Linguistic Landscapes in Bozen-Bolzano

Monolingual and multilingual areas in Bozen-Bolzano

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Summary & Conclusions

Definition of Linguistic Landscape
City information Bozen-Bolzano
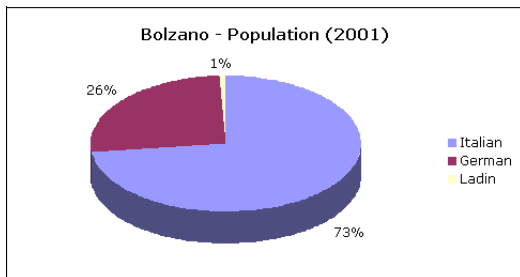
Definition of Linguistic Landscape

Definition

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 [...] (Landry & Bourhis, 1997)

- **Goal:** study the linguistic landscape of two areas of Bolzano by analysing the written information that is available on language signs in the specific areas.
- **Focus:** on commercial shop signs, bars and restaurants

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Definition of Linguistic Landscape
City information Bozen-Bolzano

City information Bozen-Bolzano

- Provincial capital of South Tyrol
- Population: 94,989 inhabitants (ASTAT, 2001)

Bolzano - Population (2001)

1%

26%

73%

- Italian
- German
- Ladin

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Area 1: City Center
Area 2: Europa-Novacella

Field study

Collecting digital images of the two areas:

- Multilingual area: City Center
- Monolingual area: Europa-Novacella

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Area 1: City Center
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Field study

Analysing the commercial shop signs, signs of bars/restaurants.

Two research questions:

1. Which are the languages displayed in the two areas, and their relative weight?

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Field study

Analysing the commercial shop signs, signs of bars/restaurants.

Two research questions:

1. Which are the languages displayed in the two areas, and their relative weight?
2. What are bilingual and multilingual signs like? (Which is the first/most prominent language on bi- and multilingual signs?)

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Field study

Analysing the commercial shop signs, signs of bars/restaurants.

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2. What are bilingual and multilingual signs like? (Which is the first/most prominent language on bi- and multilingual signs?)

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Field study

Analysing the commercial shop signs, signs of bars/restaurants.

Two research questions:

1. Which are the languages displayed in the two areas, and their relative weight?
2. What are bilingual and multilingual signs like? (Which is the first/most prominent language on bi- and multilingual signs?)

The collected corpus:

- 231 digital pictures (141 Center, 90 Europa-Novacella)
- 45 units per area (1 unit = 1 shop/bar/restaurant)
    - plus 20 units (stands) in Piazza Erbe

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Area 1: City Center
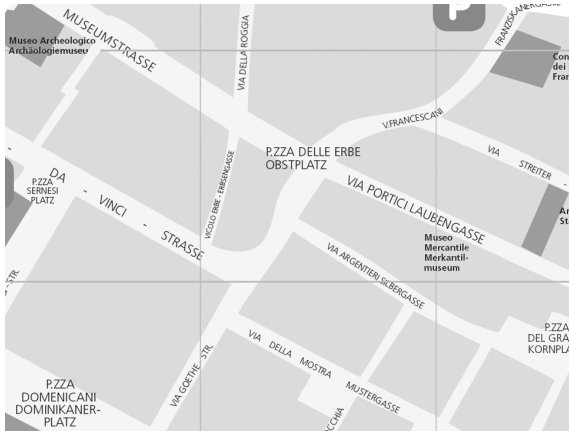Area 2: Europa-Novacella

City Center

- Considered to be a multilingual area
- Main shopping street

Streets investigated:

- Via Goethe
- Portici
- Via Museo
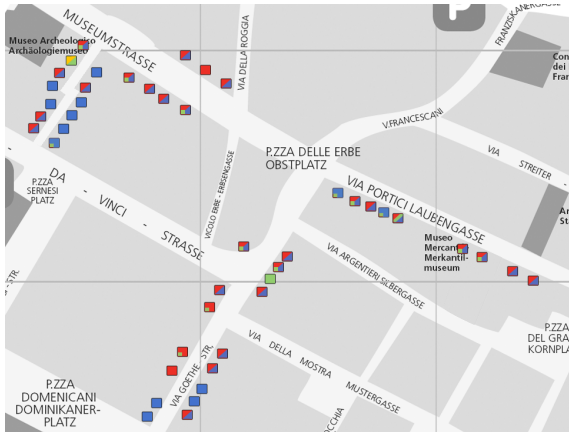- Galleria Europa
- Piazza Erbe (special mini-study)

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City Center

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

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City Center

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

Legend:

🟥 **German**
🟦 **Italian**
🟩 **English**
🟨 **French**
🟪 **Chinese**

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City Center

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

Language on signs (percentage)

