

**LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF ADDIS ABABA:
THE CASES OF BOLE AND MERKATO**

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to examine the linguistic landscape of two areas in Addis Ababa, namely Bole and Merkato. The data are collected through the researcher's observation, photographing, and informal interviews held with business owners and customers. The data are analyzed using qualitative and quantitative approaches to determine the visibility of different languages, the number of languages used, the characteristics of bi-/trilingual signs, and the importance and visibility of English as a foreign language. According to the findings, Amharic and English are the most visible languages in the linguistic landscape. The distribution of these two languages, however, differs in the two study areas. Amharic is the most visible language in Merkato, while English is dominant in Bole. The study also highlights the visibility of English in the linguistic landscape. The main reason for using English is associated with its symbolic function for the readers of the signs. The study reveals that the signs from government institutions (the top-down flow) and the signs from private sources (bottom-up flow) exhibit a difference with regard to language use and language arrangement on signs. The most widely used languages in the top-down flow are Amharic and English. However, English is the most visible language in the bottom-up flows of Bole, while Amharic is the most visible language in Merkato. The study also reveals the status of local languages and foreign languages in the linguistic landscape of the two areas.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In this section the researcher presents an overview of the study. Subsequently, a brief background has been provided on the sociolinguistic and linguistic landscape of Addis Ababa in general and the areas of Merkato and Bole in particular.

1.1.1 Overview of the Study

In many areas of the city of Addis Ababa, it is a common phenomenon to hear different languages and see public spaces that reveal signs written in diverse languages. Shohamy and Gorter (2009) noted that language is spoken and perceived by people, and also represented and displayed in public space. Written language has different semiotic properties from spoken language. Linguistic landscape, hence, offers a new approach to investigate the linguistic themes of the written languages that are displayed in the public spaces of an area. Landry and Bourhis (1997) were the first scholars to use the term *linguistic landscape* and to introduce it to the scholarly world. These scholars defined linguistic landscape as the visibility and silence of language on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region (Landry and Bourhis 1997: 23). This definition is a landmark for many studies undertaken since that time.

The importance of language in its written form in the public space occurs in different ways. It reveals the social, economic, political and cultural aspects of a community, just by studying the linguistic contents of the written language in the public sphere, without making investigations on the spoken language. Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) demonstrates that linguistic landscape also reveals that the relative power and status of the linguistic communities living in a given territory. The importance of linguistic landscape is much broader and goes beyond these themes.

This study focuses on the linguistic landscape of the two well-known districts in Addis Ababa, namely Merkato and Bole. Special attention is given to the language distribution of monolingual, bilingual, and trilingual signs in the linguistic landscape. The study also addresses the visibility and prominence of signs on the areas, as well as the language choice in top-down and bottom-up signs. Significant differences in the linguistic landscape of Merkato and Bole is also revealed.

1.1.2. The Sociolinguistic Background of Addis Ababa with Focus on Bole and Merkato

The foundation of Addis Ababa was laid during the reign of Emperor Menilek II (1889-1913) at the end of the 19th century. According to the Addis Ababa City Council, Addis Ababa as capital city of Ethiopia hosts numerous international and continental organizations, like the African Union and its predecessor the OAU, and the headquarters of the United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The city is referred to as the political capital of Africa (CSA 2007). Besides, Addis Ababa is the hub for many ethnic groups, who come from different regions of the country, with their respective religions, cultures, and languages. As a result there is no one particular spoken language associated to Addis Ababa as Ethiopia has more than 80 ethnic groups who speak their own languages.

According to the CSA (2007), the major ethnic groups in Ethiopia are the Cushitic Oromo, who comprise 34% of the entire Ethiopian population, and the Semitic Amhara and Tigray, who together comprise 33% of the entire population. Amharic and Tigrinya, the languages spoken by the Amhara and Tigray ethnic groups, respectively, play an important role in the political and social affairs of the country as compared to the other Semitic languages spoken in Ethiopia. Especially Amharic has gained importance vis-à-vis other Ethiopian languages as it is spoken by over 17 million people in the country. Amharic speakers make 32.7% of the Ethiopia's population (Wimsatt and Wynn 2011: 4). According to the (2007 census), Amharic is the most commonly spoken language in Ethiopia, used as a lingua franca by more than half of the Ethiopians. It is also currently used as the working language of the Federal Government of Ethiopia.

Since Addis Ababa reflects the sociolinguistic situation of Ethiopia in a miniature, almost all languages spoken in the country are also found in the capital city. Furthermore, the language and ethnic group proportions of the

city very closely resemble the situation of the entire country (CSA 2007). Hence, Amharic is the dominant and most widely spoken language by 71% of the total population in the capital city, followed by Oromo which is spoken by 11% of its population. The Semitic languages Gurage and Tigrinya respectively are used by about 8% and 4 % of the total population in the capital city. According to the CSA (2007), the study areas of this research, Merkato and Bole, also reflect this distribution.

1.1.2.1 The Bole Area

The Bole area is a relatively new quarter in Addis Ababa that expands to the southeast of the city center. The area is favored by the international community and high-income Ethiopians. Including the Bole International Airport, there are many international organizations, agencies, schools, embassies, diplomatic missions, etc. situated in the Bole area. The so-called Bole Road, the main street in the area, runs southeast from the Meskel Square to the airport. Along this street, there are a selection of shops, supermarkets, fashionable new bars and pubs including the landmark Dembel City Center which is among the complete shopping center in Ethiopia offering over 100 shops, snack bar, restaurant and an underground car park for vehicles.

Walking along the two streets in Bole, namely, the road running from the *mäsk'äl* square to the airport, and the street from the Bole Bridge to the

Bole *mädhane-?aläm* Church, one encounters a multitude of signs on the linguistic landscapes.

1.1.2.2. The Merkato Area

Merkato is situated to the west of the center of (*Abunä Pet'ros* statue) Addis Ababa. In physical size, it is the largest open market in Africa. In addition, it is the chief commercial center in Ethiopia. Every day over 200,000 people come to Merkato in order to buy, sell, and manufacture products or to provide special services (Graphics and Marketing Consultancy Offices 2005).

In contrast to the relatively newly formed Bole area, the origin of Merkato dates back to the Italian occupation of Ethiopia in the second half of the 1930's. According to the Graphics and Marketing Consultancy Offices (2005), half a million people live in Merkato; it is probably the only place in Ethiopia where people with different cultures, languages, ethnicities, religions, and social backgrounds live and work together this forming a colorful and unique site. The people of Merkato are cooperative, friendly and easily attract newcomers and customers.

Merkato is divided into many specialized sub-markets where similar market items are found. These sub-markets are called by special names which contain one of the Amharic term *tära* 'quarter/ place' or *bärända* 'veranda'. Some references are provided to the items, such as *män-?alläš tära* 'what-do-you-have place' (shopping area for second hand articles of all kind),

mint'af tära 'mat place' (shopping area for mats), *fraš tära* 'mattress place' shopping area for mattress', *dubaj tära* 'shopping area for clothes and shoes', *t'asa tära* 'shopping area for cans Chinese commodities', *gešo tära* 'shopping area for products used to make the traditional Ethiopian drink *t'äla*, *godžam bärända* 'the Veranda of Gojjam'(shopping area for electronic materials), or *k'ibe bärända* 'the veranda for butter products' are among others.

These days the city government has introduced a new and modern architectural design for the market. New roads are being built and old ones are reconstructed, older shops are reconstructed into modern shopping centers, like the two *Addaraš Hall*, the building of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, the Dire Tower, the Kangaroo PLC, and the Addis Ababa Shopping Center. The modernization and reconstruction of the area also leads to some changes in the public space.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Research in linguistic landscape is a relatively recent development within sociolinguistics. With regard to Ethiopia, only some studies were conducted on some aspects of the linguistic landscape that are not focused on Addis Ababa. Given the importance of Addis Ababa as Ethiopia's capital city with its unique mixture of people from all over the country and abroad, and the growing importance of the linguistic landscape for communication within

the city, it is assumed that there is a lot to be done on its linguistic landscape. The research is set to answer the following questions:

- Which languages are displayed in the linguistic landscape of Merkato and Bole and how is their distribution?
- What are the types of languages used in the two areas?
- Does the use of languages in the public sphere distinguish the Bole area from the Merkato area?
- What are the top-down and bottom-up flows of signs in the two areas?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to describe and analyze the linguistic items that are found in the linguistic landscape of Bole and Merkato areas in Addis Ababa. In line with this broad objective, the study has the following specific objectives:

1. Showing the use and visibility of languages in the linguistic landscape of Merkato and Bole.
2. Describing the linguistic landscape in accordance with the types of language use, language combinations, and the order of language use in signs at Merkato and Bole.
3. Determining the choice of language for signs in the two areas.
4. Examining the linguistic landscape of the study areas as shaped by top-down and bottom-up flows.

5. Identifying the peculiarities found in the linguistic landscape of the two areas.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The linguistic landscapes of Bole and Merkato have not been studied before. The present study, therefore, will introduce the knowledge of the linguistic landscape in Addis Ababa in general and the study areas in particular. The study also tries to provide an input for language policy makers by providing data on language preference, language use and language choice in the private and public domains in the city.

