in signs also reflects the power, status and economic importance of speakers of different languages.

An essential premise of linguistic landscape analysis is that visual language use in public spaces presents visible manifestations of circulating ideas about multilingualism (Shohamy 2006: 110). According to Hult (2009: 90) Linguistic landscape constitutes “the very scene of streets, corners, parks, buildings where a society’s public life takes place”. This carries crucial socio-symbolic importance as it actually identifies and thus serves as the symbol of societies, communities, and regions (Hult, 2009: 90).

Linguistic landscape analysis is concerned with how a specific public space is symbolically constructed “by a large variety of factors such as public institutions, associations, firms, individuals, that stem from most diverse strata and milieus” (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006: 8).

2.1.3. The Public Space

Linguistic landscape focuses on writing linguistic signs in public space, a concept which has to be specified for this particular study. Public space is a very specific type of communication. Linguistic landscape is not studied only for its linguistic appearance but also for its role of shaping the forces and what it symbolizes once it is created.

Ben-Rafael et al. (2006: 40-41) state that the notion of public space can be approached from various angles, but within linguistic landscape studies, the concept of public space is defined geoterritorially. In other words, the public space, as it relates to linguistic landscape “includes

every space in the community or the society that is not private property, such as streets, parks or public institutions” (2006: 41).

Ben-Rafael (2009) defines the linguistic landscape as “a representational construction of public space and as such it constitutes the correctness of the public space” (ibid: 41). The linguistic landscape is composed of different and contrasting inputs, yet it is still viewed as a coherent whole. The linguistic landscape functions as decorum as it calls for the attention of the public, but not all linguistic items in the linguistic landscape are viewed an equal basis. Linguistic landscape is, thus, the public space marked by language. Since the notion of linguistic landscape refers to linguistic objects that mark the public space, it represents the dignity of the public space. Though the concepts are the same, different linguistic landscape studies use the term environmental print as an alternative name for public space. But for reasons of consistent use, the term public space is used in the present study.

2.1.4. Language Use on Individual Signs

Relationships between language groups may be expressed not only in the linguistic landscape as a whole, but also on individual signs: several researchers have tried to characterize the choice and placement of languages on signs.

Reh (2004: 37) gives a typology to facilitate the systematic documentation and analysis of multilingual writing as encountered in streets. Four types of arrangement are distinguished: duplicating, fragmentary, overlapping and complementary. Duplicating multilingual writing means exactly the same text is presented in more than one language. Fragmentary multilingual refers to multilingual texts in which the full information is given only in one language, but in which selected

parts have been translated into one or more additional languages. The term overlapping multilingual writing is used if part of the interaction is given in two or more languages, and in all the languages also different pieces of additional information are given. In this case the content of the texts in the different languages may simply overlap, or the content may be identical although the speech acts are not (Reh, 2004: 32). Finally, texts in which different parts of the overall information are each rendered in a different language display complementary multilingualism. The last two types of multilingual text overlapping and complementary presuppose multilingual readers since knowledge of all the languages involved is necessary to understand the whole message.

According to Reh (2004) the analysis of multilingual text types and their communicative functions “enable conclusions to be drawn regarding, among other factors, the social layering of the community, the relative status of the various societal segments, and the dominant cultural ideals of the community” (ibid: 34).

Sebba (2007) also looks into multilingual texts. Sebba distinguished between parallel and complementary mixed-language texts. In parallel texts the same information is given in two or more languages, whereas in complementary texts two or more languages are used, but the texts are not translations of each other. Sebba’s notion of parallel texts corresponds to Reh’s duplicating multilingual writing.

Reh refers to fragmentary or overlapping multilingual writing. According to Sebba, parallel multilingual texts often have a monolingual audience intend, i.e., they are meant for monolingual readers, whereas complementary multilingual texts have a multilingual audience design, they are meant for multilingual readers. This idea is similar to Reh’s observation that overlapping and complementary multilingual texts

presuppose multilingual readers. Sebba (2007) remarks that in mixed-language texts part of a text in one language is part of the context for the other language and vice versa.

Scollon and Scollon (2003: 135-137) discuss the semiotic of signs. The fact that the texts in different languages on multilingual signs cannot be located simultaneously in the same place produces a system of preference. Scollon and Scollon (2003) examine that in the case of languages with a writing direction from left to right there are three possibilities. If the languages are aligned vertically, the preferred code is located above the secondary code. If they are placed horizontally, the preferred code is located in the left position and the secondary code is placed in the right position. The third possibility is that the preferred code is located in the center and the secondary code is placed on the margins of the sign.

Scollon and Scollon (2003: 130-134) note that this code-preference system can be played off against salience. This is the case when the language in the lower positions is written in larger letters than the language in the upper positions. Similarly, Huebner (2006) remarks that determining language prominence in a sign can be problematic, as text placements and font size can be offset by other features, particularly color, images and amount of text. But in the present study because of delimitation, the study is not including features such as color, and images of a given sign as its focus on text.

According to Scollon and Scollon (2003: 137), the language on a sign can either index the community, for example an Arabic-speaking community, or it can symbolize something about the product or business that has nothing to do with the place it is located. Scollon and Scollon call the first case geopolitical indexing and the second

symbolization based on socio-cultural associations. English can be used to symbolize foreign taste and manners rather than to index an English speaking community. Backhaus (2007: 58) indicates that all signs are in fact related to the circumstances of their positioning through indexicality. Even if language use is symbolic, on a higher level it may index a preference for foreign language use by the non-foreign population.

Haarmann (1986), in an early study of the functions of multilingual advertising, already note that through the use of particular languages, advertised products may be associated with stereotypes of the corresponding groups of speakers. The languages used in advertising may or may not reflect the languages spoken by the speech community for which it is intended. Haarmann observes that the use of English and other foreign languages in Japanese mass media does not reflect the everyday language use of the Japanese speech community, which is largely monolingual. He calls this phenomenon “impersonal multilingualism”. This use of foreign languages is often not intended as a means of verbal communication, but according to Haarmann (1986) it rather aims to appeal to people’s emotions.

The studies discussed in this section make it clear the choice and placement of languages on individual signs produce meaning. Thus, it is worthwhile to investigate the ways in which languages are combined on multilingual signs in a specific area such as Aksum.

