

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC SIGNAGE OF THE COMMERCIAL
AND
NON-COMMERCIAL SIGNS IN EENHANA TOWN, OHANGWENA REGION

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Abstract

This study analysed the public signage of commercial and non-commercial signs in Eenhana Town, Ohangwena Region. The linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town, situated at the core of the Ohangwena Region in Namibia, presents a complex and insufficiently explored issue in current scholarship. The primary challenge lies in the visual representation of linguistic diversity through public signage, particularly concerning the coexistence of official and indigenous languages. Despite constitutional provisions such as Article 3(1) of the Namibian Constitution designates English as the language of official communication in Namibia, there remains a conspicuous absence of specific policies addressing the linguistic landscape in Namibia. The chief objective of the current enquiry was to explore the nature of language(s) and linguistic forms used on billboards as part of the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town, in order to examine their communicative potential to the target population as well as establish the attitudes of the target population towards the linguistic landscape. A mixed-method approach was strategically employed, synergising both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to achieve the comprehensive goals of this study. A non-probability sampling approach was employed, acknowledging the impracticality of examining the entirety of commercial as well as non-commercial signage within Eenhana Town. The researcher purposively selected 20 signs, comprising ten commercials as well as an equal number of non-commercial signs (10) strategically dispersed around the town. A total of fifteen sign readers from Eenhana were strategically chosen through a snowball sampling technique. This research found that the language(s) represented in the linguistic landscape inadequately reflect the authentic linguistic practices observable in Eenhana. Furthermore, this investigation revealed that contrary to the widespread belief that English functions as the principal professional language in

Eenhana, speakers of indigenous languages encountered a considerable disadvantage due to the overshadowing presence of English signage. There exists a compelling necessity for an augmented representation of signage in indigenous languages. To promote linguistic inclusivity, it is imperative for local authorities and stakeholders to actively engage with the community, comprehending language preferences to guide policies that honour diversity and acknowledge the intricate linguistic fabric.

Keywords: attitudes, commercial signage, indigenous, linguistic landscape, public signage

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Lastly, my profound gratitude goes to the Lord Jesus Christ for granting me the strength, wisdom, and courage to undertake and complete this study.

Declaration

I, Shiwaovanhu Slowly Kamati, hereby declare that this study is the true reflection of my research and that this work, in whole or part, has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

This chapter is the introduction to the study and provides the background of the study, the problem statement, and the study's objectives. Additionally, this introductory chapter highlights the study's significance, as well as the limitations and delimitations, and ends by explaining the overall layout of the study.

1.2. Background of the study

The study critically analyses the public signage of commercial and non-commercial signs in Eenhana Town, Ohangwena Region. This research, positioned in the broader framework of Linguistic Landscape, specifically investigated the semiotic interplay of languages in the signage of Eenhana Town. By scrutinising both commercial as well as non-commercial signs, including advertisements, architectural inscriptions, and graffiti, the study sought to explore the intricate patterns of linguistic usage and visibility.

Linguistic landscape is known as the signs assigned to territories, regions, or metropolitan settings, streets, places, commercial store signs, advertising billboards, and other public signs all containing a variety of languages (Gaho et al., 2022). Landry and Bourhis coined the phrase "linguistic landscape" in 1997. They coined the phrase, which is frequently referred to as the study of signage, to examine the use of conspicuous and prominent languages on public and commercial signs in a particular location (Gorter, 2006). This research delved into the intricate usage of language within multilingual signage, encompassing both public and private signs such as commercials, graffiti, and

inscriptions on structured exteriors. Signage significantly influences community communication by shaping the linguistic landscape, which reflects the coexistence of multiple languages and cultural identities. In this study, particular emphasis is placed on assessing the visibility of the three primary languages - Oshiwambo, English, and Afrikaans - on private and public signs.

The linguistic landscape of a region serves as a dynamic canvas that reflects the linguistic diversity and cultural expressions within a community. It encompasses the various languages, scripts, and visual elements that adorn public spaces, offering insights into the sociolinguistic fabric of the locale. Signage, a prominent mode of communication in public spaces, not only conveys information but also shapes the identity and character of a community. The selection of languages on signs is a deliberate act that involves considerations of audience, cultural resonance, and accessibility. The major languages examined by the current study - English, Oshiwambo, and Afrikaans - represented linguistic dimensions influenced by historical, social, and political factors. Understanding their visibility on private and public signs provides significant insights into power dynamics that characterise the sociolinguistic landscape of Eenhana Town.

Moreover, this study recognised the multifaceted nature of linguistic landscape analysis, acknowledging the need to explore spatial and visual aspects of signage. By employing a holistic approach, the study went beyond mere language counting. It delved into the spatial arrangements, design elements, and semiotic strategies that contribute to the overall communicative impact of signs. This contributed to the evolving methodologies within linguistic landscape studies, fostering a comprehensive understanding of language in its visual and spatial dimensions within the Namibian context.

The linguistic diversity embedded in the signage of a town offers a rich and multifaceted landscape for research on multilingualism. The scope of written signage encompasses many sources, ranging from official signposts within constructed structures' vicinity to announcements displayed on noticeboards and ads strategically placed for public visibility. The town's linguistic tapestry unfolds through the lens of monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual signs, each holding the potential for unique insights into the complex interplay of languages in Eenhana Town. This research set out with the ambitious goal of discerning discernible patterns evinced through the symbolic construction of various multilingual signs within and around Eenhana Town. The focus extends beyond a mere enumeration of languages present and delves into the nuanced ways these languages are strategically employed and visually represented. By closely examining the design, placement, and linguistic composition of these signs, the study unravelled the intricate dynamics shaping the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town. The interplay between languages in this visual and symbolic realm reflects the linguistic diversity and the cultural, historical, and socio-political forces at play in the town. In its endeavours through systematic analysis, the research aids in the deeper appreciation of the multilingual dynamics inherent in the town's communicative spaces.

Beyond the physical dimensions, this study's pursuit extends to explore the socio-cultural implications underpinning public signage in Eenhana Town. By examining the multifaceted layers of these markers, a comprehensive understanding is contributed to the broader implications of urban semiotics and its resonance within the local community. As the researcher embarked on this analytical journey, the overarching goal was to illuminate

the intricate interplay between visual communication and the cultural dynamics that shape the urban environment.

Linguistic landscape studies gained momentum following the trinary intercontinental discussion based on trilingual and third linguistic acquirement held on Tralee Island in September 2003 (Nadirova, 2019). This interdisciplinary field examines the proliferation and functions of languages in public spaces, with a particular awareness proceeding the graphic depiction entailing written language signs and the interactions of individuals with these linguistic elements. The linguistic landscape encompasses diverse mediums such as advertising billboards, street names, public road signs, signs on state buildings, place names, and signage on private commercial establishments, collectively shaping the linguistic identity of a specific city (De Oliveira et al., 2018).

The Constitution recognises the English language as the language of official business and grants the status of national language to the diverse indigenous languages. This constitutional framework sets the stage for an intricate linguistic environment where multiple languages coexist, reflecting the rich cultural tapestry of Namibia (Zimny, 2017). Focusing on Eenhana Town, situated at a focal point within the Ohangwena Region, and within northern Namibia, this study delved into the public signage that shapes the linguistic landscape of the locale. Eenhana Town, though modest in size, holds significance as a hub within the Ohangwena Region, and a substantial portion of its residents, as well as those in the surrounding areas, belong to the Ovakwanyama community within the broader Ovambo tribe. Research (Namibia Statistics Agency, 2011; Liverpool University Press, 2023) indicates that majority of the households (97%) in the Ohangwena region speak an Oshiwambo dialect as their main language at home. Other

languages such as San, Herero, and Nama are spoken by a very small fraction of the population, typically estimated to be under 3%.

The Ovakwanyama people predominantly speak Oshikwanyama, a dialect of the broader Oshiwambo language, adding a distinctive linguistic layer to Eenhana's public space against the backdrop of Namibia's constitutional language framework, the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town becomes an intriguing subject of study, where the interplay of official and indigenous languages manifests in the visual elements that permeate the town. This research aimed at unravelling the intricate dynamics of linguistic representation within Eenhana Town's public signage, exploring how the linguistic diversity inherent in the community is visually expressed and navigated in this specific urban context. Through an in-depth linguistic landscape exploration of the town, the study sought to contribute to a deeper understanding of the sociolinguistic nuances within Namibia's diverse urban spaces, shedding light on the complexities of language representation in public domains.

Public signage within urban environments functions as a silent, yet potent, medium that communicates the essence and identity of a community (Scollon & Scollon, 2003; Shohamy & Gorter, 2009). Eenhana Town, nestled within the Ohangwena Region, emerges as a microcosm of urban development, where the juxtaposition of commercial and non-commercial signs creates a visual tapestry reflecting the town's socio-economic intricacies. This study embarked on a critical analysis, peeling back the layers of Eenhana's public signage to unveil the nuanced narrative woven into the town's cultural, economic, and social fabric.

The primary focus of this investigation revolved around the dichotomy inherent in commercial and non-commercial signs. Commercial signs, emblematic of businesses and enterprises, not only facilitate economic transactions but also contribute significantly to the visual aesthetics of the urban landscape. Conversely, non-commercial signs, representing public institutions, civic spaces, and cultural landmarks, assume a vital position in formatting the collective distinctiveness of Eenhana Town's residents.

1.3. Statement of the problem

The linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town, situated at the core of the Ohangwena Region in Namibia, presents a complex and insufficiently explored issue in current scholarship. The primary challenge lies in the visual representation of linguistic diversity through public signage, particularly concerning the coexistence of official and indigenous languages. Despite the Namibian constitution declaring English as the official language, according to national language status to indigenous language, there remains a conspicuous absence of specific policies addressing the linguistic landscape in Namibia (Zimny, 2017).

This research problematises the current state of knowledge by emphasising the importance of understanding how linguistic diversity is visually communicated in public spaces, particularly through signage, within the unique sociolinguistic context of Eenhana Town. The absence of scholarly discourse pertaining to Eenhana on this issue not only hinders a wide-ranging comprehension of the linguistic landscape dynamics in Eenhana but also neglects to address potential implications for community cohesion, identity formation, and social interactions.

As the study sought to fill this gap, it emphasised the need for empirical evidence to inform future discussions and potential policy considerations regarding linguistic diversity in urban spaces. By problematising the lack of scholarly attention to the linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town, this research sought to contribute a distinctive significance of the intersection amongst language, culture, and urban representation in Namibia, thereby addressing a critical gap in the existing literature. This gap in the literature calls for an in-depth investigation into the linguistic landscape of Eenhana, where a substantial Ovakwanyama-speaking population contributes a distinct linguistic layer to the town's composition. The scarcity of research of Eenhana in this domain is evident in the absence of comprehensive studies examining the interplay between official and indigenous languages in the public signage of Eenhana Town, leaving unexplored the practical implications of linguistic diversity on the visual representation of the town's identity.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The chief objective of the research was to analyse the language(s) used on the linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town to determine their effectiveness to the target market for the signage as well as the attitudes of the same population towards this linguistic landscape. Thus, this study specifically sought to:

1.4.1 Ascertain the extent to which the language(s) and linguistic forms within the linguistic landscape reflects the actual linguistic practices of Eenhana residents through the use of interviews.

1.4.2 Identify the sign readers' attitude toward the language(s) used on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town; and

1.4.3 Explore the language preferences of the sign readers on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana through the use of interviews.

1.5. Significance of the study

The potential importance of the current study is underscored by its potential to contribute meaningful insights to both academic discourse and practical urban planning through a comprehensive exploration of the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town. In addressing several crucial aspects, the study offers broader implications for various domains:

The research is instrumental in preserving and representing the cultural identity of the Ovakwanyama-speaking community in Eenhana Town. By scrutinising how languages are visually represented in public spaces, the study actively contributes to acknowledging and preserving cultural diversity within the complex urban milieu.

Exploring language interaction in public spaces sheds crucial light on sociolinguistic dynamics within Eenhana Town. This nuanced understanding is pivotal for fostering positive intercultural interactions and maintaining a harmonious social fabric within the community, thereby enhancing community cohesion (Gorter & Cenoz, 2014).

The findings of this study bear direct relevance to urban planning and policy decisions related to linguistic diversity. The recommendations for inclusive linguistic landscape policies derived from the research may serve as a guiding framework for local authorities, aiding in the development of signage that authentically reflects the linguistic richness of the community.

Insights gleaned from the study into the influence of linguistic diversity on community identity have the potential to significantly enhance residents' sense of belonging. Recognising and valuing the linguistic contributions of different groups foster a more inclusive and cohesive community environment, promoting a shared sense of identity and connection among residents. Within the academic realm, this research expands the understanding of linguistic landscape studies, particularly within the Namibian context.

The study potentially establishes a foundational understanding of the linguistic landscape of Eenhana, providing a springboard for future research endeavours in similar contexts. Scholars can leverage these foundational insights to delve deeper into the complexities of language representation in diverse urban spaces, thereby advancing the field and informing future urban development strategies.

