LANGUAGE POLICY AS REFLECTED IN THE LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE IN GEORGE TOWN, PENANG

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ABSTRACT

This is a sociolinguistic study on language policy and language planning in Malaysia. The Linguistic Landscape (LL) approach will be adopted as a framework to investigate the language use on signs in the public space of George Town, Penang, specifically on Penang Road. By reviewing the language choice on signs in public space, it aims to evaluate how language policy of Malaysia is reflected in reality. Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be used in the study. For the quantitative method, photos of signs in public space has been taken using a digital camera. The collected data has been processed by software File Maker. Interviews has been carried out to complement the quantitative method. The findings of the study show that Penang Road is highly multilingual with numerous languages visible in the linguistic landscape. Although Malay language is advocated as the national language in the national language policy, and the language is a must in signage policies, the actual practice shows the contrary. It has been found that there is inconsistency between the prescribed language policy and the actual languages used on the billboard advertisements. It is hoped that the result of this study will enhance the understanding of the linguistic landscape of the multilingual and multiethnic society of Malaysia and have implications on the implementation of national language policy.

Key words: linguistic landscape, language policy, sign, multilingual, George Town

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini adalah satu kajian sosiolinguistik dasar bahasa dan perancangan bahasa di Malaysia. Pendekatan landskap linguistik (Linguistic Landscape) akan diguna sebagai rangka kerja untuk menyiasat penggunaan bahasa pada papan tanda dalam ruang awam di George Town, Pulau Pinang, khususnya di Penang Road. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menilai pelaksanaan dasar bahasa dalam realiti dengan mengkaji pilihan bahasa pada papan tanda di ruang awam. Kedua-dua kaedah kualitatif dan kuantitatif akan digunakan dalam kajian ini. Bagi kaedah kuantitatif, gambar tanda-tanda di ruang awam akan diambil menggunakan kamera digital. Data yang dikumpul akan diproses dengan menggunakan perisian Fail Maker. Temubual akan dijalankan untuk melengkapkan kaedah kuantitatif. Hasil kajian mendapati Penang Road memaparkan pelbagai jenis Bahasa di ruang awam. Walaupun Bahasa Melayu telah dimartabatkan sebagai Bahasa Kebangsaan di bawah Dasar Bahasa Negara dan kegunaan Bahasa Melayu adalah diwajibkan dalam undang-undang papan tanda, namun, praktik sebenar kegunnan Bahasa pada papam tanda tidak seiras dengan pelaksanaan undang-undang. Hasil kajian ini berharap dapat mempertingkatkan pemahaman landskap linguistik masyarakat berbilang bahasa dan etnik Malaysia dan memberi implikasi terhadap pelaksanaan dasar bahasa kebangsaan.

Kata Kunci: landskap linguistik , dasar bahasa, tanda, kepelbagaian bahasa, George Town

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Research on the language of signs dates back to the 1970's (Backhaus, 2007:12; Spolsky, 2009: 26), but it is the publication of Landry and Bourhis's seminal paper in 1997 that has drawn increasing interest from researchers in different countries. Since then, the field of linguistic landscape research has expanded and grown, and has become a vital part of sociolinguistic research. The concept of linguistic landscape according to Landry and Bourhis is as follows:

> The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration. (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 25)

Linguistic landscape can be referred to as "symbolic construction of the public space", according to Ben-Rafael et al. (2006). Research on the linguistic landscape provides comprehension on the status of languages and the level of prestige certain languages enjoy in linguistic contested regions. In the words of Landry and Bourhis (1997: 25), "the predominance of one language on public signs relative to other languages can reflect the relative power and status of competing language groups".

Linguistic landscape can provide complex insights into language policies and practices in a community. Cenoz and Gorter (2006: 68) wrote that, "the study of the linguistic

landscape can also be interesting because it can provide information on the differences between the official language policy that can be reflected in top-down signs such as street names or names of official buildings and the impact of that policy on individuals as reflected in bottom up signs such as shop names or street posters". The choice of certain languages over other languages particularly in the case of official signs, according to Spolsky (2009:33), can provide "information about the sociolinguistic context and reflecting a symbolic value of some or all of the participants". In the words of Landry and Bourhis:

> Given that it is the dominant language group that can most effectively control the state apparatus regulating the language on public signs, one can consider the relative position of competing languages in the linguistic landscape as a measure of how the dominant group treats the linguistic minorities inhabiting the given territory. (Landry & Bourhis, 1997: 29)

The current research adopts linguistic landscape as the framework to study languages used on signs in the public space in Malaysia. The geography focus of this study is located in George Town, the capital city of Penang. It surveys an area which has not previously been under investigation. The study expands the field of linguistic landscape by moving from the capital city to a World Heritage site. The study adopts the framework of linguistic landscape to investigate languages used on signs. The inconsistencies between the actual practices and the language policies are the focus of this current study. By reviewing the language choice on signs in the public space, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the implementation of the national language policy. In cases where the region uses more than one language, linguistic landscape research can give insights into the actual policies and the will of the authorities to recognise and promote the languages of the region. This study helps to understand how official policies are laid out by the authorities particularly on public signs and explain how policies are experienced and carried out by the community at

the bottom-up level. The results will also enhance the understanding of the linguistic landscape of multilingual and multi-ethnic society of Malaysia.

Historic, demographic and linguistic background

The current study was carried out in Penang, Malaysia, specifically in George Town, the capital city and administrative centre of Penang (Figure 1.0). Penang was originally part of Kedah. However, Penang's history is no longer linked to a sultan or a Malay ruling class after becoming a colony directly ruled by the British.

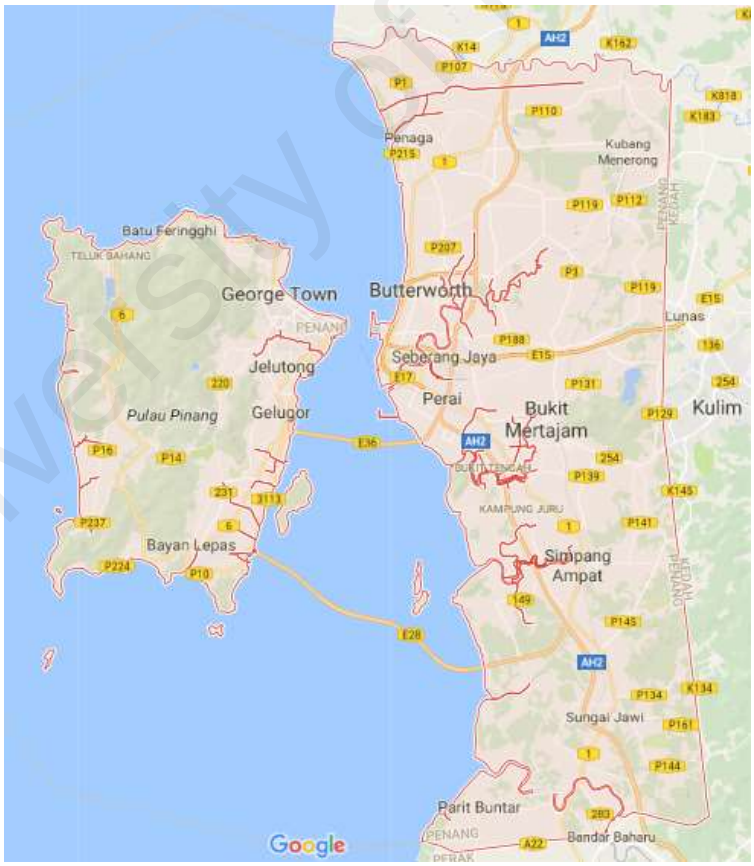

Figure 1.0: The Map of Penang
(Source: Google Map, 2016)

The first major conjuncture in Penang's history occurred when the island was taken over by Francis Light in year 1786. After Penang was taken over, the island was immediately followed by an influx of settlers exposing the island to local, regional and global forces. The first flow of settlers came from Kedah, other Malay states in the peninsula, Aceh and other parts of Sumatra as well as Siam and Burma. It was then followed by an influx of settlers from India and China. The expansion of colonial enterprises in the late nineteenth century brought in additional waves of immigrants.

By the early 1900s, Penang was a sanctuary for both political and social activities. Since it started its operations in the late eighteenth century, the vibrant colonial port of Penang has attracted a diverse range of people, enabled the pioneering of commercial enterprises, and fomented inter-ethnic collaboration and inter-cultural borrowings. The function of Penang as a port-city, linking the island with world ports, and to regional centres such as Singapore, Larut, Songkhla, Patani, Sumatra and Hong Kong through shipping, has contributed to the complexity of its polychromatic social and cultural history. The list of different confluences plotted in Penang's history can be experienced in the uniquely mixed heritage in arts, culture and language.

Penang, as an international tourist destination famous for its many historic and scenic attractions along with its diverse cultures. Penang's contribution to Malaysia's tourist industry is the third highest in the country with about six million tourist arrivals per year, which include international tourists (Table 1.0). On the 7th of July 2007, the capital city of Penang was named a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Table 1.0: Number of Tourist Arrivals in Penang (2009- 2012)

Year	Tourist		Overall total
	Local	International	
	Total	Total	
2009	2,982,687	2,977,642	5,960,329
2010	2,952,544	3,048,320	5,990,864
2011	2,956,390	3,063,564	6,019,954
2012	2,996,282	3,086,907	6,093,189

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia (2016)

Governance structure

Malaysia is a federation of thirteen states and three federal territories operating within a constitutional monarchy following a Westminster style parliamentary system. The Malaysian government is run within a framework that has three tiers, namely, federal government, state government and local government.

The federal government is the ultimate authority in Malaysia and is headed by the Prime Minister of Malaysia. The federal government adopts the principle of separation of powers under Article 127 of the Federal Constitution. The three branches of powers are executive, legislative and judiciary.

The state government structure in all thirteen states is similar to the government system of the federal government of Malaysia. Each state government is created by the respective state constitutions. State governments are led by a Minister (in states with hereditary Malay rulers) or a Chief Minister (in states without hereditary Malay rulers). According to Article 80 of the Federal Constitution, the state executive has administrative power over all matters which the state legislature may legislate under

the constitution. Division of powers between federal and state government according to Article 73-79 of the Federal Constitution gives the former jurisdiction over external affairs, defence and security; trade, commerce and industry; shipping, communication and transport; water supply, rivers and canals; finance and taxation; education and health; and public utilities. Whereas, the state government holds responsibility for Islamic affairs; land ownership and use; agriculture and forestry; state works and water supply; Malay reservation and custom; and local government. Shared areas of responsibility include social welfare; public health; water supply; town and country planning; drainage and irrigation; rehabilitation of mining land and soil erosion; national parks and wildlife; and labour and social security.

The local government is the lowest level in the system of government in Malaysia. At the local government level, there are local authorities referred to as municipalities and district councils. These local authorities have some limited discretionary power on local development issues but they are subordinated to the state government. The local government has the power to collect assessment tax, create by-laws and to grant licenses and permits for any trade in its area of jurisdiction. In addition to providing basic amenities, the local authorities are also responsible for collecting and managing waste and garbage as well as planning and developing the area under their jurisdiction.

Penang, being a former British settlement, has no hereditary Malay ruler. The head of the state executive is a Yang di-Pertua Negeri (Governor) appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong (King of Malaysia). The Governor acts upon the advice of the state Executive Council, which is appointed from the majority party in the Legislative Assembly. The head of the Penang state government is the Chief Minister who is also the leader of the majority party or largest coalition party of the Penang State

Legislative Assembly. Following the 12th general election on the 8th of March 2008, the coalition of The Democratic Action Party (DAP) and Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) formed the state government of Penang. The current Chief Minister of Penang is Mr. Lim Guan Eng from the Democratic Action Party (DAP). The Deputy Chief Minister I is Dato' Mohd Rashid bin Hasnon from PKR and Deputy Chief Minister II is Dr. P. Ramasamy from DAP who is also the first Tamil to hold the deputy chief minister post. Penang is the only state in Malaysia in which its chief ministership has been continuously held by non-Malays (Chinese) since independence, reflecting the state's ethnic majority.

Linguistic Situation

The common languages of Penang, depending on social classes, social circles, and ethnic backgrounds are English, Mandarin, Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), Penang Hokkien and Tamil. Mandarin, which is taught in Chinese-medium schools in the state, is being increasingly spoken.

Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), as the language of the majority race in Malaysia is also the official language of Penang. The language is mandatory in all official and formal contexts. It is also the medium of instruction in education. The language is mostly spoken by the Malays in Penang.

English, a colonial legacy, is a working language widely used in commerce, education, and the arts. English is mainly used by the people in business and daily transaction. The language is also an important subject taught in schools.

Chinese language, specifically Mandarin, is one of the media of instruction in Chinese-medium schools. Besides Mandarin, several dialects of the Chinese language are also widely spoken in Penang. Penang Hokkien is a variant of Minnan and is used on a daily basis by a substantial portion of the Penang population who are descendants of Chinese settlers. It is based on the Minnan dialect of Zhangzhou prefecture in Fujian province, China. Other Chinese dialects, including Hakka which is mostly used in Balik Pulau, and Cantonese are also spoken in Penang while Teochew is heard more in Seberang Perai.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The function of Penang as a port-city in the past had contributed to the complexity of the polychromatic social and cultural history. After Penang was taken over by Francis Light in 1786, immediately followed an influx of settlers. Since it started its operations in the late eighteenth century, the vibrant colonial port of Penang has attracted a diverse range of people, enabling the pioneering of commercial enterprises, and fomenting inter-ethnic collaboration and inter-cultural borrowings. In colonial Malaya, English was the official language while Malay, Chinese and Tamil languages were deemed vernaculars.

With the coming of independence in 1957, the leaders of the major communities decided to accept Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) as the national language, a symbol of national unity. Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), as proclaimed in Article 152 of the Malaysian Constitution, is Malaysia's official language. As the sole national and official language, it is compulsory in the administration, official functions and all domains of activities. As for the language policy for advertisements, it has been

stipulated in the Malaysian Local Council by-laws that Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) is mandatory in all public and private signboards. However, the linguistic situation in Penang is a complex one, with numerous linguistic varieties existing in parallel; Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) as the national language of Malaysia, English language as the international language, Chinese, including so-called dialects, as the language of the state's ethnic majority, other ethnic language such as Tamil and also numerous other foreign languages. Although official policies have made Malay language a fundamental language in linguistic practices especially on signs, observation has shown that the policies have not been totally adhered to. Signs without the usage of the Malay language are abundant and clearly visible in public areas.

Linguistic landscape research which focuses specifically on billboard advertising and language policy in Malaysia have hardly been touched by researches. The primary reason which has prompted the study of linguistic landscape and language policy is due to the dearth of literature in this area. Most studies are not entirely focused on the linguistic landscape and language policy.

Limited findings of the study, especially in the Malaysian context, have provided an inconclusive literature in linguistic landscape study. There are only few articles published to date: one on multilingual acts in billboard advertisements along PLUS Highway (Anuarudin, A. A. S., Chan, S. H., & Abdullah, A. N., 2012), another the on linguistic landscape in Chinatown and Little India in Kuala Lumpur (Supramani et al., 2014) and the third paper on the linguistic landscape of five selected neighbourhoods of Kuala Lumpur (Manan et al., 2015). This study is carried out in order to enrich the comprehension of the study of the linguistic landscape in Malaysia. Generally, this study aims to examine the linguistic practices focusing on the code choices in public

signs of the selected cityscape through the approach of linguistic landscape. This study is therefore significant as it provides empirical findings relating to the language policy using the linguistic landscape approach. The language preference on signs, at the same time, is associated with the status or value the languages enjoy in the region. The assumption of the study is that the languages used on signs are a reflection of the language policy of the nation.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To explore the linguistic diversity of signs in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road, George Town.
2. To examine the usage of the "National language" (Malay language), the "International language" (English language) and the "Community languages" (Chinese and Tamil language) on signs.
3. To make comparisons between the language policies and language choices for the signage in the linguistic landscape.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the above research objectives, the data was analysed in terms of three research questions as shown below:

1. How are different languages used in the linguistic landscape of George Town?
2. What are the characteristics of top-down and bottom-up signs?
3. How does the language usage in the linguistic landscape reflect the official language policy?

