

# **Language diversity in the linguistic landscape of three Lagos State communities**

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The study identified the language deployed in the linguistic landscape of three Lagos State communities and analyse their patterns of language use. It also discussed the phenomenon of language diversity in relation to the sociolinguistic context of the study area with a view to shedding light on the understanding of language diversity in the linguistic landscape of Nigerian cities and advancing the understanding of language contact in Nigerian urban metropolis.

The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources were the data collected from the linguistic landscape of Lagos Island, Ajegunle and Ikeja where 75 photographs of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, commercial shop signs and inscriptions on buildings taken with the use of digital camera. The areas were specifically selected because they are replete with people with varying ethnic and cultural diversities. The secondary sources included books, journal articles and the internet. The data collected was analysed within the frameworks of Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication and Giles and Coupland's Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT).

The results of the study revealed the motivations for the nature of the patterns and extent of language diversity found in the linguistic landscape of three communities. It showed the presence of monolingual, bilingual and multilingual signs in the selected communities. The findings from the study specifically revealed the presence of signs that are monolingual in English and Arabic, bilingual in English and Yoruba, English and Igbo, English and Efik/Ibibio and multilingual in English/Yoruba/Hausa/Igbo in the linguistic landscapes of the communities. It was found that the different languages used on signs were used in order to enhance communicative efficiency, demonstrate the power of the English language, create a sense of social identity, social attractiveness and the maintain solidarity.

The study concluded that the heterogeneous and cosmopolitan nature of the state is responsible for the monolingual, bilingual and multilingual nature of signs display in the linguistic landscape of the three communities.

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