Actively involving the community through training in the research process empowers residents to contribute to the shaping of their linguistic and cultural representation. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership and engagement (Pietikäinen & Kelly-Holmes, 2013).

In summary, the significance of this study extends far beyond its immediate context, offering valuable lessons for both academic inquiry and practical applications in urban development and cultural preservation. By unravelling the complexities of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town, the research contributes to a broader understanding of the intersections among language, culture, and urban spaces, thereby influencing both scholarly discussions and practical interventions.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study's qualitative methodology introduces an inherent limitation related to subjectivity, as it heavily relies on the researcher's interpretation, potentially leading to unintentional bias or manipulation based on personal beliefs. Furthermore, the specificity of the research focus on Eenhana Town may limit the generalisability of findings to other contexts, reducing the broader applicability of the study. The reliance on qualitative methods also means a scarcity of quantitative data, hindering the ability to draw statistically significant generalisations. To address the potential for researcher bias, the study commits to rigorous reflexivity and transparency throughout the research process. Temporal constraints are acknowledged, as the study provides a snapshot of the linguistic landscape, potentially overlooking shifts in language use or policy over time. Additionally, the qualitative approach may limit the depth and breadth of participant perspectives, offering an insightful yet potentially incomplete portrayal of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana. Despite these limitations, the study strives to uphold methodological rigour to enhance the credibility and validity of its qualitative findings.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The scope of this research was confined to Eenhana Town and did not encompass the broader area, including the surrounding villages. The focus specifically narrowed down to the town's linguistic landscape, limiting the examination of language policies and practices to the urban setting of Eenhana Town. While this delimitation enhances the precision and depth of the study within the town boundaries, it excludes potential variations and dynamics that may exist in the linguistic landscape of the surrounding villages. The decision to delimit the study to the town of Eenhana Town ensured a focused

and manageable investigation, allowing for a thorough exploration of the language policies and practices within the defined urban context.

1.8 Outline of the chapters

An outline of the study is as follows: Chapter 1 - It provides an overview of the study's problem, significance, aim, and objectives. It also clearly states the limitations and scope of the investigation. Chapter 2 - The review of extant literature and explications of theoretical foundations within which the current study is couched, are provided in this chapter. Chapter 3 - Explains the research methodology and describes the steps the researcher took when conducting the study and how it was done. Chapter 4 - Presents and discusses the findings from the fieldwork. Furthermore, the results are discussed and contrasted in line with the reviewed literature. Chapter 5 - This final chapter provides a summary of the study's findings and suggests recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores prevailing literature and explains the theoretical paradigm that was used to frame the study. Accordingly, the analysis of current literature intends to demonstrate the existence of scholarly works about the presentation of cosmopolitan identities and patterns of othering in existing scholarly work. The realm of academia is quite multifaceted hence, the need to aggregate, amend, regulate, or evaluate literary discourse and theoretical concepts. Hence, literary analyses such as these are critical in the identification of gaps that contemporary studies should fill through insightful, well-researched and gap-filling knowledge. Thus, the application of a literary criticism/theory is of paramount importance as it solidifies these forms of academic arguments, ideologies, and propositions that share affinities with a contemporary study's concerns.

2.2 Review of related literature

This section explores the existing literature on linguistic landscape as a concept and signage.

2.2.1 Linguistic landscape as a concept

Although previous studies, like the one by Rosenbaum et al. (1977), examined linguistic landscapes in the context of Israeli cities, Landry and Bourhis's (1997) ground-breaking work greatly expanded the field by offering two interconnected definitions: the symbolic function (signs as reflections of ethnolinguistic vitality) and the informational function (signs as indicators of linguistic presence). In later research, this fundamental concept has been widely embraced and extended. Shohamy and Gorter (2009), for example, focused

on the agency of communities in designing signage by critically analysing the intersections of linguistic landscapes with language policy and power relations. In a similar vein, Blommaert (2013) popularised the idea of "semiotic landscapes," which promotes a bilingual, multi-layered understanding of place and movement. By examining how informal signage and translingual behaviours in multilingual environments challenge conventional ideas of language and visibility, Felix Banda (2015) advanced this conversation with a focus on African urban places. When taken as a whole, these contributions demonstrate the growing complexity of linguistic landscape studies and the necessity of participatory, context-sensitive methods for studying language in public settings. The first, commonly referred to as the list definition, encapsulates the essence of a linguistic landscape by cataloguing language choices in signs, a concept frequently cited by researchers in their contributions to the field. However, this definition is oversimplified, particularly in neglecting technological advancements and virtual spaces. The second definition often termed the short version, explains linguistic landscape as the discernibility and significance of languages on civic and commercial signs within the borders of a specified area or country, yet it too has limitations, excluding written language (Gorter, 2018). Gorter acknowledges the significant insights provided by Landry and Bourhis (1997) but contends that both the short and long versions of their definitions are somewhat outdated.

A comprehensive definition of linguistic landscape, seeking to appreciate the motives, usages, ideological convictions, linguistic variations, and power dynamics displayed in public spaces, seeks to replace earlier, somewhat antiquated definitions. Signs, in this context, serve as vehicles for broadcasting messages of public interest, including

directives, warnings, and commercial promotions. These definitions are intentionally expansive, accommodating various elements within the public space, a necessity given the rapid globalisation and the ever-evolving nature of public spaces.

The study of linguistic landscape, focusing on the occurrence, depiction, meaning, and linguistic analysis within a civic space, has emerged as a focal point in sociolinguistics (Harley et al., 2010). According to Shohamy and Gorter (2009) linguistic landscape studies explore how the public space is shaped by diverse dimensions, including state agencies, organisations, businesses, and private entities from numerous sectors and backgrounds. As the linguistic landscape continues to transform, these multifaceted definitions provide a nuanced appreciation of the complex dynamics between language usage patterns and the public sphere.

The community's language practices are prominently reflected in public signage, where high-status signs often employ formal language, contrasting with the informal language of low-status signs. This phenomenon illustrates the influence of social ranking on language use, as seen in various studies.

Analysis of linguistic discourse within landscapes enables conclusions to emerge based on societal divisions as a result of the community's setup in terms of the present social sections and traditional practices used, among other factors. The analysis of linguistic landscapes additionally allows humans to establish the patterns evincing the diversity of ways in which individuals, institutions, communities, associations, and agencies of government deal with signages within a complex society.

2.2.2 The foundation of the linguistic landscape

Studies within the discipline of Linguistic Landscape have their origins within the broader discipline of the Sociology of Language by Joshua Fishman, and more specifically within language policy and planning. Many of the early works on linguistic landscape sought to explore and examine where and how language contact culminated in social and political instability within those given environments. However, the study is not restricted to sociolinguistic research. Its genesis and growth are also accounted for within many other fields such as education, literature, applied linguistics, and society semiotics.

Rosenbaum et al.'s (1977) analysis of the frequency and usage of English in the linguistic landscape of Keren Kayemet Street in Jerusalem, which is regularly regarded as the preliminary analysis proceeding scribbled visual symbols within a civic area analysed the language signs, transactions and interviews which reported on the impact of the designated language policy on the linguistic landscape in particular originating from the advancement and supremacy of the official language in comparison to the status of English in the private sphere. It focused on the growth in the usage of the English language and recognised three broad classes for linguistic signage: without Roman script, with evidence of Roman script while dominated by Hebrew script, and those with equal prominence of both Roman and Hebrew script.

Wetzel (2010) evaluates the conspicuousness of two joint official languages (French and Dutch) on commercial signage in several communities in the Belgian capital, Brussels. They highlighted the difference evinced by the discordant correlation between the fact of the official bilingual status of the city and the definite occurrence of the languages

(linguistic forms) utilised on display within the streets, representing a more profound role for French (as well as English, to some extent) and less of Dutch.

The first studies of language in public spaces by Landry and Bourhis (1997) have often been imagined, from a modernist view, as a means for advancing language within society. Landry and Bourhis interpret the linguistic landscape as a reflection of the cultural linguistics present in addition to an immediate indication of the authority and position of the language users within a specific community. To a certain extent, traces of that are found in what Blommaert (2016, p. 2) imagines as “the modernist ethnolinguistic assumption: the placement of the use of one language with one ethnolinguistic community or ethnicity”. Most of the seminal linguistic landscape research (Shohamy & Gorter; 2009; Cenoz & Gorter, 2006 & Backhaus, 2007) contend with issues of language policy as well as language planning greatly evinced this notion through exclusively tackling and understanding the quantified visibility of language patterns within linguistic landscapes as symptomatic of the diversity and nature of the spoken varieties of forms of languages by the residents of the studied ethnolinguistic communities.

The commonality in these studies is that they examine language usage patterns within public spheres and within which language laws have been passed as an extension of a language policy that seeks to guide the manners in which different languages that appear on public signs are used. This is in addition to the modernist view in which language in communities and linguistic groups are imagined as individuated entities which can potentially conflict with each other.

Recent studies integrating participatory, ethnographic, and interactive approaches include Hanauer (2012), who viewed street signs as public literacy texts co-constructed by communities. Peck and Stroud (2015) analysed youth spaces to highlight social meaning-making in LLs. Malinowski (2015) employed multilingual landscape analysis to foreground participant agency and transnational literacy practices in community signage. Aiestaran et al. (2010) explored linguistic landscapes of societies and cities (such as those of San Sebastian) and from passers-by perspectives. Aiestaran examine the observations and impressions of residents of two major ethnic groups living within the city of San Sebastian in a bid to establish their views towards the city's linguistic landscape as well as to establish the respondents' linguistic preferences. In China, Wang (2020) explored the multilingual landscape in eastern China, to establish the residents' opinions and feelings towards it. Further to that, Han and Wu (2020) utilise Guangzhou's urban linguistic landscape as a basis for understanding how it reflected the domestic language policies as well as the impressions and opinions of passers-by regards such a landscape. Most linguistic landscape studies differ in terms of purpose and methodology while examining approximately the same issues within linguistic landscaping.

2.2.3 Commercial and non-commercial signs

Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) classified signage into commercial and non-commercial groups and indicators in this analysis. Commercial symbols are regarded as signs produced by a commercial body to market their product or service while non-commercial signs are signs produced solely to notify, educate, inform, and warn the public. The non-commercial signs do not promote the sale of a good or service in any regard. Typically, non-commercial signage endorsing a linguistic learning institute or a health service

provision centre, for example, is often highly well-organised and expertly designed. They thus, are different from civic cautioning symbols due to their intention of selling a service. The binary wide-ranging groups' signs similarly appear unusual. In commercial signs, key variances amongst symbols besides indicators produced by smaller businesses which are at times local, and those produced by larger corporations. Some of these commercial signs include public recognition campaign signs, banking signs, government/town council signs, and religious organisational signs.

Early linguistic landscape research such as Rosenbaum et al. (1977) and Landry and Bourhis (1997) places a significant emphasis on discerning between official and non-official signs, a distinction that carries profound implications for understanding power dynamics and linguistic hierarchies within a given society (Bourhis et al. 2007). The prevalence of a specific language on public signs can mirror the power and status of its speakers in that specific social context, often leading to linguistic competition among different language groups.

Public signs tend to overwhelmingly favour utilising linguistics most dominant, relegating minor linguistics towards the periphery of linguistic visibility (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). This phenomenon echoes authority dynamics among the population, where the majority language asserts its influence on public signage, while minor languages may find spaces within private buildings and contexts. Landry and Bourhis (1997) note that there are situations where public signs exhibit bilingualism, explicitly showcasing the dominant language alongside a minor language. The dominant language typically aligns with the majority group inhabiting the region, but there are instances where minority languages

may assert themselves on public signs, challenging the linguistic norms even when they constitute most of the population (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006).

Private signs, encompassing commercial displays on storefronts, advertisements on public and private transportation, and billboards, operate under different linguistic dynamics. Unlike public signs, the language on private signs is not subject to state control. Private signs are considered expressions of individual freedom and opinion, contributing to the diverse linguistic landscape shaped by the interactions between public and private linguistic domains.

Murbill (2015) emphasises that there exists an overall understanding that linguistic usage within the linguistic landscape can be categorised into the following: administration signs and private signs which were later conceptualised into those that are top-down as well as those that are bottom-up in approach. The top-down ones are linguistic signages often commissioned by the government or local government authorities, and which are usually professionally designed and these signs on public institutions, include road signs, and public announcements. Bottom-up signs are often largely private and exemplified by advertising and commercial signs, and these are often designed and constructed by individual persons and can be demonstrated by shop signs or private business signs.

Differentiating between top-down and bottom-up signs is hardly practical and straightforward hence in alignment with this categorisation, Murbill (2015) grants a nuanced table format adapted from Ben-Rafael et al. (2006), illustrating the objectives of the top-down versus bottom-up approach. The breakdown is as follows:

Top-down approach:

1. Civic establishments: government, religious, educational, municipal-cultural, and medical
2. Public signage of general interest
3. Civic notices
4. Symbols of street titles

Bottom-up approach:

1. Shop signs: food, clothing, and jewellery
2. Private business signs: factories, offices, and agencies
3. Private announcements: “wanted” advertisements, for sale or for rental signs for accommodation or motor vehicles.

