

**Multilingualism and the status of English in the  
linguistic landscapes of main tourist attractions  
in Helsinki**

A case study of four churches in Helsinki and their websites

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## **Abstract**

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**Abstract:** This thesis reports of a case study exploring the linguistic landscapes of four churches in Helsinki and their official websites. The aim of the study was to explore multilingualism and the status of English in the linguistic landscapes of main tourist destinations in Helsinki. In particular, the study aimed to find out how different languages, particularly English, are used in the linguistic landscape of Finnish tourism, as well as the reasons for this. Simultaneously, it explored the differences between on-site and online linguistic landscapes to find out how they affect visitors' experiences.

The data consist of photographs collected on-site in the four churches and the different language versions of the church websites. The thesis analysed the linguistic landscapes (LL) and virtual linguistic landscapes (VLL) by categorizing the collected data as monolingual or multilingual signs, as well as the appearing language order and the materiality of signs as temporary or permanent.

The findings revealed that numerous languages were used in the LL and VLL, but Finnish remained the dominant language, with English, Swedish, and Russian coming in next. The number of languages on the websites was fewer than the number of languages on-site. A noteworthy discovery is that English was used more frequently than Swedish, even though Swedish is one of Finland's national languages. English was also a common language in these churches since it was used in more temporary signs than permanent signs to transmit most of the current and up-to-date information to visitors.

Based on the findings, the LL of the churches are mostly accessible to tourists, but that consistency of the signage could be thought out more thoroughly. With the increasing number of foreign tourists, more language versions of LL can be added, particularly English version, which is the world's lingua franca. Some LL with grammatical and spelling mistakes can also be appropriately updated in order to provide visitors a better travel experience.

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## 1 Introduction

Helsinki, Finland's capital, and seat of the region of Uusimaa in southern Finland, has a population of 656,920 people (Helsinki facts and figures, 2021). There are about 1,530,000 people (Helsinki facts and figures, 2021) living in the Helsinki region which is comprised of the cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, and Kauniainen and surrounding commuter towns, including the eastern neighboring municipality of Sipoo, making it the most populated in Finland. The city also happens to be the country's most significant hub for political and educational institutions as well as financial and cultural institutions, and research and development. While the Helsinki region encompasses a number of cities, the research I conduct in this thesis is primarily focused on the city of Helsinki, which is also the most popular destination for foreign tourists to visit Finland. Despite the travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as many as 1,616,635 people had overnight stays in registered accommodation establishments in Helsinki in 2020 (Helsinki facts and figures, 2021).

Based on *Helsinki facts and figures* (2021), 17% of the population in Helsinki speak a mother tongue other than Finnish, Swedish or Sami. Figure 1 below shows the most common foreign tongues in Helsinki. As the figure illustrates, Helsinki is clearly an international and multilingual city.

	<b>No. of speakers</b>	<b>%</b>
Russian	19,032	2.9
Somali	11,982	1.8
Estonian	10,289	1.6
Arabic	8,376	1.3
English	7,424	1.1
Chinese	3,992	0.6
Kurdish	3,670	0.6
Persian	3,287	0.5

Figure 1 Most common foreign tongues in Helsinki (Helsinki facts and figures 2021)

As a Chinese visitor to and current resident of Helsinki, I have noticed that signage in tourist destinations in the city are written in a variety of languages. This multilingualism is

something that I am quite interested in. In this thesis, I examine the languages used on signage at major tourist attractions in Helsinki, as well as the languages used on their official websites. I explore what differences there are between the signs in the different tourist attractions and which languages may be more prevalent. Due to the large number of appealing tourist spots in Helsinki, I am unable to cover them all; thus, I have chosen to focus on the places that rank among the top six most popular tourist attractions in the city according to *Helsinki facts and figures* (2021). Religious sites are popular tourist attractions, mainly because they are place-specific landmarks that mediate conceptions about history and identity (Jokela 2013). In Helsinki, churches are among the most popular tourist attractions, which is a good example of this. The Suomenlinna Church, Temppeliaukio Church, Uspenski Cathedral, and Helsinki Cathedral are all among the top six ranking list in *Helsinki facts and figures* (2021), so I have chosen to focus on these four churches. This choice allows me to establish a horizontal comparison between the attractions.

The first part of my research concentrated on the multilingualism that appears on the signage in the four churches. These multilingual signs can help reflect the expected target group of these churches. Secondly, I focused on English usage on those signs. This is because while English is not a national or an official language in Finland, it emerges in most places in the lives of Finnish people. Understanding the function of English in different linguistic landscapes might help us better comprehend the position of English in Finland (see Leppänen et al. 2011). Aside from that, I also explored the languages used on the official websites of the four churches in question. During my visits to these four churches, I discovered that certain signage has a QR code, which, when scanned, would lead me to the official church website of that particular church. Because of the development of the Internet, virtual linguistic landscapes are becoming increasingly popular. Comparison of linguistic landscapes on-site and online is a way of analyzing language hierarchies in these four churches and who their target audience is. Therefore, my research questions are as follows:

1. What languages appear on the signs and websites of the tourist attractions?
2. What is the order of languages on the signs and the websites?
3. How is English used in these four churches and their websites?
4. What differences, if any, are there in language use (a) between the attractions and their websites and (b) between the different attractions?

To conduct this study, I photographed the linguistic landscapes inside these four churches and collected the different language versions of their official websites. Drawing on previous linguistic landscapes research from cities in Israel and Tokyo by Gorter (2006), as well as Leeman and Modan's (2009) study on Chinatown in Washington DC, the data were analyzed for the languages used on the signs and the websites, with focus on language choice, and language order. This study was further expanded to include the materiality of the linguistic landscapes as well as who these linguistic landscapes are aimed at in these four churches.

In Chapter 2, the background part, I provide an overview of previous research and essential concepts to set the stage for my thesis. In addition to linguistic landscapes (LL) research, which serves as the major theoretical foundation in this thesis, I introduce studies on virtual linguistic landscape (VLL) as this is the approach that I use when analyzing the languages on the churches' official websites. I also introduce the four churches because the history of the attractions may be relevant for studying the language environment. In order to better examine the languages on the signs, I discuss the position of English in both Finland and the rest of the globe and consider multilingualism in Finland. In Chapter 3, I describe the linguistic landscapes that I acquired as data from the four churches, as well as the methods of data collection, categorization, and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results of my research, with focus on the languages on the signs and websites, divided into monolingual and multilingual usage, the order of the languages, as well as materiality of the linguistic landscapes, which will be further discussed in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, I will present a summary and conclusion of my research, as well as some further suggestions about the linguistic landscapes of these four churches in order to create a better experience for tourists. Including the four religious places as research sites also gives the study a new perspective since it no longer just pays attention to shopping malls and some other more entertainment-oriented venues.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 Linguistic landscape**

Language in the form of text can be seen almost everywhere around us: in shop windows, billboards, traffic signs, official notices, and so on, which can be referred to as ‘linguistic landscapes.’ The concept linguistic landscape (LL) refers to the visibility and salience of languages on commercial and public signs in a given territory or region (Landry and Bourhis 1997). It emerged from studies related to how languages are perceived and used in multilingual societies. There are many studies of linguistic landscape that have been published in various academic and scientific journals, and they have utilized different methods to conduct their analysis.

Two well-known definitions include a ‘short’ and a ‘list’ version, as mentioned by Gorter (2018). According to the ‘short’ version, linguistic landscape refers to the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region (Landry and Bourhis 1997, 23). The other one is the ‘list’ version: the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combine to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration’ (Landry and Bourhis 1997, 25). Both of them are older definitions. The latter one seems to be more specific and clearer to understand. Despite the fact that this concept has been cited in most studies devoted to the study of the linguistic landscapes presented around us, it appears to be somewhat limited and outdated, as indicated by the number of new advances that have occurred in the recent decade, for example, virtual linguistic landscapes which mean visibility, accessibility, and status of languages on the internet (Leppänen and Peuronen 2012).

Gorter (2018) also mentions a more recent definition, that is, the field of Linguistic Landscape attempts to understand the motives, uses, ideologies, language varieties and contestations of multiple forms of “languages” as they are displayed in public spaces. This definition provides a broader concept than that two mentioned above. Gorter states that various disciplines’ theoretical lenses are introduced into the LL field and contribute to its development, and it can also operate in reverse when LL findings affect those disciplines. This point provides a link between LL and tourism in my study in that LL studies may have a great influence on tourism.



As illustrated, for instance, by the edited volume *Linguistic Landscape: A New Approach to Multilingualism* (Gorter 2006), linguistic landscape studies often focus on multilingualism in cities. This volume includes studies on the linguistic landscape of cities around the world, including Israel, Japan, Thailand, the Netherlands (Friesland), and Spain (the Basque Country), whose cultural, socioeconomic, and political situations are extremely disparate. It states that multilingualism has emerged as an important dimension of the linguistic landscape around the world, as well as a reflection of the globalisation process, as seen by the use of English. The study of the linguistic landscape is used to increase our understanding of multilingualism, and future directions are sketched forth. In the chapters of this book, the number of languages utilized, which languages are on the signs, and the special characteristics of bilingual and multilingual signs are determined by analyzing the language use in the signs. This is quite similar to my study since I also analyze the signs in the four churches in Helsinki to find out about multilingualism in them.

### **2.1.1 Linguistic landscapes and tourism**

With more and more studies in the field of linguistic landscapes, language use in tourism has also begun to receive a lot of attention. Given that tourism is a social activity with a strong intercultural component, language display is crucial in enhancing visitors' experiences.