1.5 Organization of the Dissertation

The content of this study is organised into five chapters as follows. Chapter one presents the introduction and background information of the study. It outlines the background of the study, research problem, research objectives, research questions and the significance of the study.

Chapter two highlights the literature review. It explains the concept of linguistic landscape. It also discusses the study of linguistic landscape and its relationship with language policy. This chapter also gives an explanation on the overview of the literature component in the Malaysian language policy.

Chapter three discusses the research design of the study. It covers the methodological approach, research site, methods of data collection and methods of data analysis used in the study.

Chapter four presents the results and findings of the study. The results are discussed accordingly to the stipulated objectives and research questions stated in Chapter one. The collected data is presented in the form of tables followed by the interpretation and discussion of the results.

Finally, Chapter five presents the conclusions, implications and limitations of the study, alongside suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides information on literature on the linguistic landscape. The chapter is organised as follows. Section 2.2. 1 highlights previous literature concerning the concept of linguistic landscape. Section 2.2.2 discusses the functions of the linguistic landscape, Section 2.2.3 explains methodological issues of the linguistic landscape and Section 2.2.4 outlines the applications of linguistic landscape. Section 2.3 discusses about linguistic landscape and language policy. The language policy of Malaysia will be discussed in detail in section 2.3.1.

2.2 The Study of Linguistic Landscape

2.2.1 The Notion of Linguistic Landscape

Research on the public signage as a source of information and data dates back to the 1960s (Backhaus, 2007:12; Spolsky, 2009:26). However, it is only since the publication of Landry and Bourhis's seminal paper in 1997 that it has become especially popular among researchers as a field or sub-field of sociolinguistics. The definition Landry and Bourhis gave of the linguistic landscape is as follows:

> The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration. (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, p. 25)

Several studies around the world have been carried out in order to examine different aspects of linguistic landscape representations and their implied meanings, as well as their effects towards the public. Landry and Bourhis (1997) empirically investigated the area of Quebec, its linguistic landscape and the effects of its display on the public. They found that signage in the linguistic landscape holds much more power than recognised; they argue that it can actually influence language behaviour. In more specific terms, they stated that the relative presence or absence of signage in a target language influences the degree of its usage in private domains of the speakers' lives. That is to say, the absence of signage in a particular language will bring about negative attitudes of its speakers towards that language. This in turn will cause them to use the language less at home thus diminishing their desire to pass on the language to future generations. Ultimately, it will bring about the overall loss of that particular language.

Hicks (2002) examined the realities of Scotland's linguistic landscape. He found that there was a lack of a consistent policy relating to Gaelic signage arrangements in Scotland's linguistic landscape as well as little knowledge of correct Gaelic forms. According to his findings, the lack of knowledge or interest in a specific language and its community is conveyed in the exclusion of the language from the public space.

Backhaus (2006) empirically investigated the linguistic landscape of Tokyo, official and non-official signs, and the underlying motivations of power and solidarity communicated through them. In a city found within the borders of a country that "has for a long time

been known as one of the prototypes of a monolingual society", Backhaus has observed some positive changes regarding the representation of minorities. Although the prevalence of Japanese in the official signage is still overwhelming and is related to power, as interpreted by Backhaus, "…official agents have started providing for signs in English and, to a certain degree, Chinese and Korean. These signs are unequivocal as to the role of Japanese as the language of power, though it should be mentioned that mere existence of official signs containing languages other than Japanese constitutes a noteworthy concession to linguistic minorities in Tokyo." In the sphere of non-official signage, a much greater diversity was observed. This diversity is attributed to the underlying motivation of solidarity, rather than of power.

The study of the linguistic landscape has been investigated from different viewpoints. For instance, billboards (Tulp, 1978), shop signs and names (Sadikhova & Marjan, 2000; Schlick, 2002, 2003; MacGregor, 2003; Dimova, 2007); road signs (Puzey, 2007); all visible or displayed texts (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Dagenais, Moore, Sabatier, Lamarre, & Armand, 2009; Spolsky & Cooper, 1991); brand names (Edelman, 2009; Tufi & Blackwood, 2010). At the same time, there are also researchers conducting studies by analysing items such as transport and clothes (Curtin, 2009); transgressive art graffiti (Hanauer, 2004, 2009; Pennycook, 2009); images and notes in a microbiology lab (Hanauer, 2009, 2010); newspapers and periodicals (Itagi & Singh, 2002).

The studies of the linguistic landscape cover a rather diverse area: cities in African, Asian, European, Latin-American, and North-American countries. Some studies focused on one specific area, for example, Quito, Ecuador in Alm (2003); Baku, Azerbaijan in Sadikhova and Marjan (2000); or the Golden Triangle in Algarve, Portugal in Torkington (2008).

Some studies placed their focus on ethnolinguistic neighbourhoods, for instance, the Hispanic neighbourhood in Washington (Yanguas, 2009); the Chinese neighbourhood in Washington (Lou, 2007) and the Korean neighbourhood in Oakland, CA (Malinowski, 2009). Others engaged in comparative analyses of several areas, for instance Brown (2007) studied official public signage in Minsk, Vitebsk, and Grodno in Belarus; Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, and Trumper-Hecht (2006) covered West and East Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Nazareth and several towns within the study of the LL of Israel.

There have been also researchers doing comparative studies of areas in different countries. For instance, Friesland in the Netherlands and the Basque country in Spain (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006); Belarus, Czech Republic and Slovakia (Sloboda, 2009); Klagenfurt in Austria, Udine in Italy and Ljubljana in Slovenia (Schlick, 2002); eight cities in four European countries (Schlick, 2003); Quebec in Canada and Tokyo in Japan (Backhaus, 2009).

A number of studies have examined linguistic landscape in Asia. Kasanga (2012) conducted a linguistic landscape study of a commercial neighbourhood in central Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The results of the study showed that Khmer, the official language of Cambodia, is the most prominent language while English ranked second in the signs observed. However, the majority of the signs are bilingual Khmer-English which the author believed that it was due to gentrification and an educational policy that has enabled English to become more popular.

Huebner (2006) conducted research on codemixing and language dominance perspectives of fifteen neighbourhoods in Bangkok, Thailand as well as the Skytrain. The study

assumed that the signs were aimed at both local and foreign riders. It also highlights the importance and influence of English as a global language in Thailand.

2.2.1.1 The study of Linguistic Landscape in Malaysia

Research on the linguistic landscape holds great importance for the study of ethnolinguistic vitality, multilingualism, language identity, language maintenance, language shift, and language endangerment. Limited findings of the study especially in the Malaysian context has made the literature on the linguistic landscape study inconclusive with only few articles published to date.

Anuarudin et.al (2012) studied multilingual acts in billboard advertisements along PLUS Highway, specifically the stretch from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) toll booth to KLIA and vice versa. Their findings show that the national language, Bahasa Melayu, is not contained in all billboard advertisements and the signs without the usage of Bahasa Melayu are visible in the survey area.

Wang, X., Riget, P. N., Supramani, S., & Koh, Y. C. (2015) studied how different identities are constructed through the use of different languages. Their study compared two different places in Kuala Lumpur, i.e. China Town and Little India in Kuala Lumpur. Their studies shows a high presence of English in signs in both China Town and Brickfields.

Supramani et al. (2014) carried out a study regarding linguistic landscape analysis of language endangerment in the Malaysian context. The study focuses on Tamil language in Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur. Their study found that Tamil language shows low linguistic vitality and is not well represented in public space. The study concluded that Tamil

language can be classified as a potentially endangered language. However with support from educational and religious institutions, the language may still be alive in the near future.

Manan et al. (2015) studied about the power dynamics and political motives that shape the linguistic landscape in the multilingual, multiracial and cosmopolitan setting of the city of Kuala Lumpur. The study argues that although the official policy is formulated and implemented with the intent of unifying a multi-ethnic population, defiance to this policy can be fostered by many reasons including pragmatism, economics, religion or identity. Such resistance is seen in the form of linguistic and semiotic representation on private signboards.

Manan, S. A. & David, M. K., (2015) carried out a study regarding language ideology and the linguistic landscape in Selangor, Malaysia. Their study examined language policy and the strategies used by the public to shape the linguistic landscape of Petaling Jaya, in the state of Selangor, Malaysia. The results showed that Bahasa Malayu, the national language, is by law the compulsory language in every sign. However, from a more pragmatic economic position, the use of English in advertising is widely used to express the symbolic roles of internationalization, westernization, modernity, success and attractiveness. Further, the use of foreign languages, Chinese and Indian, are prominent in specific communities to express their ethnolinguistic identities.

Coluzzi & Kitade (2015) carried out a linguistic landscape study in places of worship in Kuala Lumpur. The study were carried out in seven different places of worship including a mosque, a Sikh gurdwara, two churches, a Chinese temple, a Hindu temple and a Theravada Buddhist temple to study the languages used and the believers' attitudes towards the languages used in these places. The finding of the research showed a big gap between policy and the actual practice. English language plays a role as a

neutral language which used for inter-ethnic communication whereas Malay language seems to be related to religious and cultural values associates with the Malay.

Apart from that, another linguistic landscape research was carried out by Coluzzi (2016) to look at the presence of Italian in the linguistic landscape of Kuala Lumpur. The findings of the research showed that Italian is quite visible in the linguistic landscape of Kuala Lumpur.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that although the research of linguistic landscape is still in its initial stage, the discipline is developing fast and drawing more attention from local researchers.

2.2.2 The Functions of the Linguistic Landscape

The linguistic landscape is said to perform several functions: informational, symbolic, mythological, and commercial. The informational function and the symbolic function are the two basic functions of the linguistic landscape according to Landry and Bourhis (1997).

The informational function of the linguistic landscape covers the particular region or area as well as its national or territorial boundaries. According to Landry & Bourhis, the informational function has two aspects: it informs regarding the linguistic characteristics, territorial limits, and language boundaries of the region, and at the same time it distinguishes the territory of a certain group of people based on the language(s) used. Secondly, it functions as an indicator of the availability of services in that language

through the dominance of one language on the public signs in an area (Landry & Bourhis, 1997: 25).

The symbolic function, on the other hand, is connected to the identity of the language users and inhabitants of a specific area. It indexes the status, power and weight of a particular linguistic group as well as the ethnolinguistic vitality of its population. The linguistic landscape can "symbolise the strength or weakness of competing ethnolinguistic groups in the intergroup setting" (Landry & Bourhis, 1997:28).

The mythological function of the linguistic landscape was introduced by Hicks (2002). Hicks believed that signage serves as a connection to the past and a transmitter of ancient culture. He claimed that the naming of places reflected the traditional culture of an ethnolinguistic group via the associations with myths, stories and folklore.

The linguistic landscape can serve commercial functions according to Hornsby (2008). He defined the function with regard to commodification of language, as the language is used exclusively for product and place promotion for tourists.

2.2.3 The Methodology issues of the Linguistic Landscape

The linguistic landscape is a complex field as it yields a considerable amount of information in a public space. There are many challenges involved in conducting linguistic landscape research especially methodologically. Backhaus (2007), Gorter (2006), Pavlenko (2009), and Spolsky (2009) are some of the scholars who have summarised methodological and theoretical issues regarding the study of the linguistic

landscape. Many methodological and theoretical issues were raised which could influence the quality of the studies. Some of the methodology problems in linguistic landscape research includes (i) categorising and documenting signs (ii) the unit of analysis.

2.2.3.1 Categorising and documenting signs.

Due to the overwhelming amount of signs present in the linguistic landscape, it is important to organise the signs into categories. Different scholars have provided different taxonomies of categorising (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991; Landry & Bourhis, 1997; Reh, 2004; Gorter, 2006; Huebner, 2009; Spolsky, 2009; Pennycook, 2009).

Spolsky and Cooper, in their research in Jerusalem, distinguished between eight major types of data: street signs, advertising signs, warning notices and prohibitions, building names, informative signs (directions, hours of opening), commemorative plaques, objects and graffiti (1991: 76).

In the case of multilingual signs, Reh (2004) proposed a taxonomy for the study of Lira municipality (a town in Uganda). For Lira's municipality research Reh suggested a taxonomy for the categorisation of multilingual writing, describing it according to the spatial mobility of the objects inscribed (if they are physically fixed or if they are movable), the visibility of multilingualism (distinguishing between 'visible' and 'covert' multilingualism) and the way in which multilingual texts are arranged. Then, Reh considered four different types of multilingual information, suggesting possible combinations of languages and information in the text: 'duplicating', 'fragmentary',

'overlapping' and 'complementary'. In complementary texts, different parts are written in different languages, and to comprehend the meaning of the text, the reader would need to possess a mastery of all the languages in the text. Duplicating texts have exactly the same texts and information in different languages. In this way, the available languages have the same value. In fragmentary texts, the whole information is available in only one language, but some parts are translated into other languages. In overlapping signs, only part of the information is repeated in another language, while the rest of the text is only in one language (Reh 2004: 8-14).

Based on Reh's study in 2004, Backhaus (2006, 2007) introduced a slightly different terminology for his analysis of Tokyo, identifying four types of 'part writing': 'homophonic', 'mixed', 'polyphonic' and 'monophonic'. The ´homophonic´ type points to signs containing two or more languages, where the information is fully translated or transliterated. In the 'mixed' type of part writing, the author makes no distinction between 'fragmentary' and 'overlapping' multilingualism present in Reh's taxonomy, including signs that provide only some information in all languages or the whole message in one language and varying parts in one or several other languages. The 'polyphonic' type includes signs that have several languages completely independent of each other in the content. Finally, 'monophonic part writing' distinguishes four different patterns: single words, slogans/catchphrases, business names and other patterns that do not suit the previous patterns.

Spolsky (2009) suggested the following categories of street signs: advertising signs, warning notices and prohibitions, building names, informative signs, commemorative plaques, objects and graffiti. The inclusion of more categories created a more holistic view of linguistic landscaping that includes all possible instances of language, whether

temporal or more permanent, legally or illegally displayed. Pennycook (2009) further supported the incorporation of graffiti in the linguistic landscape, explaining that it allows for deeper exploration into production and purposes of languages in the environment, transcending language differences and bringing in other factors of representation into the discussion of the linguistic landscape.

Huebner (2009) calls for a more specific approach to categorising multilingual signs by suggesting the following categorisation: (a) expressive signs, which convey emotions or feelings; (b) directive signs, which offer recommendations, advice, or attempt to persuade; (c) informational signs, which describe, inform or report information; (d) interactional signs, which "create, maintain and finish contact between the addresser and addressee" (p. 75); and (e) signs with poetic function, which use a code to communicate meanings that would not otherwise be communicated. These signs can be categorised according to which language or languages are on the sign, as well as by purpose of the sign: for example, shop signs, directional signs, or political signs. Categorising multilingual signs can also help in determining who the intended audience is, and if each language communicates the same message.