This classification provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the diverse manifestations of language in the linguistic landscape, considering both the authoritative, state-driven expressions (top-down) and the grassroots, individually initiated expressions (bottom-up).

These multifaceted relationships between linguistic landscapes and language policies have been examined through both the top-down and bottom-up approaches, often, comparatively. For example, Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) explore the manners in which three specific languages (English, Arabic, and Israel-Hebrew) proliferate within the top-down flow (that is, elements of the linguistic landscape issued by governance agencies and in line with local or central government policies) and those within the bottom-up flow (that is, signage that is designed and posted by individual independent actors). The results demonstrate that the Israel-Hebrew language is highly occurring (almost always) within the

top-down signs across all the three regions under study (Palestine localities, Jewish Israeli, and East Jerusalem). On the other hand, the bottom-up signages also incorporate other linguistic codes, including among others, Russian.

2.2.4 Monolingualism

Eliis (2006) defines monolingualism as people's aptitude to create a linguistic code and use it. The concept of 'monolingualism' thus references the ability of individual(s) to speak only a single (one) language.

2.2.5 Bilingualism

Bialystok (2001) defines bilingualism as the ability to use and control the use of two languages only. Usually, the official language is the native and the following is the foreign language which may be learned simultaneously in a bilingual community.

2.2.6 Multilingualism

Gorter (2006) presents the study of Linguistic Landscape as a new approach to multilingualism, an innovative investigation of significant subjects about the field of sociolinguistics. LL researchers have clasped this approach and have since examined multilingual language use in different communities worldwide.

Social multilingualism as a recurrent focal point and critical feature of the Linguistic landscape has greatly expanded since Gorter's (2006) edited special issue. Shohamy and Gorter (2009) and more recently edited volumes include explorations concentrating on multilingualism in numerous communities from several frameworks in which numerous methodologies have been utilised.

2.3 The complex dynamics of the linguistic landscape

One recurring revelation in linguistic landscape studies is the divergence between the languages audibly spoken by a local population, known as the soundscape and the linguistic diversity observed in the Linguistic Landscape of a given setting. Contrary to the assumption that the merely mirrors the languages spoken, it is increasingly recognised as an outcome of intricate power struggles over legitimacy, space, policy, ownership, and ideology. It serves as a localised “symbolic construction of public space” in addition to warranting analysis besides interpretation (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Shohamy, 2012).

2.4 The functions of language in the linguistic landscape

Landry and Bourhis (1997) characterise signs as “markers of the relative power and status of the linguistic communities inhabiting the territory” (p. 32). Signs play a significant role in signifying the languages prevalent in a particular community. For example, the prevalence of English information signs in Windhoek can be interpreted as an indication that English speakers reside in that area. Conversely, a Chinese sign in Windhoek may not necessarily imply a Chinese-speaking community but could be an attempt to infuse the place with a ‘China’ ambience, emphasising solidarity rather than asserting power.

It is the collective impact of signs that unravels their nuanced and contextual significance within the larger linguistic landscape. In essence, linguistic landscape studies underscore the complexity of language use in public spaces, highlighting the multifaceted interplay of power dynamics, symbolic constructions, and the collective impact of linguistic expressions on the interpretation of public spaces.

2.5 Distinguishing informational and symbolic functions in the linguistic landscape

Landry and Bourhis (1997) emphasise two key functions when examining signs in a community's linguistic landscape: the informative function, marking the linguistic borders of the community, and the symbolic function, indicating the presence or potential oppression of a language. However, Scollon and Scollon's (2003) state that semiotic framework introduces four crucial questions to consider when analysing indexicality, shedding light on the complexity of interpreting signs in the linguistic landscape:

- Who 'uttered' this?
- Who is the reader?
- What is the social situation?
- Is 'that' part of the material world relevant to the sign?

The approach suggests that the answers to these questions help differentiate the educational in addition to representational functions of a sign. If a sign provides hints about someone or something not physically present in the community, it is categorised as symbolic. Conversely, if a sign directly showcases evidence of the actual presence of something depicted on the sign, it serves an informational purpose (Landry & Bourhis, 1997).

Scollon and Scollon's (2003) framework suggests a more nuanced perspective. Differentiating between the informative and symbolic functions in linguistic landscape research becomes crucial. The informational function pertains to the basic message a sign conveys, utilising language as a method of communiqué. This is often affiliated with top-

down signage on clerical structures or learning institutes, delineating the linguistic territory's borders.

In essence, the integration of semiotic analysis into the study of linguistic landscapes grants a valuable background for understanding the intricate interplay between symbolic and informational functions. It prompts researchers to delve deeper into the context, social dynamics, and material relevance of signs, enriching our comprehension of the nuanced ways in which language operates within public spaces.

The dominance of a language in the Linguistic Landscape significantly influences perceptions of power, status, and vitality, while marginalising languages with less visibility. This dynamic is evident in various contexts, where the presence of a dominant language reinforces its perceived strength and cultural significance. For instance, Gorter et al. (2019) highlight how the visibility of minority languages correlates with their societal negotiations and power relations.

According to Edelman (2010), Gorter invented 'multilingual cityscapes' to circumvent the usage of the 'linguistic landscapes', as it implies townships and villages while the studies of signs were primarily instituted in capitals. Ultimately, this calls for the criticality of the prior need for the identification of what would be regarded as constituting a linguistic landscape (sign), as this is quite critical for the conducting of studies of linguistic landscapes, quantitatively.

2.6 Language policy

The linguistic discipline of Linguistic Landscape has over the years advanced from initially being chiefly interested in large quantitative examinations of the proliferation of

particular linguistic structures and variations on written signage within public spaces of given entire cities, or even countries. It has however developed into focusing more on ethnographic characterisations of how people communicate through the use of diverse semiotic symbols and signs, and often within specific smaller spaces such as a specific street within a neighbourhood or a neighbourhood (Shohamy, 2012).

Enthused by the seminal scholarship of Scollon and Scollon (2003), scholars such as Blommaert (2013) argue that the linguistic landscape must be viewed as a culturally prolix expanse which classically affords established customs for beings who utilise it. Developing from post-humanist theoretical foundations, including the Actor-Network theoretical explications, Pennycook (2019) perpetuated this ideological imagination of the concept and presented the concept of “agency” and “language” as spread within human as well as non-human actors (and these include smells, objects, and space itself) which collectively represent and form the linguistic landscape of a geographic space. In Pennycook’s words, this can be imagined as the “semiotic assemblage”.

Historically, language policies have been utilised in controlling language usage within specified areas and states. They are usually a representation of the ruling class hence the bond among the languages favoured by states and the linguistic landscape which serves as a symbolic construction of the public sphere (Ben Rafel et al., 2006). Shohamny (2006) emphasises that the linguistic landscape is the proliferation of and processes through which the language policy is realised. Language policies not only entail the planning and designation of the official languages but also guide the usage of minority languages. Language policies protect minority languages in the linguistic landscape as their use won’t

entirely be altered and the actual language usage is dependent upon several factors and not solely on the language policy. Some of the factors include politics and economics.

Linguistic landscape elements are language policy processes that preserve beliefs as well as the ranking of given languages, and oftentimes, at the exclusion of other languages. For instance, language activists within several minority regions of Europe have been observed to paint over signs within their neighbourhoods which they believe reflect “wrong” names. This act in itself signals to the neutral passers-by the existence of a struggle over linguistic rights (Aiestaran et al., 2010). Such disputes on the location denomination to utilise and the significance of the language on signage may be prolonged. The language utilised on these signs impacts the judgement of second language learners with regards to the perceived statuses of the languages and ultimately affects their conduct linguistically.

Most former colonial languages such as English, French and Portuguese have been retained in post-independent African countries as not only the medium of instruction in schools but also within the official language policies as the official languages of business. This is mostly done for communication as they are also the languages that provide African countries with the code/channel for communicating with citizens of other countries outside of the continent of Africa. Accumulating proof, however, presents these linguistic guidelines as being unsuitable for African communities (Kotze, 2010).

2.7 Political decisions and linguistic dynamics: The case of English in Namibia

The sole preference for English as Namibia’s official language in 1989 was a political decision with multifaceted implications. This decision, made in the context of a former apartheid colony under the white minority South African government that favoured

Afrikaans, reflects the complex interplay of historical, political, and linguistic factors (Iipinge & Huddleston, 2023). The imposition of the coloniser's language often leads to linguistic adaptation, where the language of the colonisers becomes the dominant and widely adopted language within the country's borders.

In the case of Namibia, English was alleged to be a 'neutral' language, chosen to distance Namibia from the linguistic associations with the former apartheid regime (Iipinge & Huddleston). This decision aligned with the global trend of English being recognised as the leading widely used world language and one of the preferred languages of official business for international organisations, among them, the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and the Commonwealth. English, with its global reach, satisfied key principles outlined in the Lusaka UNIN Linguistic workshop intended for Namibia, including unity, acceptability, science and technology, feasibility, wider communication, familiarity, Pan Africanism, and alignment with the United Nations (Duggal, 1981).

The imposition of English as the official language in Namibia mirrors historical instances where former colonial powers enforced their languages for administrative and educational purposes. Examples include France imposing French as the medium of instruction in Mali and Portugal implementing the Assimilado Policy with Portuguese in Mozambique and Angola.

The decision to embrace English in Namibia was not merely linguistic but deeply political, reflecting efforts to redefine the country's identity in the post-apartheid era. It also illustrates the complex dynamics involved in language policy decisions, where considerations of neutrality, global communication, and historical legacies intersect. The

consequences of such decisions are far-reaching, influencing education, communication, and the linguistic landscape of the nation.

2.8 Linguistic signage: Influences and power dynamics

Spolsky and Cooper (1991) provide insightful guidelines that shed light on the factors influencing the choice of languages on signs, revealing the intricate dynamics at play in linguistic signage. The three guidelines outlined by Spolsky and Cooper offer a nuanced understanding of the motivations behind language selection.

2.9 Language Familiarity

The decision to construct signage in a linguistic choice of the sign-producers underscores the importance of linguistic proficiency among those creating the signs. This guideline reflects the practical consideration of choosing a language that the sign-makers are comfortable and proficient in (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009).

2.9.1 Intended Reader's Language

The preference for writing signs in a language expected to be utilised by the projected users emphasises the importance of linguistic proficiency among the target audience. This guideline acknowledges the communicative aspect of signage, aiming to cater to the linguistic competence of those who are meant to interpret the signs (Backhaus, 2007).

2.9.2 Symbolic Value

The consideration of whether sign writers prefer the usage of their language or a given language with which they would like to identify introduces the notion of symbolic value. This guideline goes beyond mere linguistic functionality and delves into the symbolic and identity-related aspects of language choice in signage (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). The symbolic function of language on signage plays a key role in reinforcing or challenging social hierarchies and identities.

2.9.3 Understanding Language Attitudes

The prominence of language in community places serves as a strategic assertion of power and identity, reflecting broader sociopolitical dynamics. In multilingual environments, the absence or presence of language(s) within signage can indicate dominance or marginalisation (Shohamy, 2006). In essence, the selection of languages on signs is a multifaceted process influenced by linguistic proficiency, communicative considerations, and symbolic values. It goes beyond mere functionality to encompass the complex interplay of power dynamics and identity construction within a linguistic landscape.

Language attitudes represent the perceptions and individual feelings or responses towards a given language. The main constituent models of language attitudes are affect (feelings), cognition (beliefs), and conation (readiness for action) (Baker, 1992). Any given component from which language attitudes are examined is related to how respondents view a language, the impression the language gives them, and what they believe should be done with it. However, a sizeable number of scholars have solely focused on only two components, often neglecting the third (Garrett, 2010).

2.9.4 Exploring Linguistic Landscape: An Overview of Previous Studies and Approaches

The study of linguistic landscapes in urban areas has evolved significantly, focusing on the visual representation of multilingualism. Researchers have employed various methodologies to analyse how these landscapes reflect sociolinguistic dynamics, ethnic identities, and language policies (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009; Blommaert, 2013).

Instead of merely examining the linguistic signage itself, the emphasis has shifted to understanding the language behaviours exhibited by various ethnocultural and national groups inhabiting these urban spaces. These studies delved into the broader sociolinguistic context, aiming to unravel the intricate relationships and interactions between different linguistic communities. They shed light on how languages were utilised, negotiated, and asserted within the public sphere (Spolsky, 2009).

The choice of urban areas as research sites acknowledged the heightened complexity of language interactions in densely populated and culturally diverse environments. Urban linguistic landscapes, with their vibrant mix of languages, scripts, and communication modes, served as dynamic arenas for understanding the multifaceted nature of language use (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006).

Overall, these studies laid the groundwork for a more nuanced understanding of linguistic landscapes by transcending purely visual analysis. By investigating the language behaviours of diverse groups within urban contexts, researchers gained a deeper appreciation for the social, cultural, and linguistic intricacies that contribute to the rich tapestry of multilingualism within our cities.