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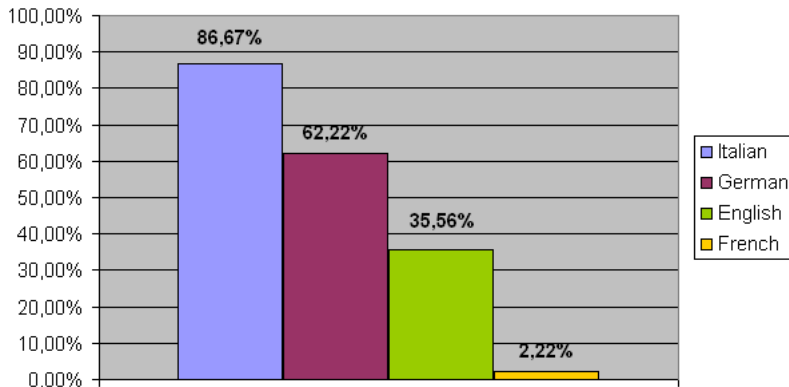
City Center

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

Number of languages on the signs	signs	percentages
1	12	26.67%
2	24	53.33%
3	9	20.00%
> 3	0	0.00%

- Most signs bilingual (53%)

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City Center

Research Question 2: Characteristics of bilingual and multilingual signs

The first language on bilingual signs	signs	percentages
Italian	14	42.42%
German	18	54.55%
English	0	0.00%
French	1	3.03%

- Italian and German nearly equaly likely to be the first/most prominent language (42% vs. 55%)
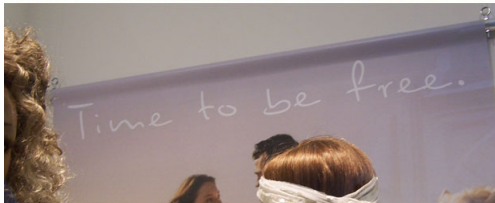
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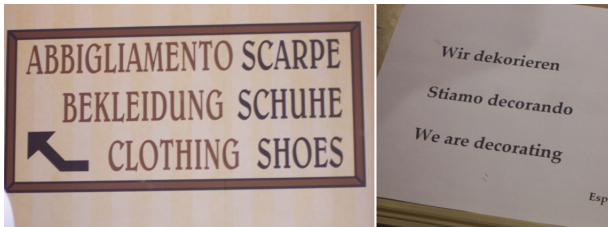Summary & Conclusions

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City Center

Example: Monolingual signs

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Area 1: City Center
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City Center

Example: Bilingual signs and English slogans

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Example: Trilingual signs

Only 2 trilingual units (out of all investigated units from both areas).

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Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

- 20 stands (vegetables, meat, cheese and bread)
- Which languages do they use?

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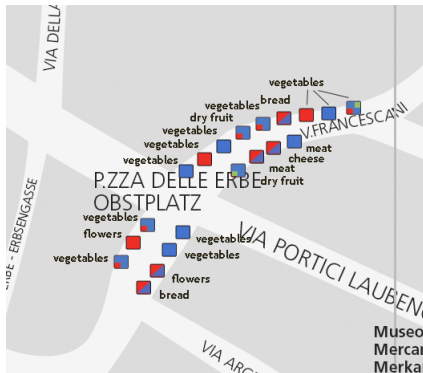# Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

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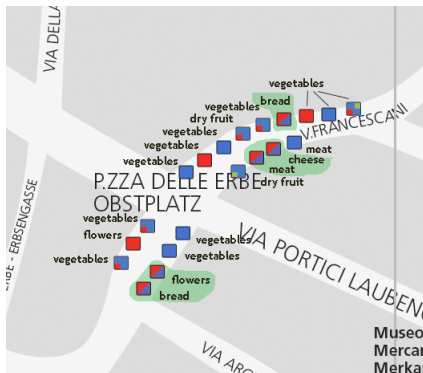## Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

- 20 stands (vegetables, meat, cheese and bread)
- Which languages do they use?