Another important categorisation in an LL study is to identify the sign-maker i.e. distinguishing between top-down and bottom-up signs. Ben-Rafael et al. believe that this distinction puts order in the analysis of LL (2006: 10). Top-down, official government or LL from above are different terms used to describe the signs "issued by national and public bureaucracies, public institutions, signs on public sites, public announcement and street names" (Ben-Rafael et al. 2006). On the other hand, bottom-up, unofficial private and LL from below are terms used to refer to items "issued by individual social actors,

shop owners and companies like names of shops, signs on businesses and personal announcements" (Ben Rafael et al. 2006).

2.2.3.2 Unit of analysis

Although Landry & Bourhis (1997) have provided a definition and broad characterisation of the linguistic landscape, the methodological challenges in determining the 'units of analysis' is still an ongoing debate in the field. Gorter and Cenoz (2008), observed that:

> The unit of analysis - the large number of language signs next to each other makes it difficult to decide what each linguistic sign is. Are all the linguistic items in a shop window part of 'one' language sign or should they be considered separately? What about other ads, graffiti or posters next to the shop window? Can a whole street be considered a unit of analysis? There are indeed advantages and disadvantages with each of these choices. Decisions regarding the unit of analysis are important because it is a crucial methodological issue to allow for comparability between studies (p. 351).

According to Said (2011), the sign selection process is a matter of personal interpretation. To illustrate, Hult (2009: 96) photographs items that were visible at street level with the naked eye as unit of analysis; while Backhaus (2007: 66) used any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame as unit of analysis, irrelevant of its size. Spolsky and Cooper (1991) defined units of analysis as separate signs plaques; while Cenoz and Gorter (2006) combined the texts on one business front, or establishment, into one unit of analysis.

Most researchers, following Landry & Bourhis (1997, p. 25), mainly consider language texts on relatively "fixed" signs such as "public road signs, advertising billboards, street

names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings" which have some degree of stability regarding their spatial position.

However, there are other researchers who add "mobile" forms of signs into this list of objects. Such mobile signs could be "leaflets and flyers being distributed (and perhaps discarded) in the street, advertising on vans, buses and other vehicles that pass through the streets of the area under study, free tourist maps and other publications available on counters and desks of hotels and tourist information centres" (Torkington, 2008: 124), or even "personal visiting cards" (Ben-Rafael, et al., 2006: 8) and "business cards" (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2010).

2.2.4 Applications of Linguistic Landscape Studies

The linguistic landscape (LL) is a relatively new subfield of sociolinguistics. During the past decades, the linguistic landscape approach has been adopted for various research purposes, such as language policy, multilingualism, and language vitality (Gorter, 2006; Backhaus, 2007; Negro, 2009; Supramani & Wang et al, 2013). It has also been a useful tool for analysis of the identity issue in multi-ethnic countries. Curtin (2009) examined the identities associated with the linguistic landscape in Taipei. In particular, she analysed the different Romanisation systems of Chinese in the public space and discussed the dynamic process of self-identification of Taiwanese. Taylor-Leech (2012) investigated the linguistic landscape in Dili, Timor-Leste, and discussed its association with its colonial past and current diverse ethno-cultural identity. Research on LL can give comprehension on the status of languages in linguistic contested regions. The choice of certain languages over other languages on signs according to Spolsky (2009: 33) can

provide "information about the sociolinguistic context and reflecting a symbolic value of some of all of the participants".

With globalisation and the spread of the English language, numerous linguistic landscape studies have revolved around the use of English. English language has been found to have spread in infiltrated many countries such as Bulgaria (Griffin, 2001), and having a noticeable presence in Tokyo, Japan (Backhaus, 2007; Hyde, 2002; MacGregor, 2003), Finland (Taavitsainen & Pahta, 2008), Macedonia (Dimova, 2007), Bangkok, Thailand (Huebner, 2006), and Rome, Italy (Griffin, 2004). English language seems to play a cosmopolitan role indexing the international status of a place and its modernity. The shop signs which use English were also interpreted as indicating better quality and higher status of businesses (Dimova, 2007; Schlick, 2002, 2003). In addition, studies conducted in tourist areas suggested that English has been used as a lingua franca or an international language, or the language of the target audience, as well as to symbolise fashion and prestige (Griffin, 2004; Kallen, 2009).

The linguistic landscape is also viewed as a language policy mechanism (Shohamy, 2006: 123). By comparing the regulations on language policy with official and private signs, the status and roles of the languages in the region can be shown. It can also show how real-life language situation relate to with official policy. Dal Negro (2009: 206) defines the rationale of the study of linguistic landscapes and language policies:

> A bilingual sign can be read as the expression per se of a bilingual community, or it can be seen as an aspect of an explicit language policy aimed at giving equal status to two codes […] not representing the entire or the real local linguistic repertoire but its language policy.

The relationship between language policies and ideologies and the linguistic configuration of the public space has also been the focus of interest in many pieces of research. The studies focus predominantly on the investigation of the interaction between the language policies and the actual linguistic behaviour as detectable in the linguistic patterns of the public space (Backhaus 2009; Sloboda 2009; Dal Negro 2009; du Plessis 2010; Marten 2010 and Pavlenko 2010).

Spolsky and Cooper (1991) investigated the language choices and the changes in street names and examined the influence of political factors on changes in LL of Jerusalem. Landry and Bourhis (1997) investigated the bilingual situation in Québec. The role of minority languages, national languages and English on signs was investigated by Cenoz and Gorter (2006), by comparing two streets in Spain and the Netherlands respectively. Backhaus (2007) analysed multilingual signs in the region around train stations in Tokyo and found out significant differences in the languages used, position and font size between public (top-down) and private (bottom-up) signs.

According to Shohamy (2012: 538), the main goal of linguistic landscape studies is "to describe and identify systemic patterns of the presence and absence of languages in public spaces." As such, the study of the linguistic landscape has been incorporated in a multitude of thematic foci dealing with the impact of globalisation, the relationship between signs, scripts and identity, the discursive construction of the public space, the multimodality of the linguistic landscape and many other topics (Shohamy 2006).

2.3 Linguistic landscape and Language Policy

Language policy is one of the fields which has been addressed by linguistic landscape studies. According to Dal Negro (2009: 206), the linguistic landscape is an instrument which language policy is reflected while Puzey (2012: 141) believes that the linguistic landscape is a contributing factor to how people understand language policy. Spolsky and Shohamy (2000) from their standing point defined language policy as "an effort by someone with or claiming authority to change the language practice (or ideology) of someone else". Thus, the policy maker has some level of authority over those expected to follow the policy. They supported Ager (1996) who sees language policy as obtaining power rather than distributing it. Spolsky and Shohamy think that if language policy aims at changing language practice, then there is a concern for studying not just policy making but also the implementation and evaluation of the policy. For a policy to be analysed, it is crucial to evaluate its impact. It is therefore important to note that sometimes the statement of a policy can be more important than its effective implementation.

Shohamy (2006: 112) argues that the public space can be a good setting for ideological battles and she observed that the linguistic landscape is a mechanism affecting the de facto language policy and is a major aspect in manipulating language. According to her, it is through the language policy in a given territory that one ascertains how in general certain languages should be used in society, and in particular, in the linguistic landscape and on public signs (2006: 55). Shohamy claims that the presence or absence of certain languages in the LL affects language policy (2006: 110). She further contends that the presence (or absence) of language(s) displayed in public spaces communicates a message, "intentional or not, conscious or not, that affects, manipulates or imposes de facto language policy practice" (p. 110). In other words, she believes that the linguistic

landscape symbolises the legitimacy and priority of certain languages over other languages. Shohamy claims that the presence or absence of certain languages in the LL affects language policy (2006: 110).

Cenoz and Gorter (2006) observed that one of the ways of analysing language is by focusing on the written information on language signs in a given area. Based on this, linguistic landscapes also reflect the power relations as well as the status of the different languages in the sociolinguistic context (Cenoz and Gorter 2006:67). They also contribute to the construction of a sociolinguistic context as visual language has the power to affect and influence people's linguistic behaviours and language use. The language used on the official language sign can be compared to the language policy of the region. Thus, the signage of any linguistic landscape can say a lot about the language ideologies of the people and activities in that given context.

From another viewpoint, Spolsky (2009:65) posits that the "public linguistic space" is shaped and controlled consciously by rules and regulations which are the key to language policy. Yet, Pavlenko (2010: 148) argues that changes in the linguistic landscape should not only be seen as a reflection of language shift, but also as a "direct outcome of language changes in political regimes". In a sense, the dominant language in use is a result of its political affiliation to the policy makers. On the other hand, there are also studies about the role of language policy in shaping the linguistic landscape of a region. Kallen (2009) examines the linguistic landscape of Ireland and its interaction with the language policy and tourism. Blackwood and Tufi (2012) investigated the linguistic landscape of French and Italian Mediterranean coastal towns, and the influence of language policies on the appearance of the linguistic landscape.

The distinction between top-down and bottom-up signs is another factor which contributes to the comprehension of language policy. Shohamy states that it is the difference between top-down and bottom-up signs in terms of the languages used in the public space that sheds light on the language policy (2006: 123). While the top-down flow of LL shows the authorities' language preference, bottom-up signs show whether this preference is accepted and implemented by the general population (Puzey 2012: 141). On the other hand, as Ben-Rafael puts it, the distinction between top-down and bottom-up signs is significant because different signs are made by different actors for different audiences, and while top-down signs "serve official policies", bottom-up signs "are designed much more freely" (2009: 49). Referring to the LL study conducted by Ben-Rafael et al. in Israel, Shohamy remarks that in Jewish areas, Arabic is mostly present on top-down signs which implies the status of Arabic as an official language, but it is hardly present on bottom-up signs (2006: 123).

As mentioned above, language policy has various mechanisms; the ones which are related to the study of the LL are discussed here. It is through the language policy that languages are chosen to be used and learned in certain contexts (Shohamy 2006: 55). The language policy in education is actually an explicit way of imposing policy in a formal context. When a certain language is chosen to be the medium of instruction in schools, it is actually imposed as a policy on learners. Another tool through which language policy is manifested is language tests, and Shohamy (2006: 94) believes that tests are a way of imposing language policies, and determining the power of specific languages. She further considers language tests as "a tool in determining what other languages (apart from the national language) are important" such as the position English tests have today in terms of university or job admittance (2006:105). Shohamy adds that language policy in

"education and language tests" is often applied in the top-down domain by authorities (2006: 139).

The last point to be discussed here is the implementation of language policy. Stating a policy does not necessarily mean that this policy is followed and Shohamy emphasises that in some situations, the use of languages is in contrast to the policies (2006: 51). This is actually where the battle of top-down and bottom-up forces take place. Policy makers introduce policies through top-down forces, but those who resist, introduce their language preferences and ideologies through bottom-up forces (Shohamy 2006: 51).

2.3.1 Language policy of Malaysia

Although general language policy may not have direct relevance to the signage policy or the linguistic landscape, however, providing a background of the language policy and planning can help explain the significance languages assume in the complex sociolinguistic, socio-economic and socio-political landscape of Malaysia. It is believed that the way national language policies have shaped historically and politically in Malaysia would have left some bearing on the language preference for the signage policy. Therefore, to understand the linguistic landscape, a description of the macro-level (language policies) and micro-level (signage policies) can help clarify the context of the study.

2.3.1.1 Language Policy in the Pre-Independence Era

In the 19th century, the British encouraged the immigration of labourers from China and India to work in various economic sectors in different areas in Malaysia. Most Malays and Indians were left to work in the fields and plantation estates whereas the Chinese were involved in the mining industry and also worked as entrepreneurs (Hashim, 2009). Jesudason (1989) views the separate development of the ethnic groups as a deliberate product of the British colonial policy of 'divide and rule'. The practise of the British government had resulted in the unequal distribution of Malays, Chinese and Indian communities across the rural and urban areas of Malaya.

British colonisation also created a diverse education system of mainstream and vernacular schools that is English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil, with the purpose to maintain the social and economic segregation among the ethnic groups. There were four types of schools using four different languages and four different sets of curriculum that is the English schools, the Chinese schools, the Malay schools and the Tamil schools. They provided different forms of education to different ethnic groups in order to limit the possibility of social mobility (Watson 1980; Powell 2002).

Basic education in the vernacular schools was provided free for the Malays and Indians. However, the schools only provided education at the primary level. Hence, the Malays and the Indians who desired to get a secondary education had to enrol in an English school. The aim of Malay and Tamil education was to make the son of a fisherman or peasant a more intelligent fisherman or peasant than the generation before him. On the other hand, the Chinese were left to go their own way. The Chinese were educated both in their own language and in English. According to Asmah (1996), with the start of British colonial

governance in 1824, the Chinese community in Malaya started to acquire English through their education, while in the 1920s, with the influence from China, Chinese schools started to use Mandarin as the medium of instruction (Mak 1985). According to Platt (1976), Chinese language medium schools were established by the Chinese communities and some Chinese students who had the chance to further their education in China.

During the British occupation in Malaya in the early 19th century, English was used as the language of administration and those proficient in English had the competitive edge (Gaudart, 1987). The purpose of establishing English medium schools was to create a local workforce to undertake the support-staff positions for British administration (Malakolunthu & Rengasamy, 2012: 147). English medium schools offered students ample opportunities for further education, employment in the civil service and access to scholarships. The schools were established in urban areas and were mainly attended by wealthier Chinese and Indians and some elite Malays in order to have better mobility to pursue tertiary studies and become professionals (Ozog, 1993). The English school according to Omar (1979: 41) was "a passport to social mobility and it opened a wide avenue to an unlimited number of professions".

2.3.1.2 Language Policy in Post-Independence Era

Shortly before independence, in 1951, the British government set up the Barnes Committee to conduct an in-depth study of education in Malaya. The Barnes Report 1951 proposed a single inter – racial type of school, the national school. It would provide six years of free bilingual (Malay and English) education for all 6-12 year-olds. The committees aim was the achievement of the elusive goal of educational unification, based

on Malay – English bilingualism. It suggested the transformation of all vernacular schools into national schools where English would be the medium of instruction and Malay the national language, while Chinese and Tamil languages were to be taught as subjects according to the pupils' own language. The committee recommended that Chinese and Indians be encouraged to give up their vernacular schools and opt for schools which had Malay as the only oriental language taught. The goal was ''that the ethnic minority groups gave up their mother tongue education in favour of the study of the Malay language in and tertiary levels'' (Yang, 1998: 31). Mother tongue education was considered an ''unreasonable public expenditure'' (Yang, 1998: 34). English was suggested as a medium of instruction to develop skills and knowledgeable human resources for economic prosperity of the new nation.

After independence, the government of Malaya adopted the Education Ordinance of 1957 based on the Razak Report which made recommendations for an education system best suited for an independent Malaysia (Asmah, 1979: 14). In contrast to the Barnes Report, the Razak report supported development of mother tongue education and vernacular schools, which reads as follows:

> To examine the present Educational policy of the Federation of Malaya and to recommend any alterations that are necessary with a view to establishing a national system of education acceptable to the people of the Federation as a whole which will satisfy their needs to promote their cultural, social, economic and political development as a nation, having regard to the intention to make Malay the national language of the country whilst preserving and sustaining the growth of the language and culture of other communities living in the country (Report on the Education Committee, 1956: 1)

The Razak Report stated that there should be a variety of primary schools according to these broad types: Standard Primary Schools in which the medium of instruction should

be the Malayan National Language; and the Standard-Type Primary Schools in which the main medium of instruction could be Mandarin or Tamil or English. According to Wong & Ea (1975: 58), "Malay was to be a compulsory subject in all schools since it was the National Language. English would be compulsory because of its utilitarian value. Chinese and Tamil would be taught in primary schools where the parents of fifteen children requested it".