Zimny (2017) states that:

I [Zimny] investigate the public signage of Independence Avenue in Windhoek, Namibia, on the one hand evaluating to what extent Namibia's language policy (LP) and the real language practices of Namibians are reflected here, and on the other how commercial and non-commercial entities place and design public signs differently and what this may reveal about their identities. (p. 4)

The study established that the linguistic landscape evinced the dominant utilisation of the English language in both the physical as well as virtual spaces of Independence Avenue, and these seemed to be distinct from the real life and actual linguistic practices for most Namibians. Furthermore, the result notes that public signs are divided into zones, each zone reflecting a different quality in signs. The central and busier sections of the street evinced as more exclusive and chiefly directed at attracting tourists. On the other hand, the signage on the two perpendicular zones largely reflects more on the notion of places of necessity.

A similar study on sociolinguistics was conducted by Sitali (2022), “...to evaluate the practice of multilingualism within the Independence Avenue and Mandume Ndemufayo's signage, the language used on signage, as well as the placement and range of designs developed by distinct designers” (p. 8). The study was motivated by languages found in the signage of Mandume Ndemufayo and Independence Avenue streets and sought to analyse the selection principles utilised in deciding the omission and/or addition of the numerous languages in the two streets.

2.10 Research gap

Pütz and Mundt (2019) state that research on the linguistic landscape in Africa has largely been underrepresented especially in Sub-Saharan Africa which has multifaceted landscapes and consequently, an intermission in the literature on the linguistic landscape in the framework of Namibia.

More attention to linguistic landscape studies has focused on large towns and capitals while neglecting local marginalised villages just as the virtual linguistic landscape. Studies

focused on these landscapes are rare, stressing the need for more research on underdeveloped areas.

Although the researcher on the current study has found a few studies (Zimny, 2017; Sitali, 2022) conducted on the linguistic landscape in Namibia, upon reviewing the literature on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana, there was a gap in the signage studies. The studies focused more on the design of the signage and their presentation on the linguistic landscape rather than the effectiveness of these signs to the readers, their attitudes towards the signs and the reasoning. Therefore, this study analysed the language beliefs of sign readers to understand the language preferences of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana.

2.11 Theoretical framework

Linguistic landscape studies have been carped for their lack of consistency in reliable and constant methodology and theories. However, this stems from the rapid expansion of the newly incorporated interest areas of study in the linguistic landscape in which new paradigms, approaches and theoretical explications have been propounded. Past scholarship within the linguistic landscape has largely been largely quantitative analyses of pictures of signage, which were collected and largely quantitatively analysed. Scholars such as Amos (2017) and Ivanov (2023) identify the need for the involvement of sign writers and sign readers in linguistic landscape studies, and this has resulted in contemporary studies within the discipline incorporating mixed methodologies. Ultimately, contemporary studies are often seen to combine both quantitative and qualitative designs. Consequently, a profound number of these studies have made use of, questionnaires, interviews, group discussions as well as other critical methodologies for obtaining data. Edmund (2017) adopted, for example, adopts interviews, ethnographic

observations, as well as socio-historical information for data collection. This is, of course, in addition to the images of the signage. The study uses all these methods complementary to each other to analyse the linguistic landscape of assimilation and migration in Cary, North Carolina. These data collection methods were utilised because of the observation that marginalised languages were rarely present within the linguistic landscape of the towns under study. The research was thus interested in exploring the reasons for such absence and concludes that the glaring absence of minority languages public signage was largely resulting from a lack of institutional and parental assistance, the minute size of demographics of minority ethnolinguistic communities, migration, and the lack of connections with and between families and friends.

Scollon and Scollon (2003) developed the term “geosemiotics”. Geosemiotics sustains that the location of action in the world has a substantial influence on its meaning. Scollon and Scollon define geosemiotics as the study of the social significance of the material location of discourses and signs, as well as our behaviours in the material world. It designates the relationship between semiotics and the material universe in addition to how humans behave, judge, and interpret language as displayed in the physical and social environment around them. The language used on the sign and within which it is utilised sign may represent characteristics of a product that is not in place within its geographic location or index the community. The main idea is that the meaning of signs and symbols can be derived from how and where they are placed in a linguistic landscape under the place semiotics approach.

Scollon and Scollon (2003, p. 124), state that signage can traverse from placement, within a particular frame to its placement in the world. This research is centred on the analyses

of how certain languages utilise signs relative to their position, which may be a direct indication of their status, within that society or the world at large. Thus, this research used Geosemiotics as a theory amongst others as a basis for the analysis.

The Geosemiotics approach applied by Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) has been progressively utilised in linguistic landscape studies. The Geosemiotics theory was solidly pioneered by Scollon and Scollon (2003) and supplementary pragmatic in a collection assembled by Jaworski and Thurlow (2010).

The signage ranged from public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings. Commercial signage is spread and placed throughout the LL, and how the design (that is, the materials with which the signs are made, the size of signs and their graphic design features regarding font and colour) of signs, varied across and within these two broad categories. Looking at these factors could reveal possible relationships between different sign producers, their ideologies and how sign producers choose to express their identities in the LL.

The theory of place semiotics is primarily concerned with the interpretation methodology which enables the classification of language within the substance setting based on its affiliation to language and place (Wang, 2020). Scollon emphasised that the interpretation of signs can be deduced from their designated position within the linguistic landscape. It is impossible to analyse the meaning of the text without accounting for the social and physical setting in which it is displayed. In this regard, the emplacement of the languages on the signs, the visual representation of languages and the positioning of languages on the signs whether they are placed on top of each other or placed below each other. This

study mainly focused on the “place semiotics” of public signs Eenhana, as well as visual semiotics, which investigates how pictures, including signs, images, text, photographs, and other visual media, are produced as meaningful wholes for graphic interpretation, in code preference, labels, and placement analysis.

2.12 Chapter summary

The chapter reviewed related literature and provided an insightful explanation of the study’s theoretical framework. The next chapter, Chapter 3 provides the study’s research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains how the research was conducted and consists of the research design, research data of the study, research instrument, data collection techniques, and data analysis.

3.2 Research design

A mixed-method approach was employed, synergising both quantitative and qualitative methods to achieve the comprehensive goals of this study. A quantitative method was instrumental in systematically gauging the prevalence of specific languages within the signage of Eenhana Town. This approach played a fundamental role in establishing a foundational understanding of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town. Quantifying language frequencies not only offered a tangible measure of linguistic representation but also provided a quantitative basis for situating the linguistic diversity in the town's public space. Furthermore, this method facilitated the calculation of the percentage of sign readers' attitudes toward the languages featured in the linguistic landscape, contributing valuable insights into the community's language preferences as manifested in public signage.

In relation to with the quantitative approach, the qualitative method was harnessed, driven by the inherent nature of the study. This qualitative dimension delved into the intricate fabric of linguistic preferences, beliefs, and ideologies held by the sign readers in Eenhana. Through methods of interviews, surveys, and participant observations, the qualitative analysis aimed to unearth the cultural and social nuances influencing language choices

and interpretations within the community. By capturing the subjective experiences and perspectives of individuals, the qualitative approach enriched the overall understanding of the linguistic landscape, revealing the intricate interplay between language, identity, and societal dynamics.

3.3 Population

The study's population encompassed the entirety of public signage in Eenhana Town, spanning both commercial and non-commercial signs. The analysis extended beyond the physical manifestations of language in signage to include the residents of the town who served as active participants in the linguistic landscape and those who read and interacted with the signs daily. This inclusive approach aimed to capture the lived experiences and perceptions of the diverse community, providing a holistic view of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana.

Figure 3.1 Map of Eenhana



3.4 Sample

In this study, a non-probability sampling approach was employed, acknowledging the impracticality of examining the entirety of commercial and non-commercial signs in Eenhana Town due to their sheer volume. To ensure a representative and credible analysis, the researcher purposively selected 20 signs, comprising ten commercial and ten non-commercial signs strategically dispersed around the town. This purposive selection aimed to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the linguistic landscape, incorporating various contexts and domains within Eenhana.

Inclusion Criteria

- **Sign Type:** Only commercial and non-commercial signs were included in the sample.
- **Location:** Signs had to be located within Eenhana Town.
- **Strategic Dispersion:** Signs were strategically dispersed around various areas of the town to ensure geographical and contextual diversity.
- **Purposeful Representation:** Signs were selected purposively to reflect a variety of linguistic, functional, and social contexts within the urban landscape.
- **Sample Size:** A total of **20 signs** were included: 10 commercial (e.g., business signage) and 10 non-commercial (e.g., public information signs, posters).

Using the observation checklist, the researcher was able to collect 20 signs: 10 commercial and 10 non-commercial. Of the 10 commercial signs, there was a lack of variety of the signs in the Oshiwambo language as opposed to those in the English language which were frequent in the town.

Recognising the challenge of identifying residents without direct residence records, a snowball sampling technique was adopted. Given that potential participants might not be readily identifiable as residents of Eenhana, this approach relied on referrals and recommendations from initial interviewees. A total of fifteen sign readers from Eenhana were strategically chosen through this iterative process, facilitating access to individuals with a vested interest and active engagement in the town's linguistic landscape. The snowball sampling method not only addressed the logistical challenge of resident identification but also ensured a more nuanced and informed exploration of language attitudes and preferences within the community.

By combining purposive sampling for signs and snowball sampling for resident interviews, this study aimed to strike a balance between depth and breadth, offering a robust examination of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town while capturing the diverse perspectives of its resident sign readers.

3.5 Research instruments

The research instruments employed for this study encompassed an observation checklist and interview guides designed to navigate the linguistic landscape of Eenhana. The observation checklist served as a systematic tool that quantitatively recorded the frequency and distribution of different languages on public signage throughout the town. This checklist facilitated a structured and comprehensive analysis, allowing the researcher to capture key elements of the linguistic landscape, including the presence of commercial and non-commercial signs, the languages featured, and their respective frequencies. A

structured observation checklist that methodically documented the frequency and distribution of languages on Eenhana's public signage was used in this study to quantify the data. The languages used were recorded, along with whether the signs were monolingual or multilingual, and each sign was classified as either commercial or non-commercial. The researcher was able to provide numerical data on language presence throughout the sampled signs by using the checklist to record the frequency of each language's appearance. This methodical technique made it possible to analyse the town's signage for linguistic patterns in a straightforward and quantifiable manner, providing information about the prevalence and visibility of specific languages in various public areas.

In tandem with the observation checklist, interview guides were crafted to conduct in-depth qualitative interviews with residents of Eenhana Town. These guides were structured to explore the linguistic preferences, beliefs, and ideologies of sign readers in the town. The open-ended nature of the interviews aimed to elicit rich, nuanced responses, providing valuable insights into the subjective experiences and perceptions of individuals interacting with the linguistic landscape. The combination of observational data and qualitative interviews aimed to offer a holistic understanding of language use, attitudes, and preferences within the community. By employing a multi-faceted research instrument, this study sought to leverage both quantitative and qualitative methods, fostering a comprehensive exploration of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town and the dynamics influencing language perceptions among its residents.

3.5 Procedure

The data collection process involved a dual approach, employing both observational techniques and interviews to glean comprehensive insights into the linguistic landscape of Eenhana. In the initial phase, the researcher conducted on-site observations in public spaces across Eenhana Town. Armed with a smartphone, the researcher captured 20 images of commercial and non-commercial signs. The selection of signs adhered to a purposive sampling strategy, specifically focusing on monolingual signs featuring English and Oshikwanyama. This methodical approach aimed to ensure a representative sample of linguistic elements within the town's public sphere.

Subsequently, the researcher engaged in a qualitative data collection process through interviews with sign readers in Eenhana Town. The interviews were thoughtfully designed, utilising open-ended questions to encourage participants to express their linguistic preferences, beliefs, and attitudes toward the signage they encounter in their daily environment. The responses were systematically recorded to capture the nuances of language perceptions among the town's residents.

By integrating these two complementary data collection methods, the study aimed to amalgamate quantitative observations with qualitative insights, fostering a nuanced understanding of the linguistic landscape and the lived experiences of individuals navigating this communicative environment in Eenhana.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of condensing gathered data into practicable sizes, identifying patterns, and emerging summaries to enhance comprehension (Cooper & Shindler, 2017).

In this study, quantitative content analysis was employed to analyse the collected data. The photographs captured were systematically categorised based on the language used, and their interpretation was conducted with a focus on their efficacy for the sign readers and their language preferences.

The scheme that was developed for this study focused on the selection of languages and the way they are presented in the linguistic landscape. In this study, particular attention was given to the positioning of text - whether it appeared at the top, left, or centre of signs. These locations were considered more prominent based on the specific type of sign under examination. The analysis delved into various linguistic elements, such as font size, colour, accompanying images, repetitions of words, verbs, adjectives, articles, and the number of modifier words, among other linguistic devices and features. By scrutinising these aspects, the study sought to unveil the nuanced dynamics of language display within the linguistic landscape. Through this analytical approach the study aimed to unravel the intricate interplay of linguistic elements that contribute to the perception of code preference in the public signage of Eenhana.

Qualitative data gathered through interviews, was subjected to a thorough examination, and themes were extracted to condense and organise the information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This qualitative analysis provides depth and context to the findings, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the language beliefs and ideologies of the sign readers in Eenhana Town.