As Addis Ababa is a rapidly growing city, social, economic, and cultural situations are dynamic. Accordingly, the linguistic landscape of the city also undergoes changes. Thus, this study plays a major role in documenting the cultural and social contexts of the community of the study areas from the linguistic landscape.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The research was conducted in the capital city of Ethiopia: Addis Ababa. There are 10 sub-cities in the city. These are Addis Ketema, Bole, Lideta, Arada, Kirkos, Gullele, Kolfe Keranio, Nifas Silk- Lafto, Ak'ak'y Kaliti and Yeka. This study, however, was delimited to two areas that are found in the two sub cities (Addis Ketema and Bole), namely, the Merkato area and the Bole area. Not all places in these areas were addressed in the study; rather two main streets in each area were selected. In the Merkato area, the road

running from the *Addaraš* to *Habtägjorgis Bridge*, and the street from *Miʔrab Hotel* to *Cinema Ras* were selected. In Bole area the study was delimited to the street running from the *Meskel Square* to the airport, and the road from the *Bole Bridge* to the *Bole mädhane-ʔaläm Church*. The linguistic landscape items on the public spaces of the study areas were also delimited to those texts that are written on fixed outdoor materials, such as advertising billboards, government or public buildings, public road signs and shops. Texts on mobile materials are not considered, such as texts on moving objects, handwriting stickers and flyers.

Lack of works regarding the linguistic landscape in the Ethiopian context has made the research very difficult. Moreover, due to shortage of time and the broad nature of the topic, exhaustive research in linguistic landscape was not possible. Therefore, focus was given to main streets in the Bole and Merkato areas.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, APPROACHES, AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Linguistic Landscape as a Research Topic

Landry and Bourhis (1997) were among the first to establish the concept as a field of research. According to Landry and Bourhis (1997:25), linguistic landscape refers to "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings" which form the linguistic landscape of "a given territory, region, or urban agglomerations". As Torkington (2009: 124) points out, Landry and Bourhis' (1997) definition only includes relatively fixed signs and texts that have some degree of stability. But as Torkington (2009: 124) observes, mobile forms of texts could be added to the list, such as leaflets and flyers that are distributed in streets, advertising on vans, buses and other vehicles that pass through streets of the area under study.

Although many scholars on this field quote Landry and Bourhis' (1997) definition, these days the concept of linguistic landscape is used in different ways.

Following Landry and Bourhis' (1997) definition, Gorter (2006:2) defines linguistic landscape as "the use of language in its written form in the public sphere." According to him, the concept of linguistic landscape has been used in different ways. It is used in a rather general sense for the description and analysis of the language situation in a certain country or for the presence and use of many languages in a large geographic area. Thus, the term linguistic landscape can be synonymous with concepts such as linguistic market, linguistic variety, diversity of languages, ecology of languages, or the linguistic situation. In these cases, linguistic landscape refers to the social context in which more than one language is present. Gorter (2006) also 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 monolinguals in advance. Moreover, this new term has not really caught on among researchers in the field whereas linguistic landscape is still very widespread (Shohamy and Gorter 2009). For these reasons the term linguistic landscape is used in the present study.

Ben-Rafael et al. (2006: 14) define 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 Landry and Bourhis (1997) as it also encompasses signs inside buildings. According to Shohamy and Waksman (2009: 314) in their very broad view

stated that linguistic landscape incorporates all possible discourses that emerge in public spaces, including texts, images, objects, and placement in time and space as well as in human beings.

Another terminological suggestion has recently been made by Itagi and Singh (2002) in their publication about the linguistic landscape of India. They paraphrase the terms "linguistic landscape" and "linguistic landscaping" as language use in its written form (visible language) in the public sphere. Though directly referring to Landry and Bourhi's seminal paper from 1997, Itagi and Singh's conception of the term linguistic landscape slightly deviates from the original definition in that it includes as potential study object items such as newspapers, visiting cards, and other print media.

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

In the linguistic literature, the term linguistic landscape is also used in a broader sense to refer to a language situation. In this sense Hagen (1989: 48), for example, writes: “The ‘linguistic landscape’ of the Netherlands consists of a relatively diverse range of dialects.”

However, in the present study the term linguistic landscape is only used in the more specific sense, namely, that linguistic landscape deals with the language of advertising billboards, street names, commercial signs on shops, restaurants, cafes, and private institutions, and public signs on government institutions that are readable in public spaces of the study areas.

2.1.2 Important Concepts in Linguistic Landscape

There are very common important concepts used in the study of linguistic landscape. In what follows, the researcher introduces those concepts that are used to describe the linguistic landscape of Addis Ababa. These include signs, public space, written language, top-down and bottom-up flows.

The first important element in the study of the linguistic landscape is a sign. According to Backhaus (2006:55), “A sign is considered to be any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame.” The underlying definition is rather broad including anything from handwritten stickers to huge commercial billboards. The author also includes such items as push and pulls stickers at entrance doors, lettered foot mats or botanic explanation plates on trees. Each sign was counted as one item irrespective of its size.

Thus, the concept of sign can be used in a broad sense. Spolsky's (2009: 27) definition suggests that a sign could comprise any meaningful unit interpreted as standing for something other than itself. However, as Edelman (2010: 10) observes, some researchers use a different definition for the term sign. For example, El-Yasin and Mahadin (1996: 409), and Spolsky (2009:37) consider a sign to be the linguistic material written to draw attention to a shop that might be written on a typical sign, on a shop window, or on a moving door. In addition according to this authors all that relates to the same store or shop and those that written on different sides of the shop is seen as a single sign, such as in cases of shops at corners, shops with more than one sign, or shops with a sign and a shop window or door with something written on it.

The second common term in this study is the concept of public space. As Backhaus (2006: 5-6) stated, the notion of public space is related to the earlier concept of public sphere formulated by Habermas. As the author stated, though the concept of public sphere may be viewed from different angles, when it comes to the analysis of linguistic landscape, it can be defined more precisely as, a space that includes all displays in the community or the society that are not private property, such as streets, parks or public institutions. Therefore, since the notion of linguistic landscape refers to linguistic objects that mark the public space, it constitutes the dignity of the public space. Though the concepts are the same, different linguistic landscape studies use the term environmental

print as an alternate name for public space. But for the consistent use, the term public space is used in this study.

In Linguistic landscape studies, the issue of actors is also very significant. In linguistic landscape research, actors are usually referred to by the question *Linguistic Landscape by whom?* Although the distinction between official and non-official signs is quite common, it is referred to by various terms in the literature, like municipal signs and commercial signs (Scollon and Scollon 2003), in vitro and in vivo components of signs (Calvet 1990: 75), private signs and government signs (Landry and Bourhis 1997: 27), top-down and bottom-up signs (Ben-Rafael 2006:10). The first term of the above pairs denotes signs that are displayed by authorities (government or government related bodies) while the second term is related to signs that are written by the citizens. Ben-Rafaels' (2006) terminology is used in this study.

Landry and Bourhis (1997: 27) describe the interaction of official or top-down signs, government related signs and nonofficial or bottom-up private signs within the linguistic landscape as follows:

“In some cases, the language profile of private signs and government signs may be quite similar and thus contribute to a consistent and coherent linguistic landscape. There are instances, however, in which the language of private signs is quite discordant with the language profile of government

signs. More often than not, there is greater language diversity in private than in government signs.”

The present study also dealt with the relationship between these two types of signs and their difference with regard to their categories and language use situation on the signs in the two areas: Merkato and Bole.

2.1.3 Main Functions of the Linguistic Landscape

According to Gorter (2006), Landry and Bourhis (1997) as well as of Spolsky and Cooper (1991) suggest that the linguistic landscape might function as both an informational marker and a symbolic marker of a given territory under study.

According to Kotez (2010: 26), the informative function is the most basic function of linguistic landscape that relates to both the fact that certain information is presented on a specific sign (functional) as well as that the linguistic landscape serves to delineate linguistic boundaries. In other words, linguistic landscape marks the territory. According to Landry and Bourhis (1997: 25-29), the linguistic landscape gives information on the sociolinguistic composition of various groups in the area as well as the power and status relations between them. In addition, the linguistic landscape also indicates the degree of linguistic diversity and the specific language or languages used in the communication system of the community in a certain area.

As Cenoz and Gorter (2009: 56) point out, the 'symbolic function' refers to the value and status of the languages as perceived by the members of a language group in comparison to other language groups. As Scollon and Scollon (2003) observe in their study of geosemiotics refer to this function as follows:

“All semiotic systems operate 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 they are systems of choice are neutral in the social world.” (Scollon and Scollon, 2003: 7)

As to Scollon and Scollon (2003: 118), for instance the use of a foreign language on commercial signs may have a symbolic function or an indexical function on the public space. For example, we find English signs in Amharic-speaking communities that might symbolize the foreign tastes, fashions, and cultures of that language. The symbolic function relates to two issues, namely, power and status as well as identity (Kotez 2010:28).