The newly independent Malaysia had a major agenda, national unity. With three major ethnic groups, the Malays, Indians and Chinese, a national language was seen as the binding element to ensure a smooth transition from the 'divide and rule' policy implemented by the British. The language policy was directed towards the national sentiment, since the new independent government was predominantly ruled by Malay leaders even though the ruling party was an alliance of three major parties. The Alliance consisted of UMNO (United Malays National Organization), MCA (Malaysian Chinese Association) and MIC (Malaysian Indian Congress).

To Malay leaders, Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) was an indisputable choice since Malays were the majority in Malaysia, and also because of its role as a lingua franca, its position as the main inter-ethnic communication case before and after independence, its possessing of high literature, and its previous use as a language of diplomacy and administration in the Malay Archipelago (Omar, 1979). The Malays believed that the institution of Bahasa Melayu as the national language and its establishment by law as the official language would provide them the educational and administrative capital which would lead to development of Malay as a language of higher status. On the other hand, the Chinese and the Indians did not offer much resistance because the issue of citizenship was used as a bargaining tool. In the post-independence period, a non-Malay could apply

for citizenship ‘‘provided he or she met with the three stipulated requirements: residential, good conduct and language’’ (Asmah, 1979: 10). As Asmah frankly elaborated, “To put it crudely, the institution of Malay as the national and official language ... was a barter for the acquisition and equality of citizenship for the non-Malays’’ (Asmah, 1979: 11). According to Asmah (1987), the ethnical and nationalistic reasons for the selection of the national language were that:

> To the Malays and the bumiputera people, that the choice fell on Malay was the most natural thing. It is the language of the soil. Of all the bumiputeras or indigenous languages, Malay is the most advanced in terms of its function as language of administration, high culture, literary knowledge and religion. There was another factor that provided the impetus for the switch in language policy to Bahasa Melayu. This was the strong link perceived between medium of instruction in schools and existing economic and social opportunities. In the former colonial system, English schools were located in urban areas and were mainly attended by non-Malays and a few Malays who came from the elite. In contrast, Malays in the rural areas attended Malay medium schools (at least for the primary levels). English had already become the language of economic opportunity and social mobility and this situation resulted in ‘‘an identification of a racial group with a particular type of vocation or industry and hence its identification with wealth or poverty’’ (p. 63).

Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) was therefore accepted as the national language and a symbol of national unity although peculiarly, as Gill (2004) states less than 50 per cent of the population at that time spoke Malay. This does not mean that English and the Chinese language do not possess high literature but Malay was chosen as the National language simply for politics reasons. Furthermore, for the Malay leaders, such move was important to symbolise the Malay political dominance in the country. This belief was explicitly incorporated in the Federal Constitution. Malay as the national and official language, and Malays’ rights, were secured since independence in 1957. All Malay of Malaysia speaks a form of dialects whether is Perak, Pahang or Kelantan dialect of Malay. However, the researcher feels that the Malay the Gill refer

here is Standard Malay that is the Malay based on the Johor Riau dialect. Thus, the focus on Malay language of the research is the Standard Malay.

In order to ensure that the Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) was widely accepted, it was made mandatory for a wide range of activities including media, government and most importantly, education. However, English was allowed to share the official language status with Malay for a period of ten years (1957-1967) as according to Vikor (1983), this period was to be used to develop Malay language materials containing explicit knowledge in the form of textbooks, terminology and translations.

After the general election in 1969, where the Barisan Nasional did not win seats in most of the main cities in Malaysia, riots broke out between the Chinese and Malays and subsequently, a declaration of a state of national emergency led to the suspension of parliament, and the National Operation Council governed the country from 1969 to 1971. The outcome after 1969 was a transition from English to Malay at all levels of the education system. The government began to implement the transition from English language to Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) in the education system in 1970. Aggressive affirmative action policies, for example the New Economic Policy, and racial quota for public university enrolment were implemented to address income imbalance, and emphasising development for the Malays. In addition to the above mentioned educational policies, the setting up of other completely Malay-based institutions such as the MARA Institute of Technology, junior science colleges, a large number of residential science schools and almost unlimited funding for Malay scholars as well as the preferences in employment in the public sector can be classified as affirmative action designed to ensure the correction of the ethnic socio-economic disparity which existed in the country.

2.3.1.3 Signage Policies

Apart from language policies and educational policies, signage policies were been introduced to uphold the status of Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) in the policy for advertisements. Bahasa Malaysia (Malay language), according to the constitution, is Malaysia's official language.

The Constitution of Malaysia, Article 152(1), and the National Language Act 1963 have provided the base for other government organisations, institutions and authorities to come up with their own language policy. This includes the language policy for advertisements in Malaysia. The regulations provide specific details regarding the use of Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) as the national language and also the use of other languages in advertisements as well as in billboard advertisements. Article 152 of the Constitution proclaimed its status as the national language as follows:

> "(1) The national language shall be the Malay language and shall be in such script as Parliament may by law provide:
>
> Provided that-
>
> (a) no person shall be prohibited or prevented from using (otherwise than for official purposes), or from teaching or learning, any other language; and
>
> (b) nothing in this Clause shall prejudice the right of the Federal Government or of any State Government to preserve and sustain the use and study of the language of any other community in the Federation." (Federal Constitution 1982: 137 – 138 cited in Asiah Abu Samah, 1994: 63).

From the policy documents, it could be seen that although the regulations allow the use of foreign language(s), the use of Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language) is still emphasised and prioritised. However, it is also stated in the constitution that English Language is permitted to be used in other situations such as in courts and parliament, while stressing the importance of using Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) in government official functions.

The language policy for advertisements are stipulated in the Malaysian subsidiaries of the Local Council by-laws (Undang-undang kecil Majlis Perbandaran). According to the by-laws, Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) must be used in public signboards, including billboards and road names. The usage of the national language on signboards according to Advertisement by-law by Municipal Council of Penang Island (2000) under the jurisdiction of state government states that:

> 3. (1) Bahasa Malaysia shall be used for all advertisements whether by itself or together with any other language.
>
> (2) Where Bahasa Malaysia is used together with any other language in an advertisement, the words in Bahasa Malaysia shall be bigger in size and be given more prominence in visual emphasis and position than the words in such other language.
>
> (3) No person shall exhibit or cause or permit to be exhibited any advertisement that does not comply with paragraphs (1) and (2).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology of the study. The contents of this chapter are organised into the following four sections; Section 3.2 presents the research design. Section 3.3 discusses the research site. Section 3.4 describes the form of data and data collection procedures. Section 3.5 provides explanation regarding data analysis procedures. Finally Section 3.6 summarises the chapter.

3.2 Research Design

This study has been carried out using a combination of qualitative and quantitative method. Fieldwork was carried out to take photographs of signs using a digital camera at the research site. The collected photographs of signs were then categorised and analysed using several parameters from previous studies.

To complement the quantitative data, a qualitative approach was adopted. Interviews were carried out with selected interviewees for a more detailed qualitative analysis in order to complement the quantitative data

Information on the regulations of signs and policy documents pertaining language policy as well as advertisement laws from official sources are also reviewed for data triangulation purposes. The details will be discussed in the following sections.

3.3 Research Site

The research site of the study is located in George Town, Penang. George Town is the capital city of Penang. It is located at the north-easten corner of Penang Island (see Figure 3.1 below). As the second largest metropolitan area in Malaysia, it has a population of 187,665 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2001). The Chinese ethnic group are the dominant group in George Town with 66.76 % of population, followed by Malay (22.23%) and Tamil (10.13%).

Figure 3.1: The location of George Town
(Source: Google Map, 2016)

Being the capital city of Penang, George Town plays an important role especially in the political and economic welfare. The city is a mainstay on the Malaysian tourism scene, yet it is also a popular expat enclave.

George Town was nominated as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) on 7th July 2007. It is a remarkable example of a historic colonial town that shows a succession of historical and cultural influences from its former function as a trading port. George Town represents an exceptional example of a multi-cultural trading town in East and Southeast Asia, forged from the mercantile and cultural exchanges of Malays, Chinese, and Indians, along with European colonial power imprints in its architecture, townscape, culture, monumental art and languages. The city is dotted with numerous well-preserved idiosyncratic heritage buildings such as old colonial-era mansions, shop houses, clan houses and ornate temples dating back to the 19th century. It also bears testimony to a living multi-cultural heritage and tradition of Asia, where the many religions and cultures met and coexisted. As a UNESCO Word Heritage Site, the research conducted in Georgetown was expected to yield interesting results.

The present study was carried out in one of the busiest business street in George Town, which is Penang Road. The length of Penang Road is approximately 3km. The research site stretches from Farquhar Street in the north, to Gurdwara circle, which is the junction of Penang Road, Macalister Road, Dato Keramat Road, Magazine Road and Gurdwara Road in the south (See Figure 3.2 below).

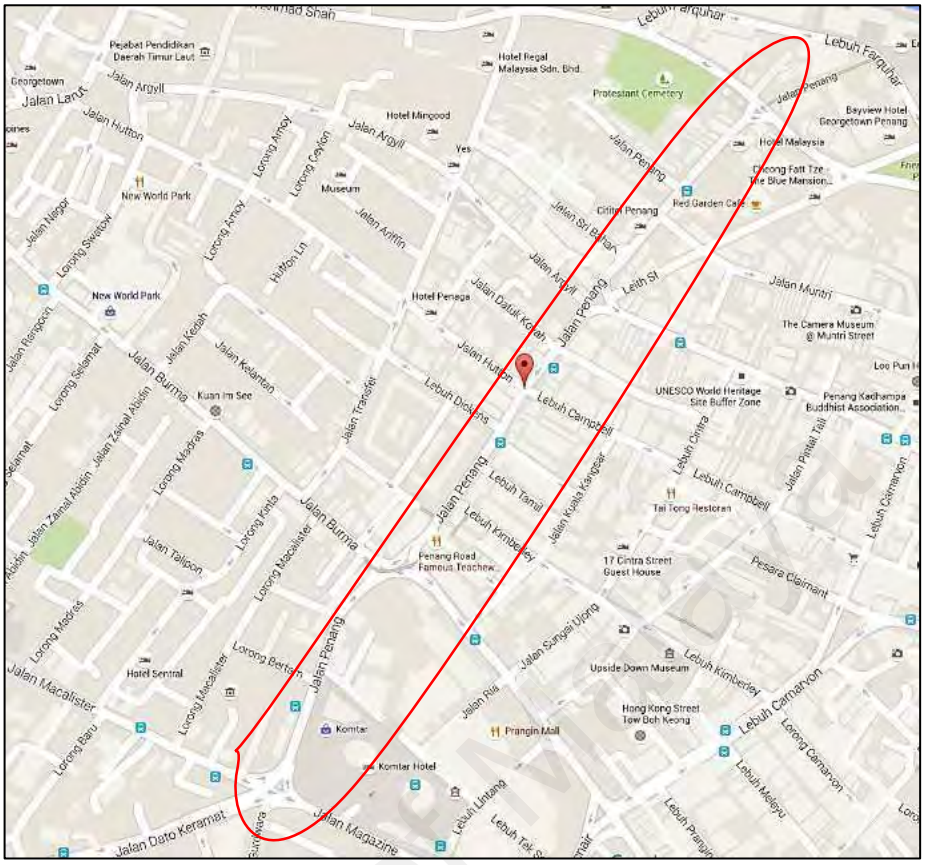

Figure 3.2: Official boundary of Penang Road
(Source: Google Map, 2016)

Penang Road is one of the business streets in George Town which functions mainly as a shopping street, major tourist destination, administrative area and hub for intra- and inter-city transportation. The road encompasses a rich collection of historical buildings in various styles. Both traditional and new architecture can be found along Penang Road.

Shops which offer a large array of goods ranging from daily groceries such as vegetables, fruits, fish and meat, to essential items such as cloth, silk, traditional pharmaceutical supplies, and all the way to non-essential items such as tourist memorabilia and crafts can be found along the road. Although Georgetown's

landscape is dominated by Chinese storefronts, traditional coffee shops and restaurants, there are also swanky shopping complexes, refurbished Chinese manors, rowdy pubs and artsy boutiques, cafés and studios. Numerous upscale western restaurants, bars and pubs are also available along the road especially along the Upper Penang Road zone.

Penang Road also serves as an administrative site besides being the site of attraction for both locals and tourists. Many ministries and agencies of the state government as well as the federal government are based in Penang Road. In fact, the tallest building of Penang, the Komtar Tower (Kompleks Tun Abdul Razak) is also located at the southern part of Penang Road. The tower, besides than being the transportation hub for the in-city bus services, also houses the administrative offices for the Penang State Government. The 65-storey tower also serves as a shopping complex with many retail outlets located in it.

This research is conducted in Penang road as it has a high density of signs. This is due to the presence of many shops, restaurants, hotels and also local administrative office along the road. Penang Road is one of the business streets in George Town which serves as an administrative site besides being the site of attraction for both locals and tourists. The road has a myriad of written messages on public display for both local and tourists which are able to represent the city's linguistic diversity as a whole.

3.4 Data

According to Landry and Bourhis (1997), linguistic landscape includes "public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings (Landry & Bourhis 1997: 25)". This study, therefore, has included the six range of signs which were characterised in terms of the definition of LL offered by Landry and Bourhis.

In order to get a broader spectrum of the linguistic landscape, "top-down" signs and "bottom-up" signs are also included in this study. This decision was made based on the fact mentioned by Backhaus that "many aspects of a city's linguistic landscape are not captured when focusing on one type of sign only" (Backhaus 2007: 61). The collection of "top-down" and "bottom-up" signs can help to enhance the understanding of the language policy. As Spolsky (2004: 65) put it, "the real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than in management".

According to Ben-Rafael et al. (2004: 17; 2006: 14), "top-down" signs refer to signs issued by the state or by central bureaucracies, while 'bottom-up' signs are signs set up by autonomous actors such as shop owners, companies, or other private enterprises (cited in Backhaus, 2007). For this research, all government-related signs are classified as "top-down" signs whereas those non-government-related signs are considered as "bottom-up" signs. Taking up the distinction of Ben-Rafael et al., all government-related signs of the Penang Road are then classified as "top-down" signs including signs by agencies of the government as well as by the police administration. Non-government related signs are otherwise considered as bottom-up signs. These include store-front signs, signs located on window fronts and awnings, flyers on pillars,

advertisements on walls, banners or posters on perimeter fences of buildings, and huge billboards.

Based on Gorter's definition, the linguistic landscape means the use of language in its "written form" (Gorter 2006: 2), therefore items with no text such as graffiti, pictures, emblems and logos that were encountered in the survey areas were not taken into account. Similarly, small signs on higher floors which were unreadable and signs that were defaced and illegible were excluded from the study. Signs that were located in the interior of a shop or building were excluded as well. In contrast, items such as couplets, "Welcome" stickers at entrances, and payment option stickers such as "Visa, Master Card, American Express etc." with linguistic value are considered as data for this study.

In order to complement the collected visual data, interviews were conducted. Relevant information about the signs, the opinions on the signs, and reasons behind the language choice on signs were asked during the interviews. As pointed out by Foucault (1980: 81), "local knowledge provided through informant data constituted a non-centralized and independent theorisation which was not contingent on the endorsement from top-down/institutionalized regimes of thought". The inclusion of data from business proprietors can provide an additional layer of interpretation of the results of this study.

In addition to photographs and interviews, policy documents from official sources such as the Federal Constitution, National Language Policy and Advertisement by-laws of the Municipal Council of Penang were gathered and studied. Information on the regulations helped to interpret the findings and was used for data triangulation purposes

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Fieldwork was carried out in stages in November and December 2013 to collect data along Penang Road, George Town. Methods that were adopted include photos, interviews, observation and collection of relevant official documents. Three trips to Penang Road were made to collect photographs of signs. The photo shooting sessions were conducted on 11th November 2013 and 25th November 2013. On 9th December 2013 another trip was made to re-photograph all signs along Penang Road to conduct quantitative analysis. All visible signs irrespective of "top-down" signs or "bottom-up" signs along the road were captured during the fieldwork producing a total number of 405 photographs. However, the final amount of photographs left for data analysis was only 378 photographs. This is due to the elimination of repeated, unclear, defaced, incomplete or half-erased signs.