Furthermore, a Geosemiotics approach to sign analysis was integrated into the overall methodology. This approach considers the material location of signs within the linguistic

landscape, emphasising the interplay between language and place. The utilisation of quantitative data, forming the basis for narrative paragraphs, ensures a comprehensive exploration of the linguistic landscape in Eenhana. In summary, the combined use of quantitative content analysis, qualitative thematic analysis, and a geosemiotic approach contribute to a robust and multifaceted data analysis process. This approach aims to uncover patterns, meanings, and nuances within the linguistic landscape, providing a rich and comprehensive understanding of language preferences and attitudes in Eenhana.

3.7 Reliability and validity

This thesis is sensitive to the context of its qualitative nature. Hence the findings are dependent on the location of the research. To warrant accurate and reliable findings, the researcher ensured that the instruments utilised in the data collection process, the observation checklist and the interviews accurately catered to the aims of the research. The researcher ensured that questions specifically targeted the aims of the study and did not divert from the focus. The questions were also well-formulated and clear. This was accomplished through a pilot study that was conducted moreover, the researcher ensured that the data obtained during the data collection process were precisely transcribed as collected without the influence of the researcher's perspective.

Reliability and validity are integral components of research methodology, playing pivotal roles in establishing the trustworthiness and accuracy of research findings. The chosen research methods have been meticulously designed to ensure the precise measurement of the research objectives. The purposive sampling method was deliberately selected to maximise a comprehensive representation of the attitudes prevalent among the residents of Eenhana Town. This strategic sampling approach was complemented by the utilisation

of an observation checklist and an interview guide featuring open-ended questions. These instruments were designed to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences related to the linguistic landscape of the town.

The reliability of the research methods was underscored by the systematic and consistent application of the observation checklist during on-site data collection. The deliberate selection of monolingual signs in English and Oshikwanyama further contributed to the reliability of the observations, ensuring a focused and standardised approach. Additionally, the validity of the research methods was emphasised through the thoughtful construction of interview guides, incorporating open-ended questions. This qualitative approach allows participants the freedom to express their nuanced language preferences, beliefs, and attitudes, thereby enhancing the validity of the data collected. Lastly, the deliberate alignment of purposive sampling, observation checklist, and interview guide with the research objectives enhances the reliability and validity of the research methods, ultimately fortifying the credibility of the study's findings.

3.8 Research ethics

The ethical clearance certificate was obtained from the University of Namibia Decentralisation Ethic Committee (with reference to appendix 1). The research permission letter was issued by the Postgraduate Research Support Services (with reference to appendix 2). Participation was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time without negative precautions. The names and identities of the participants were protected. To ensure the protection of identity, pseudonyms were utilised when the need emerged in the study. The researcher will keep the data for five years in encrypted files on an iCloud account after which they will be destroyed. The

researcher followed the ethical principle of intellectual property and copyrights by acknowledging all sources that were used in the study by including them in the references list. The researcher will get the research published. Upon publication, the researcher hopes to distribute a copy to the Eenhana Town Council to help it understand the linguistic diversity of its residents or lack of it and how effective the linguistic landscape is to the public in terms of understanding which might aid in their future linguistic landscaping.

3.9 Chapter summary

The present chapter provided insights into the research methods, covering aspects such as the data collection approach, readability, and research ethics. The next chapter presents and analyses the study's findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter comprised the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings from this study. This chapter begins by presenting findings on language use on commercial and non-commercial signage within Eenhana Town. The researcher further interprets the placement and designs of different sign categories. This analysis has aided the researcher in continuing with the discussion on how signage reflects the linguistic practices of residents in Eenhana, the attitudes they have, and their linguistic preferences on Eenhana's linguistic landscape. Using the observation checklist, the researcher was able to collect 20 signs: 10 commercial and 10 non-commercial. Of the 10 commercial signs, there was a lack of variety of the signs in the Oshiwambo language as opposed to those in the English language which were frequent in the town. Likewise, the non-commercial signs in the Oshiwambo language in the town were also difficult to locate as opposed to the non-commercial signs in English. They were either a bit further from the town or smaller in size which was a huge signifier of their status. The study focused on the placement of signage within the town to derive meaning as it was informed by the Geomesiotics approach. Within the commercial signs, there are distinctions between signs produced by the locals and those of the large companies. The non-commercial signage may be identified in four specific types: town council signs, banking signs, public awareness signs and religious signs.

4.2 Linguistic landscapes in Eenhana residents

The study aimed to ascertain the extent to which the language(s) used in the linguistic landscape reflects the actual linguistic practices of Eenhana residents. Furthermore, the study explored the language preferences of the sign readers on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana. A total of three languages were used within the linguistic landscape of Eenhana namely English, Oshiwambo (Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga), and Portuguese. About 90% of all the signs in town were written in English and 9.5% in Oshiwambo while 0.5% equated to one sign written in Portuguese. About 20% of all the sampled signs in Eenhana Town were bilingual, English and Oshiwambo.

4.2.1 Identifying code preference

The methodological approach utilised to ascertain linguistic preference in this investigation is informed by Scollon and Scollon's Geosemiotic framework, which asserts that one language is generally assigned a more salient position on signage. They underscored the notion that the deliberate arrangement of languages on signs functions as a critical indicator of code preference, thus facilitating the identification of the language regarded as more dominant. In analysing the linguistic landscape of Eenhana using the Geosemiotics approach, the study focused on the social significance of the material location of signs within the town. The placement of signs in specific frames and their distribution across public spaces revealed patterns of language use and social practices in Eenhana. The findings highlighted that the categorisation of signs, particularly in the commercial and non-commercial sectors, was influenced by their intended functions. Commercial signs, associated with businesses intent on selling products or services,

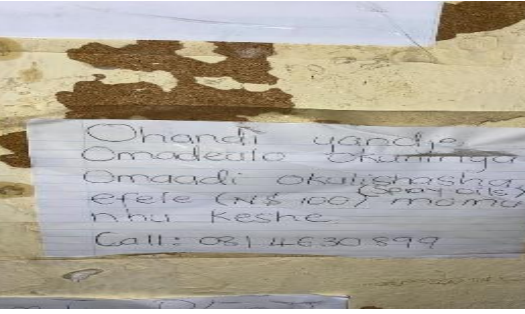
differed significantly from non-commercial signs, which aimed to inform, instruct, or warn.

Within commercial signage, distinctions were observed between signs produced by smaller, mostly local businesses and those of larger companies. On the non-commercial front, specific sign types included government/town council signs, banking signs, and public awareness campaign signs. These distinctions contributed to a nuanced understanding of how signs were produced and placed in Eenhana to influence the public. Code preference within bilingual and multilingual signs was explored, emphasising the prominence of one language over another based on its placement. This involved considering factors like font size, colour, accompanying images, and linguistic features.

The following linguistic landscapes were used to collect data using interviews:

Figure 4.1 Sampled linguistic landscapes



	
Translates: Hymn books and covers for sale	Translates to 'I am giving training on how to prepare perfume, N\$100 per person.'
	
	

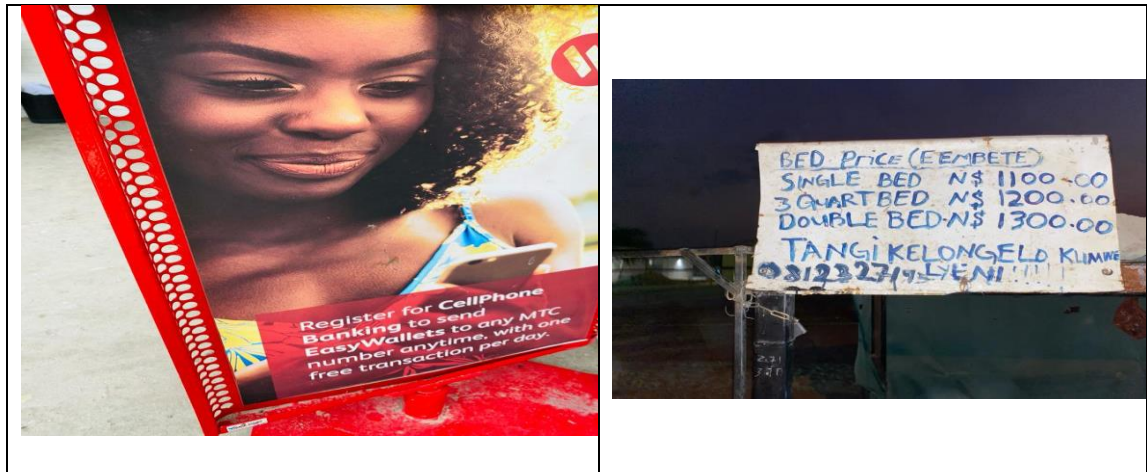


Figure 4.2 Paratus sign



The Oshiwambo language has been employed in Figure 4.2 sign to engage the predominant demographic of the town, characterised by Oshiwambo speakers, in utilising the internet services that are being provided. The sign conveys to the public that internet services are of high quality, a term frequently encountered in product marketing. It endeavours to reassure potential customers that the offerings merit their financial investment, thereby encouraging them to experiment with the product. The phrase "internet" appears in English and is never translated nor adapted into Oshiwambo, even though the sign uses Oshiwambo throughout to appeal to local people. For monolingual

Oshiwambo speakers who might not be familiar with the English phrase, this decision might restrict their ability to fully understand or feel the feeling. Similarly, Uushona and Mbenzi (2019) posit that this is indicative of larger trends whereby indigenous languages, such as Oshiwambo, incorporate English (or German earlier) loanwords to adapt new ideas, particularly in fields like technology and marketing. Bilingual audiences may find it easier to notice such borrowings, while monolingual speakers who might not recognize or comprehend the untranslated terminology run the risk of being marginalized. The incorporation of the company's logo on the sign facilitates comprehension for English-speaking individuals based on the textual elements presented. This sign has been strategically positioned along the principal thoroughfare, ensuring its visibility and accessibility to users of the roadway. Regarding commercial signage, there are vivid differences between signs produced by smaller (local) businesses and those of larger companies (local). Under the non-commercial category, there are four more specific types of signage, including government/town council signs, banking signs, public awareness campaign signs, and religious-organisational signs. The study focused mainly on the function and designation of signs where the analysis was on how the signage is being produced and placed to influence the public to want to buy their services.

Figure 4.3 Health campaign sign



The careful selection and arrangement of linguistic elements on the signage reveal a sophisticated approach by the designer to capture the attention and interest of the public. By using different colours, font sizes, and visual elements, the designer has employed a multi-modal strategy to convey the message effectively. In this sign, the designer used a bigger font to highlight ‘fever? weakness? body ache? headache?’ In doing so, the attention of the reader is drawn towards that part of the sign. The light blue background on the part also acts in the same capacity of drawing the attention of the sign reader there. The use of green highlighted capital letters to ‘get tested for both’ is not only attention-grabbing but also carries associations of urgency and importance, making these words stand out prominently. This supports the findings of Li and Chen (2023), who found that ads with a lot of color contrast and graphic prominence were able to hold viewers' attention for longer. The effectiveness of employing visual hierarchy and rich colors to direct the viewer to important message elements is further supported by these findings. The inclusion of a picture showing a woman holding a toddler while the health personnel stares at the pair as two more people, a woman holding a child and a man, are queued up waiting on their turn to be tested sends a message that everyone, young or old can be tested including children. In this case, the image acts as a powerful visual anchor, drawing individuals in and encouraging them to engage with the content.

Figure 4.4 Paratus Internet sign



The internet sign Figure 4.4 is written in Oshindonga (an Oshiwambo dialect) in large blue font size. The dark blue colour dominates the writing against a white background, which makes it easier for readers. The brand logo is placed below the wording, so the reader knows which brand they should associate the fast connection to.

Figure 4.5 Namibian Breweries billboard



Figure 4.5, the Windhoek draught sign produced by Namibian Breweries has been professionally written and thoughtfully placed at the entrance of the town at the T-junction. Perfect time and perfect beer are written in big bold letters that capture the attention of the reader alongside a picture of two draught beers that are cold with water

droplets showing the preferred temperature that is regarded as perfect. Against a white background, it indicates who is eligible to consume and with caution. This sign caters to the overall population as those who do not speak English but can see the two opened draught beers can grasp the essence of the advertisement.