2.1.5. Structural Principles

2.1.5.1. Ben-Rafael's Four Structural Principles

Ben-Rafeal (2009: 44-48), state the linguistic landscape functioning as “symbolic construction of public space”, identifies four structural principles. Each of these principles has its contributions in shaping linguistic landscape research. The first principle, presentation of self, is inspired by Goffman's (in Ben-Rafeal, 2009) refer to how social agents present their image to others in order to reach a desired goal. Ben-Rafael (2009) extends this principle to linguistic landscape items, which compete for the attention of other groups.

The second principle, the good reason principle derives from the fact that linguistic landscape items have to provide rationally for the interests of the readership, and that the readership has to be able to perceive such linguistic landscape items as being rational.

The third structural principle relates to collective identity even as the principle of presentation of self indicates the agent's uniqueness in order to gain the attention of member of the public the collective identity principle indicates to which groups the agent belongs and draws clients on a basis of a shared identity. Power relations, the fourth principle, centre on the degree to which certain groups are able to impose linguistic regulations on others. It can be revealed in the extent to which a dominant group's power is restricted by legislation, or also how other powerful agents may oppose language regulations. Ben-Rafael (2009: 47) quotes the imposition of the national language in the linguistic landscape as an example of power hegemony. He also mentions that the greater the role the power-relations principle plays in structuring the linguistic landscape, the more this aspect might be the object of confrontation.

2.1.5.2. Spolsky's Three Conditions for Language Choice

Referring to Spolsky and Cooper (1991: 81-85), Spolsky (2009: 33-34) proposes three conditions for language choice in public space. The first relates to literacy write in a language you know. The second, the presumed reader's condition, focuses on the communicative goals of public signage and requires the sign writer to use a language in the intended readers. The third, symbolic value condition, accounts for language choice on signs that declare ownership. The conditions for language choice thus vary from sign to sign. Spolsky (2009: 29-30) refines his condition related to literacy. The absence of a language might simply be due to the fact that the language has no written system or the speakers are not literate. He suggests that signs should first be classified according to density and the comparative density of verbal and non-verbal signs even before language choice.

2.1.5.3. Kallen's Matrix

Kallen (2009: 277-278) proposes that the choice of communication in the linguistic landscape encompasses more than simply a choice of languages. Kallen's matrix of choices consists of four factors; language choice relates to the choice of languages, which includes translations and transliterations in to other languages. Code choices relates to the graphic modes of representation such as font, colour and placement. Pragmatic choices refer to the general interactional function of a sign. The fourth factor, readership choices, refers to the expected readership of the sign. Although this matrix is not widely used in the linguistic landscape, it correlates with Ben-Rafael's (2009: 45) 'good reasons principle' and Spolsky's (2009: 33) 'presumed reader condition'. This matrix can be utilized to investigate the communicative choices made when creating a linguistic landscape item.

2.1.5.4. Agency

The current dichotomous definition of agency distinguishes between bottom-up and top-down agents. Landry and Bourhis (1997) differentiation between private and governmental signs remains an important factor of categorization and analysis in linguistic landscape studies:

Private sign includes commercial signs on store fronts and business institutions (E.g retail stores and banks), commercial advertising and billboards, and advertising signs displayed in public transport and on private vehicles. Governmental signs refer to public signs used by national regional, or municipal government in the following domains road signs, place names, street names, and inscriptions on government buildings including ministries, hospitals, universities, town halls, schools , metro stations, and public parks (Landry and Bourhis, 1997: 26).

This distinction was later refined and expanded by several researchers, including Ben-Rafael et al. (2006: 10). Top-down signage is issued by institutional agencies which in one way or another act under the control of local and central policies, while bottom-up signage is erected by individual, associative or corporative agents who enjoy autonomy of action within legal limits (Ibid: 10.). The importance of these distinctions is that they indicate not necessarily the source, but two different ways of marking the territory (Backhaus; 2005: 41) in other words, it makes different contributions to the linguistic landscape.

Landry and Bourhis (1997: 26-27) note that there is greater linguistic diversity in bottom-up signage, because private signs are less controlled. As a result, private signs provide a more realistic reflection of the sociolinguistic composition of the specific area than top-down signs. The coherence of the linguistic landscape indicates the degree of discrepancy between official and de facto language policies.

Discrepancies do not only exist between top-down and bottom-up signage, but also in top-down signage itself. This is often due to incoherent planning and implementing by the government (Ben-Rafael, 2009: 47).

Government and private signs make different contributions to the linguistic landscape, especially in terms of language policy. Official language policies are ascribed to with varying degrees of accuracy on official signage, while bottom-up agents for the most part have more freedom and thus create the de facto language policy. According to Landry and Bourhis (1997: 27) these two contributions are analyzed and compared in terms of the languages contained, code preference and availability of multilingualism signs.

2.2. Review of Related Empirical Studies

The researcher has made an attempt to assess previously done research projects to ensure the relevance of this research. Accordingly, one of the works of Gorter (2006) focuses on the linguistic landscape in five different societies by using linguistic landscape as related to commercial signage and place names. In his introduction, he provides a brief discussion on the etymology and varying usages of the term linguistic landscape. He addresses a number of methodological issues and challenges posed by the sampling of empirical data and complex tasks of defining a unit of analysis and subsequently devising the categorization and coding schemes of the signs studied.

Another significant study was made by Backhaus (2006). In this study multilingualism in the linguistic landscape made considerable advances in creating a coherent methodology by identifying the three questions that underlie most linguistic landscape studies. The first question is linguistic landscape by whom, which refers to the source of a sign. The

second question is linguistic landscape for whom, which concerns the readers of the signs. According to Cooper and Spolsky (1991), the presumed reader condition is one of the key determinants for a language to be displayed in the public space. The last question is of what the signs in the streets reveal about the diachronic development of the linguistic condition in a city.

Backhaus (2007) also made a comparative study of the linguistic landscape on urban language contact. He aims at providing an introduction to the study of language on signs and insights about multilingualism and language contact. The paper paid special attention to the distinction between official and non-official signs. The author interprets the relationships of power and solidarity as an expression of socio-economic power relations and the values attached to it in the linguistic landscapes on the public space.

More recently, Akindle (2011) studied the “linguistic landscape as public spaces of Gaborone, Botswana”. This study focus on language contact, language attitude, patterns of language displayed on the public signage interrelated with semiotics. In his study, provides an analysis of language contact that takes place between English and the local language of Botswana, Setswana. In the linguistic landscape of Gaborone, English, Setswana and Chinese are found. English is more dominant due to the economic activities in the city, and the Chinese language and culture were attested in the public space of Gaborone.

In the Ethiopian context, two works that were conducted on particular aspects of linguistic landscape by Samrawit Bekele (2012), and Lanza and Hirut (2009).