According to Backhaus (2007: 22) the primary motivation through which socio-political control can be exercised in the public space is by controlling the discourses of the space (i.e., official or de facto language policy). The dominance of a specific language in the linguistic landscape indicates the power and status of a majority or strong minority group over other groups.

For example, the high-status language used in official domains is more likely to be found on public signs than the languages of lower status. The power and status relationship is even more clearly reflected in the order and size of the language.

Spolsky and Cooper (1991) capture the issues of identity. The sign writers prefer to write signs in their own languages or in a language with which they wish to be identified. This symbolic value condition accounts for language choice and for the order of languages on multilingual signs. According to Kotze (2010), the symbolic function of the linguistic landscape relates to its capacity to contribute to a positive social identity of the group whose language is used, by affirming the value and status of that language and leading the group to feel included in the society.

2.2 Approaches to Linguistic Landscape

The dependent and interdisciplinary nature of linguistic landscape research is probably the reason for not having a unified theory. This forces the linguist to borrow theoretical concepts from other fields as a solution. In most studies, linguistic landscape has been used as an approach to investigate topics such as linguistic diversity, language planning and policy, language status, language attitude or perception. Most studies in linguistic landscape are descriptive that enforce authors to give their concern to methodological considerations rather than the development of a theory.

Therefore, studies usually are based on their own theories or models. A few of these are briefly discussed below.

The first theoretical consideration is proposed by Kallen (2009: 277-278). This author argues that the choice of communication in the linguistic landscape encompasses more than simply a choice of language. Kallen's matrix choices consist of four factors;

- *Language choice* relates to the choice of language (which includes translations in to other languages)
- *Code choice* refers to the graphic modes of representation, such as font, color, and placement
- The *pragmatic choice* refers to the general interactional function of a sign
- The *readership choices* refer to the anticipated readership of the sign.

Although this matrix is not widely used in linguistic landscape research, it is similar to Ben-Rafael's (2009) good reason principle and Spolsky's (2009) presumed reader condition.

Spolsky and Cooper (1991: 5-8) propose three conditions for language choice in public signage. The first condition is *the sign-writer's skill condition* to write a sign in a language that the writer knows or in a language they wish to be associated with them. This condition explains why signs are not written in languages without a writing system, which accounts

for the fact that a certain state of literacy in a language community is necessary for that language to be represented in the linguistic landscape. *The presumed reader condition* puts focus on the communicative goal of public signs and requires the sign writer to write signs in the language or languages for intended readers. The third, *the symbolic value condition*, accounts for language choice on signs that assert ownership.

Ben-Rafael (2009: 44-48) provides a sociological framework for linguistic landscape research. For him, language facts are social facts that can be related to general social phenomena. In order to explain the diversity in the linguistic landscape and to challenge the impression of chaos that it may leave behind, he proposes four principles of structuration. These principles derive from more general sociological theories of social action. Each of these principles has its contribution in shaping the linguistic landscape research. These are the presentation of self, the good reason principle, the power relation principle, and the perspective of collective identity. The first principle, *presentation of self*, is inspired by Goffman's (1963, 1981) analysis of how social agents present their images in the public sphere in order to gain attention (as cited in Ben-Rafael 2009). Ben-Rafael (2009) extends this principle to items related to the actors and identity markers of groups of participants to contrast themselves from others.

The second principle, the *good reason* principle, drives from the fact that linguistic landscape items have to gratify rationally with the interests of

linguistic landscape actors vis-à-vis the public. This principle focuses on the relation of linguistic landscape items to clients and the perception of their motives that they reveal (Ben-Rafael 2009: 48). The third principle, *power relations*, refers to the extent to which actors are able to impose patterns of behavior on others. Dominant groups may impose the use of a given language on subordinate groups. Regarding the composition of the linguistic landscape, this principle leads to the hypothesis that the language of the dominant group is used more frequently than the languages of subordinate groups. The last structural principle relates to *collective identity*. It implies that actors assert their particular identities, exhibiting a commitment to a given group within the general public that shows the agents' likeness or belongingness to that targeted group on the basis of a shared identity. This principle is particularly relevant in multicultural societies.

This study uses the Spolsky and Cooper's (1991) and Ben-Rafael's (2009) theoretical considerations to its wider use, since the study focuses on the social phenomenon, language use situation and the two language flows language choice; top-down and bottom-up for their direct relation with the public and actors' imposition on the public sphere. Kallen's (2009) matrix is also used to some extent, for its correlation with first two selected theories in this study.

2.3 Review of Related Literature

The study of linguistic landscape is a relatively new development in the field of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics for which few works have been done so far. Before the late 1990s, it had gained little scholarly attention. However, some early studies were mentioned in Kotze (2010). Rosenbaum et al. (1977) determined the prominence of the Roman script on signs in a busy street in Jerusalem, Israel. Around the same time, Tulp (1978) investigated the geographic distribution of French and Dutch advertising billboards in the municipalities of greater Brussels, Belgium. About a decade later, Monnier (1989) conducted a survey of language use on shop signs in Montreal, Canada. Calvet (1990) compared the linguistic landscapes of the French capital Paris and the Senegalese capital Dakar. Spolsky and Cooper (1991), finally, examined language use on the signs of the old city of Jerusalem and the motivations behind it.

Landry and Bourhis (1997) were amongst the first to focus their research on the linguistic landscape by considering the language in the public space as an important indicator, capable of providing relevant information about societies, vitality, and inter-relationships of groups.

In recent years, scholarly interest in the linguistic landscape has grown. This development occurred for several reasons. Firstly, because of migration many cities around the world are becoming linguistically more diverse. Secondly, as a result of the globalization process advertising is

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In recent years, scholarly interest in the linguistic landscape has grown. This development occurred for several reasons. Firstly, because of migration many cities around the world are becoming linguistically more diverse. Secondly, as a result of the globalization process advertising is

becoming increasingly multilingual. Finally, the introduction of digital cameras with sufficient memory and for a reasonable price allows for a more complete data corpus and makes it easier to investigate the language on signs (Gorter 2006:2).

The first significant publication was Gorter's (2006) editorial work focusing on the linguistic landscape of five different societies as related to commercial signage and place names. In his introduction, the editor provides a brief discussion on the etymology and varying usages of the term linguistic landscape. He refers to the working definition of the term given by Landry and Bourhis (1997) as one that is followed by the authors in his issue. He then 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). This author 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 originator, creator or 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 of the written medium. He aimed at providing a general introduction to the study of language on signs and by providing insights about multilingualism and language contact. The paper paid special attention to the distinction between official and nonofficial signs. The author interpreted the relationships of power and solidarity as an expression of socio-economic power relations and the values attached to it in the very linguistic landscapes on the public space.

Shohamy and Gorter (2009) edited the book *Linguistic Landscape: Expanding the Scenery*. This significant publication contributed a lot to the development of a consistent theory and methodology in the field by discovering the expanded dimension of linguistic landscape in terms of theory, research, documentation, and applications from issues of history, personal and group identities to domains of language policy and education. This book is an attempt to take linguistic landscape further to gain a deeper understanding by examining its relationships and connections with a variety of tangent fields.

More recently, Edelman (2010) investigated the linguistic landscape of the two multilingual cities in the Netherlands: Amsterdam and Friesland. This dissertation showed the presentation of self and collective identities with

the possible impact on the linguistic landscape. It aimed at investigating the use of immigrant minority languages in the linguistic landscape.

To the best of my knowledge, this study is the first in-depth study on the linguistic landscape of the two areas in Addis Ababa, Bole and Merkato. Particularly, the study has focused on the language situation, agency and visibility/ prominence of languages on the public arena. However, there are three works that were conducted on particular aspects of linguistic landscape in Ethiopia, by Lanza and Hirut.

The first work has focused on Mekele, a regional capital in Ethiopia (Lanza and Hirut 2009: 189-2005). This study focuses on the issue of language ideology and linguistic landscape in three languages: Amharic, Tigrigna, and English. It also tried to demonstrate the interrelationship between language policy and linguistic landscape. In Mekele's linguistic landscape the language situation promoting an ideology of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. Thus, in Mekele the regional language, the use of Tigrigna is more favored on the public space, than any other language, such as, Amharic.

Their second study has focused on language contact, agency and power in the linguistic landscape of the two regional capitals of Ethiopia, Mekele and Nazareth (Lanza and Hirut, forth coming). In their study they provided an analysis of language contact that takes place between regional languages. The linguistic landscape of the two study areas showed that, the regional languages have fought for the regional recognition of language rights.

Hence, the speakers of the regional languages use ways to create an arena for language use and thereby assert their agency in developing new literacy practices.

Their last study focused on the religious wars in the linguistic landscape of Addis Ababa (Lanza and Hirut, forth coming). In the area the public space manifested the tension, debate points of differences between the different religious groups in Ethiopia. Hence, the linguistic landscape serves as an arena for evangelization, contestations and debates.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The theoretical shortcoming of research in linguistic landscape creates a challenge due to the lack of a consistent methodology. Searching for secondary sources that were conducted by different scholars in the field was the first procedure that helped the researcher to gain a general picture of linguistic landscape in the research area. Hence, this study takes its own method based on the study aim by considering other researchers' work as a standing point.