Figure 4.6 Omashako Meat Supply



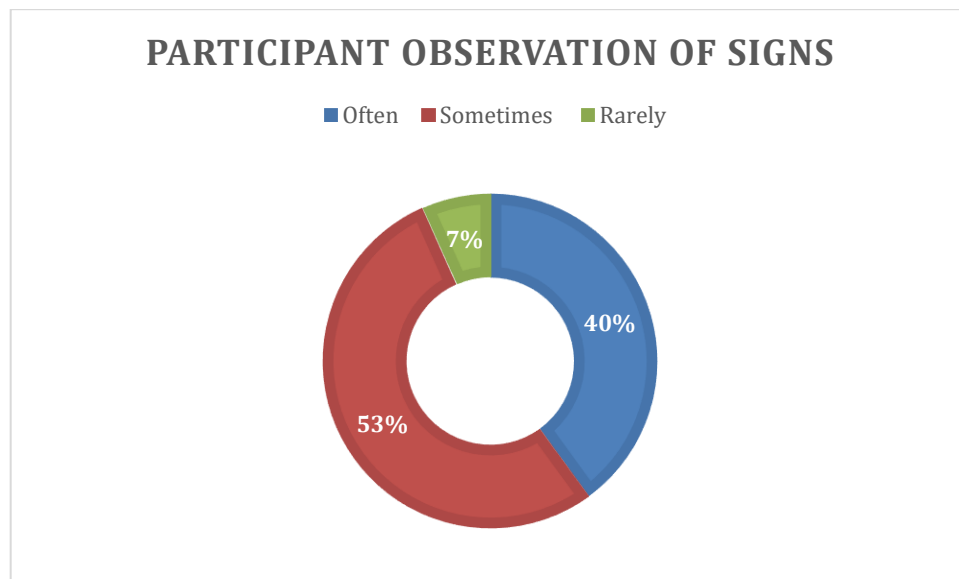
The sign in Figure 4.6 is bilingual in that it is written in Oshiwambo and English. The phrase Omashako in Oshikwanyama, comes from the word *eshako* which translates to big. Hence, it appeals to the Oshiwambo-speaking community as it is constructed in their language, and they would feel welcome there, and they know that the bags they would purchase are big. Equally, the sign's usage of English 'meat supplies' ensures that the English speakers feel welcome, too. The fork and knife design above conveys a message

of good quality service and a certain level of comfort with the business symbolising warmth and feeling welcomed.

4.3 Linguistic landscapes and sign readers' attitude in Eenhana Town

This section presents and discusses the perspective of sign readers regarding the linguistic elements present within the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town. This was necessary to explore the attitudes and language preferences of respondents. The investigation revealed that a significant proportion of the respondents (53%) exhibited attentiveness to the signs, while forty per cent (40%) of the participants frequently engaged with the signs. Approximately 7% of the respondents seldom interacted with the signs. These findings suggest a limited level of engagement with the linguistic landscapes in Eenhana. Figure 4.7 presents a graphical representation of these findings:

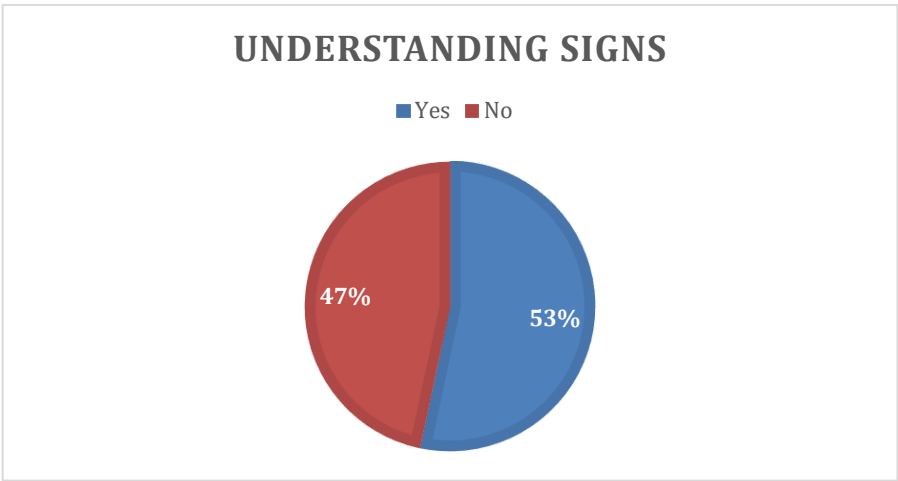
Figure 4.7 Observation of signs



This study found that participants' poor engagements with the signs were attributed to the personal design of the signs: Two participants noted that the signs were not

interesting and had nothing exciting to look at: this study found that the size of the signs and how it is designed greatly affected how interested sign readers were. The participants' poor interaction with the signage, which they rated as "not interesting" or not visually appealing, is consistent with new research on the efficacy of sign design. Larger, more noticeable signs with more surface area and unique design elements draw noticeably more visual attention and are viewed as more intriguing, according to eye-tracking studies conducted on commercial streetscapes (Kang et al., 2021). Smaller or less eye-catching signage, on the other hand, draw less attention and do not pique curiosity, which is consistent with the qualitative feedback from participants. Similar to this, Roberts et al. (2023) discovered that factors related to visual design, like colour contrast and typeface scale, are important indicators of attention and persuasion; signs that lack these components are more likely to be ignored by observers. The investigation examined the capacity of participants to comprehend the signs. Approximately 53% of the participants demonstrated an ability to interpret the signs, whereas 47% encountered challenges in understanding certain signs, as illustrated in Figure 4.8:

Figure 4.8 Understanding signs



Furthermore, a significant proportion of the respondents, constituting 80%, indicated a level of satisfaction with the linguistic landscapes present in Eenhana, whereas twenty per cent (20%) expressed dissatisfaction with the signage as depicted in Figure 4.8.

The majority of respondents conveyed satisfaction with the primary language utilised on the signs, which was English. The results demonstrate that participants recognised English as an official language, which they asserted should be employed: *“Yes. English Is our official language and Oshiwambo is our native language”* (Participant 3: Appendix 6) and *“Yes, I am. I like the languages used on the signs. English is our official language in Namibia. Without it, you won’t progress in life such as getting a good paying job. Oshikwanyama doesn’t really add value to our lives nowadays, so it doesn’t hold any status”* (Participant 9: Appendix 12). In contrast, some individuals expressed contentment yet suggested that signage should be multilingual to cater to those who lack proficiency in English the native languages preferred were Oshiwambo and Portuguese. Consequently, the issue of language barriers was identified as a significant concern: *“I’m happy they used English in most signs, but I would have preferred more Oshiwambo signs since this is an area primarily inhabitant by Oshiwambo speakers. The English signs are everywhere especially in the big offices and everywhere else. We sometimes lose interest because we don’t understand unless there’s pictures”* (Participant 1: Appendix 40), and *“No. the signs should have been in both English and Oshiwambo so it’s easy for us also to understand otherwise now, they are only for some people”* (Participant 6: Appendix 9). However, other participants preferred to have the signs in their native languages rather than in English: *“No. they should remove English and put Oshikwanyama. After all, it is*

our language, and we are the inhabitants of Eenhana” (Participant 8: Appendix 11). The participants’ preferences are tabulated as follows:

Table 4.1 Language preferences

Preferred language(s)	Frequency	Percentage
Multilingual	8	53.3
Native	5	33.3
English	2	13.3
Total	15	100

The results presented in this section illustrate how linguistic barriers significantly impeded participants' interactions with the signage. Lestari et al. (2024) discovered that cultural identity, language prestige, and the prominence of disadvantaged languages all have an impact on how symbol users interpret the languages shown on public signage. They also discovered that these sociolinguistic factors are important in deciding which languages are used in public and how onlookers perceive them. This observation was corroborated in the present investigation, wherein participants advocated for the incorporation of their respective languages. Furthermore, the presence of minoritised languages in postcolonial contexts highlights the importance of local practices and identities, influencing reader attitudes. Signage that employs various languages, enhances accessibility and understanding (Champakaew et al., 2023).

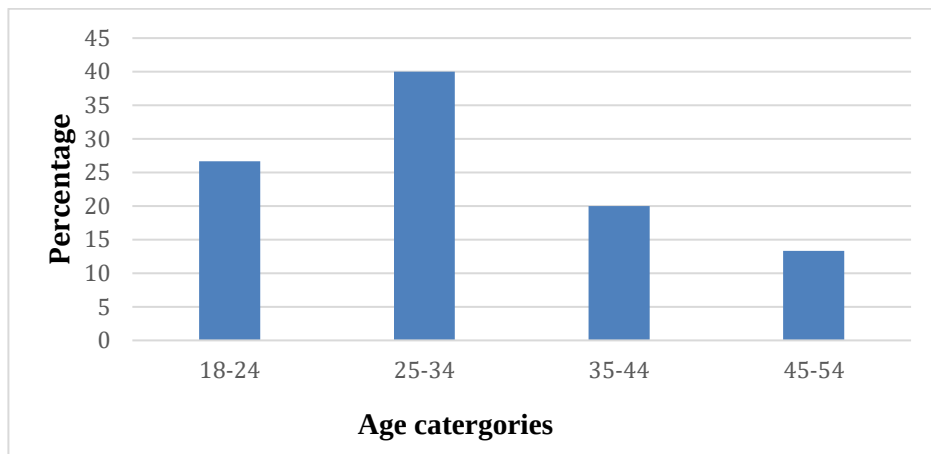
4.5 Demographic characteristics of participants

This study collected data from 15 participants. This section presents the age, occupation, and length of residency of these 15 participants.

4.5.1 Age

The participants were asked how old they were at the time of participating. Figure 4.8 depicts the participants' ages.

Figure 4.9 Participants' age at the time of participating



For analysis, the age of the participants was categorised into four age groups to present a wide scope of participation. Figure 4.9 indicates that most of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 34 years and accounted for 40%. Followed by participants aged between 18 and 24 years old (26%). In addition, twenty per cent (20%) of participants were between the ages of 35 and 44 years old and only 13% of participants were between the ages of 45 and 54 years old.

4.5.2 Length of Residence in Eenhana

Table 4.2 presents how long participants were living in Eenhana and most of the participants (53.3%) lived in Eenhana for 10 years or less. Moreover, twenty per cent (20%) of participants lived in Eenhana for 11 to 20 years. However, only 26.6% of participants lived in Eenhana for more than 20 years.

Table 4.2 Distribution of participants by length of residence

Length of residence	Frequency	Percentage
0-10 years	8	53.3
11-20 years	3	20
More than 20 years	4	26.6
Total	15	100

This study found that participants who had lived in Eenhana for 10 years or more were less likely to notice the town's signage. In addition to stating that they were accustomed to these signs and rarely paid attention to them, participants added that they were able to navigate without the aid of signs: *“Sometimes I do, sometimes I don’t because I have lived here for a long time. I can function without looking at the signs”* (Participant 1: Appendix 4); *“Most times, I don’t because I see them all the time. Other times, I make use of the road signs when driving”* (Participant 5: Appendix 8) and *“Sometimes I do, sometimes I don’t because I have lived here for a long time. I can function without looking at the signs”* (Participant 8: Appendix11). Furthermore, a participant who only lived in Eenhana for 8 months noted utilising the signs frequently to find direction: *“Yes, I do look at them. Though it is a small town, I’m still getting used to it so, from time to time, I do look at the signs”* (Participant 9: Appendix12). As a result, participants emerged as partially engaged in the signage of Eenhana Town. Their partial engagement is influenced by the ability to function without the guidance of the signs since they have inhabited the area for decades. According to recent empirical research, those who have lived in Eenhana for ten years or longer are less likely to see municipal signage. Davis

and Calkins (2022) found that people in long-term care facilities preferred internal spatial knowledge over signage because they were accustomed to recurrent visual signals. Similar to this, theories of visual habituation, such as "banner blindness" seen in interface studies, demonstrate that visual constructs that are regularly encountered can become less salient, which explains why long-term inhabitants cease paying attention to town signs (Hsieh et al., 2022).

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an analysis of the collected data about signage and linguistic landscapes in Eenhana Town. The next chapter, Chapter 5, concludes the study's findings and provides future recommendations in the same endeavour.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The principal aim of this investigation was to examine the linguistic elements present within the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town, with the intent of assessing their efficacy for sign readers and the perceptions held by these individuals towards the linguistic environment. This study encompassed an analysis of both commercial and non-commercial signage. This chapter presents the outcomes of the research findings, along with recommendations for enhancements and prospective studies that should be conducted to attain a more profound comprehension of the linguistic landscape. To accomplish this aim, the objectives delineated below were employed.

5.2. Conclusions

5.2.1 The extent to which the language(s) used in the linguistic landscape reflects the actual linguistic practices of Eenhana residents

One of the objectives of this research was to examine the symbols and prevalent vernacular employed by sign creators for both commercial and non-commercial signage. This investigation was crucial to determine whether the languages utilised genuinely reflect the actual linguistic behaviours exhibited by residents of Eenhana. The linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town unfolds as a vibrant mosaic of languages, prominently featuring Oshiwambo, English, and Portuguese. This linguistic diversity mirrors the multicultural fabric of the community, creating a visual representation of the town's rich tapestry of communication. The findings of the study indicated that a significant

proportion of commercial sign manufacturers operate under the appropriate motive framework, aiming to sway the audience by aligning with their values and preferences.

This is achieved through the emphasis on the expected aesthetic appeal of the signage alongside the marketing lexicon, which reshaped the structure and application of colloquial language and verbal discourse. The employment of Geosemiotics in this analysis serves as a lens through which the intricate interplay of language, space, and meaning comes into focus. Geosemiotics allows for a nuanced exploration of how languages are strategically positioned on signs, unveiling the subtle yet powerful dynamics at play in the linguistic landscape. Code preference, discerned through the deliberate placement and design of languages on signs, provides a captivating narrative of the linguistic choices made by sign producers.