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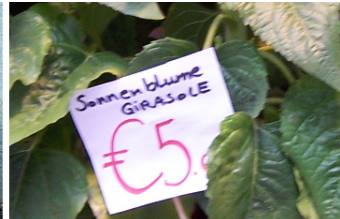Area 2: Europa-Novacella
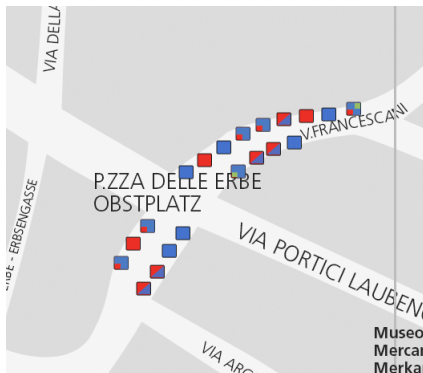
Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

- 5 Bilingual (Italian-German) stands: They are selling bread, meat, cheese or flowers (non of the bilingual stands sells vegetables)
- 3 German stands (2 vegetables, 1 flowers)
- 6 Italian stands (5 vegetables, 1 meat)
- Vegetable stands:
  - use either Italian or German signs
  - 1 vegetable stand "mixes" Italian, German, English
  - 5 vegetable stands use mostly Italian (plus German terms like "saftig süss", or some few/single translations like "nostrani/hiesige")

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Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

Example: Monolingual and Bilingual signs

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Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

Example: "Mix" of Italian, German and English

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Microstudy: Piazza Erbe-Obstplatz

Example of a vegetable stand: "saftig süss"

- "Siamo qua da 25 anni [...] All'inizio i cartelloni erano in tedesco, vero?" (chiede alla moglie) "Ma no, dipende".
- "Perchè saftig süss?" "Eh, perchè son dolci, son buoni..."
- "Vogliamo accontentare i nostri clienti..."

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Europa-Novacella

- Considered to be more a monolingual area (Italian)
- More a residential area

Streets investigated:

- Via Roma
- Via Novacella
- Via Rovigo
- Via Milano/Piazza Matteotti
- Via Torino

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Europa-Novacella

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

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Area 1: City Center
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Europa-Novacella

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

Legend:

- ■ German
- ■ Italian
- ■ English
- ■ French
- ■ Chinese

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Europa-Novacella

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

Language on signs (percentage)

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Europa-Novacella

Research Question 1: Languages displayed

Number of languages on the signs	signs	percentages
1	26	57.78%
2	17	37.78%
3	2	4.44%
> 3	0	0.00%

- In contrast to the center, mostly monolingual (Italian) signs (57,78%)

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Europa-Novacella

Research Question 2: Characteristics of bilingual and multilingual signs

The first language on bilingual signs	signs	percentages
Italian	19	100.00%
German	0	0.00%
English	0	0.00%
French	0	0.00%
Chinese	0	0.00%

- Italian as the first/most prominent language!

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Example: Monolingual signs

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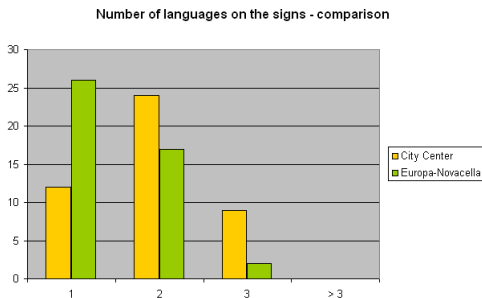# Europa-Novacella

Example: Bilingual signs, English slogan and Chinese

Summary & Conclusions

- The goal was to analyse the linguistic landscape of two areas of Bozen-Bolzano.
- Digital pictures were taken and analyzed according to:
  - which languages are displayed
  - number of languages on the signs
  - first/most prominent language on bi-/multilingual signs
- Creation of a map that indicates the languages

To conclude, some comparisons of the two areas will follow.
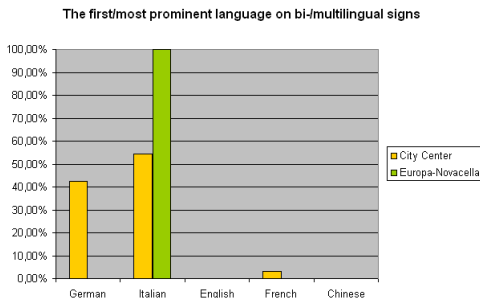
Summary & Conclusions

Comparison: Number of languages

Number of languages on the signs - comparison

In the City Center more bilingual signs, in Europa-Novacella the monolingual signs dominate.

Summary & Conclusions

Comparison: Characteristics of bi-/multilingual signs

The first/most prominent language on bi-/multilingual signs

In Europa-Novacella Italian is the most prominent language. In the City Center both Italian and German are prominent languages.

Summary & Conclusions

Conclusions

- Europa-Novacella more a monolingual area (Italian).
- On the contrast, the City Center is more a multilingual area (both Italian and German as the first/most prominent language on the bi-/multilingual signs).
- Influence of English (stronger in City Center):
  - English shop names: "Travel agency", "Computer assistance", "Gelateria Blu Ice 2"
  - Slogans: "Time to be free", "good.time","best in the alps"
- Just 2 units having fully trilingual signs (Esprit, Timberland; both in the City Center).
- In both areas, no more than 3 languages on the signs.

Thank you.

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