When I was looking for references about both language and tourism, I found that Kallen's groundbreaking study from 2009, which combined tourism and LL, opened new boundaries in this field and provided new ideas for my study. According to Kallen (2009), tourists' semiotic demands are rarely considered in tourism research, and language is rarely seen as a positive component in tourism. He argues that the tourist's engagement with "foreign" languages is an integral component of the tourist's experience of a foreign trip. The field has grown since his work, and many people have accepted his concepts. Kallen's (2009) starting point is LL as a mode of discourse, particularly the role of the tourist. He came up with an idea that not all signage is appropriate for everyone, and the extent to which tourists are considered varies. Some signs in the tourist attractions are directed toward tourists as addressees, while others are directed at everyone including the tourists who are thus treated as audience, and still other signs are not even addressed to tourists at all which means the tourists are treated as eavesdroppers (Kallen 2009, 274). In

addition, in locations where tourism (especially international tourism) is a major economic or social activity, the visitor has a role in defining the design of the linguistic landscape. Based on this fact, Kallen (2009, 275) believes that four sorts of expected visitor needs are likely to affect local choices in creating the LL: (1) the need for an authentic experience of place, to see the “real” foreign land; (2) the need to feel secure, ensuring that what is different is not so different as to be threatening or in some way repugnant; (3) the need to break away from normal routines; and (4) the need to return from a journey of transformation, i.e., to create a memory of the experience of travel that stands out from other experiences. The author presents an interesting model of a tourism-based audience, which I am applying to my own research into the linguistic landscapes of four churches in Helsinki that are well-known tourist locations. It is possible to utilize these four types of anticipated visitor requirements to analyze the linguistic landscapes obtained from the four churches in Helsinki, including language usage, language choice, and language order on linguistic landscapes.

Great linguistic landscapes in tourist attractions can provide a wonderful traveling experience for tourists. For example, Macao’s linguistic environment was examined by Yan and Lee (2014) from the viewpoint of visitors. A better understanding of street names might enhance a tourist’s overall experience in an area of interest. Tourist destinations in Mallorca have been explored by Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau (2009). They combined the conventional LL approach of shooting images for the signs with a questionnaire that asked consumers about their linguistic background, as well as their expectations and impressions of English in the LL of S’Arenal, to produce a successful outcome. They discovered that English was an international language, and that the quality of English had a direct impact on visitors’ overall satisfaction, and this result also explains why the usage of English on signs is also a major topic of my research.

### **2.1.2 Virtual linguistic landscapes**

The scope of language studies has become wider since the Internet has become a key and relevant arena for language usage and communication for a rising number of people throughout the world. Leppänen and Peuronen (2012) pointed out that multilingualism on the internet is not a straightforward notion. It can refer to a phenomenon which can mean the choice and diversity of languages as means of communication on the internet, and analyses of their visibility, accessibility, and status. In order to understand how Internet

users choose their language of communication and utilize multilingual resources in their online activities, researchers need to conduct more research. For this reason, the concept of virtual linguistic landscapes (VLL) has come to be a fresh topic in the study of multilingualism, which is also new to LL studies. It entails the study of websites as linguistic landscapes, with special emphasis on the languages that users encounter when browsing a given website.

According to Ivkovic and Lotherington (2008), VLL describes the linguistic cyberscape just as the LL describes the linguistic cityscape. As a result, the VLL serves as an identifier and gives users a variety of options for textual expression and access. Compared to urban linguistic landscapes' stability, virtual linguistic landscapes are often less stable, since web content may be constantly updated and adding contents is less expensive. In addition, the LL is immersive in that the individual enters and exits, functions, and may even reside within the physical territory, interacting linguistically within demarcated spatial boundaries, whereas VLL are delocalized in the sense that anyone can enter and engage with a virtual space from anywhere (Ivkovic and Lotherington 2008). The comparison between LL and VLL discussed in Ivkovic and Lotherington (2008) serves as the framework for my research, which will compare the linguistic landscapes in the four churches in Helsinki with the virtual linguistic landscapes on their official websites.

Háhn (2016) performed an example research of language selection on the websites of ten Finnish banks. Based on the findings of the research, the author came to the conclusion that language choice in internet marketing is not regulated by authorities, and this indicates a company's interest in certain customer groups or markets, which also reflects the company's underlying corporate language policy. This finding offered me a starting point for figuring out whether the language used, language choice, and content in different languages on the four churches' official websites indicate that they cater to a certain demographic.

## **2.2 Tourism in Helsinki**

This section will present an overview of Helsinki's tourist numbers, including both international and domestic tourists, as well as some basic background information of the four churches that serve as my study location.

Based on *Helsinki facts and figures 2020*, Helsinki was the world's busiest passenger port, and there were about 4,489,741 visitors who had overnight stays in registered accommodation establishments (including 2,411,696 foreign visitors and 2,078,045 Finnish visitors). However, *Helsinki facts and figures 2021* found that in 2020, passenger traffic to Helsinki was ground to a halt by the global COVID-19 pandemic, with only about 1,616,635 visitors who had overnight stays in registered accommodation establishments (including 1,121,234 foreign visitors and 495,401 Finnish visitors), which means that there was a significant decrease compared to the 2019 figures. What remains unchanged is that the top 5 source markets for overnight stays in Helsinki. The top 5 markets in both years were: (1) Russia, (2) German, (3) USA, (4) UK, and (5) Sweden (Helsinki facts and figures, 2020), with the order of the USA and UK reversed in 2020.

According to both *Helsinki facts and figures 2020* and *Helsinki facts and figures 2021*, the 6 most popular tourist attractions are Linnanmäki Amusement Park, Suomenlinna, Korkeasaari Zoo, Temppeliaukio Church, Uspenski Cathedral and Helsinki Cathedral and Crypt. In order to narrow down the scope of my research and provide a more accurate comparison, I included the four churches in this list, one of which was the Suomenlinna church, which is situated on Suomenlinna. As the ranking shows, in Helsinki, churches are among the most visited tourist attractions. Religious sites are attractive tourist destinations, in part because they are site-specific locations that serve as a medium for articulating ideas about history and national identity. The history and architecture of these four churches are described below, with the majority of the material coming from Wikipedia. Figure 2 below is from Jokela (2013), which provides the location and construction years of the churches mentioned in the text. These details may give insight on the usage of some of the languages in these churches, which can be helpful to my study.

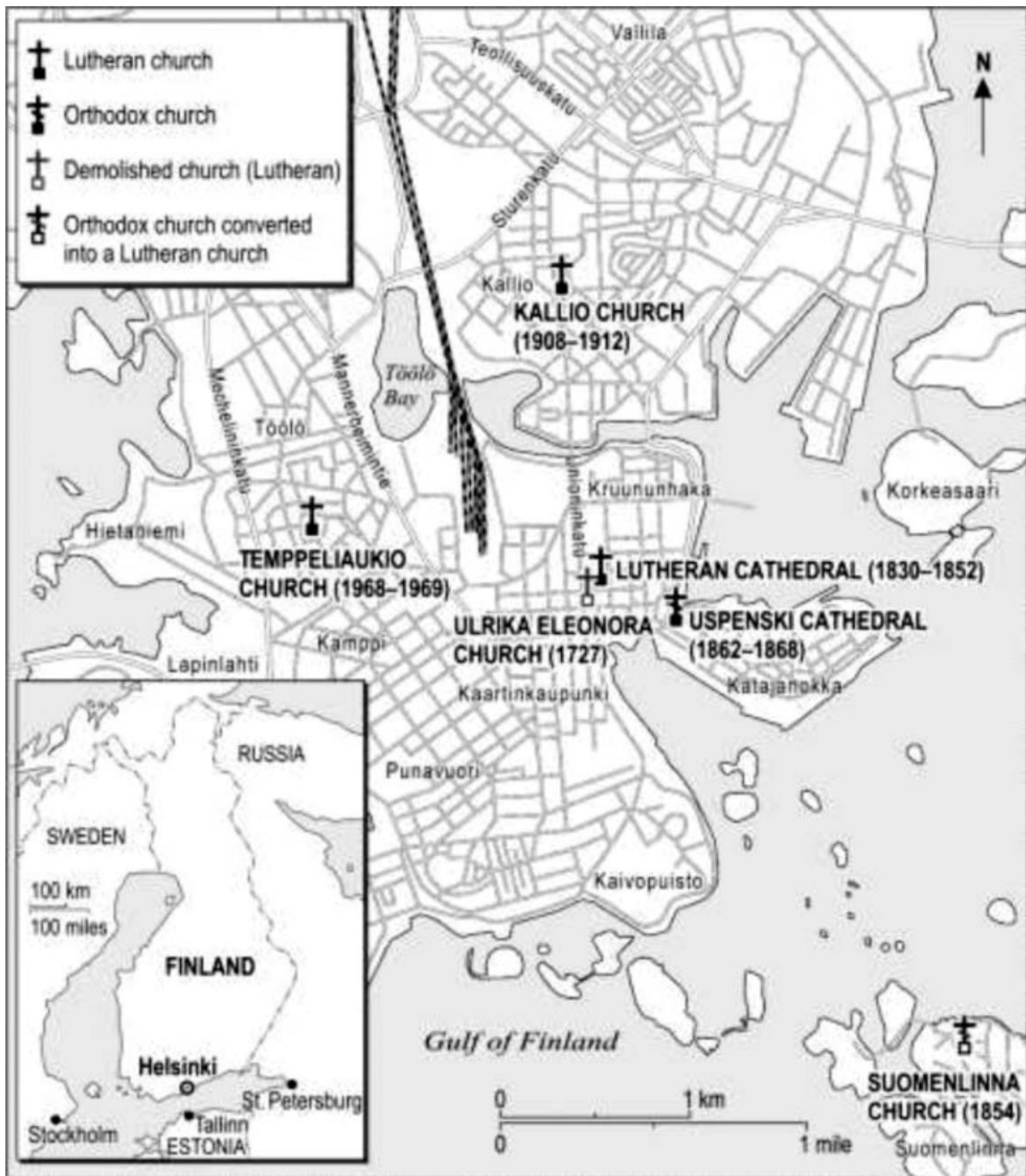


Figure 2 The location and construction years of the churches mentioned in the text. (Jokela 2013)

### 2.2.1 Suomenlinna Church

The Suomenlinna Church (Finnish: *Suomenlinnan kirkko*, Swedish: *Sveaborgs kyrka*, see Figure 3) in Helsinki, Finland, was built in 1854 as an Orthodox garrison church which was built by the Russian military on the fortress island of Suomenlinna near Helsinki (Jokela 2013). The church was originally an Orthodox church but was later converted into a Lutheran church.