Apart from the snapshots of visible signs, interviews with shop owners and customers regarding Penang Road were conducted to complement the findings. In December 2013, interviews were carried out with 5 individuals who are related to Penang Road in various ways. Questions regarding "business name, history, the significance of the business name, staff and clientele demographics, publicity practices, the nature of the owner's involvement in creating their shop signs" adopted from Malinowski's study (2009:111) were asked during the interviews. Further interviews with several foreign nationals met at hotels and cafes were conducted to seek their opinions on the various languages used on signs found along Penang Road.

A total of four hours of interviews were recorded with approximately sixty percent carried out in Chinese dialects, twenty percent in English language and twenty percent

in Malay language. The data collected from the interviews in the form of recordings were then transcribed and analysed.

Official policy and documents pertaining to language policy and advertisement laws such as the Federal Constitution 1982, The National Language Policy, The Local Council Act 1976 and also by-laws regarding advertisements, for instance The Local Council Act 1976 and The Advertisement by-law of Municipal Council of Penang (2000), are also studied. The collected data from the photo shooting session and interviews were analysed to ascertain the representative strength of languages used on signs and revealed the reasons of the choice of languages found in the linguistic landscape of the research site. Policy documents pertaining to language policy and advertisement laws from official sources were reviewed for data triangulation purposes. The findings of the research will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Unit of Analysis

Determining the exact size and nature of signs to be collected is an ongoing methodological issue in LL research (see chapter 2). As observed by Backhaus (2007), it is important to choose a more inclusive and balanced representation of signs to enhance the validity of LL studies as many aspects of a city's linguistic landscape are not captured when focusing on just one type of sign.

The definition of a "sign" adopted in this study was the one proposed by Backhaus (2007:66). Backhaus (2007:66) observed that:

> A sign was considered to be any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame. The underlying definition is rather broad, including anything from handwritten stickers to huge commercial billboards. Also such items as 'push' and 'pull' stickers at entrance doors, lettered foot mats or botanic explanation plates on trees were considered to be signs. Each sign was counted as one item, irrespective of its size (2007: 66).

With this broad definition, signs in this study include any visible signage. For instance road signs, store-front signs, signs located on window fronts and awnings, flyers on pillars, advertisements on walls, banners or posters on perimeter fences of buildings, and huge billboards. Banners or billboards with texts on both sides were counted as two different units for analysis In addition, items such as couplets, "Welcome" stickers at entrances, and payment option stickers such as "Visa, Master Card, American Express etc." with linguistic value were also considered as signs.

3.6.2 Data Analysis

A total of 378 photographs of visible top-down and bottom-up signs along Penang Road were collected. The collected photographs were imported into a virtual album named "Penang Road" in the File Maker program which sorts the photos into chronological order based on date and time stamps. Photographs of visible top-down and bottom-up signs along Penang Road were then analysed. The definition of a "sign" adopted in this study was the one proposed by Backhaus (2007:66) as "any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame". With this broad definition, signs in this study include any visible signage from advertisements or flyers pasted on pillars and walls to huge posters

or banners on perimeter fences or buildings. Each sign irrespective of its size is defined as one item. Of the 378 pictures, a total of 701 signs were obtained.

The parameters used to analyze were adopted from Supramani et al.'s (2013) study regarding the usage of Tamil language in Brickfields, Malaysia. The parameters they used in their research including the number of languages, type of shop, color of script, size of script, type of sign, languages on the sign, and the dominant language. The parameters used for this research is adopted from Supramani et al.'s (2013) with minor adjustments in order to answer the research questions of this study. The signs were analysed using the parameters which included: location, type of shop, type of sign, number of languages, language on sign, dominant language, character of Chinese script, and sign owner. (see Figure 3.3)

Location	Penang Road
Type of Shop	Shop sign
Type of Sign	Monolingual
Number of languages	1
Languages on sign	English
Domininant language	English
Colour of script	
Character of Chinese script	
Direction of Chinese script	
Colour of Chinese script	
Sign owner	Bottom up
Remark	

Figure 3.3: Example of entry form of FileMaker Pro 10

Figure 3.3 shows an example of an entry form in the software FileMaker Pro 10 used in the study. The parameters used for analysis include: location, type of shop, type of sign, number of languages, languages on sign, dominant language, colour of script, character of Chinese script, direction of Chinese script, colour of Chinese script, and sign owner.

To answer the first research question: How are different languages used in the linguistic landscape of George Town? Two parameters were identified, i.e., (i) number of languages and (ii) languages on signs. The signs are examined and categorised

according to their linguistic properties. For instance, monolingual signs or multilingual signs (Rosenbaum et al., 1977; Smalley, 1994; Huebner, 2006; Ben-Raphael et al. 2006, and Shohamy, Ben-Rafael & Bami, 2010).

The collected signs were categorised into monolingual signs and multilingual signs and the amount and percentage for each category were then calculated and tabulated. Next, the composition of both monolingual signs and multilingual signs was identified. The languages used on the signs were listed and their frequency of usage was calculated.

For multilingual signs, the signs were further categorised based on the total languages found on the signs, for instance, bilingual signs or trilingual signs. The combination of languages was then identified and the frequency of usage was also calculated and tabulated.

Figure 3.4 and Figure 3.5 show some examples of monolingual signs and multilingual signs captured along Penang Road.

Figure 3.4: An Example of Malay Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

Figure 3.5: An Example of Bilingual (English and Chinese) sign in Penang Road

To answer the second research question regarding the characteristics of "top−down" signs and "bottom-up" signs, two parameters were identified: (i) the sign's owner and (ii) the dominant language. The total frequency of the usage of the languages in both top-down and bottom-up signs was calculated. The categorising process aims to determine the distribution of languages in official and non-official domains. It also aims to find out whether language policies are reflected in both types of signs in the linguistic landscape.

Other than the parameters stated above, the appearance of the languages as the dominant in signs was also be analysed. As mentioned by Scollon and Scollon (2003), the size of script and its position on signs are the main criteria for defining the dominant language.

Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7 show some examples of top-down signs and bottom-up signs captured along Penang Road.

Figure 3.6: An Example of Top-Down Multilingual Sign by the City Council in Penang Road

Figure 3.6 displays an example of top-down, multilingual sign put up by the city council. The sign is multilingual sign and displays three languages: Malay, Chinese and Tamil. Based on the size of the script and its position, Malay language is considered the dominant language among the three languages due to it having the biggest size and being on top of other languages.

Figure 3.7 displays an example of a bottom-up sign put up by one of the shop owners in Penang Road. The sign is multilingual sign and displays three languages; Malay, Chinese and English. Among the three languages, Chinese language is considered the dominant language given that the size of the Chinese scripts are the biggest and the fact that it is placed in the most prominent position compared to the other languages.

Figure 3.7: A Bottom-Up Multilingual Sign in Penang Road

In order to answer the third research question regarding the implementation of the national language policy, the qualitative data obtained from interviews were analysed. Data such as age, ethnic background and information related to Penang Road were asked. Besides that, information about local language policy such as The Federal Constitution 1982, The National Language Policy, The Local Council Act 1976, by-laws regarding advertisements, for instance, The Local Council Act 1976 and The Advertisement by-law of Municipal Council of Penang (2000) were studied. Reasons concerning the choice of certain languages placed on signs were also asked to business proprietors in Penang Road.

The actual data collected were then compared with the official policy documents to discern if the actual practices of linguistic landscape are in terms with the implemented national language policy. Comparing the national language policy and the actual practice in the linguistic landscape will enhance our understanding of the linguistic landscape of Penang Road as well as help us to reflect on the achievement and the implementation of the national language policy.

3.7 Summary

As a summary, all the methods and procedures explained in this chapter have been chosen because they fit the design and objectives. The modus operandi chosen can also answer the research questions in this research. Extensive discussion on the results of the analyses will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the language policy as reflected in Penang Road, George Town. The findings of the study were discussed from three sources of data, namely linguistic landscape data, interview data and policy documents data according to the research questions stated in Chapter one. The empirical findings, legislative data and numerical findings of the study will be discussed in more detail in the following sections. The chapter consists of five sections. Section 4.2 presents the linguistic properties of signs in Penang Road. Section 4.3 shows the results of the top-down signs and bottom-up signs. Section 4.4 explains the use of languages on signs. Finally, section 4.5 summarises the chapter.

4.2 Linguistic Properties of signs in Penang Road

This dissertation is a sociolinguistics study on language policy, language planning and the linguistic landscape. The study includes comprehensive photographs of all visible top-down (government signs, street names, etc.) and bottom-up (private signs, business signs, etc.) signage along Penang Road to review the inconsistency between language policy and the actual practice of code choice for signs.

In order to answer the first research question regarding how different languages are used in the linguistic landscape of George Town, the analysis focuses on the following categorisation:

(1) Languages displayed

(2) Combination of signs

4.2.1 Languages displayed on signs in Penang Road

A total number of 701 signs of various types were collected at the research site during the fieldworks. A remarkable diversity was shown in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road with a total number of ten languages identified on signboards (see Table 1).

The languages include English, Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), Chinese, Japanese, Tamil, Arabic, Bengali, Italian, French and Thai. Among the ten languages, English language, Bahasa Melayu (Malay language), and Chinese language are exhibited as the three main languages found on sign boards.

English language emerged as the most represented language with a surprisingly high percentage at 71.04% (N= 498) while Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) came up second with 45.93%. Chinese language, on the other hand, ranked as the third with 39.66%. Table 1 below shows the overview of the languages displayed on signs along Penang Road.

Table 4.1: Overview of Languages Displayed on Signs in Penang Road

Language	Amount	Percentage (%)
English	498	71.04
Malay	322	45.93
Chinese	278	39.66
Japanese	18	2.57
Tamil	17	2.43
Arabic	8	1.14
Bengali	5	0.71
Italian	2	0.29
French	1	0.14
Thai	1	0.14

Other than the local languages, the finding also illustrated the presence of foreign languages in the public sphere of Penang Road. Foreign languages for instance Japanese, Bengali, Italian, French and Thai were found to be used on signs in Penang Road. Penang is known as a popular tourist hotspot, hence the presence of a variety of foreign languages can be seen as welcoming and accommodating to the tourists. Although the foreign languages used on signs are consider relatively low, the presence of these languages on signs reflects that there is a demand to meet the needs of the rising population of foreigners in Penang Road.

Among all the foreign languages, Japanese appears to be the most frequently used language (Table 1). Japanese language is frequently used on signs especially on restaurants sign. The language frequent these restaurant as Japanese food is popular among the local and also other foreign tourists. Japan has contributed the fourth largest amount of tourists to Malaysia, after Indonesia, Singapore and China, as reported in the Penang Global Tourism 2014. The prominent use of Japanese language in George Town reflects the high frequency of Japanese tourists visiting Penang. Besides tourism

factor, the use of Japanese language in signs is also related to the Japanese occupation of Malaya in its pre-independence history. During the occupation period, Penang was used as a submarine base by the Japanese Armed Forces, therefore, the language can be seen as the most frequently used language on signs among all foreign languages.

Figure 4.1: Shop Sign Containing Japanese and Chinese Language Found in Penang Road

The usage of foreign languages such as Japanese, Bengali, Italian, French and Thai languages is also believed to be related to Penang's history in the early ages. Penang was an important port and trading centre for long distance, regional and short distance merchants, traders, labourers, and others. The most prominent setting in early Penang were Indian merchants from the Coromandel Coast, Bengal and the Malay Peninsula. This population of foreigners established diasporic settlements in Penang and thus spread the use of foreign languages in Penang.

Figure 4.2: Shop Sign Containing Italian Language, English and Malay Found in Penang Road

Figure 4.3: Sign Containing Thai Language Found in Penang Road

Figure 4.4: Business Sign Containing French Language Found in Penang Road

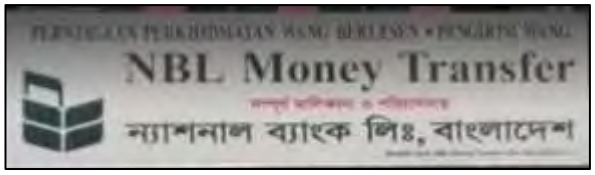

Figure 4.5: Business Sign Containing Bengali Language Found in Penang Road

4.2.2 Combination of signs

4.2.2.1 Monolingual signs

The linguistic landscape of Penang Road in George Town consists of two types of signs; monolingual signs which use only one language and multilingual signs which display two or more languages in one single sign.

Table 4.2 below shows the amount and percentage of monolingual signs and multilingual signs in Penang Road.

Table 4.2: Monolingual and Multilingual Signs in Penang Road

Language	Amount	Percentage (%)
Monolingual	376	53.64
Multilingual	325	46.35
Total	**701**	**100**

Out of the total of 701 signs collected, 376 are monolingual signs which contain only one language, while 325 are multilingual which display two or more languages.

Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show the examples of monolingual signs and multilingual signs respectively found along Penang Road.

Figure 4.6: Malay Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.7: Multilingual sign (written in Malay, Chinese and English language) in Penang Road

4.2.2.2 Composition of Monolingual signs in Penang Road

Table 4.3 illustrates the particular languages used in Monolingual signs in Penang Road.

Table 4.3: Monolingual Signs in Penang Road

Language	Amount	Percentage (%)
English	214	56.91
Malay	100	26.60
Chinese	55	14.63
Japanese	3	0.80
Tamil	2	0.53
Bengali	2	0.53
Total	**376**	**100**

Based on the findings, a total of six prominent languages are found in monolingual signs. Out of a total of 376 monolingual signs, 56.91% (N=214) are written in English, 26.60% (N=100) are written in Malay, 14.63% (N=55) are written in Chinese, 0.53% (N=3) in Japanese and 0.53% (N=2) in Tamil and Bengali respectively.

Figures 4.8, 4.9. 4.10, 4.11, 4.12 and 4.13 show some examples of Monolingual signs found in Penang Road.

Figure 4.8: English Monolingual Shop Sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.9: Chinese Monolingual Shop Sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.10: Malay Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.11: Tamil Monolingual sign found in Penang Road

Figure 4.12: Bengali Monolingual sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.13: Japanese Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

4.2.2.3 Composition of Multilingual signs

The multilingual signs in Penang Road consist of bilingual signs which display two languages in a sign, trilingual signs which display three languages in a sign, quadrilingual signs with four languages in a sign and pentalingual signs which have five languages in a sign.

Table 4.4 below illustrates the composition of multilingual signs displayed in Penang Road.

Table 4.4: Composition of Multilingual Signs of Penang Road

Language	Amount	Percentage (%)
Bilingual	216	66.46
Trilingual	95	29.23
Quadrilingual	13	4.00
Pentalingual	1	0.31
Total	325	100

Out of a total of 325 multilingual signs, 66.46% are bilingual signs (displaying two languages in one sign) followed by trilingual signs (displaying three languages) at 29.23%, quadrilingual signs (displaying four languages) at 4% and Pentalingual signs (displaying five languages) at 0.31%.

Bilingual Signs in Penang Road

Table 4.5 below shows the language combination of bilingual signs in Penang Road. A total of eight combinations of languages or scripts were identified on bilingual signs. The combination includes Malay and English (M+E), Chinese and English (C+E), Chinese and Malay (C+M), English and Japanese (E+JP), Malay and Arabic (M+AR), English and Bengali (E+B), English and Italian (E+I), Malay and Bengali (M+B).