Accordingly, the following three main methodological steps were used. The first one was to determine the survey area, the second was to determine the unit of analysis (linguistic landscape items) from the survey area and the last one was to categorize these items using the statistical instrument SPSS.

3.1 Determination of the Survey Area

As long as the study focused on the linguistic landscape of the urban setting, highly dense areas are common. For the vast nature of Addis Ababa, two main areas of the city were chosen: Bole and Merkato. These districts were selected in accordance with the purpose of the study, based on the researcher's observation.

The sampling technique used in this study was simple random sampling technique to get a general representation of the signs in the public space. The sampling focused on those parts of the investigated areas where there

were a high density of signs. For this reason, the samples were selected in the main shopping places where the major commercial activities take place and the principal public institutions are located. The linguistic landscape items, therefore, include street signs, commercial shop signs, advertising billboards, trade names, public signs posted on government buildings, and public notices. Four streets were selected: two in Bole, a site for the international community and the so-called modernized citizens of the city, where the linguistic landscape is strongly influenced by the global language English, and two streets at Merkato, where Amharic-only and bilingual Amharic-English signs dominated the linguistic landscape. In the survey all covered signs were avoided, as it was very hard to get permission to take pictures of them.

In order to allow the complete inventory of the areas linguistic landscape and thereby to compare the dynamic visibility of linguistic landscape in the areas, the two research sites were investigated separately and together. Accordingly, a total of 616 pictures of every visible signs were collected from the two areas; 229 signs from Merkato and 387 signs from Bole.

3.2 Unit of Analysis and Sampling Procedure

For the specific interest of this study, Backhaus's (2007) definition of sign is taken. Backhaus (2007: 4-5) consider signs as any piece of written text within any definable frame in any physical form. Thus, all signs in the public space have been treated, even the very small signs that were difficult

to be noted by passengers. Although graffiti and simple handwritten stickers were included in Backhaus's (2007) categories, these items were not included in the areas under investigation.

All signs inside the buildings or shops, signs on moving objects, like on vehicles, signs on clothes, like T-shirts, and signs on notice boards and brushers were not used as unit of analysis in this study.

The technique applied for analyzing the collected survey items combines qualitative and quantitative approaches. The collection of linguistic landscape items was done by careful visiting of the places and photographing of all tokens found in the areas by a digital camera. After the linguistic landscape items were captured and put in the statistical instrument SPSS, the data were quantified according to the frequency of representation and other variables of the data in line with the specific interest of the study.

In addition, some unstructured interviews were carried out with randomly selected shop owners, customers, and some people who have lived in the research areas for a long time. Interviews were conducted in a narrative fashion. The interviews that were conducted with customers and the people who live in the study area were done in order to investigate the general view concerning the usage of language in the areas and the usage of signs in the linguistic landscape. Interviews that were conducted with owners or managers of shops or organizations are concerned with the questions why

they assign their business name in a given language and what are the intentions behind it. In all cases, the interviewees were Amharic speakers. For the reason that the targeted areas were business areas the majority of interviews took place in shops.

3.3 Categorization of Signs

After gathering the signs in photographs, the items were categorized using a coding scheme developed by the researcher for this study. The codification was made after clearing the redundant and unclear items from the data corpus. The statistical package SPSS was used for the analysis. Signs were coded as follows: Id number, survey area, number of languages, type of establishment and language choice of agencies, language combinations and language in the order of appearance.

- *ID number*: each sign was given a unique code number.
- *Survey area*: all the coded variables on a sign were categorized depending on the area where the sign was found.
- *Number of Languages*: linguistic landscape items were coded based on the number of languages on signs and whether the signs contain one, two or more languages. Thus, the signs were categorized as monolingual (a sign with one language), bilingual (if the sign contained two or more languages), and trilingual (if the sign contains three languages). Some signs contained texts written in a script of another language. These signs constituted two scripts that are used

on signs, Latin for English and fidäl, i.e., the Ethiopic syllabary, for Amharic. If English terms are written in fidäl the sign has been categorized as representing Amharic but not English because the intended readers were Amharic speakers who can understand the sign in fidäl.

- *Agency and Type of Establishments*: the linguistic landscape contains signs written either by governmental or non-governmental agents. A top-down and bottom-up distinction of signs is used in Backhaus (2007). This study also made a distinction of these two different domains of signs. Hence all government signs, such as public institutions, public announcements, government schools, religious institutions, and street names were coded under top- down categories, and signs of private institutions and shop signs, as well as private announcements were coded under the domain of bottom-up categories.
- *Language combinations*: bilingual signs and trilingual signs were categorized in this grouping. These signs were coded in accordance with the pattern of the languages they contained.
- *Languages in order of appearance*: signs were coded in the order of their languages appeared on them. The preferred codes are exclusively on the top in a vertical alignment or on the left in horizontally aligned texts (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 118). Therefore, if languages appeared on the top in vertically aligned text or on the

left in horizontal aligned texts they were considered as the preferred codes in this study. The preferred code might be either the dominant language or the prestigious language of the area. This method is not appropriate when scripts written from right to left are involved, such as Arabic, Hebrew, and Chinese (Backhaus 2007). However these languages were usually lacking in the investigated areas, with the only exception of Arabic that very rarely occurred in Merkato.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the corpus of signs that are photographed and coded from the linguistic landscape of the two areas in the Ethiopian capital city Addis Ababa: namely Bole and Merkato. Based on the gathered data different issues are addressed in three sections. The first section deals with the language use situation in the linguistic landscape of the two areas. In this section, description for comparison on the visibility and distribution of languages in monolingual, bilingual and trilingual signs is given in the linguistic landscapes of the two areas. In section 4.2 the issue of language preference in the two studied areas is addressed. Finally, the last section (4.3) characterizing signs of different agencies, i.e., top-down and bottom-up signs in the linguistic landscape of the areas. In here, two issues are raised. First, the different categories of top-down and bottom-up signs will be discussed, and then the nature of the two language flows with regard to the language use situation is described.

4.1. Language Use Situation in the Linguistic Landscapes of

Bole and Merkato

The linguistic landscape of Bole and Merkato displays Amharic, the Federal working language of the country and English, the international language that plays a big role in education, media and other domains in country. In addition to the two languages, a few signs have been found using Arabic and

Chinese. Oromo, the language used by 36 % of the nations' population is also observed in few cases. The use of Chinese may be related to the current involvement of Chinese in the infrastructure and economic development of the nation. On the other hand the use of Arabic is associated with the Muslim communities in the country. It is observed that monolingual signs, bilingual signs and trilingual signs appear in the linguistic landscape of both studied areas. Even though most of the signs are monolingual in the linguistic landscape of the two areas; there are some public spaces that are accompanied by bilingual and multilingual signs. Hence, in Bole, of the total of 100% signs: 58% of signs are monolingual, while bilingual signs and trilingual signs accounts 41% and 1% respectively. Whereas in Merkato, of the total of 97% signs: monolingual signs account 53.3%, while 42% signs are bilingual and 1% of the accounts for trilingual signs. Below the researcher discussed the language use situation of each category across the two areas.

4.1.1. Monolingual Signs

In the linguistic landscape of both areas the monolingual signs are attested with either Amharic or English. The public space also exhibits a few Chinese signs. The following table (1) summarizes the distribution of monolingual signs across the two areas.

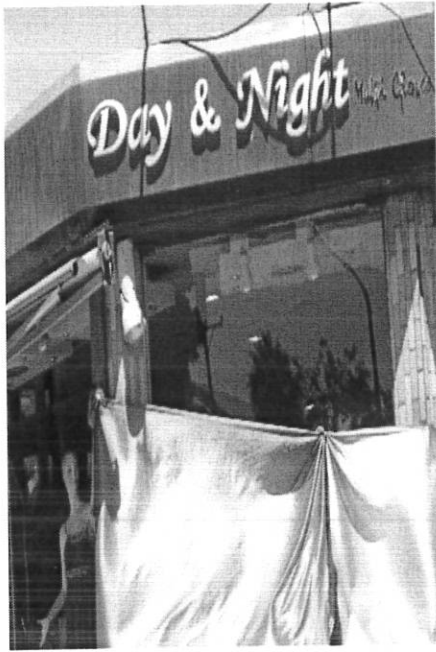


Figure 1: Shop sign (English- only)

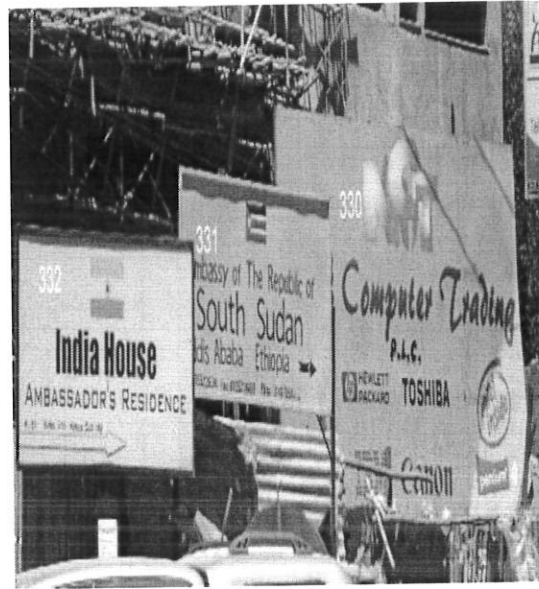


Figure 2: Monolingual English Signs announcing Indian resident house, Southern Sudan

The Merkato linguistic landscape exhibits Amharic and English monolingual signs. However, Amharic is more visible than English in the area (See Figure 3, 4, 5, and 6). Of the total of 122 signs, 71.3 % signs are Amharic only signs. English constitutes 28.7 % of the monolingual signs in this area. This clearly shows the dominance and high visibility of Amharic over English in Merkato than in Bole.