It was named for Alexander Nevsky, who beat the Swedes in the Neva Battle in 1240. Alexander Nevsky Church had five onion domes when it was first built. In 1891, the church was raised to the position of cathedral within the Orthodox religion. To show its new-found independence from Russia, Finland transformed its Orthodox church to Evangelical Lutheran in 1918. Removal of the four smaller onion domes took place right away.



*Figure 3 The Suomenlinna Church (From Wikipedia)<sup>1</sup>*

Additional modifications for the church were carried out in the 1960s (after the church's transfer to the Evangelical Lutheran Parish Union of Helsinki) and again in the late 1980s and 1990s in preparation for the 250th anniversary of Suomenlinna in 1998. It is also one of the first landmarks for people arriving in Helsinki by sea. Nowadays, Suomenlinna Church remains a popular wedding venue.

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<sup>1</sup> Photographer: Ralf Roletschek  
License: [GFDL 1.2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GFDL)

### 2.2.2 Temppeliaukio Church

Located in the Töölö area of Helsinki, the Temppeliaukio Church (Finnish: *Temppeliaukion kirkko*, Swedish: *Tempelplatsens kyrka*) is a Lutheran church. It is also known as the Church of the Rock and Rock Church since it was built into solid rock. From Figure 2, we can see that it is a Lutheran church.



Figure 4 The inside of Temppeliaukio Church<sup>2</sup>

In the research on the connections between tourism and identity politics in the Helsinki churchscape, Jokela (2013) mentions the Temppeliaukio Church, which clearly exemplify how nationalist sentiments manifested themselves in the ecclesiastical architecture of Helsinki. The Temppeliaukio Church (1969) epitomizes the contemporary Finnish architectural style that flourished after World War II. This building's architectural design incorporates elements and features from Finnish nature. For instance, its granite walls alluded to Finnish landscapes and the Finns' pervasive 'national character.'

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<sup>2</sup> Photographer: Matthew Duncan  
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Soon after its consecration, the Temppeliaukio Church became a ‘must-see’ attraction in urban Helsinki, and its visitor count has surpassed that of the Helsinki Cathedral and Uspenski Cathedral, as seen by the ranking list. The church of Temppeliaukio also gained popularity because of its nationalist design, which showcased the abilities of Finnish architects and distinguished these churches from Helsinki’s nineteenth-century ‘Russian’ architecture (Jokela 2013). Their rough and gray granite walls contributed to an image of a resilient, ‘close to nature’ country. Due to the distinctive internal style of the Temppeliaukio Church, it was often displayed from the inside (Figure 4).

### 2.2.3 Uspenski Cathedral

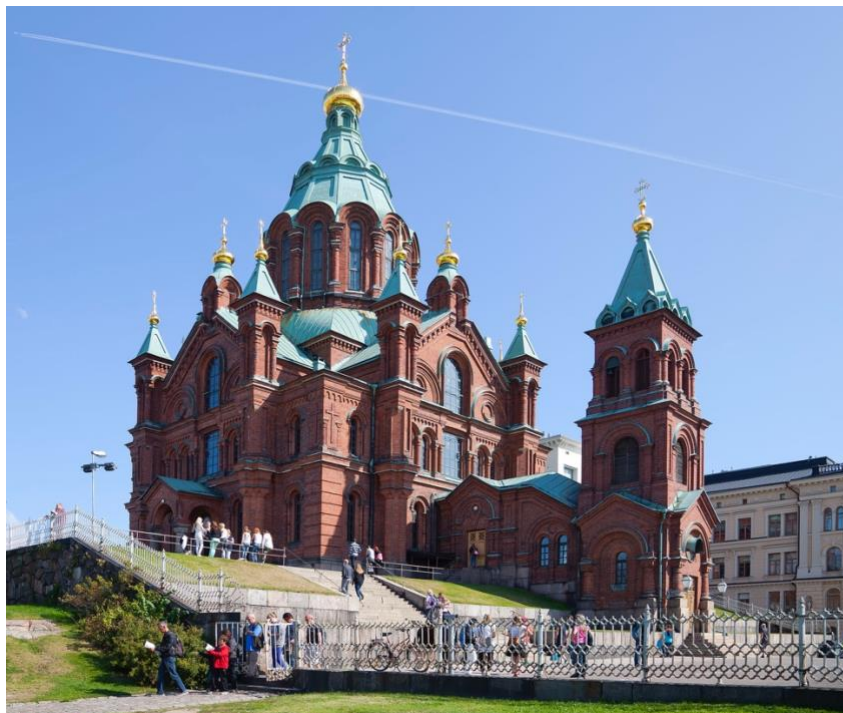


Figure 5 The Uspenski Cathedral (From Wikipedia)<sup>3</sup>

Located in Helsinki, Finland, the Uspenski Cathedral (Finnish: *Uspenskin katedraali*, Swedish: *Uspenskij-katedralen*, Russian: *Uspenskij sobor*), as shown in Figure 5, is an Orthodox church dedicated to the Dormition of the Theotokos (the Virgin Mary), which is also the major cathedral of the Orthodox Church of Finland. Its name derives from the Old Church Slavonic term *uspenie*, which means the Dormition. Uspenski Cathedral has a Russian name besides Finnish and Swedish name.

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<sup>3</sup> Photographer: Diego Delso  
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From 1850 to 1907, Helsinki's small population increased significantly as a consequence of the city's position as a capital city and the industrialisation that took place in the city. Consequently, the community saw the construction of new churches. In 1827, a Russian Orthodox parish was established because of this influence. The Uspenski Cathedral, built in 1868, was the most significant of the new Orthodox churches (Jokela 2013). It became the main cathedral of the state-affiliated Orthodox Church in Finland and, over the course of the twentieth century, one of Helsinki's most popular tourist attractions (Honkanen 2002). It is another Orthodox church in addition to the Suomenlinna church, although the Suomenlinna church has been converted into a Lutheran church.

#### 2.2.4 Helsinki Cathedral and Crypt

The Helsinki Cathedral (Finnish: *Helsingin tuomiokirkko*, *Suurkirkko*; Swedish: *Helsingfors domkyrka*, *Storkyrkan*), illustrated in Figure 6, which was originally called Lutheran Cathedral (1830-1852), is absolutely the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran cathedral of the Diocese of Helsinki, situated in the neighborhood of Kruununhaka in the center of Helsinki, Finland at the Senate Square. The cathedral was initially constructed between 1830 and 1852 as a memorial to Tsar Nicholas I of Russia, who was the Grand Duke of Finland in 1825-1855.



Figure 6 The Helsinki Cathedral (From Wikipedia)<sup>4</sup>

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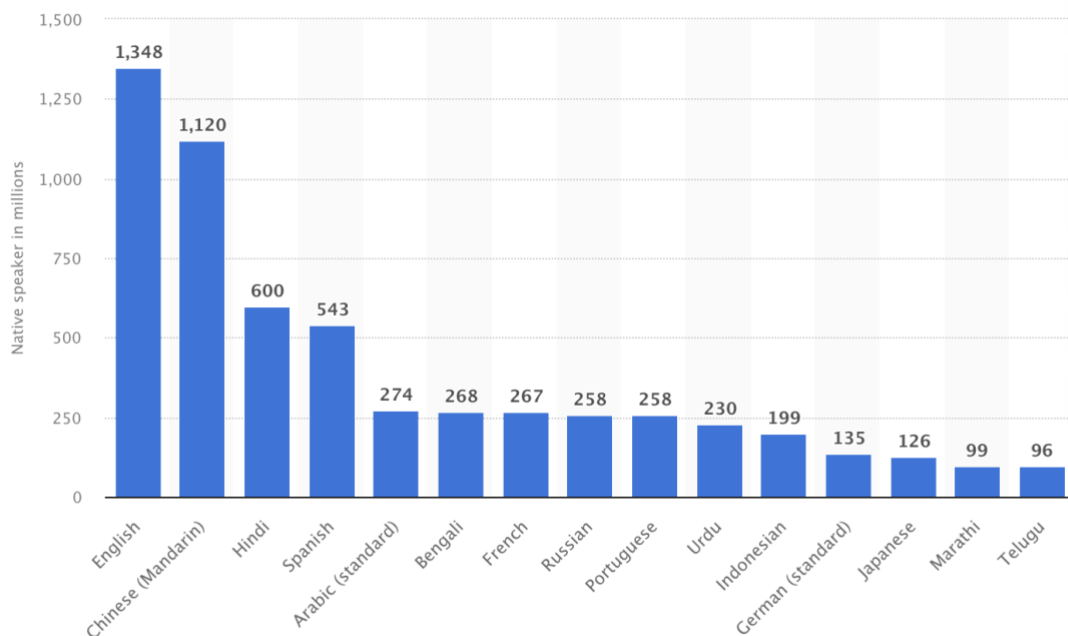
<sup>4</sup> Photographer: Alvesgaspar  
License: [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

The name of this church has been altered several times. When it was first erected, it was known as St. Nicholas Cathedral, but following Finland's independence from Russia in 1917, its name was changed to Great Cathedral. When the Diocese of Helsinki was established in 1959, the cathedral's name was changed to Helsinki Cathedral.