The most favoured combination of languages seen in bilingual signs involves English with the addition of Malay (39.81%), followed by the combination of English and Chinese with 38.43% and the combination of Malay and Chinese at 16.20%. Out of 216 bilingual signs, English language is used as the dominant language for 75 signs. Malay language is used slightly less compared to the English language as seen in 74 signs followed by Chinese language which is used in 64 signs.

Figure 4.14 - Figure 4.18 shows some examples of bilingual signs found in Penang Road.

Figure 4.14: A Bilingual Shop Sign Containing Malay and Chinese in Penang Road

Figure 4.15: A Bilingual Shop Sign Containing English and Chinese in Penang Road

Figure 4.16: A Bilingual Shop Sign Containing Malay and English in Penang Road

Figure 4.17: A Bilingual Shop Sign Containing English and Bengali in Penang Road

Figure 4.18: A Bilingual Shop Sign Containing Italian and English found in Penang Road

Table 4.5: Bilingual Signs in Penang Road, George Town

Language/ Script Combinations	Amount	Percentage (%)	Dominant Language									
			C	%	M	%	E	%	JP	%	B	%
M+E	86	39.81	-	-	53	61.63	33	38.4	-	-	-	-
C+E	83	38.43	46	55.4	-	-	37	44.6	-	-	-	-
C+M	35	16.20	18	51.4	17	48.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
E+JP	5	2.31	-	-	-	-	3	60.0	2	40.0	-	-
M+AR	3	1.39	-	-	3	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
E+B	2	0.93	-	-	-	-	1	50.0	-	-	1	50.0
E+I	1	0.46	-	-	-	-	1	100.0	-	-	-	-
M+B	1	0.46	-	-	1	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**216**	**100**	**64**	**29.63**	**74**	**34.26**	**75**	**34.72**	**2**	**0.93**	**1**	**0.46**

Trilingual Signs in Penang Road

Table 6 displays the language combination of trilingual signs in Penang Road. A total of eleven combinations of languages/scripts were identified on trilingual signs. The combinations include Chinese, Malay and English (C+M+E), Chinese, English and Japanese (C+E+JP), English, Chinese and Tamil (E+C+T), English, Chinese and Arabic (E+C+AR), Chinese, Malay and Japanese (C+M+JP), Thai, English and Malay (TH+E+M), Malay, Chinese and Arabic (M+C+AR), Italian, Malay and English (I+M+E), Arabic, English and Tamil (AR+E+T), English, Chinese and French (E+C+F) and lastly, Malay, English and Japanese (M+E+JP).

The most favoured combination of languages seen in trilingual signs involves English with the addition of Malay and Chinese with 82.10%. Out of 95 trilingual signs, English language was used as the dominant language for 36 signs. Chinese language was used slightly less compared to the English language with 34 signs followed by Malay language in 23 signs.

In addition to bilingual and trilingual signs, Penang Road also displays quadrilingual signs which consist of four languages in one sign and also pentalingual signs which consist of five languages in one sign.

Table 4.6: Trilingual Signs in Penang Road, George Town

Language/ script Combinations	Amount	Percentage (%)	Dominant Language											
			C	%	M	%	E	%	T	%	JP	%	F	%
C+M+E	78	82.1	32	41.0	21	26.9	25	32.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
C+E+JP	6	6.3	2	33.3	-	-	4	66.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
E+C+T	2	2.1	-	-	-	-	2	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
E+C+AR	2	2.1	-	-	-	-	2	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
C+M+JP	1	1.1	-	-	1	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TH+E+M	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1**	**100**	-	-	-	-
M+C+AR	1	1.1	-	-	**1**	**100**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
I+M+E	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	**1**	**100**	-	-	-	-	-	-
AR+E+T	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	**1**	**100**	-	-	-	-	-	-
E+C+F	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	**1**	**100**	-	-	**1**	**100**	-	-
M+E+JP	1	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	95	**100**	**34**	**35.79**	**23**	**24.21**	**36**	**37.89**	**1**	**1.05**	**1**	**1.05**	-	-

Figure 4.19 - Figure 4.26 shows some examples of trilingual, quadrilingual and pentalingual signs found in Penang Road.

Figure 4.19: A Trilingual Shop Sign Containing Chinese, Japanese and English in Penang Road

Figure 4.20: A Trilingual Shop Sign Containing Chinese, Malay and English Language in Penang Road

Figure 4.21: A Trilingual Shop Sign Containing English, Arabic and Chinese in Penang Road

Figure 4.22: A Trilingual Shop Sign Containing Malay (Wrtitten in Jawi), English and Tamil language in Penang Road

Figure 4.23: A Trilingual Shop Sign Containing Malay, Japanese and English in Penang Road

Figure 4.24: A Quadrilingual Sign Containing Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English in Penang Road

Figure 4.25: A Quadrilingual Shop Sign Containing Malay, English, Chinese and Japanese in Penang Road

Figure 4.26: A Pentalingual Sign Containing Malay, Chinese, Tamil, Japanese and English in Penang Road

4.3 Top-Down signs and Bottom-Up signs

Table 4.7 makes a distinction between the "top-down" signs and "bottom-up" signs in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. Top down signs refers to signs by government authorities while bottom-up signs refers to signs by individuals or non-government agencies.

Table 4.7: Top-down and Bottom-up signs in Penang Road

Status	Amount	Percentage (%)
Bottom-up	661	94.29
Top-down	40	5.71
Total	701	100

The distribution of top-down signs and bottom-up signs along Penang Road are calculated and the percentages shown are in relation to the total number of signs collected in the study. In this study, 94.29% (n=661) of the signs are bottom-up signs while only 5.71% (n= 40) are top-down signs.

The comparison and contrast of languages used in top-down signs and bottom-up signs can help to determine language choices and preference patterns in the signage. The results reveal that the LL of the research site like in most places is dominated by private companies rather than government agencies. As Penang Road is mainly a business area, a dominance of bottom-up signs was therefore to be expected.

4.3.1 Monolingual and multilingual signs in Top-down and Bottom-up signs

Table 4.8 shows the distribution of monolingual signs and multilingual signs in top-down and bottom-up signs.

Table 4.8: Monolingual vs multilingual in top-down and bottom-up signs

	Top- down signs		Bottom-up signs	
	Amount	**%**	**Amount**	**%**
Monolingual	22	55.00	354	53.56
Multilingual	18	45.00	307	46.44
Total	40	100	661	100

55% of the top-down signs are monolingual while 45% of the top-down signs are multilingual. Whereas for bottom-up signs, 53.64% are monolingual while 46.44% are multilingual signs.

Figure 4.27 - Figure 4.34 show some examples of monolingual top-down signs found in Penang Road.

Figure 4.27: A Top-down Monolingual sign (Malay language) in Penang Road

Figure 4.28: A Top-down Monolingual sign (Malay language) in Penang Road

Figure 4.29: A Top-down Monolingual Sign (English language) in Penang Road

Figure 4.30: A Top-down Monolingual Sign (English language) in Penang Road

Figure 4.31: A Top-down Multilingual Sign (Malay and Arabic) in Penang Road

Figure 4.32: A Top-down Multilingual Sign (Malay and Chinese) in Penang Road

Figure 4.33: A Top-down Multilingual Sign (Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English) in Penang Road

Figure 4.34: A Top-down Multilingual Sign (Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English) in Penang Road

4.3.2 Dominant language in Top-down and Bottom-up signs

Table 4.9 below shows the details of dominant languages in top-down and bottom-up signs. There are altogether seven dominant languages in both top-down signs and bottom-up signs. Among all, English language, Malay language and the combination of these two languages are the dominant languages used in both monolingual and multilingual top-down signs.

Of the total 40 top-down signs, 22 are monolingual while 18 are multilingual signs. Malay language is used in 86.36% of the signs while English is used in 13.64% of the signs. On the other hand, out of a total of 18 multilingual signs, Malay language is used in 77.78% of the signs while English language is used in 22.22% of multilingual top-down signs.

Table 4.9: Dominant Language in Top-down and Bottom-up Signs

	Top-down sign (n=40)				Bottom-up sign (n=661)			
	Monolingual		Multilingual		Monolingual		Multilingual	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Malay	19	86.36	14	77.78	85	24.01	97	31.60
English	3	13.64	4	22.22	207	58.47	137	44.63
Chinese	-	-	-	-	55	15.54	68	22.15
Tamil	-	-	-	-	2	0.56	-	-
Japanese	-	-	-	-	3	0.85	3	0.98
Thai	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.33
Bengali	-	-	-	-	2	0.56	1	0.33
Total	22	100	18	100	354	100	307	100

Malay language is used in 86.36% of the monolingual top-down signs and 77.78% of the multilingual top-down signs in Penang Road, whereas the English language is used in 13.64% of the monolingual top-down signs and 22.22% multilingual top-down signs.

On the contrary, out of 661 bottom-up signs in Penang Road, 354 are monolingual signs, while the other 307 are multilingual signs. For the linguistic situation of the bottom-up signs, the usage of languages is more diverse. A total of six languages are found in bottom-up monolingual and multilingual signs (Table 4.9). English language is the dominant language in both monolingual and multilingual signs in bottom-up signs. It is used in 58.47% of monolingual bottom-up signs and in 44.63% of multilingual bottom-up signs. Chinese language ranked third and is used in 15.54% of monolingual bottom-up signs and 22.15% of the multilingual bottom-up signs. Other languages found in the bottom-up signs include Tamil, Japanese, Thai and Bengali.

4.4 The Usage of Languages on Signs: A Reflection of Official Language Policy

In order to answer the third research question regarding how language usage in the linguistic landscape reflects the official language policy, the use of languages, specifically Malay language, English language and Chinese language in public spaces is reviewed.

4.4.1 The use of Malay language on signs

Malay language as the sole national and official language of Malaysia is to be used in public and private domains as proclaimed in Article 152 of The Federal Constitution 1982. Table 4.10 illustrates the usage of Malay language along Penang Road in George Town.

Table 4.10: The Usage of Malay Language on Signs in Penang Road

Categories	Malay Language	
	Amount	%
Total frequency of usage	322/701	45.93%
As the dominant language	207/701	29.53%
In monolingual signs	100/376	26.60%
In multilingual signs	97/325	29.85%
In Top-down signs	37/40	92.50%
In Bottom-up Signs	174/661	26.30%

According to the findings, 45.93% out of the total of 701 signs in Penang Road uses Malay language. Malay language is also the dominant language for 29.53% of the signs

in Penang Road. The language is also visible in monolingual and multilingual signs as well as in both top-down and bottom-up signs.

Figure 4.35 and Figure 4.36 show two examples of a top-down sign and a bottom-up sign which use Malay language found in Penang Road.

4.4.1.1 Rumi Form and Jawi Form of Malay language

Malay language has two form of writing system, that is the Rumi Form and the Jawi form. The Rumi form is written using a Latin alphabet while Jawi form is written using Arabic alphabet. The Rumi writing system is the official script in Malaysia and is used for both official and informal purposes. On the other hand, Jawi is used in terms of writing or reading for Islamic religious educational programs and in media especially Islamic programmes.

Figure 4.35: An Example of Bottom-up Malay Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.36: An Example of Bottom-up multilingual sign written in English, Tamil and Malay (Jawi form) in Penang Road

4.4.2 The Used of English language

Table 4.11 displays the usage of English language on signs along Penang Road. Based on the findings, it can be seen that English language is prominent in the linguistic landscape of George Town. Despite the overt and covert governmental emphasis on the use of Malay language, English is placed in a dominant position in almost all the categories of usage. It is also the most dominant language in monolingual signs and multilingual signs.

Table 4.11: The Usage of English Language on Signs in Penang Road

Categories	English Language	
	Amount	**%**
Total frequency of usage	498/701	71.04%
As the dominant language	325/701	46.36%
In monolingual signs	214/376	56.91%
In multilingual signs	111/325	34.15%
In Top-down signs	19/40	47.50%
In Bottom-up Signs	318/661	48.10%

Figure 4.37 and Figure 4.38 show two examples of a top-down sign and a bottom-up sign found in Penang Road that use English language.

Figure 4.37: An example of a Top-down English Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

Figure 4.38: An example of a Bottom-up English Monolingual Sign in Penang Road

4.4.3 The used of Chinese language

Aside from English, another language which appears considerably frequently, and is salient and prominent in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road is Chinese language. In most of the domains Chinese language turned out to be the third major language used in the linguistic landscape after English and Malay.

The usage of Chinese languages on the signs in Penang Road is shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: The Usage of the Chinese Language on Signs in Penang Road

Categories	Chinese Language	
	Amount	%
Total frequency of usage	278/701	39.66%
As the dominant language	157/701	22.40%
In monolingual signs	55/376	14.63%
In multilingual signs	98/325	30.15%
In Top-down signs	8/40	20.00%
In Bottom-up Signs	157/661	23.80%

Chinese language appears prominently in 39.66% of the total signboards in Penang Road. The percentage of Chinese language being used as the dominant language comes at 22.40%. It is used in 14.36% of the monolingual signs, 30.15% of the multilingual signs, 29.63% of the bilingual signs and 35.79% of the trilingual signs. The percentage of Chinese language being used in top-down signs comes at a 20.0% and 23.80% of the bottom-up signs.

Figure 4.39 and Figure 4.40 show two examples of a top-down sign and a bottom-up sign found in Penang Road that use Chinese language.

Figure 4.39: An Example of a Bottom-up Shop Sign that Features Traditional Chinese in Penang Road

Figure 4.40: An Example of a Top-down Sign that Features Traditional Chinese in Penang Road

4.4.3.1 Romanised Form and Character Form of Chinese Language

The Chinese language signs in Penang Road have been identified to be written in two forms: the Romanised form and the character form. Chinese Romanised form refers to the phonetic representation of Chinese words using Roman characters while the Chinese character form uses Chinese characters ideograms.

4.4.3.1.1 The Chinese Romanised Form

The appearance of a Romanised system of Chinese language in signs is another interesting phenomenon in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. Curtin's (2008: 231) study shows three Romanised systems namely, Wade-Giles, Hanyu Pinyin and Tongyong pinyin in the LL of Taipei. The Romanised system found in Penang Road differs from her study. The Romanised system in Penang Road is use in Chinese 'dialects' such as Hokkien, and Cantonese. There are also Mandarin signs written in Romanised form.

Table 4.13 shows the details of Different Types of Romanised of Chinese signs in Penang Road.

Table 4.13: Romanization System of Chinese on Signs in Penang Road

	Amount	**%**
Hokkien	39	61.90
Cantonese	22	34.92
Han Yu Pinyin (Mandarin)	2	3.17
Total	**63**	**100**

Out of the 63 Chinese scripts signs in Penang Road, 39 signs or 61.9% (N=39) are written in Hokkien Pinyin, 34.92%, (N=22) in Cantonese Pinyin and 3.17% (N=2) in Mandarin using Han Yu Pinyin. This phenomenon is due to the fact that Hokkien is the dominant Chinese dialect spoken in Penang. According to Mak (1985: 71), the Hokkien group had demographically been the major dialect group among the early Chinese immigrants in the 19th century.

The use of dialects in Romanised form in Chinese signs reflects the ethnical origins and dialects that the business proprietors speak. At the same time, it also responds to the proprietors' desire to cling on to his or her sub-ethnic group's identity.