The first work has been conducted on the linguistic landscape of Addis Ababa: Bole and Merkato areas. This study focuses on the issue of language patterns and visibility of different languages on the written discourse in the public space in the two main languages: Amharic and English. In Bole and Merkato the language situation of linguistic landscape is different in many ways. English is more visible than Amharic in Bole due to the occurrences of international organizations whereas in Merkato, Amharic is more favored due to the commercial shop signs. In addition to that, in the linguistic landscape of Addis Ababa in both top-down and bottom-up agents, Amharic and English signs are more dominant with some signs of Afan Oromo, Chinese and Arabic. Languages displayed in the linguistic landscape of Bole and Merkato have different font sizes and prominence in their appearances.

The second work was conducted on particular aspects of linguistic landscape in Mekelle, Ethiopia, by Lanza and Hirut (2009: 189-205). This study focuses on the issue of language ideology and linguistic landscape in three languages Amharic, Tigrigna, and English. It also tries to demonstrate the interrelationship between language policy and linguistic landscape. In Mekelle linguistic landscape the language situation is promoting an ideology of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. Thus, in Mekelle, the regional language, Tigrigna is more favored on the public space, than any other language, such as Amharic.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As a result of its being a recent field, linguistic landscape has no consistent methodology of searching for secondary sources that could help the researcher to gain a general picture of linguistic landscape in the research area. Hence this study follows methods employed by other researchers as a standing point.

Accordingly, the following three main methodological steps were used. Firstly, the survey area needs to be established. This aspect was mainly determined by the aim of the study. Secondly it is crucial to define what constitutes a sign, as unit of analysis. Third is the coding of signage, in other words, categorizing items using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) instrument.

3.1. Survey Areas

So far, the study focused on linguistic landscape of urban settings, because of the higher concentration of signs as well as the greater diversity in terms of sociolinguistic groups. In fact, Ben-Rafael (2009: 40-41) defines public space, where the linguistic landscape is situated. For the purpose of the present research Aksum town was selected. Because the researcher knows the research area many multilingual signs displayed in the public spaces of Aksum as a historical city. In Aksum two areas were selected: Niqodimos Tesfay Street and Denver Street. These streets were selected in accordance with the purpose of the research, because of high density of signs.

The sampling method applied in this study is simple random sampling, to get a general representation of the signs in the public space. The sampling focused on the two streets where there was a high density of

signs. For this reason, the samples were selected the main shopping centers where the major commercial activities take place and where the public institutions are located. The survey items include commercial shop signs, street signs, electronic shop names, school names, college names, clinic names, pharmacy names, jewelry store names, advertising billboards, cafe and restaurants, public signs posted on government buildings and private institutions. In the survey every covered signs were avoided, as it was very hard to get permission to take pictures of them.

In order to have a complete record of the linguistic landscape and thereby compare the visibility of the linguistic items the whole site selected was considered. Accordingly, a total of 376 visible signs were collected from the two streets, 212 signs from Niqodimos Tesfay Street, and 164 signs from Denver Street.

3.2. Survey Items

In order to obtain a systematic inventory, sample signs in the survey areas were photographed.

In accordance with Backhaus (2006: 55), a sign was considered to be whichever written form, including anything from hand written stickers to vast commercial billboards. Thus, all signs in the public space have been treated, even the very small signs that were difficult to be noticed by passengers. Although graffiti and simple hand writing stickers were included in Backhaus' (2006) categories, such items were not included in the areas under investigation.

In the present study, all signs inside buildings or shops, signs on mobile objects, like vehicles, signs on clothes, postcards, posters written on wall and environmental prints were not used as unit of

analysis. Because of lack of resource and time and also it was difficult to photograph every piece of written signs displayed in the sites selected.

The technique applied for analyzing the collected survey items combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. The collection of linguistic landscape items was done by observation and photographing of signs found in the areas. After the survey items were collected and put into SPSS, the data were quantified according to the frequency of representation and other variables in line with the specific objectives of the study.

In addition, seven semi-structured interviews were carried out with purposively selected shop and restaurants owners and customers. Interviews were conducted in a narrative fashion. The interviews that were done with owners of shops, or cafe and restaurant to investigate the general view concerning the usage of language in the public space. By asking why they assign their business names in a given language and what the intentions behind the signs. In all cases, the interviewees were Tigrigna speakers and the interview was in Tigrigna. The interviews took place in shops, handcrafts shops and restaurants.

3.3. Coding of Signs

To find out which languages are present in the linguistic landscape and how these languages are represented, the linguistics and semiotic properties of the signs were investigated. Using the instrument SPSS, the signs were coded according to the following variables:

Sign Number

Each sign was assigned a unique number.

Survey Area

The languages used on a sign vary depending on the neighborhood where the sign was found. For every sign the survey area was coded.

Language Combinations

Bilingual signs and trilingual signs were categorized according to the order of the languages they contained.

Languages in Order of Appearance

The languages on sign were coded in order of appearance. The direction of signage is vertical or horizontal, is considered. This method was based on Scollon and Scollon's (2003) code preference system: if the languages are aligned vertically, the preferred is located above the secondary code, and if they are aligned horizontally, the preferred code is located in the left position and the secondary code is placed in the right position.

Number of Languages

The number of languages found in the linguistic landscapes was determined by counting languages. Thus the signs were categorized as monolingual, bilingual, and trilingual. Some signs contained texts written in a script of another language; Latin for English, and Fidäl for Tigrigna and Amharic. If English items are written in Fidäl the sign has been categorized as representing Tigrigna or Amharic but not English because the expected readers were Tigrigna or Amharic speakers who can use only Fidäl.

Categories of Establishments

The linguistic landscape contains signs written by government or private agents. A government and private distinction of signs is used in Backhaus (2005). The present study also made a distinction of these

two different domains of signs. Hence, all government signs, such as public institutions, public announcements, government schools, colleges, and street names were coded under government categories, and signs of private institutions and shop signs as well as private announcements were coded under the domain of private categories.

Presence of Translation

On multilingual signs, pieces of text in different languages can be combined in several ways. One possibility is that they are mutual translations, a term that Backhaus (2006) uses when pieces of texts constitute a translation of each other. Thus, the occurrence of translation on the sign was coded. The categories are word for word translations, partial translations and transliterations.

As discussed in chapter 2, Reh (2004) distinguishes four types of arrangements in her typology of multilingual writing; duplicating, fragmentary, overlapping, and complementary. Word-for-word translation corresponds to duplication multilingualism. Partial translation may either be fragmentary or overlapping.