Figure 3 Amharic only sign announcing the *dubay tära* 'dubay shopping center' at Merkato



Figure 4 Amharic only sign for Bar and Restaurant



Figure 5 baltina signs around *mən-alläš tära* at Merkato (Amharic only)



Figure 6 Amharic only tailor shop at Merkato

As mentioned above, the visibility of the monolingual Amharic and monolingual English signs are different across the two study areas. Amharic monolingual signs are more visible in Merkato than in Bole. As the Graphics and Marketing Consultancy Offices (2005) shows Merkato is probably a unique place in Ethiopia where people with different cultures, languages, ethnicities, religions, and social backgrounds live and work together.

However, the linguistic landscape does not exhibit this linguistic diversity. This might be because the working language, Amharic is commonly used for shopping in the market.

Even though Ethiopia does not have a colonial past, except the Italian occupation for five years (1936-1941), the country is caught by the current wave of globalization that increases the role of English in most significant aspect of the city.

In this study of the two streets in Bole, namely, the road running from the *mäsk'äl* square to the airport, and the street from the Bole Bridge to the Bole *mädhane-?aläm* Church, English signs are more visible than Amharic monolingual signs. This might be because the area is a seat for international organizations, embassies, agencies, international hotels, international airport, etc. According to the interviews made with some business owners and managers in the area, English- only signs are preferred in Bole because they thought that in the area English is very good language to be cached quickly and transmit the intended message. However, except for the use of English as a foreign language in education, the language has a limited use in communication. For this reason, it would be difficult to claim that all those signs written in English texts target the English speaking community in the area. Rather they have some symbolic function than they have informational / communicative function. From this, the researcher can claim that the incredible spread and influence of English signs in the

linguistic landscape of the investigated areas does not seem to be due to the intention to reach the English speaking community or to transmit factual information. English is used for its connotation of internationality and modernity. Piller (2003) strengthens this claim that messages in English activate values such as international orientation, future orientation, success, sophistication, etc.

4.1.2. Bilingual and Trilingual Signs

There are four bilingual and two trilingual sign categories that are displayed in the linguistic landscape of Bole and Merkato. The bilingual signs involve two local languages: Amharic and Oromo and three foreign languages: English, Arabic, and Chinese. Likewise the trilingual signs constitute two local languages: Amharic and Oromo and three foreign languages: English, Arabic and Chinese in the areas. Table 2 gives the list of language combinations and the overall distribution of bilingual and trilingual signs in the two areas.

Table 2: Bilingual Signs in Bole and Merkato

	LANGUAGES	BOLE		MERKATO	
		FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
Bilingual Signs	Amharic-English	155	97.5	92	96
	Amharic-Oromo	2	1.6	-	-
	Arabic-English	1	0.6	-	-
	Amharic-Arabic	-	-	4	4
	Chinese - English	1	0.6	-	-
	Total	159	100	96	100

Table 3: Trilingual Signs in Bole and Merkato

	LANGUAGE	BOLE		MERKATO	
		FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
Trilingual Signs	Amharic- English-Oromo	3	75	1	33
	Amharic- English-Arabic	-	-	2	67
	Amharic- English-Chinese	1	25	-	-
	Total	163	100	99	100
				N=262	

As Table 2 shows, the linguistic landscape of Bole displays four bilingual sign combinations: Amharic- English signs (97.5 %), Amharic-Oromo signs (1.6 %), Arabic- English signs (0.6 %) and Chinese- English signs (0.6 %).

There are two trilingual signs attested in the area. These are Amharic-English- Oromo (75 %) and Amharic-English-Chinese (25 %). Whereas the linguistic landscape of Merkato displays two categories of bilingual signs: Amharic- English bilingual signs (96 %) and Amharic- Arabic bilingual signs (4 %). There are also two trilingual signs attested in the area. These are Amharic- English- Oromo signs (33 %) and Amharic- English- Arabic signs (67 %).

As can be seen in Table 2, in both areas the most widely displayed bilingual sign is the Amharic - English combination. In Bole, 97.5% of signs are Amharic- English bilingual signs. Following this, Amharic- Oromo and Arabic - English bilingual signs account for 2.2% of the bilingual signs in the area. Likewise in Merkato, the most visible (96%) bilingual signs are Amharic- English signs. On the other hand, Amharic- Arabic bilingual signs consist only 4 % of the signs in the area.

As mentioned above, signs using Amharic- English bilingual combination are the most visible in the study areas. This might be because these two languages, Amharic and English, are the dominant languages in the city (Amharic being the dominant local language and English the dominant foreign language). Interviews conducted with some shop owners and managers also showed that the Amharic- English bilingual combination is more preferable to appear together than any other combination on the signs. They pointed out that some of the advantages of using such signs. The

main advantage they mentioned is, bilingual Amharic-English signs are best to increase their sales by reaching a large number of target groups (customers). Some of the interviewees also said that, though they are aware that most of the expected readers/audiences of their business are Amharic speakers, they feel that their linguistic landscape would be better not to exclude the English texts. Rather the use of English words with Amharic on the signs might add 'good look' on the audiences perception of their sales or/and services they are giving (see Figure 7 and 8).



Figure 7: Bilingual Amharic- English signs (area of Merkato)



Figure 8: Bilingual English- Amharic sign at Merkato area

In addition to Amharic and English, the bi-/ trilingual sign categories attested in both areas involve Oromo, Arabic and Chinese (see Table 2, 3). In both areas the bi/trilingual sign that involve Oromo texts are announcements belonging to the Oromiya National Regional State (see Figure 9 and 10).



Figure 9 Oromo- Amharic- English sign for Oromiya Bank (Bole area)



Figure 10 Oromo- Amharic- English sign for Oromiya Radio and Television Organization Office (Bole area)

Signs that contained Arabic script on signs are often associated with the Muslim community. Such signs are found around mosques, like the Anwar Mosque at the heart of Merkato. In this area, establishments, such as shops and restaurants are written in the Arabic language (see Figure 11 and 12). Thus, it is uncommon to see bi/trilingual signs that exclude Arabic scripts in the area. From the interviews made with some business owners in the area, the business owners favored Arabic scripts on their signs. As they mentioned there reason was that the presumed readers in that area are

Muslims who have the knowledge of Arabic. In addition, the establishments with Arabic signs might declare that the owner is Muslim.



Figure 11 Amharic- Arabic restaurant sign (Merkato area)



Figure 12: Amharic- Arabic- English shop sign (Merkato area)

As we see in Table 2, 3 and as mentioned above, the signs that involve Chinese are found in Bole area. In the area out of 163 bi/ trilingual signs, only two signs are attested Chinese. One of the sign is used on a monument which is found on Bole Square in front of the Bole International Airport. This monument is a site which is designed and constructed by China Jiangxi Corporation for International Economic and Technical Corporation with Africa (see Figure 13). This can show that Ethiopia, as a seat for African Union, is having good economic and technical bond with China.



Figure 13: Monument stands on Bole Square



Figure 14 Chinese Restaurant (Chinese- English sign) at Bole

The second sign that makes use of Chinese is owned by a Chinese restaurant. This sign is written in a highlighted large Chinese script and with its English translation (see Figure 14). The customers of the restaurant are mainly Chinese but could also be Ethiopians.

As Table 3 shows the occurrence of trilingual signs are rare (7 signs) in both areas. In Bole area, there are only three trilingual signs which are used for one trilingual Oromo-Amharic- English combination. These signs involve Oromo because the texts on the signs are announcing the buildings which are exclusively used as an office for the Oromiya National Regional State (See Figure 10 and 11). There is also one trilingual Oromo-Amharic-English sign in Merkato. Similar to Bole, the sign that involve Oromo in Merkato is also exclusively used for one Oromiya office.

In general, the most common bilingual signs involve either Amharic or English, or both Amharic and English on bi-/trilingual signs. However, trilingual signs are rare in the linguistic landscape of both areas (only 7 signs).