Jokela (2013) gave much explanation for the changing of names in her study, which is related to the relationship between Finland and Russia. By the twentieth century, the architectural ideas of church construction had started to express Finnish nationalist emotions rather than Russian architectural standards. This national-romanticist trend became stronger in the aftermath of Finland's independence from Russia (1917) and the ensuing Civil War (1918), which concluded with the triumph of the government's 'Whites' over the revolutionary, working-class 'Reds.' The result of the conflict reinforced the 'Whites' conviction that anything that deemed 'Russian' should be removed from the Finnish landscape (Jokela 2013). This is well reflected in the renaming of the Helsinki Cathedral. It is one of Helsinki's most recognizable landmarks nowadays, and maybe the most well-known building in Finland when viewed globally.

### **2.3 English as a global language**

It is common to hear people refer to English as the "language of the world" or "lingua franca." Most nations in the globe have at least a few English speakers. According to the statistics published on March 30, 2021, by M. Szmigiera, Figure 7 below shows the most spoken languages worldwide in 2021.



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Figure 7 The most spoken languages worldwide 2021 (available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/266808/the-most-spoken-languages-worldwide/>)

From the Figure 7 above, we can see that around 1.35 billion people worldwide spoke English natively or as a second language in 2021. The written language of English is also widely used over the globe. Everywhere people travel, they will encounter English-language signs and ads. When people go into a hotel or restaurant in a foreign city, they will find that the staff members are fluent in English and that there will be a menu in English (Crystal 2012). In addition, Crystal (2012) also mentioned that English is now the language most widely taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries, such as China, Russia, Germany, Spain, Egypt, and Brazil, and in most of these countries it is emerging as the chief foreign language to be encountered in schools, often displacing another language in the process. These examples show that English is unquestionably a global language. Despite the early release of the book *English as a global language* by Crystal (2012), the insights appear to be still relevant today.

## 2.4 Multilingualism in Finland

The number of people who are fluent in more than one language is on the rise. As a reason, multilingualism seems to have become a more common occurrence in our society

nowadays. When I first traveled to Finland as a tourist, I found that multilingualism was more prevalent than in China. It was common to see road signs, location names and descriptions of tourist attractions, as well as window advertisements in numerous languages. Some of the languages used here include Finnish and Swedish as well as English, Russian, and sometimes even Chinese. The current situation is that in practice, Finland is today a multilingual country, where 148 languages are spoken as the mother tongue, and there are many languages used in Finland (Tallroth 2012).

This section will include fundamental information about the language use in Finland, including Finland's official languages, the status of English in Finland, as well as information about other foreign languages that may be found in Finland, all of which will be useful to me in my research since I want to find out the relationship between how the overall language use in Finland and the languages used in these four churches, which is related to my first and second research questions 'What languages appear on the signs and websites of the tourist attractions? What is the order of languages on the signs and the websites?'.

#### **2.4.1 National languages of Finland**

Based on both the *Language Act* (423/2003) published by the Finnish Ministry of Justice and the *Strategy for the National Languages of Finland* (2012) published by the Prime Minister's office, the national languages of Finland are Swedish and Finnish. In Finland, Finnish and Swedish are the languages in which the majority of the population communicates and thinks. My observations revealed that this is mirrored in their daily lives as well, with the number of road signs and location names being multilingual, and their language education. The Finnish and Swedish languages are taught in Finnish schools as part of the school curriculum. Pupils are required to study either Finnish or Swedish as their first language and the second national language in elementary school and in general or vocational upper secondary education. A university degree also requires students to take and pass a test in both their native language and the country's second official language. This is based on the reality that Finnish and Swedish are the languages that are commonly accepted for use in transactions with the government and in the provision of public services in Finland.

### **2.4.2 English in Finland**

English, as a lingua franca, is also extensively used in Finland, especially in language education. According to Statistics Finland, English was the most frequently studied foreign language in comprehensive schools during the autumn term of 2018, nearly all students enrolled in upper secondary general education during the autumn term of 2019, and English instruction in grades 1 to 6 increased in 2020 compared to the previous year. In addition, the data from *Education First (EF)* shows that Finnish adults' English skills are the ninth best in a comparison of 112 countries in 2021.

Based on Taavitsainen and Pahta (2008), English as a global language has become more and more important in Finnish daily life, which can also be seen in many signs in Finland. In addition to Taavitsainen and Pahta (2008), some other articles, for example, Kontio (2021) and Laitinen (2014) talk about the linguistic landscapes in advertising in Finland, but seldom studies focus on places related to tourism. The *National Survey on the English Language in Finland: Uses, meanings and attitudes* (Leppänen, S. & al 2011) provides a great survey on English usage in Finland, and it did research on Finn's attitudes towards English. This survey's result may not be the latest, but it does show how English exists in Finnish's daily life, which makes me wonder what the role or status of English in Helsinki is and how can this be reflected from the linguistic landscapes in the selected tourist attractions.

### **2.4.3 Other foreign languages in Finland**

In addition to the two main official languages Finnish and Swedish, there are also several official minority languages: three variants of Sami, Romani, Finnish Sign Language and Karelian. This section, however, will only pay attention to those foreign languages that do not have official status in Finland but are quite widespread in the tourist attractions, such as Russian, Arabic, and many others.

<b>Biggest numbers of foreign-language speakers 2020</b>	
	<b>2020</b>
	<b>Population 31 Dec</b>
<b>Bosnian</b>	2,452
<b>Swahili</b>	2,560
<b>Hindi</b>	2,944
<b>Hungarian</b>	3,088
<b>Bulgarian</b>	3,114
<b>Italian</b>	3,130
<b>Portuguese</b>	3,558
<b>Urdu</b>	3,846
<b>Nepali</b>	4,636
<b>Bengali, (Bangla)</b>	4,749
<b>French</b>	4,966
<b>Tagalog</b>	5,315
<b>Romanian</b>	5,463
<b>Polish</b>	5,695
<b>Ukrainian</b>	5,961
<b>German</b>	6,841
<b>Other language</b>	7,955
<b>Spanish; Castilian</b>	9,151
<b>Turkish</b>	9,492
<b>Thai</b>	10,553
<b>Vietnamese</b>	11,562
<b>Albanian</b>	12,664
<b>Chinese</b>	13,778
<b>Persian, Farsi</b>	15,105
<b>Kurdish</b>	15,368
<b>Somali</b>	22,794
<b>English</b>	23,433
<b>Arabic</b>	34,282
<b>Estonian</b>	49,551
<b>Russian</b>	84,190

Units: Persons  
Source: Statistics Finland / Population structure

Figure 8 The Biggest numbers of foreign-language speakers in 2020 (available at [http://vertinet2.stat.fi/verti/graph/Graphserver.aspx?ifile=quicktables/Maahanmuuttajat/kieli\\_2&lang=1&qsk=2&mimetype=htm](http://vertinet2.stat.fi/verti/graph/Graphserver.aspx?ifile=quicktables/Maahanmuuttajat/kieli_2&lang=1&qsk=2&mimetype=htm))

The table above (Figure 8) shows data (provided by Statistics Finland) on the highest number of foreign language speakers in Finland in 2020. It shows that Russian is the most common foreign language; in fact, according to the statistics provided in Wikipedia, the Russian language is the third most widely spoken native language in Finland (1.5%), after Finnish and Swedish. This may also explain the presence of Russian language in the tourist attractions in my research. As will be shown in chapter 4, aside from Russian, the majority of the languages that I discovered at the tourist sites throughout my research

could be found in the figure, for example, Chinese, French, German, etc. The statistics can thus provide a good starting point for understanding how the multilingualism emerged in the various linguistic landscapes.

### **3 Material and methods**

Kallen (2009) argued that it is precisely the encounter with “foreign” languages that constitutes an essential part of the tourist’s experience of a voyage of foreign travel. It makes sense to choose tourist attractions as research subjects in a city where people can speak many different languages, like Helsinki. Good linguistic landscapes help tourists have a better experience when they visit a foreign land.

Below, I discuss in detail the data that I collected from the four churches (section 3.1), after which I introduce the methods of analysis (3.2).

#### **3.1 Data collection**

Gorter (2018) discussed some issues related to data collection especially for LL studies, for example, the research sites or survey area, the survey items or unit of analysis and the use of photographs as data. This gave me some thoughts on why I chose the four churches as research sites and why I use photographs as my data. I chose the four churches because the churches are well-known and public places for tourists, and they include signs in a variety of languages. Information about the churches have been described in section 2.2. Taking photographs of the signs that appear in the churches is a well-established data collection method in linguistic landscape studies and thus the chosen way for me to record the data.

The linguistic landscapes of the four churches, as well as the virtual linguistic landscapes of their official websites, were the sources of the data I collected. All the churches are public spaces, most of which are free to access (except Temppeliaukio Church, which costs 4 euros to enter). Since the churches are public spaces, I was able to take photos freely as long as there was no ‘no photo’ sign. The data collected are used for research purposes in my thesis and not for commercial purposes. The data collection occurred in November and December in 2021. Potentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were not many visitors in these locations, so I did not disturb anyone when I collected my data. The position I performed throughout my observation of linguistic landscapes was a hybrid one, in which I played both the researcher and the foreign visitor. This allows me to approach my research from multiple perspectives. On the one hand, as a researcher, I will observe the appearance and use of each language, especially English, on the linguistic



landscapes. On the other hand, from the point of view of a visitor, I will consider whether these linguistic landscapes can give tourists a better experience or whether they have any deficiency.