Presence of Language Mixing

Apart from constituting mutual translations, text in different languages may also give the same or complementary information, in which case, the languages are mixed on some level. Therefore, the presence of language mixing was coded. The categories include mixing in word level, mixing in phrase level. It may be the case that more fluid forms of language mixing are related to more multilingual environments. Every sign was regarded as a legal text.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the corpus of signs that were photographed and coded from the linguistic landscape of Aksum town. Based on the gathered data, different issues are addressed in four sections. The first section deals with the language use situation in the linguistic landscape of the town. In this section, explanation on the visibility and distribution of languages in monolingual, bilingual and trilingual signs is given (in the linguistic landscape). The next section is characterizing signs of different agencies, either government or private. In here, two issues are raised. First, the different categories of government and private signs are discussed and then the language use situation is described.

In section 4.3, the issue of language preference in the linguistic landscape of Aksum town is addressed. Finally, in section 4.4, the linguistic features of the translations and language mixing situations are discussed.

4.1. Language Use in the Linguistic Landscape of Aksum Town

The linguistic landscape of Aksum town displays Amharic, the federal working language of the country, Tigrigna, the regional working language, English, plays a big role in education, media and other domains of the country. In addition to these languages, a few signs have been found using Ge'ez, Italian and Arabic. Signs written in Italian the language have been found in the Handcraft shops. This may be due to interests of foreign tourists. On the other hand, Arabic sign is used in one night club (because the owner of the night club had lived in Dubai for eight years), according to the interview held with her.

It is observed that monolingual, bilingual and trilingual signs appear in the linguistic landscape of the town. Eventhough most of the signs are bilingual in the public spaces of the study area; there are some public spaces that show monolingual and trilingual signs.

Therefore, of the total signs 71.8% are bilingual signs, while 27.4% are monolingual, and trilingual signs account for only 0.8%.

4.1.1 Monolingual Signs

In the linguistic landscape of Aksum monolingual signs are visible either in Amharic, Tigrigna, Ge'ez or English. The following table summarizes the distribution of such signs across the study area.

Table 1. Distribution of Monolingual Languages

Language	Frequency	Percent
Tigrigna	39	37.9
Amharic	46	44.6
Ge'ez	2	1.9
English	16	15.6
Total	103	100

The distribution of Tigrigna vs. Amharic monolingual signs varies across the study area. As Table 1 shows, the majority 44.6% of monolingual signs are Amharic, while 37.9% signs are in Tigrigna. And also 15.6% signs are in English and 1.9% in Ge'ez. This shows the high visibility of Amharic over Tigrigna, English and Ge'ez. The reason for using Amharic more than Tigrigna is that Amharic is a national working language of Ethiopia but Tigrigna is the regional working language. Secondly Amharic is used in the public space for commercial reasons; it attracts more customers in the service industry. The other reason is the

similarity of the Fidäl used for both Amharic and Tigrigna. And also the language policy of Tigray is not concerned about how advertising should be written.

The following are examples of monolingual signs Amharic, Tigrigna, English and Geez in Aksum.



Figure 1. Amharic Sign Only (Mäskäräm adult and childrens boutique)



Figure 2. English Sign



Figure 3. Ge'ez Sign



Figure 4. Tigrigna Sign (Establishing an income based family is wisdom)

In Aksum linguistic landscape four languages are displayed in monolingual signs. These signs are more visible in the private businesses like electronics, bars, business centers, boutiques, etc. In this sense, Amharic is the main language in the public space which owners use more than Tigrigna. English signs are mostly found on

electronic and internet centers; this show English is a language of modernity. In addition to these languages in some public billboards, Ge'ez is displayed. The Ge'ez signs give information to people about Saint Yared where he was born and buried.

4.1.2. Distribution of Language in Bilingual Signs

There are eight categories of bilingual signs displayed in the linguistic landscape of Aksum. The bilingual signs involve three Ethiopian languages: Amharic, Tigrigna, and Ge'ez (used only as liturgical language of Ethiopian Orthodox Church) and two foreign languages: English and Italian.

Table 2. Distribution of Bilingual Languages

Languages	Frequency	Percent
Amharic – English	144	53.2
Tigrigna – English	113	41.6
Geez - English	6	2.2
English – Amharic	3	1.1
Tigrinya – Amharic	1	0.4
Amharic – Tigrigna	1	0.4
English – Italian	2	0.7
English – Tigrigna	1	0.4
Total	271	100

As Table 2 shows, the most widely displayed bilingual signs are Amharic-English ones.

As mentioned above, signs using Amharic-English and Tigrigna-English bilingual combinations are the most visible ones in the areas. As we can see above, bilingual English signs involve Amharic, Tigrinya or Ge'ez.

The use of combinations of Ethiopian languages such as Amharic–Tigrigna is 0.4 % signs. The interview on this shows that the reason for this is that Amharic and Tigrigna use similar script, the customers can use either of the two languages using the same script.

The status of the languages in the public space can also be interpreted as an indication of this (Scollon and Scollon; 2003). In Aksum, the most dominant languages are Amharic and Tigrigna compared to English which has low visibility.

Amharic is more dominant than Tigrinya in the area and English is the dominant foreign language. But in most of bilingual signs of the public spaces English is found next to Tigrigna or Amharic. A fair consideration of the use of English in the linguistic landscape is its commercially appealing value.

Interviews conducted with some shop and bar owners also showed that the Amharic-English bilingual combinations are more preferable to Tigrinya-English combinations on signs. They pointed out some advantages of using such bilingual signs increase their sales. Some of the interviewees also said that they are aware that most of the expected readers/ audiences of their business are Tigrigna speakers and they believe that Amharic as a second language in the town and that both languages use the Fidaäl. In most of the bilingual signs, English always appears to take the bottom position, as we see in the figures below and also in Table 2 above. Accordingly, English serves a symbolic function as a language of modernity for the users in the area.



Figure 5. Amharic-English Sign



Figure 6. Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 7. Geez-English Sign

Signs that contained Ge'ez are often associated with Saint Yared and Ge'ez was spoken during the Aksumite Empire, but now limited to the church, where Ge'ez-English combinations are found.