This reveals not only a functional aspect of communication but also sheds light on the broader implications of identity, power dynamics, and the intricate dance of communication within the diverse sociocultural landscape of Eenhana Town. The prominence of specific languages, as indicated by their spatial arrangement and design elements, unveils a rich tapestry where linguistic choices intricately intertwine with notions of identity and power, shaping the communicative essence of the town's public signage.

In addition to this, the selection of a prevalent language by the designers was influenced by their individual linguistic preferences to establish a desired affiliation. This assertion is substantiated by the analysed signs, which indicated that a significant proportion of the

signs were composed in English. This study concludes that the symbols employed did not fully encapsulate the genuine linguistic behaviours present.

5.2.2 The sign readers' attitude toward the language(s) used on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town

A considerable percentage of the participants sporadically demonstrated a degree of attentiveness towards the symbols. Nevertheless, the dimensions of the symbols and their design significantly influenced the level of interest exhibited by sign readers. The degree of attention afforded to the symbols by the respondents was predominantly contingent upon the linguistic context. Although most of the respondents expressed contentment with the symbols, the existence of a language barrier constituted a significant obstacle in their interaction with the symbols. Despite this impediment, the study revealed an affirmative disposition among participants towards the linguistic landscape.

5.2.3 The language preferences of the sign readers on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana

This study found that despite the prevailing perception that English serves as the predominant professional language in Eenhana; speakers of indigenous languages experienced a significant disadvantage due to the displacement of English signage. There is a demand for an increased presence of signage in native languages (Oshiwambo), in addition to English and other regional languages. Hence, the conclusion that there was a lack of representation of various local languages on the signage prompted a desire to have multi-linguistic signage.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the researcher recommends the following:

- There is an overall need for multilingual public signs in Eenhana to promote diversity and inclusivity. This could also require standardisation and creativity in public signs translation.
- Future research into public signage ought to concentrate on the intricate relationship between linguistics and culture alongside the cultural ramifications of public displays. The examination of linguistic landscapes elucidates how multilingual signages serve as a reflection of cultural multiplicity and the dynamics of power. Moreover, an investigation into the semiotic dimensions of public signage can significantly augment our comprehension of visual discourse and its influential capacity in the construction of cultural identity.
- Future research should explore Eenhana Town's linguistic dynamics through longitudinal studies, unveiling changes in signage patterns and providing a comprehensive understanding of linguistic transformations, community identity shifts, and sociocultural developments.
- To foster linguistic inclusivity, local authorities and stakeholders should engage actively with the community, understanding language preferences to inform policies that celebrate diversity and respect the multifaceted linguistic tapestry.
- Businesses and institutions in Eenhana are advised to follow signage design guidelines, emphasising clarity, cultural sensitivity, and inclusive language practices to enhance the town's linguistic landscape.

- Educational initiatives are recommended to cultivate a positive language attitude and promote multilingualism. Workshops, seminars, or awareness campaigns can highlight the cultural significance of languages, contributing to a more cohesive and culturally enriched linguistic landscape in Eenhana Town.

5.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has drawn insightful conclusions regarding the study's findings. In addition, the chapter provided future recommendations to extend the present study. In this chapter, the linguistic landscape of Eenhana Town was meticulously examined, unravelling the intricate layers of language use on both commercial and non-commercial signs. The analysis delved into the prevalence and visibility of languages, the categorisation of signs, and the influence of Geosemiotics on communication strategies. Through a critical lens, the chapter explored the dynamics of linguistic diversity, shedding light on how Oshiwambo, English, and Afrikaans shape the visual and communicative aspects of the town. The conclusion synthesises these findings, emphasizing the nuanced interplay of languages and sign categories in Eenhana's evolving linguistic landscape.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance Certificate



ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SHS 0093 Date: 6 April 2024

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Decentralized Ethics Committee (DEC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the School of Humanities, Society & Development Decentralized Ethics Committee.

Title of Project: A Critical Analysis of the Public Signage of the Commercial and Non-Commercial Signs in Enhana Town, Ohangwena Region

Researcher: Shiwaovanhu S. Kamati

Student Number: 201607922

Supervisor(s): Dr S. Shipale

Centre for Research Services

Take note of the following:

1. Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the ethics committee. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
2. Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the ethics committee
3. The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the ethics committee (through the Chairperson) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by the ethics committee
4. The ethics committee retains the right to:
 - i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

The ethics committee wishes you the best in your research.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Artwell Nhemachena".

Dr. Artwell Nhemachena (Acting Chairperson, Decentralised Ethics Committee)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Davis Mumbengegwi".

Prof. Davis Mumbengegwi (Head, Multidisciplinary Research)

Appendix 2: Research Permission Letter

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH SERVICES

Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor: Research, Innovation & Development

University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, Windhoek, Namibia

340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pioneers Park, Office F223 - Fblock, Second Floor

☎ +264 61 206 4673; E-mail: kmbulu@unam.na; URL: <http://www.unam.edu.na>



RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

Date: 22/11/2024

Student Name: Shiwaovanhu S. Kamati

Student Number: 201607922

Programme: MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH STUDIES

Approved Research Title: Critical Analysis of the Public Signage of the Commercial and Non-Commercial Signs in Enhana Town, Ohangwena Region.

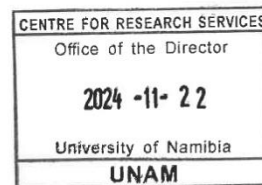
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I hereby confirm that the above-mentioned student is registered at the University of Namibia for the programme indicated. The proposed study met all the requirements as stipulated in the University guidelines and has been approved by the relevant committees.

The proposal adheres to ethical principles as per attached Ethical Clearance Certificate. Permission is hereby granted to carry out the research as described in the approved proposal.

Best Regards

Dr. AEE Shikongo
Head: Postgraduate Research Support Services
Tel: +264 61 206 3129
E-mail: aeshikongo@unam.na



Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form

ANNEX 5F

INFORMED CONSENT FOR QUALITATIVE STUDIES

Informed Consent for Eenhana town residents

Name of Principal Investigator:	Shiwaovanhu Slowly Kamati
Name of Sponsor:	Shiwaovanhu Slowly Kamati

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- Information Sheet (this section, to share information about the study with you)
- Certificate of Consent (for signatures if you choose to participate)

You will be given a copy of the full Informed Consent Form.

PART I: INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

My name is Shiwaovanhu Kamati and I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in English studies at the University of Namibia. I am doing research on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana of which you are a resident. I am going to give you information on my research and invite you to be part of it. You do not have to decide today whether you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information, and I will take the time to explain. If you have questions later, feel free to ask me.

Purpose of the Research

We use language in everyday communication, which is everywhere around us. We see it on the signs that are placed in front of shops, on traffic signs when we are using public roads, in front of salons, houses and government buildings. All these constitute the linguistic landscape. In this study, I want to find out if the languages that are used on these signs are the same languages that are spoken by the residents in Eenhana. My research seeks to fully understand how you feel about the languages used on these signs and if you prefer the signs in the current languages used or if you prefer them written in another language. By taking part in this interview, I believe that you can help me by sharing your thoughts, understanding, and attitudes on the linguistic landscape of Eenhana which will help me get answers to my research questions.

Type of Research Intervention

This research will involve an interview which will take about 10 to 15 minutes in total.

Appendix 4: Data Collection Instrument

Observation Checklist

1. The researcher should survey the town (Eenhana)
2. 20 signs in total of which, 10 are commercial and 10 are non-commercial should be identified and captured.
3. The signs should be monolingual and written either in English or Oshiwambo
4. Signs selected should be on advertising billboards, displayed on shop walls, outside shops, buildings, and public road signs
5. Signs should be clearly visible to the sign readers, but their colour and size should not affect selection
6. A smartphone should be used to photograph the signs
7. All the signs captured should be within the public space of the town

Interview guide questions

Building rapport

1. how long have you lived in Eenhana?
2. How many languages do you speak? Name them.
3. Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 20 pictures in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

4. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read them to me and interpret them.
5. How do you view the languages used on the signs?
6. Is there any sign here that you think is difficult to understand? If so, which one is it and why?
7. Are you happy with the language used on the signs? why or why not?
8. Would you have preferred different languages to have been used on the signs? why?

Appendix 5: Participant 1 transcript

Translated from Oshiwambo.

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

Respondent: I'm unemployed.

2. Interviewer: How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: I am 30 years old, and I have lived here for about a decade.

3. Interviewer: Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't because I have lived here for a long time. I can function without looking at the signs.

4. Interviewer: I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

5. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent: The first sign is showing where VTC is. This one is showing that there is a doctor available. This one is a prohibition of parking. These ones are selling beds. This is the ministry of Agriculture. This one is showing an open market. This one is a sign of the doctor's office. This one train people for makes perfume. This one is for MTC, and the last one is for bank Windhoek. The last one is selling light for 50.

6. Interviewer: is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent: Not really. There is none.

7. Interviewer: Are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: Yes, they are okay. They are easy to understand, and they are our languages.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: No.

Appendix 6: Participant 2 transcript

Interviewer

1. Can you kindly state your age and occupation?

Respondent

I am 29-years old teacher.

Interviewer

2. How long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent

I have lived in Eenhana for five years.

Interviewer

3. During your time here in the Eenhana, do you generally look at the linguistic landscape that is, the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent

It depends on my focus. I mostly make use of the driving signs and the services like hospitals and the markets also.

4. I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

That's okay. All right.

Interviewer

5. Do you understand the languages that are used on these signs? Can you read and interpret the signs to me?

Respondent

Most of them, yes.

Let me start with the open market that is just the open market where people sell and buy local things, then we have biblical books.

Then we have the clamping zone, strictly customer packing only, then we need to pack only no packing for taxis. That is a zone for private probably, so the taxis are not allowed. Then we have the medical centre available that is a private doctor. They have indicated the time they operate and the direction also. They sell beds. Single bed,

double, then the prices that is most probably for local people. And we have the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry that is indicating the Ministry's display. Then we have this one in Oshiwambo this is just somebody saying she gives training to the people that are interested in making the sprays.

there's light 50 this one is a bit ambiguous. then the one for Eenhana VTC's direction and the banking app sign for bank Windhoek.

Interviewer

6. So, is there any sign here that is difficult to interpret?

Respondent

Most of them are fine, except for the other one that I'm saying, which is our language, for the Oshiwambo, it is clear, for the rest of the posters, they are clear.

Interviewer

7. Would you have preferred the signs that have been written in a different language?

Respondent

I would say yes because most people let me say majority that live in Eenhana as a Oshiwambo speakers so it would be better if most signs were in Oshiwambo compared to English.

Interviewer

Thank you.

Appendix 7: Participant 3 transcript

Interviewer?

1. Could you kindly state your age and occupation for us?

Respondent

I'm a 27-year-old police officer.

Interviewer

2. How long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent

I've been here for about 5 years.

Interviewer

3. During your stay in Eenhana, do you generally look at linguistic landscape?

Respondent

Yes, I have been observing and whenever I travel, of course, it acts as my guide.

Interviewer

4. I would like to invite you to look at the pictures that I have taken of the linguistic landscape of Eenhana. After you study the signs, I have a few questions to ask you. Alright. Study, do you understand the languages that have been used on the signs?

Respondent

Uhm...Well, the language used is not uniform and therefore I'm not well understanding all the types of languages used. Perhaps, if only one language is uniform, which is used, it would be a quicker process to understand.

Interviewer

5. So, do you understand the language used on these signs? Kindly interpret them for me. What do you think they mean? One by one.

Respondent

Yes, I do.

There's a book cover Bibles. And this is, I feel like this is talking about perhaps a store where they said it should be commercial, where they sell books, cover bibles. We have medical doctors available next to standard bank. This is a guide for a doctor's assistance. It is indicating the direction when you need a medical doctor. We have Eenhana open market. This is just a general. It is not a commercial guide because it's just indicating an

open market where people are selling their goods. we have the prohibition sign on Taxi, the Eenhana vocational training centre's location and the ministry of Agriculture's location also. There is one for the light for 50, another showcasing bed prices and one seeking customers to train them to make perfumes.

Interviewer

6. Is there any sign here that you think is difficult to interpret, or to understand?

Respondent

No. There is none.

Interviewer

7. Are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent

yes. English Is our official language and Oshiwambo is our native language.

Interviewer

8. Would you have preferred any of the signs at all to have been written in a different language

Respondent

No.

Appendix 8: Participant 4 transcript

Interviewer

1. Could you tell me your age and occupation?

Respondent

I am 37-year-old vendor.

2. Interviewer

How long have you been in Eenhana?

Respondent

For about five to six years now.

3. Interviewer

During your stay in Eenhana, do you generally look at the linguistic landscape? which is the signs that are placed within the town.

I will say, yes. Okay. There are a few pictures that I took of the signs within Eenhana.

I'd like you to look at them before I ask you a few questions if that's okay with you.

Respondent

Yes.

4. Interviewer

Okay. Do you understand the languages that have been used on the signs?