Considering the subject of this study, fieldwork is the best and primary data collection method since there were no pre-existing datasets that could be used, and the signs are only shown in the churches. In LL research, photographs collected during fieldwork are the primary data. Pictures collected during fieldwork are primarily used as data for interpretation and analysis (Gorter 2018, 48). Therefore, in order to conduct my analysis, I photographed the linguistic landscapes in the chosen churches to identify how many languages are used, in what order they are, and how English is used in the churches. In addition to this, I also observed the languages used on the official websites of these churches as virtual linguistic landscapes (VLL).

The on-site data include a total of 110 photos from the four churches: 33 photos from Suomenlinna Church, 50 from Temppeliaukio Church, 13 from Uspenski Cathedral and 13 from Helsinki Cathedral.<sup>5</sup> Because the Temppeliaukio Church has an electronic display screen that displays information about the church's events, I have gathered more signages from there than from the other churches. I discovered that the electronic display shows many distinct activities, most of which do not reoccur, which is why I only gathered a portion of them. Besides, there is a souvenir store inside the Temppeliaukio Church that sells items in a variety of different languages. I collected some price lists and advertisements in it. The second largest collection of photographs is from the Suomenlinna Church because I have included the pictures displayed on the walls of the church, which all had a small line underneath them explaining what the picture is about.

Because each of these churches has a noticeboard with much content posted on it, I photographed them all in the same image when I took the photographs, which sometimes allows for better comparisons. As a result, the total amount of photographic data presented here does not represent all the linguistic landscape signs that I gathered during my research. Besides, not all the linguistic landscape signs appear in the form of signs. They

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<sup>5</sup> The link to the dataset:  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kjcOWsQGdW27sUF9yYVpfnik4LlW264W?usp=sharing>  
(Also see the appendix)

also appear as brochures, bookmarks, inscriptions, and donation boxes. For the sake of clarity, I use the term *linguistic landscape sign* to refer to all these different types of inscriptions found on-site in the churches. Another intriguing discovery I made while photographing the signages was that the majority of the linguistic landscape signs are positioned outside the church's entrance, including the ticket office and the souvenir store, and most of these churches have almost no language signs appearing inside.

The VLL are from the official websites of the churches, which are respectively <https://www.suomenlinna.fi/en/visitor/sights/suomenlinna-church/>, <https://www.temppeliaukionkirkko.fi/en/index.html>, <https://www.hos.fi/kirkot/uspenskin-katedraali/>, and <https://helsingintuomiokirkko.fi/en/>. The data of the VLL are the different types of language used on the websites and the order in which these languages appear on the websites, which are similar to the way of collecting the on-site data. Because cyberspace can be accessed from any location and at any time as long as one has access to an electronic device, the contents on the websites may always change and be updated. Therefore, I saved the homepages of different language versions of every website on February 6<sup>th</sup> in order to have a better comparison. The different language versions of these websites are the focus of my research, and their contents are not considered, except when some websites contain Chinese, in which case I have compared their content with the English version one to see whether they are consistent.

### **3.2 Methods of analysis**

Many studies on linguistic landscape have been published in various academic and scientific journals. However, since “the methodologies employed in the collection and categorization of written signs is still controversial” (Tufi and Blackwood 2010), the field of study seems to have not yet developed a clear theoretical core or standard. But various methodologies are used by different researchers to perform their analysis of the linguistic landscapes in different studies.

My research methodology is based on classification methods used in many previous studies, which I will also mention below. The categorization of my study is as follows (1) languages on-site and online, including a distinction between monolingual linguistic landscapes and multilingual linguistic landscapes, (2) order of the languages on the linguistic landscapes, and (3) the materiality of the linguistic landscapes.

The first categorization is based on the classification methods used in the following studies. In Backhaus' (2006) study, the items in the Tokyo research part were counted and classified as either monolingual or multilingual, and the items in the Israel research part by Ben-Rafael and Shohamy, Hasan Amara, and Trumper-Hecht (2006) were classified by a coding system developed by themselves with parameters that included the languages used, the order in which the signs appear, and the amount of information. Similarly, Leeman and Modan (2009, 341) developed a classification system to categorize signs according to the following criteria:

- language (Chinese or English);
- types of symbolic and ideational meanings communicated;
- time period that a business or institution was established (during the first or second wave of gentrification); and
- type of institution (business, non-profit, or government organization, Chinese-oriented goods/services or not, chain or independently owned).

I have only referred to this first classification 'language (Chinese or English)' criterion for my own categorization.

Scollon and Scollon (2003) mentioned in their book that in most cases studied so far the preferred code is located above the secondary or peripheral codes if they are aligned vertically; if they are aligned horizontally the preferred code is located in the left position and the peripheral code is located in the right position. But this probably varies depending on whether a language is read from left to right or right to left. In Finland, the reading habit is from left to right. Thus, my second category is 'language order,' in which I record the order of languages on some linguistic landscapes, especially English, in order to identify the place of English in the four churches.

The third categorization 'the materiality of the linguistic landscapes' is also based on the criterion in Scollon and Scollon (2003). They suggested that the materials out of which an object is made signal much about how we are to take its meaning. A high-quality manufactured sign made of durable materials and permanently fixed to a building is taken to indicate that the texts thus produced are to last the length of the building itself (Scollon and Scollon 2003, 135). As a result, my third categorization is 'materiality of linguistic landscapes' which will be divided into temporary landscapes and permanent landscapes

and calculate the frequency with which English appears on these landscapes. Finding out how English is used on these linguistic landscapes can help me to figure out the function of English and its status in the churches.

The first step in my research was to identify all the languages that appeared in the photos I took. This step is for constructing the first category, identifying languages in the landscapes. To begin, the photographs collected from each church were separated into monolingual and multilingual signs and further categorized based on the languages that appeared in them. Monolingual landscape signs mean those that only contain one language. Multilingual usage refers to signs or sets of signs in which more than one language is used. For example, when five different languages were used to introduce a church on five boards separately, even though the languages were not on the same board, these signs were recognized as multilingual on account of belonging to the same set of signs. This is because the signs introduced the same thing, and the content of the signs was the same. The classification and comparison in this section should also include the VLL, which means that I needed to find out which languages the churches use in their websites. This was a much easier job since these websites used abbreviations to represent languages (e.g., FI, EN, SV). As I am a bilingual speaker of Chinese and English, I made an extension to compare the English version with the Chinese version on some of the signs and web pages where both Chinese and English were present to see whether they have the same content. In addition, the presence or absence of specific languages from the comparison of language choice between linguistic landscapes in the churches and virtual linguistic landscapes on their websites can help me to explain what the potential language policy of the churches might be, and what audiences are being targeted in the churches.

The second step was to identify the language order on the signs. This categorization section is based on the classification method used in Scollon and Scollon (2003). In cases where more than one language shows on the same sign, I have considered the relationship between the languages on the signs. In a similar vein, in order to determine the difference between VLL and LL, I also examined the language order which is shown on their respective official websites. Most of the time the available languages were displayed in the upper left or upper right corner of the page, in left-to-right order, and sometimes they appeared at the top of the site, where they were listed from top to bottom when choosing a language. Additionally, considering my research questions also include English use,

paying attention to the position of English on these signs, for example, where does English come in when several languages appear at the same time, is also vital in order to determine the status of English in the tourist destinations. The next stage was to differentiate whether the linguistic landscape signs in the churches are temporary or permanent, and to count how often English appeared in these signs separately.

I utilized the folder function on my computer to categorize the photographs collected from the churches and the web pages from their official websites. To see the differences, I compared the on-site and virtual LLs by putting their language usage in one table. These tables are shown in chapter 4.

Overall, the study used qualitative methods that were similar to those used in prior LL research (Gorter 2006). Data collection was done as on-site and online field work, and the data was then classified based on the languages used on the on-site linguistic landscape signs and websites, the appearance of language order in them, and the material of the signs. Importantly, the study combines both VLL and LL, which expands the focus of previous LL studies.

## 4 Results

This section is divided into four sections: 4.1 Languages on-site and online, 4.2 Language order, and 4.3 Sign Materiality. Section 4.1 is divided into monolingual signs and multilingual signs (including not only signs, but also bookmarks and brochures as explained in section 3.1). Section 4.2 pays close attention to the language order, which included Finnish, Swedish, English, and Russian. Section 4.3 examines the signs to determine whether they were temporary or permanent based on their materiality. Sections 4.2 and 4.3 both focuses heavily on how English was used to determine the status of English in these tourist destinations.

### 4.1 Languages on-site and online

#### 4.1.1 Monolingual signs

*Table 1 Monolingual signs in the Helsinki Cathedral*

<b>The Helsinki Cathedral</b>		
<b>Language</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location/Type</b>
Finnish	5	On the noticeboards
English	1	Candle notice

Table 1 records the number of monolingual signs with 5 in Finnish and 1 in English in the Helsinki Cathedral. What is interesting is that these 5 Finnish signs were all on the noticeboards with the contents such as church events information, the correspondence school information, and information on contacting a parish worker for individual talks. These signs' information was only in Finnish, so their target audience were obviously Finnish residents. The only sign in English was a candle notice that 'only one candle per candle holder and per person', which was telling tourists the rule of how to use the candles there.

Table 2 Monolingual signs in the Uspenski Cathedral

<b>The Uspenski Cathedral</b>		
<b>Language</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location</b>
Finnish	1	Wall
English	1	On the noticeboard
Russian	1	Wall

Table 2 shows the number of monolingual landscapes signs in the Uspenski Cathedral. It is also the only church that includes Russian monolingual signs. This is unsurprising, given that the Uspenski Church is an Eastern Orthodox cathedral with ties to Russia. Because the overall number of signs collected in this church was small (13 in total), there were not many monolingual signs. The Finnish and Russian ones were both inscriptions that include information about the church on the wall. The English one was on a noticeboard, at the entrance of the church, with the only word ‘STOP’ and an image on it to remind any visitors of sanitizing their hands. The point of contention is that the word ‘Stop’ can also be used in Finnish, making it difficult to determine which language it belongs to. I counted it as an English one because I am an English speaker and a tourist here.