Figure 8. English-Italian Sign



Figure 9. English-Fidäl Sign

In the interviews conducted with some shop owners, it was stated repeatedly that the use of Amharic signs was considered a symbol of nationalism, because Amharic is widely spoken in all parts of the country. Recently a university has been opened in Aksum where speakers of different languages use Amharic as lingua franca in cafes, bars, banks, boutiques, internet service centers, etc. In some public spaces of Aksum Italian signs are also used for reasons of attracting tourists from aboard who come for arts and handcraft.

4.1.3. Distribution of Trilingual Signs

There are three categories of trilingual signs displayed in the public space of Aksum. The signs involve two local languages: Tigrigna and Amharic, and two foreign languages: English and Arabic. Table 3 gives the list of language combinations and the overall distribution of trilingual signs in the area.

Table 3. Distribution of Trilingual Languages

Languages	Frequency	Percent
Tigrinya-English-Amharic	1	50
Amharic-Arabic-English	1	50
Total	2	100

In addition to Tigrinya and Amharic, trilingual signs combinations are found in the area where Arabic and English are used. Trilingual signs that involve transliterated Arabic text such signs are found in a night club as stated (see Figure 10) by the owner of the night club, who stated that her reason was the presumed readers of the signs.



Figure 10. Transliteration Amharic-Arabic-English Trilingual Sign



Figure 11. Tigrigna-English-Amharic Trilingual Sign

In most of the signs the Tigrigna expressions showed structural deviations. Figure 11 shows Amharic word order in the noun phrase where the headed is final in Tigrigna noun phrase and compound nouns are left headed unlike in Amharic. For example in the above figure ‘omega ሺናና ካላጅ’ but in Tigrigna word order ‘ሺናና ካላ ጅ ሜጋ’. This is due to the influence Amharic word order in writing Tigrigna.

In general, the occurrence of trilingual signs is limited (2 out of 376 signs) in the study area and also in their writing they display structural deviation.

4.2. Language Choice in Government and Private Flows

According to Spolsky and Cooper (1991) the issue of language choice in public space signage refers to writing signs in one’s own language or in a language with which one wishes to be identified. This symbolic value condition accounts for the order of languages on multilingual signs. This would mean that many actors in the survey area identified with Tigrigna, Amharic and English signs, some Ge’ez signs symbolically the church.

The preference of one language in public spheres might pose questions related to the area, like who are the writers of signs and who are their readers, or questions regarding the diachronic development of language in the public space. This part is dedicated to a closer look at the different categories of government and private signs. It shows that the main trends with regard to language choice in the languages flow. In this section, discuss two points; categories of government and private domains, and language use in government and private signs.

4.2.1. Categories of Government and Private Signs

In this study, Ben-Rafael's (2009) terminology of agencies is used. Thus, signs of public institutions, public announcements, and street names are included under government signs, whereas all shop signs of clothing, food, jewelry, pharmacy, and private business signs are under private signs. The following tables summarize the number of signs under each category.

Table 4. Categories of Signs in the Government Agencies

No.	Government domains	Frequency	%
1	Public institutions	14	37.8
2	Public announcements	20	54.1
3	Street names	3	8.1
	Total	37	100

Table 5. Categories of Signs in the Private Agencies

No.	Private domains	Frequency	%
1	Shop signs (clothing, food, electronics, music, pharmacy and bars)	326	96.2
2	Private business organizations (private colleges, clinics)	13	3.8
	Total	339	100

Table 4 shows that government signage in public space includes public institutions, public announcements, and street names. Thus, in the investigated area signs appear for top-down agents have limited number, compared to private signs which are bottom-up.

Table 5 shows that private signs account for 339 (96.2 %) of the signs in the linguistic landscape. This is significantly more than the government signs in the study area. This demonstrates that the linguistic landscape of Aksum is mostly covered by private business than authorities.

In the private signs, there are two domains: first, signs for electronic shops, beauty salon, clothes, handcrafts, music, photo shops, pharmacy, and jewelry stores, entertainments venues (hotels, restaurants, bars and cafe's) were categorized in one. The second category includes private business organizations such as private educational institutions, clinics, and non governmental agencies. The total number of shop signs is more in private business signs. There are 339 signs which are bottom-up, among these 326 are shops where as 13 signs are private business organizations. This may be due to the fact that small enterprises and place of entertainment, clinics, private banks, and colleges are all found here.

4.2.2. Language Use in Government and Private Signs

In Aksum public space six languages are visible. These are Tigrigna, Amharic, English Ge'ez, Arabic, and Italian (see section 3.1). However, English signs are very frequent in all language combinations in the government and private flows. English is generally used as the first or second to be favored for combinations with Amharic and Tigrigna, the two language of wider communication in the area.

Amharic is frequently used on shops to indicate ownership, whereas Tigrigna signs appear in government and private agencies. In Top-down signs, Tigrigna signs were more than Amharic ones.

Cenoz and Gorter (2006: 67) have noted that language policy can have a considerable effect on linguistic landscape. The strong top-down presence of Tigrigna is due to the language policy (see Figure 12). The name of the street is given in order to memorize the person who is passed away his life at the war between TPLF and Derg in Aksum.



Figure 12. Government Tigrigna Street Name

Table 6. Distribution of Languages in Government and Private Agencies

Languages	Government		Private		
	Occurrence	%	Occurrence	%	
Amharic	2	5.2	43	12.6	
Tigrigna	8	20.4	31	9.4	
English	–	–	16	4.8	
Ge'ez	2	5.2	–	–	
Ge'ez-English	6	15.4	–	–	
Amharic-English	3	7.7	141	41.9	
Tigrigna-English	15	38.4	98	29.2	
English-Amharic	–	–	3	0.9	
English-Italian	–	–	2	0.6	
Tigrigna-Amharic	1	2.6	–	–	
Amharic-Tigrigna	1	2.6	–	–	
English-Tigrigna	1	2.6	–	–	
Tigrigna-English-Amharic	–	–	1	0.3	
Amharic-Arabic-English	–	–	1	0.3	
Total	39	100	337	100	100

As Table 6 shows, the most favored signs in private flows are Amharic-English bilingual signs, following this Tigrigna-English bilingual signs and monolingual signs of Amharic, Tigrigna, and English.

In the government signs, monolingual Tigrigna signs and bilingual Tigrigna-English signs dominate. This might be associated with the language policy practiced by government agencies. Cenoz and Gorter (2006: 67) have noted that language policy can have a considerable effect on linguistic landscape. The strong top-down presence of

Tigrigna-English signs are accounted for in terms of government schools, public offices, government services, public announcements signs are in Tigrigna only. Such signs are warnings against HIV AIDS, health care (see Figure 13, 14). These including Amharic-English signs used by national institutions like government banks, national institutions like culture and tourism office, 39 signs, Ge'ez-English, six signs are public announcements. These include Ge'ez-English signs which are displayed around the church to refer to Saint Yared's life.