Figure 4.41, Figure 4.42 and Figure 4.43 show three examples of signs found in Penang Road that uses Chinese Romanised form. The word 'YING YANG' in shop sign in Figure 4.41 is a Romanised form for Chinese character '阴阳' and is written using the Hanyu pinyin spelling. For Figure 4.42, the word in the shop sign "TUCK SEONG" is

the Romanised form for Chinese character '德商'. It is written based on the Cantonese spelling of the character. The word 'ENG LOONG' in shop sign in Figure 4.43 is a Romanised form for Chinese character '荣隆' and is written using the Hokkien spelling.

Figure 4.41: An Example of Shop Sign that Features Chinese Romanised Form (Hanyu Pinyin) in Penang Road

Figure 4.42: An Example of Shop Sign that Features Chinese Romanised Form (Cantonese) in Penang Road

Figure 4.43: An Example of Shop Sign that Features Chinese Romanised Form (Hokkien) in Penang Road

4.4.3.1.2 The Chinese Characters Form

From the data collected, it is observed that there is a mix in the use of traditional and simplified Chinese scripts in the signs (Table 4.14). The signs in Penang Road are written in two types of scripts systems of the Chinese characters, i.e. simplified characters and traditional characters.

The phenomenon, whereby both traditional characters and simplified characters exist in the same public space, is something rare. The use of either type of scripts according to Curtin (2008: 226), presupposes "indexicality that contextualises well-established geographical and political positions". This is unusual as the Simplified Chinese characters have been adopted as the official way of writing for Malaysian Chinese since the Ministry of Education decreed it in 1956 (Wang & Lu et al, 2006: 160). Malaysia has adopted the simplified script for the usage of Chinese schools and in mass media since the 1980s after China abandoned the traditional Chinese characters in 1956 (Wang & Lu et al, 2006: 160), but the use of traditional characters is still unrestrained in the Chinese community.

Table 4.14: Simplified Characters and Traditional Characters on Signs in Penang Road

	Amount	%
Simplified characters	104	37.41
Traditional characters	174	62.59
Total	**278**	**100**

Based on the findings, it is shown that both types of script systems are found in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. Out of the 278 signs, 104 signs (37.41%) are in simplified characters, while 174 signs (62.59%) are in traditional characters. The traditional characters dominate the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. The traditional characters are preferred in the commercial domain as the traditional characters carry more cultural and historical elements. It also reflects the fact that Malaysian Chinese cling strongly to their authentic Chinese ethnicity through the linguistic features which were inherited from their forefathers. It is also speculated that this is also a reflection of the age group that owns the stores. These shop owners are possibly of the older generation that used to learn and write in traditional Chinese characters before Malaysia adopted the simplified script system. This statement is supported by the interview findings which report that most of the shops that use traditional characters are owned by those aged 60 and above, or shops which have been established long before Malaysia's independence.

Figure 4.44, Figure 4.45 and Figure 4.46 shows some examples of signs found in Penang Road which uses Chinese characters form.

Figure 4.44: An Example of a Sign with Traditional Chinese Characters in Penang Road

Figure 4.45: An Example of a Sign with Simplified Chinese Characters in Penang Road

Figure 4.4.6: An Example of a Sign with Simplified and Traditional Chinese Characters in Penang Road

4.4.4 Mismatch of Policy and Practice

This study focuses on the degree of visibility of the three major languages: Malay, English, and Chinese, on private and public signs. Table 4.15 shows the usage of the languages on signs along Penang Road in seven different categories: as the dominant languages, in monolingual signs, in bilingual signs, in trilingual signs, the frequency of usage, in top-down signs, and in bottom-up signs.

Table 4.15: The Usage of Malay, English and Chinese on signs in Penang Road

Categories	Malay		English		Chinese	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
As the dominant language	207/701	29.53%	325/701	46.36%	157/701	22.40%
In monolingual signs	100/376	26.60%	214/376	56.91%	55/376	14.63%
In bilingual signs	74/216	34.26%	75/216	34.72%	64/216	29.63%
In trilingual signs	23/95	24.21%	36/95	37.89%	34/95	35.79%
Frequency of usage	322/701	45.93%	498/701	71.04%	278/701	39.66%
In Top-down signs	37/40	92.50%	19/40	47.50%	8/40	20.00%
In Bottom-up Signs	174/661	26.30%	318/661	48.10%	157/661	23.80%

Out of 701 signs, it can be seen that nearly half (46.46%) of the total signs utilise English language as the dominant language. Malay language and Chinese language are left with 29.53% and 22.40% respectively. As for monolingual signs, English is used in 56.91% of the signs, followed by Malay which is used in 100 out of the 376 monolingual signs (26.60%), and Chinese language in 14.63% of the signs.

In the case of bilingual signs, the most used language is English at 34.72%, followed by Malay at 34.26% and Chinese which is uses in 29.63% of the signs. For trilingual signs, English language still stands as the most dominant language with a rate of 37.89% of the total 95 signs, followed by Chinese at 35.79% and lastly Malay at 24.21%. Malay is eminently used in top-down signs. It is used in 37 out of a total of 40 signs (92.5%), while English is uses in 19 out of 40 signs (47.50%) and Chinese appears in only 8 out of 40 signs (20.00%). On the other hand, in the bottom-up category, English shows the highest usage at 48.10%, followed by Malay at 26.30% and Chinese at 23.80%.

4.4.4.1 The Use of Malay language and National Identity

The relative prominence of a certain language over other languages across the linguistic landscape represents the symbolic and power dimensions that language has. The visibility and relative prominence of Malay language across the linguistic landscape of Penang Road points to the symbolic and power dimensions as mentioned by Shohamy (2006:110), 'the presence or

absence of languages in public space communicates symbolic messages about the importance, power, significance, and relevance of certain languages or the irrelevance of others.'

Malaysia, upon attaining independence from the British in 1957, instituted Malay as the national language and the instrument to unify its multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural population. Malay was made the official language as stated by Asmah (1997: 15) because of "its role as a lingua franca, its position as a major language, its position of high literature, and the fact that it had once been an important language of administration and diplomacy in the Malay Archipelago'. Malay language was established as the sole national and official language of the country in 1967. In virtue of its status as the national language, Malay language is supposed to be used by public and private sectors in all domains of activities, for instance, administration, education, media, justice and business.

The use of Malay language and its status as the sole national language was emphasised and prioritised by the government in Article 152 of the Federal Constitution 1982. The usage of languages on signboards is under the jurisdiction of the state government according to the Local Council Act 1970. Due to this, Penang State authorities have enforced a policy to uphold the usage of the national language on signboards. The usage of the national language on signboards according to Advertisement by-law by Municipal Council of Penang Island (2000) under the jurisdiction of state government states that:

> 3. (1) Bahasa Malaysia shall be used for all advertisements whether by itself or together with any other language.

(2) No person shall exhibit or cause or permit to be exhibited any advertisement that does not comply with paragraphs (1) and (2).

The policies not only require the mandatory use of Malay language but also proclaim strict punitive treatments for those who violate these rules. According to some business proprietors during the interviews, strict rules and regulations regarding the usage of languages on signs were introduced by the local authorities when they applies for permits and licence. One of the interviewee subjects stated that:

> *"Shop sign must be written in Bahasa Melayu if you want to get the licence…if not you cannot get it"*

Another interviewee also added that any failure to comply with the stated requirements will result in rejection of the application for a business license:

> *"I already apply for 3 times to get the licence. The first two times were rejected because the officer told me I do not have Bahasa Melayu in my sign… Now I add in Bahasa Melayu and I get the licence"*

The official policy concerning public signage apparently aims at the exclusive projection of the Malay language. However, it is an unexpected discovery to find that the Malay language is not the dominant language used on signs in the LL of Penang Road. Although Malay language is mandatory to be used on signboards according to the national language policy and the advertisement by-law of the Municipal Council of Penang Island (2000), in addition to the fact that its omission means one is liable to be prosecuted, the collected results shows a huge discrepancy between the language policy and

the real language practice. The usage of Malay language, be it in a monolingual sign or multilingual sign, is relatively low. Bottom-up signs were much less eager to place the Malay language in prominent position. On the contrary, as could be expected the language is placed in a dominant position in the top-down signs category in which 92.50% of the signs are presented in Malay language.

4.4.4.2 The Use of English and the Global and Local Identity

To sum up the findings, it seems that English appears as the most used language on signs in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. English language is placed in a dominant position in almost all the categories, except in the top-down sign category. The language appears as the most frequent language used on signs, the most used language for monolingual signs, bilingual signs, trilingual signs, and also the most dominant language on signs.

English language enjoys a special status in Malaysia and is considered as the second most important language after Malay language (Asmah, 1982). As Asmah (1997: 15) pointed out: "… even at the height of nationalism, English was given a role to play, that of official language until ten years after Independence, (1967), and after having fulfilled this role, it was to become Malaysia's second language". In addition to its historical background, English language is not a foreign language to Malaysians, but the ex-colonial language which has been adopted for education, social communication and

the media. Although national educational policies towards English language have been "one of constant fluctuations, reversal and re-reversals" as mentioned by (Manan et al., 2014), the language is still thought and studied as an important subject in the Malaysian education system from primary level till tertiary level. Its importance can be seen in the Third Malaysian Plan (1976-80) where the plan suggested that "measures will be taken to ensure that English is taught as a strong second language." (Government of Malaysia 1976:386, quoted in David 2004a). English language is learned as a subject in school from primary level till tertiary level. The language also serves as the main medium in the private sector, including business and industry.

The use of English language is motivated by a number of factors as addressed in previous studies. English language presents its role as a symbol of internationalisation, westernisation, modernisation, success, sophistication and attractiveness (Brock, 1991; Piller, 2001; Lai, 2007; Gorter & Cenoz, 2008; S.A. Manan et al., 2014). Many business proprietors agree with the role of English language as the symbol of internationalisation, modernisation and attractiveness. According to one of the shop owners who wrote his sign in English:

> *"I use English in my sign so foreigners and tourists can read and understand my sign and know what I sell"*

Another subject states that:

> *"I feel that using English can attract more people… and many foreigners come to my shop and buy things from me"*

Besides fulfilling the construction of global identity, the usage of English language also aims to reflect the local identity. The language according to

Hall (1990:26), "goes global and local in the same moment" as it serves as the lingua franca between different ethnic groups as well as a communication tools with foreigners.

According to one of the business proprietors:

> *"I use English in my sign so that not only Indian, but Chinese, Malay and all people can understand and get to know the information I put on my sign"*

In fact, the potential readers of the English written signs include both local residents as well as foreign tourists. It is proved by the findings that not only tourist-oriented signs such as businesses signs exhibit English language, but also top-down signs such as public agencies, schools and post offices which target particularly people who reside within the area. The extensive use of English language on top-down signs and bottom-up signs indicates that besides being the lingua franca of the world, English language is also a language associated with the local identity.

The prominence of the English language coupled with the existing linguistic diversity is a sign of bottom-up defiance to the official Malay language policy. Despite the stringent language policy that requires strict compliance, the languages choices of the bottom-up signs show something different. Interviews conducted with business proprietors attribute to English language a high economic and transactional value. The prominence of English language in the linguistic landscape can be due to the information and symbolic dynamics the language embodies locally, regionally and internationally. English language remains the most prominent language

despite the overt and covert governmental emphasis on the use of Malay language on signage policy.

4.4.4.3 The use of Chinese language and Chinese Identity

Although Chinese language does not enjoy any privileges as compared to what Malay language and English language are entitled to, it is still a vital language in the linguistic landscape. One of the reasons that contributes to the recurrent presence of the language is the comparatively larger Chinese community in the research site. Penang is a Chinese dominant state where the population of Chinese ethnicity comprises of 45.6% of the total population in the state. In addition to that, most of the businesses in Penang Road are run by the members of Chinese community who make use of Chinese language. However, despite the large population of Chinese people in the state, the usage of only Chinese language on signs, is not as overwhelming as compared to English language and Malay language. The relatively low frequency of Chinese language usage can be interpreted as the language having less commercial role and practice compared to English language, and the fact it is not official unlike the Malay language.

However, the language is used relatively more in multilingual signs as an identity marker. Chinese language on signs functions as an identity marker. The used of Chinese characters is an important way of representing Chinese identity. The interviews with Chinese business proprietors reported that the used of Chinese language aims to emblematise their identity as a Chinese and

to attract potential customers who recognise Chinese. They affirmed that the use of Chinese language on the signage is also important for it would maintain its visibility in the linguistic ecology. All the participants agreed that the use of Chinese serves as a useful advertising tool to attract the Chinese customers in particular.

Although Chinese language does not enjoy any official status, the language is given official literary status. Chinese language is permitted to be used as a medium in education, business, media and press. The national educational policy supports the development of mother tongue education and vernacular schools (Gill, 2005), which includes supporting the development of Chinese schools. In fact, the Minority Rights Group Report on the Chinese in Southeast Asia, pointed out that "Malaysia has Southeast Asia's most comprehensive Chinese-language system of education" (1992, p. 13). Vernacular languages have been allowed as a medium of instruction for vernacular primary, and in some cases even secondary and tertiary educational level (Malakolunthu & Rengasamy, 2012).

Based on the findings, the signs in Penang Road present two types of scripts of the Chinese language, i.e. simplified Chinese characters and traditional characters. The phenomenon whereby both traditional characters and simplified characters exist in the same public space is an interesting finding. In fact, since the 1980s Malaysia has followed the step of China in abandoning the traditional script and adopting the simplified script as the standard writing system. The use of traditional Chinese scripts is however unrestrained in the Chinese community.

Traditional characters are still visible especially in daily Chinese press. However, simplified Chinese characters have been fully adopted in the education system. All Chinese schools in Malaysia utilise simplified Chinese characters as the standard form of the writing. Simplified Chinese characters are used in the teaching and learning process of Chinese language.

According to the findings, traditional scripts are preferred compared to simplified scripts. However, the use of traditional characters on signs is in fact contrary to the policy in the Chinese education system. The use of traditional scripts of the Chinese language on signs can be seen as violating the language policy since the simplified Chinese scripts has been adopted as the official way of writing for Malaysian Chinese by Ministry of Education 1956. However, this apparent contradiction in the language policy of the country may be seen as a willingness from the authorities to provide leeway for business proprietors to represent a scent of tradition in the linguistic landscape. It might be due to the fact that the traditional script carries more cultural elements compared to simplified Chinese characters.

4.5 Summary

This chapter discusses on the results and findings of the collected data. A total of 701 signs and data from interviews along with official policy documents have been analysed and discussed in this chapter. The data have been discussed according to the research questions of the study as stated in Chapter One.

From the findings, the linguistic landscape of Penang Road reveals quite a complex linguistic situation. The findings of the study show that Penang Road is highly multilingual with numerous languages visible in the linguistic landscape. Among the languages, English language, Malay language and Chinese language are the three most dominant languages.

Although Malay language is advocated as the national language through the national language policy, the aim of constructing national identity via the language policy has not succeed at the grassroots level. The empirical data of the study revealed that English language has taken over the majority of the public space in the central part of George Town. The language policy regarding the usage of Malay language is implemented in top-down signs but not in bottom-up signs. Malay language is prominent in the top-down domain but is mostly disregarded in the bottom-up especially on shop signs related to tourism. The Chinese in Malaysia had initially observed the traditional Chinese writing system as practised in China. However, over the years the writing system in China has been simplified and this is followed by Malaysia in 1956 as the simplified Chinese characters have been adopted as the standard writing system in the Malaysian Chinese education system by the Ministry of Education (Wang & Lu et al, 2006: 160). Therefore, the use of traditional Chinese characters over the simplified Chinese characters in Malaysia can also be considered as an act of violating the Chinese writing system in this country.