4.2. Language Visibility and Language Prominence

Language visibility and language prominence can be reflected through the font size used to write the script on the sign. It can also be expressed by the order of the languages on the bi-/ trilingual signs. It is observed that some signs use bigger fonts for one language than the other in a bi-/ trilingual sign. Issues in connection with language prominence are related to bi-

/trilingual signs. The way the languages are displayed vis-à-vis each other will give us further information on the relative importance given to each other (Gorter and Cenoz 2006: 74). The importance of one language over the other language 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 two investigated areas. The first point is the order of languages on bi/ trilingual sign combinations, and then the font size of texts appearing on the signs is raised.

4.2.1. Order of Languages in Bi-/Trilingual Signs

In the research areas, concerning the language use and order of languages, the bi-/ trilingual signs in both areas are classified into twelve categories. Table 4 summarizes the arrangement/ order of languages in bi-/trilingual signs.

As seen in the previous section (Section 3.1.2), the most prominent code (49% each) according to the visibility of languages on signs in the two research areas is the bilingual Amharic-English combination. When we come to the order of appearance of languages on signs, the Amharic-English vertical vector bilingual signs keep the leading position among all signs in the public spaces of both areas. Hence, In the Bole area, 49% are bilingual signs using Amharic in the first order. Likewise in Merkato area, 49 % of signs display Amharic- English vertical vector bilingual combinations. Following the Amharic- English vertically vectored signs, in both study

areas, the Amharic- English side by side signs are attested on the next step. Accordingly in Bole area, the Amharic- English side by side signs count 27.7 %. On the other hand, bi-/ trilingual signs using Amharic- English side by side pattern constitute 22% of the signs in the area of Merkato. On the third rank, the English- Amharic vertically vectored signs are displayed in the linguistic landscape of Bole (15.7 %) and in Merkato (8%).

Table 4: Languages in their Order of Appearance in Bole and Merkato

LANGUAGE COMBINATIONS	BOLE		MERKATO	
	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
Amharic (1 st)-English (2 nd)	78	49	49	49
English (1 st)-Amharic (2 nd)	25	15.7	8	8
Amharic-English side by side	44	27.7	22	22
Amharic (1 st)- English (2 nd) then Amharic and English side by side	2	1.3	8	9
English (1 st) then Amharic (2 nd) and English-Amharic side by side	1	0.6	2	2
Amharic (1 st)-English (2 nd) then Amharic (3 rd)	1	0.6	1	1
English (1 st)-Amharic (2 nd) then English (3 rd)	1	0.6	1	1
English (1 st)-Arabic (2 nd) then English (3 rd)	1	0.6		
English (1 st) then English- Amharic and English side by side	1	0.6	-	-
Chinese (1 st) then English (2 nd)	1	0.6	-	-
Amharic (1 st)- Chinese (2 nd)- English (3 rd)	1	0.6	-	-
Oromo (1 st)-Amharic (2 nd) then English	3	1.8	1	1
Amharic (1 st)- Arabic (2 nd) then English	-	-	3	3
Amharic (1 st)-Arabic (2 nd)	-	-	4	4
Total	159	100	99	100

As seen in Table 4, though on most bi-/trilingual signs English takes either the bottom position (in vertically vectored signs) or the left position (on horizontally vectored signs), almost all bi-/trilingual combinations involve English in addition to Amharic, in the second order (see Figure 15 and 16). Nonetheless the occurrence of other regional or foreign languages in the first order was very rarely observed; exceptions are the use of Oromo and Chinese in the Bole area, and Arabic in the area of Merkato. The placement of these languages (Oromo, Chinese and Arabic) on the first order of the signs is due to the importance of the languages in showing the exclusive service they are announcing particularly to those language speakers.



Figure 15 English bottom vertically vectored sign

Figure 16 English left positioned horizontally vectored sign

In both areas, Amharic-English side-by-side appearance on signs is most favored on signs owned by government and private institutions, such as Banks as we can see in Figure17.

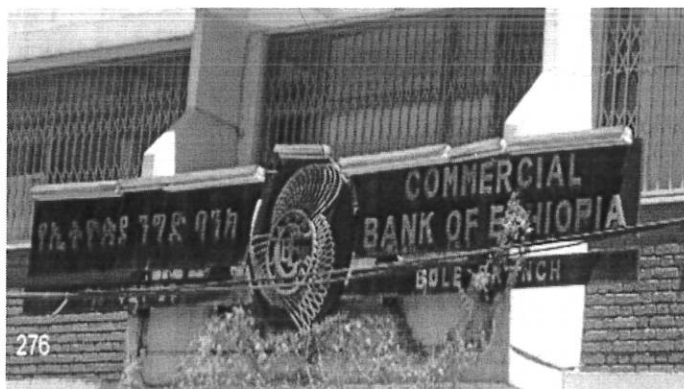


Figure 17: Amharic- English side by side sign in Merkato area

4.2.2 Font Size of Texts on 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) point out that the font size is one of the most frequently used ways of expressing a language hierarchy, which also is used to identify the prominent language in the linguistic landscape of the investigated areas. Since Amharic and English are the most favored languages in the linguistic landscape of the investigated areas, this section is in particular concerned with the analysis of the font size of Amharic and English texts on bilingual signs.

Table 5: Font Size in Bilingual Amharic-English Signs at Bole and Merkato

	BOLE		MERKATO	
	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
Amharic large font on Amharic-English signs	21	15.7	26	28.6
English large font on Amharic-English signs	28	21.1	15	16.5
Equal font size for Amharic and English	84	63.2	50	54.9
Total	133	100	91	100

As we see in Table 5, Amharic and English as dominant languages most frequently in the linguistic landscapes of Bole and Merkato are coded in equal font size. Accordingly in the Bole area, 63.2% signs are written with Amharic and English equal font size, whereas in Merkato, 54.9% signs use the same font size of the two languages (see Figure 20). However, the result is different in the remaining two categories (Amharic or English large font size on Amharic-English bilingual signs). In Merkato, Amharic in a large font size dominates the linguistic landscape following the equal font size of both languages (see Figure 18): 28.6% signs are coded in Amharic large font size in bilingual Amharic-English combinations.



Figure 18: Amharic large font text in Bilingual Amharic English Sign (area of Merkato)

However, English is more prominent in large font size in the Bole area. It is also observed that in bilingual Amharic- English signs; English is highlighted by larger capital letters (see Figure 19). Accordingly from the total of 100% signs English large font size signs constitute 21.1%, which is the largest number following the equal font size signs.



Figure 19: English Large font text in Bilingual Amharic-English sign (Bole area)



Figure 20: Bilingual Amharic- English sign with the equal font (Merkato area)

As can be seen in Table 5, the Amharic- English equal font sizes are the most prominent ones. This shows the prominence of both Amharic and English in bilingual signs is high. Moreover this shows that English is in competition with Amharic in bilingual signs. As mentioned above Amharic signs got the prominent place in Merkato.

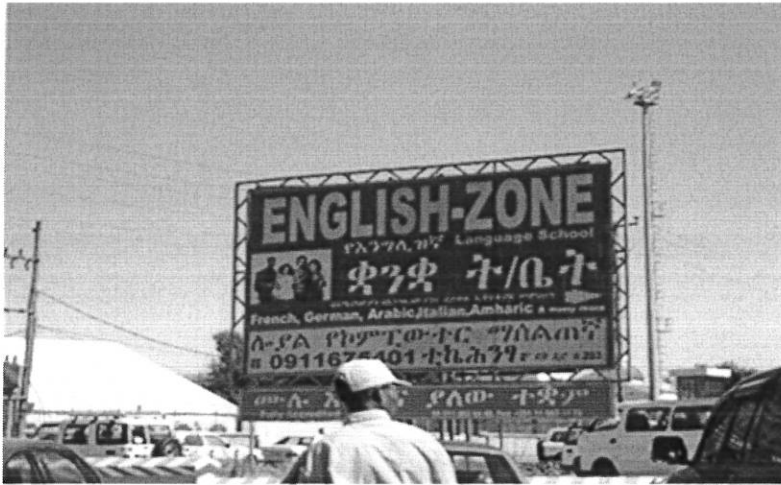


Figure 21: Computer and Language School sign Indexing Amharic and English texts

The above is a sign of a language school (Figure 21). The sign reveals a bilingual indexing (Amharic and English). The most visible language on this sign is English in the largest font, which states the name of the school. The second text, which is coded in bold, is in Amharic and states that the service of the school is language teaching. However, there is some additional information indexed in English in a small font, such as that there are languages which are additionally taught in the school like Arabic, German, Italian and Amharic, which is not stated in Amharic. In this billboard there is also another text below the above stated texts written in the same color like the largest text font on the sign. The text 'computer training school' is not stated in English. Thus, it seems that the billboard stands for a single school that serves as both language school and computer training school.

4.3. Language Choice in Top-Down and Bottom-Up Flows

The preference of one language in a public sphere might pose a number of questions related to the area, like who are the writers of signs and who are their anticipated 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 top- down and bottom- up signs. It also reveals the main trends with regard to language choice in the two language flows.