Figure 13. A Government Tigrigna Sign (I will not marry without Checking HIV AIDS status)



Figure 14: Government Tigrigna Sign (hibri aranši sqar dinš bmmgab ሽፍፍና ስኳር ድንሽ ብምምጋብ ጥዕና ኣዴታትን ህፃናትን ንኣሉ)



Figure 15. Private English Sign

In the private signs, these are different items in different languages. There are 43 signs in Amharic, 31 signs in Tigrigna, and 16 signs in English. There are 141 Amharic-English bilingual signs out of 337 signs which are bottom-up signs. Signs of Tigrigna and English combination are 98 which are signs of shops and private business organizations.

Of the total 337 private signs, two are in Italian found in handcrafts shops and the other is Arabic found on a night club.

4.3. Language Visibility and Language Prominence

Language prominence can be reflected in the order of appearance in bi-/trilingual signs. It is important to determine the prominence of the languages when documenting languages. The importance of one language over another in bi-/trilingual language signs could be related to the issue of language prominence. This section raises two issues which are related to language prominence in the study area. The first point is the order of languages on bi-/trilingual sign combination whereas the second is font sizes of the texts displayed.

4.3.1. Pattern of Language Appearances in Bi- /Trilingual Signs

Concerning the order of languages in bi-/trilingual signs in public spaces there are ten categories to look into.

Table 7. Distribution of Languages in their Order of Appearance

No	Language combinations	Frequency	Percent
1	Tigrigna-English	113	41.4
2	Amharic-English	144	52.7
3	Ge'ez-English	6	2.2
4	English-Amharic	3	1.1
5	English-Italian	2	0.6
6	Tigrigna-Amharic	1	0.3
7	Amharic-Tigrigna	1	0.3
8	English-Tigrigna	1	0.3
9	Tigrigna-English-Amharic	1	0.3
10	Amharic-Arabic-English	1	0.3
Total		273	100

Table 7 shows that the most prominent signs are Amharic-English and Tigrigna-English bilingual combinations. In the order of appearance of signs, the Amharic-English signs and Tigrigna-English combinations signs take the most prominent position among all signs. Hence, from the total of bi-/trilingual signs, 53.8 % show Amharic in the first order. Following the Amharic-English combination, the Tigrigna-English bilingual combinations are attested. In this case, vertically vectored

Amharic English combination is the most prominent followed by Tigrigna-English combinations.

Though most bi-/trilingual signs, placed in lower position or in left position in the horizontally vectored signs, almost all combinations involve English with Amharic, Tigrigna and Ge'ez in the second order.

The placement of English in the first order of signs is due to its international status as a global language of customers. When analyzing linguistic landscape the saliency, or visibility of the languages concerned is an important part of how a specific language group views their own language (Landry and Bourhis; 1997). As we can see in table 7, about bilingual signs, the most prominent languages are Amharic and Tigrigna vertically placed in top position.



Figure 16. Vertically Placed Amharic-English Sign



Figure 17. Side by Side (English horizontally placed)
Amharic-English Sign



Figure 18. Vertically Placed Tigrigna-English Sign

In this sign, the words are Tigrigna words but do not follow the word order of Tigrigna, due to the influence of Amharic. The correct Tigrigna word order for this phrase is “ma/’a tkal lx’aħn e’k’arn dādābit”. In Aksum signs written in street are displays. For example, “Denver Street”, given due to the Aksum town and Denver City of America are sister cities in development so that the Aksum town administration is

agreed to nominate the street by “Denver Street”. This street is found in the way to the historical places.



Figure 19. Vertically Placed English-Tigrigna Sign



Figure 20. Vertically Placed English-Italian Sign

4.3.2. Font Size of Texts in Bi-/Trilingual Signs

According to Gorter (2006: 35) the issue of language prominence in a given sign is problematic. However, Scollon and Scollon (2003: 118) points out that the font size is one of the most frequently used means of expressing a language hierarchy, which also is used to identify the prominent language in the linguistic landscape of the research area. Since Tigrigna-English and Amharic-English are the most favored languages in the linguistic landscape, this section is concerned with the analysis of the font size in bi-/trilingual signs.

Table 8. Font Size in Bi-/trilingual Languages

Languages	Frequency	%
large font size for Tigrigna in Tigrigna-English signs	41	15.8
large font size for Amharic in Amharic-English signs	76	29.5
Equal font size for Tigrigna-English signs	56	21.7
Equal font size for Amharic-English signs	48	18.6
large font size for English in Tigrigna-English signs	14	5.4
large font size for English in Amharic-English signs	17	6.6
large font size for Ge'ez in Ge'ez-English signs	3	1.2
Equal font size for Ge'ez-English signs	3	1.2
Total	258	100

Table 8 shows that in most of the signs, Tigrigna and English, as well as Amharic and English are dominant in the landscape. They are most

frequently coded in equal font size. Accordingly, Amharic-English and Tigrigna-English bilingual signs are in large font size which show that Amharic and Tigrinya are dominant followed by English. In this regard, the Ethiopian languages, Amharic and Tigrigna are more visible in the number of written signs more than the other languages. This may be due to the intended readership of the community. Most of the federal organizations and regional public service institutions are written in large font sizes for Amharic and Tigrigna. This is related to the language policy of Ethiopia; Amharic is the federal working language of Ethiopia whereas Tigrigna is the official working language of the regional state of Tigray. In the top-down signs, these languages are more prominent than English. The presumed reader's condition preferring the language or languages of the intended readers of the area is at work. This rule accounts for the fact that many of the signs are in Amharic or Tigrigna, since these are the languages most known in Aksum.