In summary, the execution of the national language policy has still not reach a satisfactory level as signs without Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) are still seen in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. In addition, the usage of other

languages especially English surpassing the usage of national language in bottom-up signs domain. The use of English language is motivated by a number of factors as addressed in previous studies. English language presents its role as a symbol of internationalisation, westernisation, modernisation, success, sophistication and attractiveness (Brock, 1991; Piller, 2001; Lai, 2007; Gorter & Cenoz, 2008; S.A. Manan et al., 2014).

The choice of languages used in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road is relevant to Spolsky and Cooper's three relevant conditions (Spolsky, 2009: 33). According to Spolsky and Cooper, most sign-makers write their sign in the language they know or write in the language that can be understood by the expected readers or write in the language they wish to be identified. All three conditions can be applied to the usage of English and Chinese on signs. English is choose to be used on signs for its role as a symbol of internationalisation, westernisation, modernisation, success, sophistication and attractiveness (Brock, 1991; Piller, 2001; Lai, 2007; Gorter & Cenoz, 2008; S.A. Manan et al., 2014). Chinese language is used as an identity marker. Chinese language on signs functions as a way of representing Chinese identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter has been arranged as follows. Section 5.2 concludes the summary of the findings. Section 5.3 highlights the implications and recommendations of the study. Section 5.4 discusses the limitations of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This section revisits the research questions of the present study and summarises the main findings of each question.

Research Question 1: How are the different languages are used in the linguistic landscape of George Town?

In order to answer the first research question, the study focuses on two categorisations which are (i) languages displayed and (ii) combination of signs. A total of ten languages were identified to be used on the 701 signs recorded. The languages are: English, Malay (written in Roman characters and Jawi), Chinese, Japanese, Tamil, Bengali, Italian, French and Thai.

Among the ten languages, English, Malay, and Chinese were identified to be the three main languages used on sign boards. English language emerged as the most represented language at 71.04% (N= 498) while Malay language stood second with 45.93%, followed by Chinese language at 39.66%.

Other than local languages, the finding also illustrated the presence of foreign languages in the public sphere of Penang Road. Foreign languages, such as Japanese, Bengali, Italian, French Arabic and Thai were found to be used on signs in Penang Road. The use of foreign languages is believed to be related to the fact that Penang is an important port and trading centre for long distance, regional and short distance merchants, traders, labourers, and others. Although the usage of foreign languages on signs is relatively low, the presence of these languages reflects the demand to cater to the needs of the rising population of foreigners in Penang Road and to attract customers of the language displayed.

The linguistic landscape of Penang Road consists of two types of signs: monolingual and multilingual. 53.64% of the signs are monolingual, while 46.35% of them are multilingual. Multilingual signs consist of bilingual signs, trilingual signs, quadrilingual signs and pentalingual signs. The most favoured combination of languages seen in bilingual signs involves English with the addition of Malay, followed by the combination of English and Chinese, and the combination of Malay and Chinese. On the other hand, the most favoured combination of languages seen in trilingual signs involves English with the addition of Malay and Chinese.

For both monolingual signs and multilingual signs, the data demonstrate that English and Malay are the most prominently used languages in the signage with English language surpassing Malay language. Other languages that appear considerably frequently, saliently and prominently in monolingual signs and multilingual signs are Chinese and Tamil.

Research Question 2: What are the characteristics of top-down and bottom-up signs?

The comparison and contrast of languages used in top-down signs and bottom-up signs can help to determine language choices and preference patterns in the signage. Out of a total of 701 signs in Penang Road, the majority of the signs are bottom-up, while only 5.71% are top-down signs. As Penang Road is mainly a business area, the dominance of bottom-up signs was therefore to be expected.

Out of the 40 top-down signs, 55% of them are monolingual while 45% are multilingual. English language, Malay language and the combination of these two languages are found to be used in monolingual and multilingual top-down signs. Malay language is used in 86.36% of the monolingual top-down signs and 77.78% of the multilingual top-down signs in Penang Road. English language is used in 13.64% of the monolingual top-down signs and 22.22% of the multilingual top-down signs.

On the other hand, out of 661 bottom-up signs in Penang Road, 354 are monolingual while the other 307 are multilingual signs. As far as bottom-up signs are concerned, the usage of languages is more diverse. Six languages were found in bottom-up monolingual and multilingual signs. English language is the dominant language in both monolingual and multilingual signs in the bottom-up domain. It is used in 58.47% of monolingual bottom-up signs and 44.63% of multilingual bottom-up signs. Other languages found

in the bottom-up domain include Malay, Chinese, Tamil, Japanese, Arabic, Thai and Bengali.

All in all, Malay language is the dominant language in top-down signs whereas bottom-up signs display more prominence of the English language. The findings from this study agree with the statements from other researches that private signs (bottom-up signs) have more perceptible language diversity compared to public signs (top-down signs) (Rosenbaum et al., 1977; Landry & Bourhis, 1997). This also justify what has been said earlier in Chapter two.

Research Question 3: How does the language usage in the linguistic landscape reflect the official language policy?

The findings of the study show that Penang Road is highly multilingual with numerous languages visible in the linguistic landscape. Among all languages, English language, Malay language and Chinese language are the three most dominant languages.

The language policy of Malaysia aims to uphold the status of Malay language as the sole national language and manifests it not only through the explicit education policies but also through language relates objects that marks the public space. The official policy concerning public signage apparently aims at the exclusive projection of the Malay language. The implementation of the official policy on signage prioritises the use of Malay language on signboards and sets particular conditions regarding the order, size and correct orthographic presentation of the language. The language is visible in both top-down and bottom-up monolingual and multilingual signs.

However, the implementation of the language policy has not succeeded at the grassroots level especially with the usage of other languages surpassing the national language. The competing roles between Malay as the national language and English as the international language is evident. Despite the high dominance of Malay language in top-down signs, the findings showed an extremely high usage of English language especially in bottom-up signs. In fact, Malay language is losing in its competition with the English language. The visibility of English in signs has gone beyond imagination. The public

space of Penang Road shows extremely high usage of the English language compared to Malay language, especially in the bottom-up signs domain. The empirical data of the study revealed that the language policy regarding the usage of Malay language is implemented in top-down signs but not in bottom-up signs. Malay language is prominent in the top-down domain but is mostly disregarded in the bottom-up especially on shop signs related to tourism. English language has taken over the majority of the public space in the central part of George Town. This implies that the overt language policy is not respected by private actors.

English plays a communication role both locally and internationally. The present study has shown that business proprietors cannot afford to exclude themselves from their potential customers. Language can convey important messages to customers regarding the products or services offered. Thus, as discussed, shop owners choose certain language(s) to display on their shop signs for certain pragmatic reasons. English is chosen for its symbolic and pragmatic functions. It has multiple symbolic functions such as internationalisation, westernisation, modernisation, success and attractiveness (Brock, 1991; Gorter & Cenoz 2008; Lai, 2007) which make it more a first choice to be used. The language used may have an effect on customers as it can formulate their opinion towards that particular store and can influence their decision on where to shop.

The potential readers of the English written signs include both local residents as well as foreign tourists. The findings of the study established that not only tourist-oriented signs such as business signs exhibit English language, but

top-down signs such as public offices that do not normally attract foreigners do so as well. It "goes global and local in the same moment" (Hall, 1990:26), and functions as the language of communication between the different ethnic groups as well as with foreigners.

Another interesting phenomenon is the visibility of community languages especially Chinese language. The findings show that the Chinese language still manages to maintain its visibility. Although it is only to a small extent, it is still visible in Penang Road's linguistic landscape. Chinese language as the mother tongue of the ethnic Chinese is a symbol of identity. The language is displayed on signs in order to show the ethnic identity according to what Asmah had suggestes, "Language plays a role in determining his or her identity" (2000:16).

Although the national language policy does not decree any official status for the Chinese language, its usage is not prohibited. The language is given an official literary status. Chinese language is hardly visible in top-down signs on its own but the language is used mainly in bottom-up signs. The Chinese language signs in Penang Road have been identified to be written in two forms: the Romanised form and the Chinese characters. The Romanised form refers to the phonetic representation of Chinese words using Roman characters while the Chinese Script form uses Chinese characters. The use of dialects in the Romanised form in Chinese signs reflects the ethnic origins and dialects that the business proprietors speak.

From the data collection, it is also observed that there is a mix in the use of traditional and simplified Chinese scripts in the signs. The signs in Penang Road are show by two types of scripts systems for the Chinese language, i.e. simplified characters and traditional characters. Malaysia has adopted the simplified characters as the official way of writing, but the use of traditional characters is still unrestrained in the Chinese community. The collected data shows that both traditional characters and simplified characters exist in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. The use of either type of scripts according to Curtin (2008: 226) involves a "presupposing indexicality that contextualizes well-established geographical and political positions". The phenomenon, whereby both traditional scripts and simplified scripts existing in the same public space, is something rare.

Although Malay language is advocated as the national language through the national language policy, following deep analysis of the policies, there is actually an implicit will to accommodate more linguistic diversity. The Advertisement by-law of Municipal Council of Penang (2000) gives the freedom to use other forms of languages other than Malay language on signs. The Advertisement by-law of the Municipal Council of Penang (2000) gives the freedom to use other languages other than Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) on signs. The by-law has given sign owners the freedom to create more signs with multiple languages to accommodate more linguistic diversity. Other languages can be used on signs under the condition that they do not outshine Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) in prominence, visibility or saliency. As stated in the Advertisement by-law of the Municipal Council of Penang (2000):

> *(2)* Where Bahasa Malaysia is used together with any other language in an advertisement, the words in Bahasa Malaysia shall be bigger in size and be given more prominence in visual emphasis and position than the words in such other language.

Other languages can be used on signs under the condition that they do not outshine Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) in prominence, visibility or saliency. The by-law has given sign owners the freedom to create more signs with multiple languages to accommodate more linguistic diversity. However, it is observed that the law is not abided as signs without the usage of Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) are still seen in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. Apart from that, the usage of traditional Chinese characters over simplified Chinese characters on signs can also be considered as an act of violating the law. As simplified Chinese characters are the standard writing system in the Malaysian Chinese education system, the use of traditional characters or a mixture of both characters is considered an act of violation of the current policies.

This study argues that although official policy has been formulated and implemented with the intent of unifying a multi-ethnic population, discursive defiance to this policy at the bottom levels can be triggered by many reasons including pragmatism and identity, and such defiance clearly transpires in the linguistic representation of the signboards.

5.3 Implications and Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the study, there are several important implications that need to be addressed. The first main implication of the study has enhanced our understanding of the linguistic landscape and language policy literature.

After more than fifty years of language planning, Malaysia has achieved a respectable measure of success in its language policy. The introduction of the language policy aimed at unifying the diverse ethnic groups in Malaysia with a common language has been a success. Malay language, once used only by Malay ethnics has been transformed into a viable language used by all Malaysians in education, administration, media, justice and business domains.

However, the execution of the policy is still not at a satisfactory level in linguistic landscape as discovered by this study. Based on the observation of the languages used on signs in Penang Road, the aim of constructing national identity via the language policy has not succeed at the grassroots level. The linguistic landscape of Penang Road also reveals quite a complex linguistic situation. Although Malay language is advocated as the national language through the national language policy, following deep analysis of the policies, there is actually an implicit will to accommodate more linguistic diversity. For instance, the Constitution and the advertisement by-laws have given the freedom to use other languages on signs under the condition that those languages do not outshine Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) in prominence, visibility or saliency. In addition to that, the permission also allows the use

of traditional Chinese scripts over simplified Chinese scripts on signs although simplified Chinese scripts is the standard writing system in the Malaysian Chinese education system.

Another factor which has also influenced the linguistic landscape of Penang Road is the change in the political party in power. Multilingual road signs can be seen in the linguistic landscape of Penang Road. In the year 2008 the newly formed state government which consists of multiracial parties launched a new multilingual signboards policy which put up street names and road signs in multiple languages in heritage areas for the benefit of tourists and visitors. According to State Local Government, Traffic Management and Environment Committee chairman, Mr. Chow Kon Yeow:

> "There have been requests for road signs in various languages now that George Town has received UNESCO recognition as a world heritage site. The state has, in principle, agreed to have signs in Bahasa Malaysia, English, Chinese and Tamil, and maybe even Arabic." (The Star, 23 July 2008)

The state local government is more lenient towards the usage of different languages on public signs. The government launched the multilingual road signs policy as a way to boost tourism in Penang after its recognition as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO as well as to assist foreign tourists in exploring Penang as a multiracial, multicultural and multireligious city. In fact, the action of the State Government in introducing multilingual signboards could be considered as a kind of violation to the National Language Policy which upholds the status of Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) as the sole national language.

The discourses of linguistic diversity observed in the linguistic landscape and obtained from interviews have shown that political proclamations regarding

language are not always reflective of the situation in real life. As Spolsky (2004: 65) puts it: "the real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than in management". The implementation of the language policy has not succeeded at the grassroots level especially with the usage of other languages surpassing the national language. The discrepancy observed between the language policy and the actual practice in the Penang Road context fits with to what Shohamy and Gorter (2009:3) stated: "while 'officiality' can affect language practices, the public space has its own rules and regulations, which are often unique as they tend to defy declared policies". The study also complies with previous linguistic landscape literature which proves that inconsistencies happen between the language policy and the actual practice (Barni & Bagna, 2006; Backhaus, 2007; Shohamy, 2006; Lanza & Woldemariam, 2009; Trumper-Hecht, 2009). Therefore, this study can be used to notify policy makers regarding the linguistic plurality at the bottom-up level in order to make provisions for a more representative linguistic policy. It is important that policies with regard to the linguistic landscape are based on sociolinguistic science including cultural, racial and political demands.

Secondly, this study of linguistic landscape will also contribute to the field of sociolinguistics. By focusing on visual language rather than spoken language, the study shows how the linguistic landscape can provide a vantage point on the subtleties of language representation and attitudes that are often heavily mediated and monitored in other contexts. The findings of the study also show that the community languages are struggling to maintain their visibility in the linguistic landscape. It was discovered that the local ethnic languages,

especially Tamil are not very often reflected in the public signs of George Town. Instead, foreign languages, especially English language, are overrepresented. As David (2008: 79) states, "the emphasis on Malay, the National language, and also English as an international language, are seen as more important than time spent on learning the mother tongue". The community languages, also known incorrectly as "immigrant languages", such as Chinese and Tamil, having no special status as compared to Malay language and English language are found to be left behind. The usage of these languages is hard to be found in official signs. These languages are only used in bottom-up signs by the ethnic groups in order to show their ethnic identities as Asmah observes, "language plays a role in determining his or her identity" (2000:16). Visual signs provide a window onto language ideologies and attitudes through a relatively unmediated channel. As an illustration, contrary to other sociolinguistic data sources, linguistic landscape data is not subjected to the observer's paradox (Labov, 1972), and are unaltered by the presence of the researcher. Scholars in sociolinguistics and language planning have to consider how to complement spoken data with visual signs to obtain a more balanced picture of a community.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The findings of the study are subjected to several limitations. First, the research covered only a small section of George Town hence not all signs in George Town are included in the study. The findings are collected from a

single street therefore may not conclusively represent George Town as a whole.

Other than that, the interpretation of the findings can only serve to illustrate the situation of the environment surveyed and cannot act as comprehensive data to describe the situation of George Town in general. More related researches in other parts of the city need to be carried out to allow for generalizable of the results and findings.

Secondly, it should be pointed out that the current research encompasses a synchronic study of the signs. The research focuses on the language used on signs thus does not compare older and newer signs in the research site. Longitudinal study would be more suited to study the changes in the linguistic landscape based on the evolving social circumstances and historical occurrences (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991; Backhaus, 2005). Future research may take it as a possible topic to do comparative research on the older and newer signs found in George Town.

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