4.3.1. Categories of Signs in the Top- down and Bottom- up Signs

In this study Ben-Rafael's (2009) terminology for agencies is used. Thus, signs related to public institutions, public announcements, and street names are included under top-down signs, whereas all shop signs (clothing, food, jeweler signs), and private business signs (private offices, private agencies) are included under bottom-up signs. The following table summarizes the number of signs under each category across the two areas.

Table 6: Top-Down Flows in Bole and Merkato

	TOP-DOWN FLOWS			
	BOLE		MERKATO	
	Frequency	(%)	Frequency	(%)
Public institutions	57	87.7	10	52.6
Public announcements	4	6.2	9	47.4
Street name signs	4	6.2	-	-
Total	65	100	19	100

In both research areas, Bole as well as Merkato, the total number of bottom-up items outnumber the top-down items. As Table 6, 7 shows, in both areas from the total of 616 signs, only 84 signs are top-down items that are displayed by government authorities, whereas 532 of signs are bottom-up items which are displayed by citizens. This demonstrates that the linguistic landscapes of both areas are mostly issued by non-government agencies than authorities.

Top-down flow in both research areas show that signs that are displayed by public institutions outnumber the public announcement signs and street name signs. However, the ratio of the categories differs in the areas. In Bole, from the total of 100% top-down items 87.7% of signs are displayed by public institutions, whereas in the case of Merkato from the total of 100% top-down items, it appears that almost half of the signs (52.6%) are displayed by public institutions. The other two top-down categories (public announcements and street names) account for a few signs. Thus, in both

investigated areas signs for public announcements have a very limited number. Accordingly, in Bole area, public announcements account only 6.2%. The percentage is the same for street names in this area. On the other hand, in the case of Merkato, though the number of signs for public institutions exceeds the other two categories, the ratio is closer to public announcement signs in the area. In this area, 47.4% of signs are displayed by public announcement in the area. There is no sign for a street name in the Merkato area.

For the reason that there are many international and national agencies, schools and embassies in Bole, the number of signs displayed by public institutions exceeds the number of signs displayed by public announcements and street names. However, since Merkato is a market place, it is not as such common to find signs in the top-down flow as compared to Bole.

Table 7: Bottom-Up Flows in Bole and Merkato

	BOTTOM-UP FLOWS			
	BOLE		MERKATO	
	Frequency	(%)	Frequency	(%)
Shops (clothing, food, and jewelry)	142	44.1	142	67.6
Private business (private offices and agencies)	180	55.9	68	32.4
Total	322	100	210	100

In the bottom-up flow, there are two categories: (1) shop signs for clothing, food, and jewelry and (2) private business signs that include private offices and agencies. The total numbers of these categories are different in the areas. The total number of signs that are displayed by shops is higher at Merkato than in Bole, whereas the total number of private businesses signs exceeds in Bole as compared to Merkato. Thus, in Bole, from the signs in the bottom-up flow, 55.9% of signs are displayed by private businesses, whereas the remaining 44.1% of signs are shop signs. However, in the case of Merkato, 67.6% of signs are shop signs, while the private business signs only accounts 32.4%.

As mentioned above, in the bottom-up flows, the public space of Bole is denser with private business than shops. This might be because the area is mostly favored by high-income communities and international and national business. Nonetheless in the linguistic landscape of Merkato there are

higher numbers of shop signs than private business signs since the area is a market place.

4.3.2 Language Use in Top-Down and Bottom-Up Signs

In general, the five languages Amharic, English, Oromo, Arabic, and Chinese appear in the linguistic landscape of Bole and Merkato (see section 3.1). However, only Amharic and English (in combination and separately on signs) are very frequent languages in both flows. Table 8 gives the cross tabulation of Amharic and English on government and private signs in both areas.

Table 8: English and Amharic Signs in the Top-Down and Bottom-Up Flows

	BOLE				MERKATO			
	TOP-DOWN		BOTTOM-UP		TOP-DOWN		BOTTOM-UP	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Amharic only	3	5.4	17	5.2	4	22.2	85	44
English only	22	39.4	183	56.5	6	33.3	26	13.5
Amharic-English	31	55.4	124	38.3	8	44.4	82	42.5
Total	56	100	324	100	18	100	193	100

As Table 8 shows, in Bole area, the most favored signs in the top- down flow are the bilingual Amharic- English sign (55.4 %). Following this, monolingual English signs are displayed (39.4 %). Finally, Amharic- only signs account the minimum (5.4 %). Likewise in Merkato, the most visible signs in the top- down flow are the bilingual Amharic- English signs (44.4 %). Monolingual English and Amharic signs are following by 33.3 % and 22.2 % respectively.

In the bottom- up flow the language use of the signs is different across the two areas. In Bole, English only signs are used more widely (56.5%) than Amharic- only signs (5.2%) and bilingual Amharic- English signs (38.3%). Although, in Merkato, monolingual Amharic signs are more dominant (44 %) than bilingual Amharic- English signs (42.5%) and English- only signs (13.5 %), as noted in Table 8.

As to the number of monolingual Amharic and English signs, bilingual Amharic-English signs dominate the top-down items in both areas, as shown in Table 8. Accordingly one can claim that the top-down flow is good in showing the steadiness of the two dominant languages of the city: Amharic and English. In addition, this might be associated with the prominent use of Amharic and English in government institutions. In the bottom-up flow of Merkato, the status of Amharic-English bilingual signs ranked on the second position next to the monolingual Amharic signs. However, in the case of Bole, bilingual Amharic- English signs are ranked

following monolingual English signs. Thus, in the bottom-up flows, the bilingual Amharic-English signs are favored on the linguistic landscape of both areas.

For the reason that the areas under investigation are shopping areas, bottom-up signs exceed those issued by the government. However, as we seen in Table 8, there is a difference on the use of Amharic and English in the two areas. In Bole, English-only signs are more frequent than Amharic-only signs and bilingual Amharic-English signs in the bottom-up flow (see Figure 22). In contrast, in Merkato, there is a clear predominance of Amharic-only signs over English-only signs and Amharic-English bilingual signs (see Figure 23).

As most interviewees said, since many international institutions are located in Bole, the signs should be intelligible for local and international audiences. Furthermore, they believed that if they display English signs, customers will perceive their product as being modern and high quality. In connection to this, Scollon and Scollon (2003:118) suggest that the use of foreign languages, for example English, on commercial signs may have a symbolic function. This means the signs which are written in English are perceived as being modern and prestigious for the sales. For the fact that Merkato is a shopping area for the local citizens of Ethiopia, the linguistic landscape favors a high number of monolingual Amharic signs and bilingual Amharic-English signs as compared to English-only signs. Thus, the study

clearly shows that there is a contrast between the linguistic landscape pattern of the relatively old area of Merkato and the relatively new area of Bole in their use of English and Amharic.



Figure 22 Bottom-up English- only sign (A tea shop in Bole)



Figure 23 Bottom- up Amharic - Only Sign Announcing Legal Services and Photocopy Service at Merkato

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary and Conclusions

In addition to revealing social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of a community, the linguistic landscape study plays a great role in showing the relative power and status of the language communities living in a given territory.

This research attempts an investigation into the linguistic landscape of Addis Ababa. The study took place in two well-known areas of the city, namely Merkato and Bole. As linguistic landscape research focuses on the written discourse in the public space, this study investigates the extent to which the visibility of different languages on the public space reflects the languages spoken by the speech community in relation to the motivation behind this choice. The study also made an investigation into the top-down and bottom-up sign flows in the study areas.

Though there is no consistent methodology in the field, this study has followed three main methodological steps. These are the determination of the survey area, the unit of analysis and the categorization of the data using a statistical instrument. Accordingly, the collections of the linguistic landscape items were made through careful observation of the researcher and photographing of all tokens in the public space of the areas using a digital camera. In addition, informal interviews were conducted.

From the results obtained in the investigation the following conclusions can be made:

1. When trying to deduct the preferred languages in the two study areas, a total of five different languages are found. These are Amharic, English, Oromo, Arabic, and Chinese. Among these languages, Amharic and English are the most visible languages in the linguistic landscapes of both areas. Different reasons have been provided by institutions and business owners for using these two languages in the linguistic landscape. The primary reason has to do with the value, use, relevance and the priority of the languages to the intended readers. In addition, the business owners' and the readers' sense of belongingness to Amharic might be a reason for using the language.
2. The main difference between the two areas is revealed mainly in the use monolingual languages on the signs. In Bole, English is by far the most preferred language. This might be because the area is the seat for many international organizations and institutions. The use of English on commercial signs has also a symbolic function, i.e.; the signs in English might symbolize modernity and prestige of the business owners. These attributes are usually not connected with using local languages. In contrast, at Merkato, it is common to see more signs in Amharic than in English. This might be because the Merkato area is a market place for the local community than the

international one. The people in Merkato are commonly communicated in Amharic rather than any other local language. As far as other local languages are concerned, they were hardly displayed in both areas.