Figure 21. Large Font Size for Amharic in Amharic-English Sign



Figure 22. Large Font Size for Tigrigna in Tigrigna-English Sign

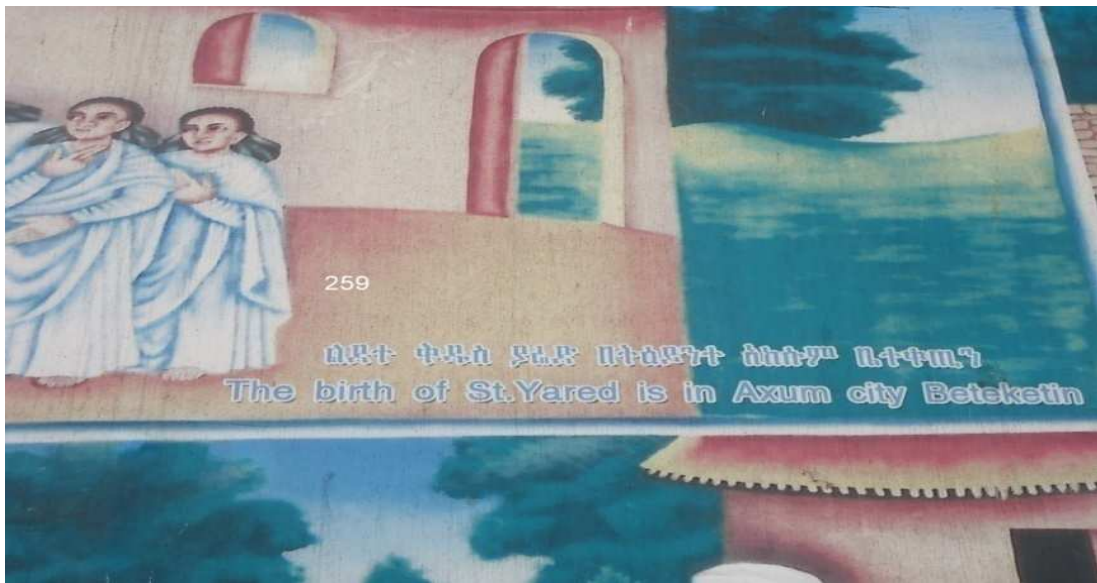


Figure 23. Equal Font Size for Geez-English Sign

4.4. Translation and Language Mixing

In Aksum, 72.6 percent of the signs are written in more than one language. On multilingual signs, the information in the different languages may be either the same or complementary (Sebba, 2007). In the first case, the texts are translations of each other, whereas in the second case texts in different languages are switched the code, for example, English with Amharic, Amharic with Tigrigna. Translations and mixing may also be combined on a single sign. In this study, the occurrence on the signs of translations of categories such as word - for word - translations, partial translations, transliteration of Amharic and English, mixing in both word and phrase level were coded. The percentages of multilingual signs including translations, transliterations and mixing are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Translations, Transliterations and Mixing in Multilingual Signs

Translation	Frequency	%
Word for word translation	90	73.8
Partial translation	7	5.7
Transliteration		
Transliteration in Fidäl script for English texts	20	16.4
Transliteration in English script for Amharic texts	2	1.6
Mixing		
Mixing in word level	–	–
Mixing in phrase level	3	2.5
Total	122	100

The table demonstrates that the translation of signs occurs much more often than the mixing signs. This means that the texts in different languages usually give the same information. In the survey area, the highest score of translations was found, most of which were word for word. In addition to this, transliteration is common in public space texts. In this regard, many English words are written in fidäl, for which reason the fidäl is most dominant in the transliteration of English texts than mixing. Figure 24 and 25 are examples of translation and transliteration.



Figure 24. Partial Translation of the Bilingual Sign



Figure 25. Fidäl for English Text Transliteration

In the study area, language mixing is low. An example of mixing at text level is the use of ‘inna’ in the Tigrigna phrase ‘bet qursi’ “breakfast” (see Figure 26). The sign refers to “breakfast, and café”. In this sign, we see the influence of Amharic in Tigrigna. This is a kind of code mixing where Amharic is used in Tigrigna phrase. Another language mixing is found at a shop where the English word boutique is used in an Amharic text. The abbreviation “M-A” English scripts mixed with the Amharic text “jä awaqiwoč inna jähiŞanät butik” at phrase level (see Figure 27).



Figure 26. Language Mixing of Tigrigna with Amharic Sign



Figure 27. Mixing of English in Amharic Text (M-A Adults and Children Boutique)



Figure 28: Fidelity for English Transliteration and Language Mixing

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This thesis describes language use in Aksum linguistic landscape; including patterns of languages, prominence of languages in terms of font size of signs, official and non-official signs and linguistic situations such as translation, transliteration and language mixing. According to the study, the visible languages are six. These are Amharic, Tigrigna, Ge'ez, English, Italian and Arabic. When we try to summarize the order of dominance of the six languages, Amharic is the most prominent in the area; followed by Tigrigna and in the third place comes English; Ge'ez, Italian and Arabic have limited occurrences.

Bi-/trilingual signs are characterized by various patterns in which languages are visible in terms of font sizes of the texts. These issues reflect the prominence of one language over another. As far as the pattern of language appearance is concerned, the Amharic-English signs keep the leading position, followed by Tigrigna-English signs. In the case of font size of texts, the bilingual Amharic-English large font sizes are dominant, followed by equal font sizes for Tigrigna-English. This shows the prominent role of Amharic in the public space of the study area as compared to the other languages.

Concerning government and private signs, government signs mainly Tigrigna, the official language of the region. Other languages, including Amharic, in the private signs are the most dominant. Tigrigna and English are used by government and private initiatives. There is thus greater linguistic diversity in private than in government signs.

The study shows that the linguistic landscape has both informational and symbolic functions. The informative function in the signs of the different languages in shops and other businesses and also reflect the relative power of the different languages. The use of Tigrigna in the public space is not only informative, but it has an important symbolic function which is related to the perception of people about Tigrigna as a symbol of identity. On the other hand, the use of Amharic and English in commercial signs interpreted as having strong symbolic function for the local population. English is more competitive with Amharic and Tigrigna placed as a first and second position in the public space. Most of the bi-/trilingual signs use English which is symbolic of modernity.

In the signs, translation occurred much more than language mixing. Signs that displayed word - for - word translation are more dominant, followed by signs of in Fidaäl for English. Those are names of bars, hotels, business center, electronics, and clothes shop. The other phenomenon in translation is partial translations in bilingual signs. The linguistic features are especially structures that follow the Amharic word order in noun phrases and compounds. It shows that Tigrigna is being influenced by Amharic. Many native Tigrigna speakers in the study area such as owners of shops, customers and signboard writers apply Amharic word order when they write Tigrigna. This might be due to the fact that Amharic was the only language originally used in writing.

In the study, Ge'ez signs are found around church. This is limited to the life of saint Yared. In addition, two other foreign languages Italian and Arabic are used. The use of Italian is to attract tourists in the arts and handcrafts shops whereas the use of Arabic sign reflects the owner's had attitude towards the language.