Table 3 Monolingual signs in the Suomenlinna Church

<b>The Suomenlinna Church</b>		
<b>Language</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location</b>
Finnish	10	On the noticeboard/table/wall
English	1	On the information desk

As illustrated in Table 3, the number of Finnish monolingual signs in the Suomenlinna Church is much higher than the English ones. There were two on the noticeboard with the content of general safety instructions and information on church events, one on the table with a ‘food forbidden’ sign telling ‘OMIEN EVÄIDEN SYÖMINEN KIELLETTY’ (eating your own food is prohibited), one on the wall telling about ‘Nauhoittava kameravalvonta’ (recording camera surveillance), one memorial plaque for donations, one memorial plaque with the title of ‘SUOMENLINNAN

RANNIKKOTYKISTÖRYKMENTIN’<sup>6</sup>(Suomenlinna coastal artillery regiment), one memorial plaque with the title of ‘YLIPÄÄLLIKÖN PÄIVÄKÄSKY’ (the daily order of the commander-in-chief), one standee with a content of supporting missionary work in Tanzania, one on the church door with content of a written plan for public outreach, and one sign with the introduction of the Suomenlinna Church votive ship. The only English sign was on the information desk of the church, saying that there are more brochures at the tourist information and with a simple map on it, whose target audience was obviously tourists new to Helsinki.

*Table 4 Monolingual signs in the Temppeliaukio Church*

<b>The Temppeliaukio Church</b>		
<b>Language</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location/Type</b>
Finnish	11	Notices on the noticeboard/sign/covid requirements
English	7	Advertisements/prohibition sign/shop signs/covid requirements

The Temppeliaukio Church had quite many monolingual signs in both Finnish and English (see Table 4). The noticeboard at the entrance of the church had 9 papers on it and all of them were in Finnish; the contents were about the church and the parish’s events. These signs aimed at Finnish residents who might go to the church a lot and would attend these events but not tourists. There were two other signs, one of which was the covid requirement, but it had a similar version also in English and Swedish. The other sign reads ‘Pappi tavattavissa 10-14’ (Meet the priest 10-14), whose target audience was also Finnish locals.

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<sup>6</sup> This is originally copied from the sign.





Figure 9 A shop sign in English



Figure 10 Forbidden signs in English

The English monolingual signs had 2 shop signs, 1 candle mission sign, 2 advertisements for the church’s social platforms, 1 covid requirement, and 2 forbidden signs about ‘No luggages beyond this point!’ (the word ‘luggages’ is in the plural form in the original) and ‘No public washrooms.’ The target audience for these signs were tourists. Figure 9 above was a shop sign in English, telling people that the postcards are 1 euro for each. The English here has a function of serving as an advertising campaign. Figure 10 above includes forbidden signs in English (The opening time below in Finnish and English were repeated on every digital poster, so they were counted as a multilingual sign only once, see section 4.1.2.) The usage of English on these signs can indicate that the church wants tourists to pay for the products and follow some church rules, because they might not be familiar with these rules.

#### 4.1.2 Multilingual signs

*Table 5 Multilingual signs of the Helsinki Cathedral on-site and online*

<b>The Helsinki Cathedral on-site</b>		
<b>Languages</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location/Type</b>
Finnish & English	6	On the noticeboard/self-guided tour introduction/digital screen/notice
Finnish & English & Swedish	1	Voluntary entrance fee introduction on the noticeboard
Finnish & Swedish & English & German & Russian	1	Admission fee introduction at the entrance
Russian & Japanese Finnish & Swedish English & Danish	1 of each	Church brochures
Finnish & Swedish	1	Covid requirement on the noticeboard
<b>Helsinki Cathedral online (official website)</b>		
Finnish & English (Suomeksi & In English)		

In the Helsinki Cathedral, multilingual signs were mostly in Finnish and English, as shown in Table 5. Most of the Finnish contents were fully translated into the English ones.

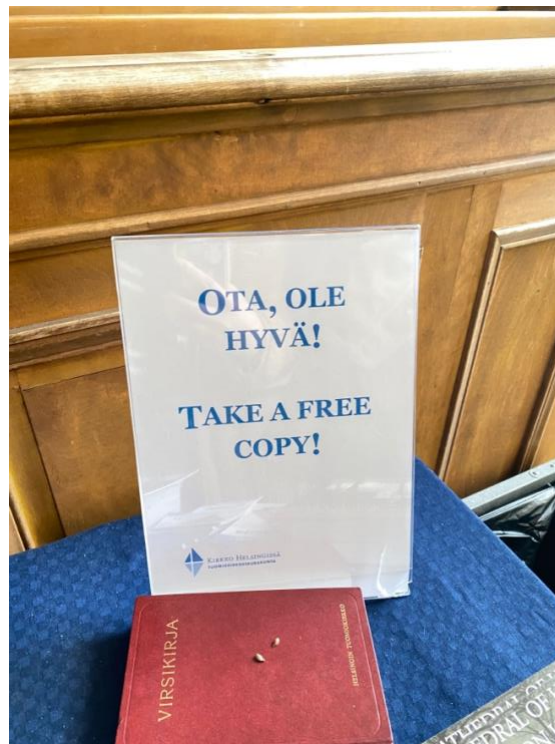


Figure 11 A sign in Finnish and English

However, as shown in Figure 11, there were some signs where the language versions were not exactly the same. The Finnish version ‘OTA, OLE HYVÄ!’ differs from the English version ‘TAKE A FREE COPY!’ in that it does not explicitly state that the copies are free, but it does include a polite expression that is absent from the English version. English and Finnish appear in almost every multilingual linguistic landscape except the covid requirement which only includes Finnish and Swedish. Therefore, it is not surprising that the official website of the Helsinki Cathedral only used English and Finnish. Comparing the English- and Finnish-language webpages, the Finnish pages contained an additional introduction to Café Crypt on the front page, which was lacking in the English page.

Table 6 Multilingual signs of the Uspenski Church on-site and online

<b>Uspenski Church on-site</b>		
<b>Languages</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location/Type</b>
Finnish & Swedish & English & Russian	4	On the noticeboard/introduction of the church/indicative signs
English & Finnish & Swedish	1	Indicative sign at the entrance
Finnish & English & Russian	2	On the noticeboard/introduction board
Finnish & Swedish & Russian & English & German & French & Greek	1	Donation box
Finnish & Swedish & Russian & German & English & French	1	Donation box
<b>Uspenski Church online (official website)</b>		
Finnish & Russian & Swedish & English (FI RU SV EN)		

The most common languages appearing on the linguistic landscape signs I collected from the Uspenski Church are Finnish, Russian, Swedish, and English, which can also be reflected in its official website (see Table 6). The two donation boxes had much more languages, for example, German, French, and even Greek. These two LL signs were clearly aiming to attract more international tourists in order to raise funds for the parish church's operating expenses. In addition, the four-language version of the web pages all contained different contents and pictures. The Finnish web page offered many more photographs of the church itself, including its interior and exterior, as well as information on various church activities and videos of the church introduction. The Russian one provided more information about the Eastern Orthodox Church, for example, recruiting a parish member, and the introduction of divine services in the Church Slavonic language. The Swedish and English web pages were in the same form with same pictures and contents, and these two included less introduction about the church but more about church services such as baptism, wedding, and burial. The English one (which is the only one I

can read) mentioned that Finnish is the main language of church services and some of their communities celebrate in Church Slavonic, English, Greek, Romanian, Swedish and Arabic. The Greek and Swedish both had a link to another page with the language to introduce the parish. Therefore, the appearance of Greek on the donation box in the church is not so surprising.

*Table 7 Multilingual signs of the Suomenlinna Church on-site and online*

<b>Suomenlinna Church on-site</b>		
<b>Languages</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location/Type</b>
Finnish & English	11	Indicative signs at the entrance/covid requirements/introductions/ticket machine/price list
Finnish & Swedish	1	Church name on the facades of the church
Finnish & Swedish & English & German & Russian	1	Voluntary fee list on the inside wall
Spanish & French & Russian & Chinese & Japanese & Arabic & Finnish & Swedish & English & Estonian & German & Italian	1 of each (Each bookmark was only in one language. The bookmarks covered all the languages listed.)	Bible Gospel bookmarks
English & Finnish & Russian	1 of each (Same as above.)	Suomenlinna introduction brochures
Finnish & Swedish & English	1	Asked intercessions
Finnish & English & Russian	1	Prohibit sign
Africaans & Arabic & Belorussian & Bulgarian & Chinese & Croatian &	1	John 3:16 (one of the most widely quoted verses from the

Czech & Danish & Dutch & English & Estonian & Farsi & Finnish & French & German & Greek & Hebrew & Hindi & Hungarian & Icelandic & Italian & Japanese & Korean & Kurdish & Latin & Latvian & Lithuanian & Maltese & Nepali & Norwegian & Polish & Portuguese & Romanian & Russian & Serbo-Croatian & Slovak & Slovenian & Somali & Spanish & Swahili & Swedish & Thai & Turkish & Ukranian & Vietnamese		bible) in 45 languages on the wall
<b>Suomenlinna Church online (official websites)</b>		
Suomi & Svenska & English & Русский & Deutsch & Français & Español & 日本語 (Japanese) & 中文(Chinese)		

As shown in Table 7, in the Suomenlinna Church, the majority of the multilingual linguistic landscapes were written in both Finnish and English. Swedish and Russian were also used in conjunction with Finnish. Aside from that, John 3:16, which is one of the most widely quoted verses from the Bible, had been translated into 45 languages and were displayed in multiple frames on the wall of the church. However, the interesting phenomenon was that two spelling mistakes appear in the languages' names. The church spells *Afrikaans* as *Africaans*, and *Ukrainian* as *Ukranian*, which are also mentioned in Table 7.