3. Concerning the issue of agents, there is a difference between two types of signs in both areas. The total number of bottom-up flow signs outnumbered the top-down signs in the two areas which are basically shopping areas. Nonetheless concerning the status of the languages used on the signs there is a difference. Top-down signs tend to use the bilingual combination Amharic-English on their signs, rather than using the two languages independently in both areas. This might reflect the language policy of the country that Amharic is the working language and the lingua franca language of the city and English is the most widely used foreign language in the city. Hence in the top- down flow is aimed at giving almost equal status for these two languages on the signs. In contrast, in both flows, the use of languages is different. In Bole, bottom-up signs were mainly monolingual English signs followed by bilingual Amharic-English signs. Monolingual Amharic signs are most frequent in the bottom-up flow at Merkato followed by bilingual Amharic-English signs. This linguistic phenomenon might reflect the fact that the Merkato area is visited by local customers who can communicate with the lingua franca, Amharic. This might suggested that Amharic has an informational function.

4. Bi-/trilingual signs in the two investigated areas are characterized by various orders in which languages appear on the signs and by various font sizes of the texts on the signs. These issues reflect the prominence of one language over another. As far as the order of language appearance is concerned, the Amharic-English vertical vector bilingual combination keeps the leading position among all signs in the public space in both areas. Concerning the font size of the texts, the bilingual Amharic-English equal font signs are prevailing. This phenomenon might reflect the prominent role of English in the linguistic landscape of the study areas as compared to other local languages.
5. In both investigated areas, English is in competition with Amharic. In Bole especially in monolingual signs, English dominates Amharic. In the contrary in Merkato, Amharic has a strong hold as the great majority of the monolingual signs use Amharic. On the other hand, in bi-/ trilingual signs, English is in competition with Amharic as it always comes along with Amharic. This might reflect that although Ethiopia has no colonial past, except for the Italian occupation from 1936-1941, the country flourished under the influence of globalization. Moreover, the spread of English might be perceived as a sign of modernity and prestige, which are not connected to local languages in the mind of the readers and the business owners in the areas. Therefore, we can claim that the use of English in the areas

could have a strong symbolic function rather than conveying information for the community in the study areas.

6. In both investigated areas Ethiopian languages other than Amharic are hardly presented in the linguistic landscapes, except for very few bi-/ trilingual signs that involve Oromo. This study found out that those signs with Oromo belong to the Oromiya Regional State.
7. Two foreign languages are used in the linguistic landscapes of the areas: Arabic and Chinese. The use of Arabic is associated with the Muslim community in the city, where as Chinese signs are reveals the current involvement of China in the Infrastructure and economic development of the nation.

5.2 Recommendations

Since linguistic landscape research is relatively new, this study is only a beginning and much remains to be done in the field. Further works will be also needed to investigate on the different aspects of the field.

The following are suggestions for further Investigation in this area:

1. *For scholars working on the theory of linguistic landscape*

The main shortcoming in the field of linguistic landscape research is the problem relating to the formulation of a theory that is rooted in the fact that linguistic landscape research covers several different disciplines. This problem is not still solved so that it creates uncertainty whether the field is independent or whether it has an independent theory. As a result, most of

the studies use their own approaches to investigate various topics in the field. Therefore, the researcher suggests to the theoretician for the formulation of a consistent and constructive theory on linguistic landscape from with a consistent methodology can be derived.

2. For language policy and language planning makers

I suggest language planning and policy to take in to account the language use situation on linguistic landscape of the city and use as an input for framing the language policy and planning of the nation.

3. For linguistic landscape researchers in Ethiopia

This study focused on the linguistic landscape of two areas in Addis Ababa. Thus it would be necessary to get motivated to work on the linguistic landscape of the different areas of the city and country at large. Hence, we can have the complete profile of linguistic landscape of the city and the country.

4. For curriculum developers In the department of linguistics

So long as the linguistic landscape study has an interdisciplinary nature, it would be better to incorporate the knowledge of other disciplines such as sociology, geography, anthropology, psychology, history, education and philosophy. The researcher also suggests curriculum developers in the department of linguistics to include linguistic landscape studies as one independent discipline.

5. For linguistic landscape scholars in general

It might be important for linguistic landscape studies to be consecutive due to the dynamic nature of the public space. It is important to include former data as an input for further studies. This helps the researcher to investigate the development and changes within the findings. Hence, it would be important to establish documentation center for documenting the linguistic landscape data.

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APPENDIX: EXAMPLES OF SIGNS FROM THE TWO STUDY AREAS



Figure 1: Bilingual Amharic and English sign on a building (Bole area)

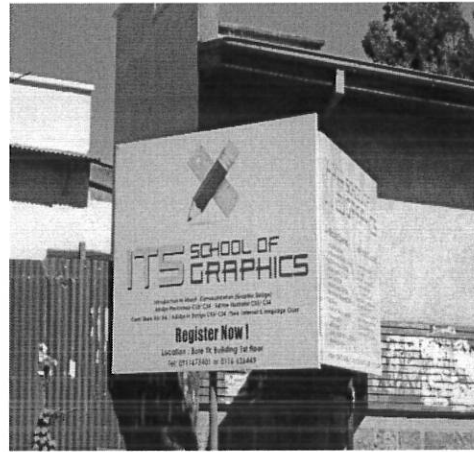


Figure 2: English monolingual English sign on a graphics school (Bole Area)



Figure 3 English sign aside the coca cola bottle (Merkato area)

Figure 4 Amharic and English sign (Merkato area)





Figure 5 Amharic and English sign for a soft drink company

Figure 6 Monolingual English sign on a billboard for Water Company



a)

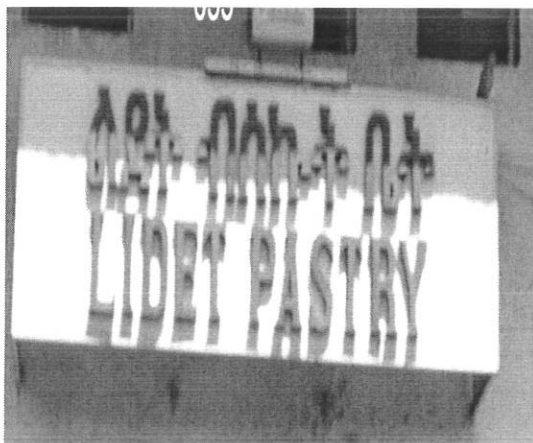


Figure 7 Amharic and English sign for a pastry house (Merkato area)



Figure 8 Amharic and English sign standing for a protestant church (Bole area)



Figure 9 Amharic and English side by side sign for a hospital (Bole area)



Figure 10 Monolingual English sign for a restaurant (Merkato area)



Figure 11 English only sign for a hotel (Bole area)



Figure 12 English only sign standing for a shopping center (Merkato area)



Figure 13 Amharic and English sign of a bank in Bole area

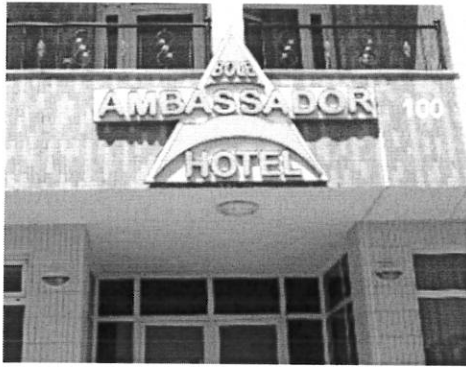


Figure 11 English only sign for a hotel (Bole area)



Figure 12 English only sign standing for a shopping center (Merkato area)



Figure 13 Amharic and English sign of a bank in Bole area



Figure 14 Amharic only sign for Bar and Restaurant at Merkato



Figure 15 Amharic and English sign for a tailor shop (Merkato area)

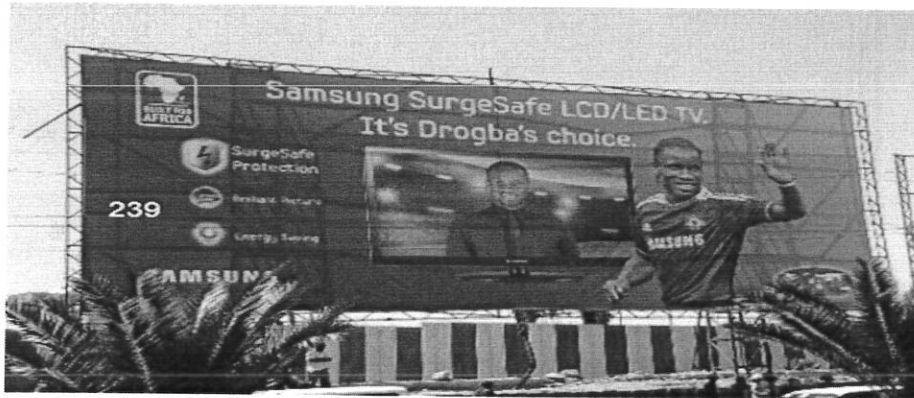


Figure 16 English only billboard announcing for a Samsung LCD television company (Bole area)



Figure 21 Bottom- up signs at Merkato



Figure 22: Amharic- English Street signs (Bole area)

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work. This thesis
has not been used for any academic study in any other university, and
all sources used for this work are clearly acknowledged.

Amrawit Bekele



April 29, 2013, Addis Ababa