5.2. Recommendations

The present study cannot address all the different aspects of the linguistic landscape of Aksum. It is only a beginning and much remains to be done in the field. Further research on the different aspects of linguistic landscape and other cities is necessary to complete the work. The following are suggestions for further research.

- Research still needs to be done on the orthography of signs, semiotics, semantic and syntactic issues of the languages placed in the linguistic landscape.
- There is also micro-analysis of the signs written on taxies, walls, and environmental prints, signs written on tomb and obelisks, domain of language uses such as language contact, code-switching.
- I recommended to the city authorities and language policy and language planning makers to systematically review its writings of signs and develop measures to make sure that language signs are designed and used in a coherent and comprehensive way. The linguistic landscape is after all contributing to the overall image tourists have of the town.
- Scholars working in the field of linguistic landscape need to formulate consistent methodology for the study of linguistic landscape. Most researchers use their own approaches to investigate linguistic landscape.

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APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES AND JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATION**

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

- **Questions prepared for interviews**

1. Why do you use English sign on your shop, could you give me a reason?
2. In your night club, there is an Arabic script. Why do you use it?
3. There is an Italian sign in your handcrafts shop, why did you use it?
4. The name of your café is written first in Amharic then English, why do you use like that, is there any thing behind the sign?
5. Why you do not write the name of your rastuarant in Tgrigna?
6. Amharic signs display boldly than Tigrigna in Aksum public spaces, what do you think about it?
7. Is there any rule and regulation given by the authorities of the town regarding the writing of signboards?

ዩኒቨርሲቲ አዲስ አበባ

ቤት ትምህርቲ መጻፍት ድህረ ምርቻ

ኮለጅ ሰብአዊ፣ መጻፍት ቋንቋታት፣ ጋዜጠኝነትን ኮሚዩኒኬሽንን

ክፍሊ ትምህርቲ ስነ-ልቦና

• ንቃለ መገትን ዝተዳለዉ ሕቶታት

1. ሸም ሸቕኪ ብእንግሊዝኛ እዩ ተፃሕፊ ዘለኛ፣ ምክንያቱ ምንገር ክኒ ዶ?
2. ዓረብኛ ፅሑፍ ኣብ ናይት ክለብኩም ኣሎ፣ ንምንታይ ክትጥቀሙ ክኣሉኪ? ምክንያቱ ምንገር ክኒ ዶ?
3. ኣብ ናይ መሻጢ ስራሕቲ ኢደ ጥበብ ሸቕኩም ጣልያንኛ ፅሑፍ ኣሎ ንምንታይ ከም ተጠቒምኩምሉ ምንገር ክኒ ዶ?
4. ሸም ካፌኸም ፈለግ ኣምሓርኛ ካብኡ ድማ እንግሊዝኛ ኢኸም ፅሑፍ ከምዎ ዘለኸም፣ ንምንታይ ኢኸም ከምኡ ተጠቒምኩም፣ ካለእ ትርጉም ኣለዎ ድዩ?
5. ሸም ቤት ብልጺኸም ንምንታይ ኢኸም ብትግርኛ ዘይፀሓፍኩምዎ?
6. ኣብ ኣኸሱም ዝርከቡ ሸም ንግድታት፣ ምልክታታትን ወሃብቲ ግልጋሎትን ካብ ትግርኛ ንላዕሊ ብኣምሓርኛ ዝተፃሕፉ ጎሊሆም ይርኣዩ፡፡ እዙይ ዝኸነሉ ምክንያት ታይ ይመስለካ?
7. ሸም ንግድኸም ኣብ እተፅሑፉ እዋን ካብ ሰበ ስልጣን እታ ከተማ ዝዋሃበኩም ሕግን ደንብን ኣሎ ዶ?

APPENDIX 2. SAMPLE OF SIGNS FROM THE STUDY AREA



Figure 1: Amharic Sign



Figure 2: Government Large Font Size for English for Bilingual
Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 3: Government Bilingual Tigrigna-English Signs



Figure 4: Government Amharic-English Sign



Figure 5: Government Bilingual Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 6: Government Tigrigna-Amharic Sign



Figure 7: Government Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 8: Government Amharic Sign

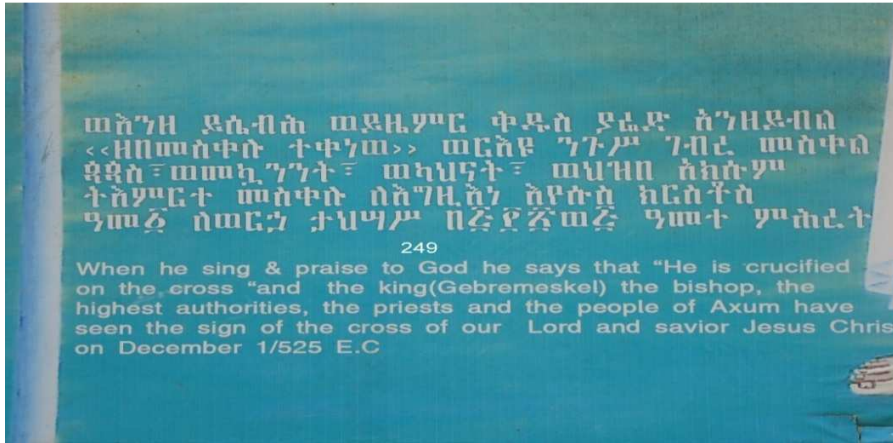


Figure 9: Government Large Font Size for Ge'ez in Ge'ez-English Sign



Figure 10: Government Partial Transliteration Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 11: Government Word - for - Word Translation in Bilingual
 Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 12: Government Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 13: Private fidäl-English Sign



Figure 14: Private Monolingual English Sign



Figure 15: Private (NGO) English-Fidäl Sign



Figure 16: Private Bilingual Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 17: Private Bilingual Amharic-English Sign



Figure 18: Private Large Font Size Amharic for Bilingual Amharic-English



Figure 19: Private Bilingual Tigrigna-English (partial translation)



Figure 20: Private side by side Bilingual Tigrigna-English Sign



Figure 21: Private English Sign



Figure 22: Private Bilingual English-Fidäl Sign



Figure 23: Translation Tigrigna Sign



Figure 24: Private Bilingual Amharic-English Sign



Figure 25: Private Amharic Sign



Figure 26: Private Equal Font Size for Amharic-English Sign



Figure 27: Private Large Font Size Amharic for Amharic-English Sign



Figure 28: Transliteration Amharic-English Sign



Figure 29: Private Transliteration Amharic-English Sign