Figure 12 Bible Gospel bookmarks in the Suomenlinna Church

Bible Gospel bookmarks in different languages, which were a kind of souvenir for tourists, were also common and popular in the church (see Figure 12). To distinguish them, they were labeled by different national flags, and there was also a sentence like ‘Take with you!’ on the shelf, which was translated into the corresponding languages (at the bottom of Figure 12). Interestingly, grammar mistakes in the translated sentence in Chinese, Spanish, and French had been modified by someone else with a pencil. The original Chinese version was “與您拿！”，which was in traditional Chinese means ‘Take with you!’ and it is a very rough translation. Then it was revised into “请自取” in simplified Chinese, “請您拿取” and “請取閱” in traditional Chinese. However, the correction here did not appear to be very official, as it was made by someone with a pencil next to the original text. The grammar here in Chinese had been modified in a way that made the translation much politer than before, and the appearance of both traditional and simplified Chinese catered for much more tourists from Greater China.

The official website of the Suomenlinna Church, which was incorporated in the Suomenlinna world heritage website, listed 9 languages, but only the Finnish, Swedish

and English pages contained information about the church. The pages in the other languages only included an introduction to the whole Suomenlinna island. The Finnish web page for the church also had one more link than Swedish and English one to introduce the church and its volunteers.

*Table 8 Multilingual signs of the Tempeliaukio Church on-site and online*

<b>Tempeliaukio Church on-site</b>		
<b>Languages</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Location/Type</b>
Finnish & English	30	Indicative signs/concert event information on digital screens/shop signs/payment method/opening time/etc.
Finnish & Swedish & English & German & French & Russian	1	‘For our parish’ sign on the wall
Finnish & Swedish	1	Covid requirement on the wall
English & Finnish & Swedish	1	Entrance fee introduction
Finnish & Swedish & English & Russian & Chinese	1 of each	Church Introduction
Chinese & Danish & Deutsch & Dutch & English & Español & Français & Hungarian & Italian & Japanese & Korean & Norwegian & Polish & Portuguese & Romanian & Russian & Suomi & Svenska & Albanian & Amharic &	1 of each	Bible Gospel bookmarks (A word of greeting)



Arabic & Armenian & Bulgarian & Burmese & Cambodian & Croatian & Czech & Indonesian & Kurdish & Latvian & Lithuanian & Mongolian & Nepali & Serbian & Somali & Swahili & Tamil & Thai & Turkish & Ukrainian & Vietnamese		
<b>Temppeleaukio Church online (official website)</b>		
<b>Languages</b>	<b>Location</b>	
Finnish & English (Suomeksi & In English)	Home page	
English & Català & Deutsch & Ελληνικά (Greek) & Español & Français & 한국어 (Korean) & Italiano & Nederlands & 日本 語 (Japanese) & Português & Polski & Русский & 中文 (Chinese)	Ticket buying page	

As shown in Table 8, the majority of the linguistic landscapes in the Temppeleaukio Church were in Finnish and English. A significant amount of the data I gathered came from the electronic screen at the church’s entryway. Given that it was the end of November, and that Christmas was fast approaching, there were several Finnish digital posters introducing Christmas concerts and I collected 6 of them (because the digital screen was always changing and did not repeat the contents). Despite the fact that these concert posters were only accessible in Finnish, they had a separate English title such as ‘Christmas Concert’, ‘Christmas Charity Concert’, ‘Concert’ and ‘Independence Day Concert’ above, and the information on ticket sales underneath the posters was available in both Finnish and English translations. These Finnish digital posters did not have an English version, but only with an English title and ticket information in both Finnish and English. Therefore, I counted this kind of Christmas concert event advertisements as one sign. Figure 13 below is an example of such posters on digital screens.



Figure 13 The example of digital posters in the Tempeliaukio Church

The third language that occurred in other LL signs that I collected was Swedish. In addition, the Tempeliaukio Church offered a large number of Bible Gospel bookmarks, which were available in 41 different languages. These bookmarks were distinguished by national flags and their language names. It is interesting to note that the English versions were marked with the American and Canadian flags rather than the British flag. Furthermore, some of the languages that were used to label the bookmarks were in English rather than the language in which the bookmark was written, such as “Chinese” and “Japanese”, while some languages such as French, Spanish, Finnish and Swedish were appeared in their own languages of the brochure, such as Français, Español, Suomi and Svenska (see Figure 14 below).



Figure 14 Bible Gospel bookmarks in the Temppeiaukio Church

The Temppeiaukio Church was also the only one that required visitors to purchase a ticket. It was for this reason that its official website contained a page for purchasing tickets. The main website of the church was available in both Finnish and English and contains some basic information about the church. When I went to the home page, the button for purchasing tickets in the bottom right corner was only available in Chinese. When users clicked on this button, the website would redirect to the ticket purchasing page, which had 14 language options that I had included in Table 8 above. This was clearly aimed at some foreign visitors, as this ticket page did not have a Finnish or Swedish language presence.

#### 4.2 Language order

The order of the languages appearing on the signs can help us to reflect on the status of the languages and to consider if there is a potential language policy in place. Scollon and Scollon (2003) suggest that in bilingual (or multilingual) signs, the code in the right or lower position is secondary or marginalized by comparison with the code in the upper or

left position. In most LL studies studies so far the preferred code is located above the secondary or peripheral codes if they are aligned vertically; if they are aligned horizontally the preferred code is located in the left position and the peripheral code is located in the right position. A third possibility is that the preferred code is located in the center and the peripheral code is placed around the periphery (Scollon and Scollon, 2003). Given that certain nations have a tradition of reading from right to left, the situation may vary depending on the reading habits of the people in such countries. Finland's default reading habit is from left to right, meaning that the languages that appear on the left on the LLs signs are considered to be more significant than those that occur on the right.

The languages that appeared in the LL signs that I collected are listed in Section 4.1.2, and their order in the table corresponds to their appearance on the linguistic landscape, with the exception of a few languages that appear alongside one another, such as those on bookmarks and brochures, and there were also languages that appear in alphabetical order. Due to the large number of languages represented in the linguistic landscapes I gathered (as seen in Section 4.1.2), I analyzed the on-site signs that utilized the languages Finnish, Swedish, English, and Russian, which were the most often used languages in the LLs. The order of languages used on their websites were also fully documented, with the exception of the Temppeliaukio Church's ticket purchasing page, which had 14 languages. In addition, this section also paid much attention to the order in which the English in these LLs emerge in order to find out the status of English in these tourist attractions

Table 9 Number of LLs classified according to language order

	Helsinki Cathedral	Uspenski Cathedral	Suomenlinna Church	Temppeliaukio Church	Total (with EN)
EN, FI	0	0	0	7	9
EN, FI, SV	0	1	0	1	
FI, EN	6	0	9	19	40
FI, EN, SV	1	0	0	0	
FI, EN, RU	0	2	1	0	
FI, EN, SV, RU	0	2	0	0	
FI, SV, EN	0	0	1	0	6
FI, SV, EN, RU	1	2	1	1	
FI, SV, RU, EN	0	2	0	0	2
FI, SV	1	0	1	1	0

Table 10 The order of language on the web pages

The churches' official websites	The order of languages
Helsinki Cathedral	FI, EN (appearing in parallel)
Uspenski Cathedral	FI, RU, SV, EN
Suomenlinna Church	FI, SV, EN, RU, DE, FR, ES, JA, ZH <sup>7</sup>
Temppeliaukio Church	FI, EN (appearing in parallel)

Table 9 above summarizes the number of linguistic landscape signs in the churches that includes English, Finnish, Swedish, and/or Russian, as well as their order of occurrence. Table 10 illustrates the order of languages in the websites of the churches. The findings show that Finnish is still the dominant language of these churches, with Finnish being the first language in 43 signs out of 60. The bulk of the linguistic landscape signs in which English appeared as the first language were located in the Temppeliaukio church. Those linguistic landscape signs in which English appeared in the second place had the largest amount (40 in total). This was significantly more than the number of linguistic landscape signs where Swedish came in second. Russian was frequently seen in the third or fourth place, but it occurred seldom.

<sup>7</sup> DE=German, FR=French, ES=Spanish, JA=Japanese, ZH=Chinese

The languages (Finnish and English) on the websites of Helsinki Cathedral and Temppeliaukio Church appeared in parallel. The interesting phenomenon was that they did not have Swedish on their web pages though Swedish is one of the national languages in Finland. Finnish and English were the only two languages that featured on all four of these websites concurrently. The order of English in both online VLLs and on-site LLs suggests that English is widely used in Finland and plays a significant role in these tourist attractions.

### 4.3 Materiality of signs

Scollon and Scollon (2003) argue that the materials out of which an object is made signal much about how we are to take its meaning, and hence they advise examining the materiality of signs in order to acquire a more holistic understanding of the linguistic landscape. With materiality they refer to either permanence or durability, temporality or newness, and quality. The material itself can produce an indexicality; permanence and durability can be conveyed through heavier, more durable, and more expensive sign materials, as materials with these characteristics imply a longer period of preparation and greater expense in production, which helps convey the intention on the part of the producer for this sign to endure over a long period of time (Scollon and Scollon 2003, 136). In comparison, since less expensive and simpler materials such as paper or plastic need less time and money to create, the indexicality they convey is temporality or newness. They can contain the latest information and can be modified easily. This section counted the number of temporary and permanent signs and calculated the proportion of English in each of these signs to ascertain the position of English in these churches.