Respondent

Yes, I do.

5. Interviewer

Okay, kindly interpret the signs to me.

Respondent

Okay, looking at this one I can tell that this is an indication that is showing the open market. Say it's a picture that shows that there's a hospital to say. Okay, but with this one, all I'm seeing here is only written light and what is it? it's giving information of what the person is serving. Same applies also to this one. Also, this one. Yeah, also this one is giving an indication of what the person is serving.

6. Interviewer

Is there any sign here that is difficult to interpret, or to understand?

Respondent

Not really. It is just this one on the light 50.

7. Interviewer

Would you have preferred any of the signs at all to have been written in a different language?

Respondent

No.

8. Interviewer

Why is that., Why not?

Respondent

Because the language that is used here is easy to understand except the light 50 sign, I guess, any person can look at the pictures really, they don't know what is happening there.

Interviewer

Thank you for your time

Appendix 9: Participant 5 transcript

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

I'm sales personnel.

2. How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

I am 31 years old, and I have lived here since I was born.

3. Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Most times, I don't because I see them all the time. Other times, I make use of the road signs when driving.

4. I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs. 9

5. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Yes.

6. is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

The light 50 is unclear.

7. are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: yes. English Is our official language and Oshiwambo is our native language.

8. would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Portuguese. we have many of them here and they are mostly selling their goods around the town. If the signs were written in their language, it would guide them better.

Appendix 10: Participant 6 transcript

1. Interviewer: **What is your occupation?**

I'm unemployed.

2. **How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?**

I am 48 years old, and I have lived here since I was born.

3. **Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?**

Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't.

4. **I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.**

5. **Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.**

Not really. Only the ones in Oshiwambo.

It's a lady advertising perfume so that others can come to her so she can teach them on how to make the perfumes also.

6. **is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?**

Yes. There other signs are difficult because I don't speak the language.

7. **are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?**

Respondent: No. the signs should have been in both English and Oshiwambo so it's easy for us also to understand otherwise now, they are only for some people.

8. **would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?**

No. just those two languages since English is the official language and Oshiwambo is the language spoken by the majority here.

Appendix 11: Participant 7 transcript

1. Interviewer

Could you kindly state your occupation and age for us?

Respondent

I am a 24-year-old domestic worker.

2. Interviewer

How long have you been leaving in Eenhana?

Respondent

For about fifteen (15) years.

3. Interviewer

During your stay in Eenhana, do you usually look at the linguistic landscapes/ the signs that are placed in the town?

Respondent

Some of them.

4. Interviewer

Why some?

Respondent

Uhm...some are not necessary.

5. Interviewer

I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

Respondent

Okay

6. Interviewer

Do you understand the languages that are used on these signs?

Respondent

Uhm...yes

7. Interviewer

Okay. Kindly interpret the signs for me. As in look them and then you tell me what you think they mean.

Respondent

A lot of them are giving us directions. And some of them are showing us centres.

8. Interviewer

Is there any sign here that you think is difficult to understand?

Respondent

Yes.

9. Interviewer

Which one is it?

Respondent

This one written light 50 is difficult to understand because it is just not clear though it is just one word.

10. Interviewer

Okay. Are you happy with the languages that are used here?

Respondent

Uhm...I'm not happy with it.

11. Interviewer

Why is that?

Respondent

Because most of the people that are residents in Eenhana are the Awambo people. They need to read the language that is normally spoken in Eenhana and that should be Oshikwanyama.

13. Interviewer

Would you then have preferred for these signs to be written in a different language? Are they just fine exactly how they are?

Respondent

They must all have been written in Oshiwambo.

Interviewer

Okay we have come to end of our interview. Thank you so much for your time.

Appendix 12: Participant 8 transcript

1. Interviewer:

What is your occupation?

Respondent

I'm unemployed.

Interviewer:

2. How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: I am 22 years old, and I have lived here all my life.

Interviewer

3. Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't because I have lived here for a long time. I can function without looking at the signs.

Interviewer

I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

4. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent

This one is about the direction of VTC, this one is prohibiting sedans from being parked, this one is advertising the beds made. This one is showing the ministry available. These sells lambs, this one is for the open market. These gives training for perfumes. This one is for the bank. This one is for books, different books that they sell for church and the last one shows where to go when you need the doctor.

Interviewer

6. Is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand?

If so, why is that?

Respondent

All the signs in English. Because I don't speak the language.

Interviewer:

7. Are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent

No. they should remove English and put Oshikwanyama. Afterall, it is our language, and we are the inhabitants of Eenhana.

Interviewer

8. would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent

I would have preferred more Oshikwanyama signs to English.

Appendix 13: Participant 9 transcript

1. Interviewer: **What is your occupation?**

Respondent: I'm a student.

2. Interviewer: **How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?**

Respondent: I am 28 years old and I have lived here for about 8 months.

3. Interviewer: **Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?**

Respondent: Yes, I do look at them. Though it is a small town, I'm still getting used to it so, from time to time, I do look at the signs.

Interviewer: I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

Respondent: Okay.

4. Interviewer: **Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.**

Respondent: Yes, I do. This advert is selling beds, and it also has prices listed and the types they make. This one is showing the ministry of agriculture's location. This one is selling books like hymns and bibles, all books for church. This one is light for 50...its tricky. I don't know if its electricity or bulbs or maybe both. Its not well constructed. This one is informing us that there is an open market here. This one is selling perfumes and wants to train people for that. This one is showing direction to the vocational centre. This one is giving directions to the doctors office. This one is a prohibition sign for taxi's not to park there. This one is for bank Windhoek showing how to send Easy Wallets with a phone.

6. Interviewer: **is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?**

Respondent: No.

7. Interviewer: **Are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?**

Respondent: Yes, I am. I like the languages used on the signs. English is our official language in Namibia. Without it, you won't progress in life such as getting a good

paying job. Oshikwanyama doesn't really add value to our lives nowadays, so it doesn't hold any status.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: I wish they incorporated Portuguese because there are a number of Angolans who visit the town in search for work and trade that would benefit from signs written in their language.

Appendix 14: Participant 10 transcript

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

Respondent: I'm unemployed.

2. Interviewer: How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: 41 years old and I have lived here for about 6 years.

3. Interviewer: Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: Sometimes. They are not always interesting to look at sometimes.

4. Interviewer: I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

Respondent: Okay.

5. Interviewer: Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent: Yes, I understand the Oshiwambo sign very well but the English ones are a little tricky without pictures to guide.

6. Interviewer: is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent: The English signs are difficult to me because I don't speak the language fluently so the big words in there makes it impossible for me to understand though I have a clue.

7. Interviewer: Are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: I'm happy they used English in most signs, but I would have preferred more Oshiwambo signs since this is an area primarily inhabitant by Oshiwambo speakers. The English signs are everywhere especially in the big offices and everywhere else. We sometimes lose interest because we don't understand unless there's pictures.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: Not really. The languages are fine. What should be done is, the English signs must be accompanied by translations in Oshikwanyama and pictures so that a lot of people are catered for. Now, even pensioners who never attended schools are left out

which should not have been the case since most signs are important and need to be read by all of us.

Appendix 15: Participant 11 transcript

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

Respondent: I'm a learner.

2. Interviewer: How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: I am 18 years old, and I have lived here since I was born.

3. Interviewer: Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't because I see them all the time. If there are new ones, I do look at them especially the big ones.

4. Interviewer: I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

5. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent: Yes.

Let me start with this one, its giving directions to the hospital. The second one is also giving directions to VTC. This one is showing that there's an open market there. This one is showing that the ministry of agriculture is here. This one is informing the public that she makes perfumes, and she wants to train them. This one is showing that they sell bibles and hymn books. This one is a prohibition sign, prohibiting taxi's from being parked in this zone. This one is an advert by bank Windhoek for sending Easy Wallet with their app. The last one is ambiguous. I don't understand it because I don't know the light that is being sold here, I think it may be a direct translation.

6. Interviewer: is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent: No. there is none.

7. Interviewer: are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: yes. English Is our official language and Oshiwambo is our native language.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: In addition to English and Oshiwambo, I would have preferred Afrikaans. I don't see any signs in Afrikaans around. It would be better if they also incorporate Afrikaans since some people do speak Afrikaans.

Appendix 16: Participant 12 transcript

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

Respondent: I'm a nurse.

2. Interviewer: How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: I am 33 years old, and I have lived here for a year.

3. Interviewer: Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: I do.

4. Interviewer: I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

5. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent: Yes. This one is on the direction of the doctor's office just like the second one showing VTC... This one is showing the open market that sells local produce. This one is for the Ministry of Agriculture that it is here. This one is seeking to train customers on making perfumes. This one an advert for selling bibles and hymn books. This one is a prohibition sign for taxi's not to park there. This one is an advert by bank Windhoek for sending Easy Wallet with their app. The last one, they are selling electricity.

6. Interviewer: is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent: No there is none. They are all easy to understand.

7. Interviewer: are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: Yes. They are easy to understand.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: No.

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Appendix 17: Participant 13 transcript

1. Interviewer

What is your occupation?

Respondent

I am teacher.

2. Interviewer

How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent

I am 34 years old and I have lived here since I was born.

3. Interviewer

Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent

Yes, I do look at them.

4. Interviewer

I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

5. Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent

Yes, I do. This one is giving directions to the Dr office. The second one is also giving directions to Eenhana VTC. This one is showing that there's an open market. This one is showing the ministry of agriculture. This one makes perfumes, and she wants to train people at a fee. This one is showing that they sell bibles and hymn books. This one is a prohibition sign, prohibiting taxi's from being parked in this zone. This one is an advert by bank Windhoek for sending Easy Wallet with their banking app. The last one is somehow I don't know the light that is being sold here, I think it may be a direct translation, but they sell lights for N\$50.00

6. Interviewer

Is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent

Yes. The last one is difficult to interpret.

7. Interviewer

Are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent

Yes. English Is our official language and the medium of instruction in schools so its usage on the signage in Eenhana is important. Equally, Oshiwambo is our native language hence It deserves the same attention.

8. Interviewer

would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent

Yes. I prefer other Namibian languages so that everyone else feels welcome.

Appendix 18: Participant 14 transcript

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

Respondent: I am a receptionist.

2. How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: I am 42 years old, and I have lived here for 2 years.

3. Interviewer: Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: Not really. There are times I don't depending on what I'm looking for and where I am.

4. I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

5. Interviewer: Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent: Well, this sign gives direction on where to turn when going to VTC then this one is for the open market just to let people know that it's there. This one is showing that the ministry of Agriculture has an office here. This one is showing that their bibles and hymn books are for sale. This one is a banking sign for bank Windhoek that shows appeals to people to send money via the banking app. This one is showing directions to the doctor's office. This one is for light that is 50. This one is an advert for making beds and they have their prices and the types that they sell there. This one makes perfumes that she wants to train people on for a fee and the last one is a prohibition sign for taxis. They can enter in that zone.

Respondent: Yes, I do.

6. Interviewer: is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent: Just one.

7. Interviewer: are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: Yes. English is the official language hence its dominance compared to Oshikwanyama which is the language spoken by people here.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: I would have preferred more Namibian indigenous languages to cater to the other Namibian citizens who visit the town, so they feel welcome.

Appendix 19: Participant 15 transcript

1. Interviewer: What is your occupation?

Respondent: I'm a businesswoman.

2. Interviewer: How old are you and how long have you lived in Eenhana?

Respondent: I am 47 years old, and I have lived here for about 14 years.

3.interviewer: Do you generally pay attention to the signs in the town? If not, why?

Respondent: Sometimes I do. Sometimes I don't because I have been here for a long time. I know where to go so it's rare to look around unless there's something new and exciting.

4. Interviewer: I would like to show you pictures of some commercial and non-commercial signs that I took around the public space in this town. They are 10 in total, and I would like to hear your opinion on the language(s) used on the signs.

Respondent: Okay.

5. interviewer: Do you understand the languages used on these signs? Kindly read and interpret these signs.

Respondent: Yes, I do.

The first sign is giving directions to VTC. It is showing the route to take to get there similar to the second showing directions to the doctor's office near standard bank. This one is advertising the furniture bed they make and the prices of the different beds. This one is showing the books that are sold at the store. This one is showing the open market in Eenhana. This one is a warning sign to the taxi driver not to park in that prohibited area. This next one is a little ambiguous. This one is selling torches for N\$50.00. This one is a banking sign for bank Windhoek that is informing the clients to send Esay Wallets with the banking app.

6. Interviewer: is there a particular sign among these that you think is difficult to understand? If so, why is that?

Respondent: There is none.

7. Interviewer: are you happy with the languages used on these signs? Why? Or why not?

Respondent: Yes. They are our languages. They are important to us.

8. Interviewer: would you have preferred different languages to have been used on these signs or within Eenhana's linguistic landscape?

Respondent: Yes. I wish there were signs in our indigenous Namibian languages catering to other Namibians and not just to one limited indigenous group since any one can just settle anywhere now since the country is independent. there are many people from the Zambezi region who inhabit the town but there are no signs here. It would be better if all languages were incorporated so everyone feels at home.