*Table 11 The number of temporary and permanent signs in the churches*

	Temporary (total)	Temporary (with EN)	Permanent (total)	Permanent (with EN)
Helsinki Cathedral	14	8 (57.1%)	0	0
Uspenski Cathedral	8	8 (100%)	4	2 (50%)
Suomenlinna Church	20	14 (70%)	6	1 (16.7%)
Temppeliaukio Church	46	34 (73.9%)	3	3 (100%)

The data in Table 11 demonstrates that the number of temporary signs greatly outnumbered the number of permanent signs, and that temporary signs including English in these four churches accounted for more than half of the temporary signs they had. The majority of temporary signs with English on them were made of papers or were on digital screens, regarding covid requirements, ticket information, candle mission, event information, and pricing list. In comparison, there were fewer permanent signs. Permanent signs that include English were generally often donation boxes or information about the church, which were made of metals and hardboards. English seemed to be a prevalent language in these churches since it was utilized to convey most of the current and up-to-date information to visitors. The permanent signs that did not include English were mostly about churches' information, such as inscriptions and monumental plaques on the wall.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Language use in Finnish churches

To answer the first two research questions, what languages appear on the signs and websites of the tourist attractions and what is the order of languages on the signs and the websites, as discussed in section 4.1, the four churches focused on in this study utilize a variety of languages, but the primary languages are Finnish, Swedish, English, and Russian. Finnish is still the dominant language among them, which can meet the tourists' need for an authentic experience of place, to see the "real" foreign land (Kallen 2009, 275), since it gives them the sense of being in Finland right now. Based on *Helsinki Facts and Figures 2021*, the top 5 source markets of tourists are Russia, Germany, UK, USA, and Sweden. It is thus not surprising that German is found in some churches. Historical factors of the church, for example, Uspenski Cathedral, are also one of the reasons that lead to the widespread usage of Russian in that church. The order of languages appeared on the linguistic landscapes also showed that Finnish is the main language which mostly occupied the first place. The linguistic landscape signs in which English was ranked second had the most, even surpassing the position of Swedish. Although Swedish is one of Finland's national languages and one of the compulsory languages for students, it is seldom used in the churches, and when it is, it is followed by Finnish or English. I speculate that a part of the reason for this is that the parishes are Finnish speaking.

Moreover, I noticed that Chinese occurs on the websites of some churches and in the linguistic landscapes on-site. For example, the Tempeliaukio church has a permanent sign in Simplified Chinese introducing the church, and the Bible Gospel bookmarks also offer Simplified Chinese translations. These churches obviously consider Finland's rising usage of Chinese as a mother tongue in recent years, as well as the growing number of Chinese visitors. To some extent, the use of these languages other than Finnish satisfies tourists' need for security (Kallen 2009, 275), as seeing a familiar language in a completely unfamiliar language environment reassures visitors that they can comprehend these diverse cultures, ensuring that what is different is not so different as to be threatening or in some way repugnant.



## **5.2 The use of English in Finnish churches**

Taavitsainen and Pahta (2008) mention that the use of English in commercial advertising and naming practices is attested on a global scale and has been addressed in numerous studies on different language communities. The prominence of English in posters, billboards, electric displays, and shop signs is now one of the most noticeable manifestations of the global spread of the language (Crystal 2003, 94). This trend is also obvious in contemporary Finland, as seen in sections 4.2 and 4.3, which demonstrate how often English emerges in the linguistic landscapes of the churches. A survey of advertisements on the business pages of the Helsinki telephone directory in 2003 (Pahta and Taavitsainen 2004) shows that English has become increasingly common in the names of various kinds of local enterprises. This demonstrates that English is widely used in commercial advertising in Finland, and my study indicates that it is also extensively used in tourism.

To answer the third research question, how is English used in the four churches and their websites, the findings show that English is present in the linguistic landscapes of the churches on-site via the content of covid requirements, ticket information, the church's introduction, product names, donation boxes, concert information, and brochures, among other things. English is also used in every church's website, providing tickets and churches' information for tourists. Among these temporary signs, English appears with great frequency. Although there are few permanent signs, English still makes up a large percentage. These LL signs are clearly targeted towards international tourists who do not understand Finnish, the emergence of English help convey the latest information about the church to tourists and the good quality of English can provide tourists with a better experience.

From another point of view, the common utilization of English in the linguistic landscape of tourist destinations might also be considered as a kind of commercial advertising, despite the fact that churches are not places of entertainment. Using English in LL signs may not directly help increase visitor numbers, but more LL signs in English can increase knowledge about the existence of the places, hence enhancing tourism industry and economic benefits. In Tempeliaukio Church, for example, visitors contribute to the church's construction by purchasing products related to the church. These products may

include an English name or introductions in English, which can help foreign visitors have a better shopping experience.

### **5.3 Comparison between LL and VLL of Finnish churches**

Considering the last research question about the differences in language use between the attractions and their websites and between the different attractions, I discovered that fewer languages were used on the websites of the four churches than on-site, but the languages used on the websites were essentially the same as the ones that were mainly used in the churches. Finnish and English are the primary languages used on the official websites of the churches. The Helsinki Cathedral and Temppeliaukio Church appear to be using the same type of website since their home pages are based on a similar framework and use only Finnish and English, though the ticket page of Temppeliaukio Church contains 14 languages. The web page of Suomenlinna includes 9 languages, but only Finnish, Swedish, and English are used to introduce the church. Furthermore, the language used on the Uspenski Cathedral website is more consistent with its on-site linguistic landscapes, as they both employ mostly Finnish, Swedish, English, and Russian, with Russian being the primary language used in the church. Furthermore, the languages utilized in monolingual signs in different churches also varies. For example, all of the churches have monolingual signs in Finnish or English, while the Uspenski Cathedral has monolingual signs in Russian for historical and contemporary considerations.

When compared to the stability of urban linguistic landscapes, virtual linguistic landscapes are less stable, because web material can be regularly updated and adding information is less expensive. Another one is that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LL on-site need to provide more signs about reminding tourists of wearing the face masks, keeping a distance, and maintaining hand hygiene. These signs are essentially identical across the sites in that they have the same style, font, and content. While VLL are delocalized, meaning that anyone can enter and engage with a virtual space from anywhere, there is no need to provide Covid-related content.

### **5.4 Limitations of the study**

In this thesis, I have presented a study that analysed the linguistic landscapes of four Finnish churches and their official websites. The data used in this thesis' study were

photographs of the linguistic landscape in which no one appears, and since these churches do not have signs prohibiting photography, there are no ethical problems.

I managed to shed light on the multilingual nature of the linguistic landscapes of the four churches and how English is utilized in them, which contributes to research on the role of different languages, and in particular, the position of English in tourist attractions in Helsinki. The study also combined the LLs and VLLs in order to find out more details about the linguistic landscapes of the churches. However, the study still includes some limitations that might be complemented in further studies.

One limitation of this study is that my study has only focused on the linguistic landscapes of the most popular tourist destination churches in Helsinki. If data from less popular churches and churches in other cities in Finland were collected, the findings would be more comprehensive. Another limitation of the study relates to my language competence: I am only able to read English and Chinese, which means that I have not been able to fully analyze the contents of the signs in other languages. I may have also missed some of the meanings conveyed in these other languages, even if I have consulted dictionaries and my colleagues to check key elements in the signs. However, I approached the data ‘as a foreign tourist’ with a specific linguistic repertoire which is English and Chinese. From this perspective, I found some shortcomings in the language use in the tourist attractions, such as the absence of English in some key signs, which confused me as a visitor, and the absence of information in Chinese about the church on the Suomenlinna website even if the website included Chinese as a language choice. Furthermore, because the linguistic landscapes were collected from tourism places, gathering views from tourists from different countries could help gain more findings. Therefore, further studies could incorporate interviews to find out how tourists from different countries experience the linguistic landscapes.

## 6 Conclusion

As a multicultural city, multilingualism is quite common in Helsinki, which can also be concluded from the results from this study. Many multilingual linguistic landscape signs were found in the churches focused on, while the dominant language on them was still Finnish. Multilingualism was quite common in these four churches sites. The primary languages were Finnish, Swedish, English, and Russian. The languages used varied from church to church mainly due to historical factors, for example the Uspenski Cathedral, an Orthodox Church, had more monolingual signs in Russian than other churches.

As expected, the status of English was relatively high in the churches. Surprisingly, English was sometimes more essential than Swedish, Finland's second national language. This was demonstrated in section 4.2 language order, which found that English often comes second after Finnish. The official websites of the Helsinki Cathedral and the Tempeliaukio Church also contain information about the churches in Finnish and English only. Aside from the Finnish monolingual signs, English monolingual signs were the second most prevalent, whereas there were no Swedish monolingual signs. In addition, the analysis of the materiality of the signs reveals that English was usually used to transmit current information about the churches in order to remind visitors of product lists or present covid needs, indicating that English has a relatively high status when confronting tourists.

The combination of analyzing LL and VLL of the churches is not a common topic in linguistic landscape study in tourism. Both the LL and VLL of the churches appear to distinguish between local and foreign visitors in the sense that different types of information are provided for different target groups, so locals are expected to come to church primarily for events, whereas tourists are expected to come to see the church building. The results of my study show that there are still some problems in linguistic landscapes in the churches, for example, spelling mistakes and lacking translations in some of them. These linguistic landscape signs can be appropriately updated, and more language versions can be added following the increasing numbers of foreign tourists, especially English versions, which is a lingua franca in the world, to provide them with a better knowledge of not just the church itself, but also some events information in the church. Churches are place-specific landmarks that mediate conceptions about history and

identity, therefore learning more about churches may help tourists learn more about the country as a whole and get a better experience when travelling in a 'real' foreign land.

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## **Appendix**

The link to the dataset:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kjcOWsQGdW27sUF9yYVpfnik4LIW264W?usp=sharing>

The photographs can be used for any purpose except for commercial use.