



Research Article

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Multilingualism in Linguistic Landscape of Prishtina (Kosovo)

Shkumbin Munishi (Prishtina)

Ph.D., Associate Professor,
Faculty of Philology, Department of Albanian Language,
University of Prishtina, Prishtina, Kosovo

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Abstract

Language relations as manifestations of the phenomenon of multilingualism are also expressed in the area of the so-called linguistic landscape. Undoubtedly, the linguistic landscape not only reflects the use of languages in public space but at the same time reveals the depth of public perception of different languages, depending on their function and prestige. In this paper, I will treat Albanian, English and Serbian reports through their coverage in the Prishtina linguistic landscape, focusing on the use of these languages in advertising space in the city of Prishtina and in other tables that perform semiotic functions of indexes in this city. Likewise, within the reflection of the status planning of languages in Prishtina linguistic landscape, the use of Serbian in the official tables will be treated. This case study will also reflect the features of language policy and the impact of the globalization phenomenon in different languages. The results presented in this paper will reflect on the field research within a certain time span. The research has shown that in the Prishtina linguistic landscape, in addition to the Albanian language, English has a dense use, while the use of Serbian is mostly limited to official charts i.e. names of the streets of the city and is not found in private advertisements tables.

Keywords: *linguistic landscape, linguistic landscape units, language policy, language planning, Albanian, Serbian, English*

1. Introduction

The use of languages in different functions and language relations can be seen as manifestations of the multilingualism and language contacts. The manifestation of multilingualism is a complex and multidimensional language manifestation. In this respect, Edwards indicates that multilingualism is both a simple description of global linguistic diversity and, at the same time, a representation of the individual and group abilities that have developed because of that very diversity (Edwards 2012: 25). These multidimensional manifestations of multilingualism are also expressed in the linguistic landscape of different social communities living within the confines of a certain territory.

Regarding the definition of the linguistic landscape concept, Laundry and Bourhis have provided the definition which is widely mentioned: "Language of public street signs, large advertising billboards, street names, country names, trademark marks and public signs in government buildings are combined to shape the linguistic landscape of a particular territory, region or urban area" (Laundry and Bourhis 1997: 25). The mentioned authors further emphasize that the linguistic landscape of a territory carries two basic functions: informational and symbolic function (ibid.) An important feature of the linguistic landscape is that it is composed of "private" and "public" signs ": signs issued by public authorities (such as government, communes or public agencies) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, signs issued by individuals, associations or firms operating more or less autonomously at the borders authorized by official regulations (Leclerc 1989, cit. by Laundry and Bourhis 1997; Ben Rafael and Shohamy, p 8). In this sense, Backhaus distinguishes

between official and unofficial signs (Backhaus 2006: 53), while Calvet (in Backhaus *ibid.*) has called these two types of signs as *in vitro* and *in vivo* components of the landscape language.

The linguistic landscape is built with language tools that are in use within a certain territory and which may belong to different language systems. Linguistic Landscape Units can be found in tables naming the streets, tables naming institutions, advertisements published on posters, on placards, on various illuminated electronic tables, and even on graphs that are written on the walls of different buildings. In other words, when out on the way, the Linguistic Landscape Units of a space or territory are immediately observed by the human eye. In general, language landscape not only reflects the use and location of languages in public spaces but at the same time reveals the depth of public perception of different languages and attitudes towards them, depending on their function and their open or covert prestige. It also reflects the use of languages in the public sphere. Otherwise, according to Cenoz and Guter (2006), the linguistic landscape reflects the relationship with the sociolinguistic context of a given space. This relationship according to them is two-way. On the one hand, the linguistic landscape reflects the relative power and status of languages in a specific sociolinguistic context. On the other hand, the linguistic landscape contributes to the building of the sociolinguistic context, because people elaborate the visual information that comes to them and the language with which the signs are written may affect their perception of the status of different languages and even affect their linguistic behavior. Language landscape study may also be of interest because it may provide information about the differences between official language policy, which may be reflected in top-down signs (public signs, *sh.m.*), such as names of roads or denominations in official buildings, and the impact of this policy on individuals, as reflected in the bottom-up signs that may be the names of shops and placards and street posters (private signs, *sh.m.*) (pp. 67- 68).

2. Methodology

2.1 Research background

In this paper, I will discuss the use and relations of Albanian and English through their reflection on the Pristina Linguistic Landscape in the public and private spheres. The Serbian language as a language with official status in Kosovo alongside Albanian is also included in the survey. Pristina is the capital of Kosovo and the main political and cultural center in the country. Usage, rapports, and functions of Albanian and English will be dealt with in light of the phenomenon of globalization and language policy in Kosovo, while the use of Serbian, mainly in public tables, will be dealt with within the framework of the language policy and status planning of languages in Kosovo. A paper dealing with the discrepancy between language policy and the use of languages in the Linguistic Landscape of Pristina comes from Demaj and Vandenbroucke (2013). In our paper, the issue of reflection of language policy in the Pristina Linguistic Landscape will not be discussed thoroughly and will be taken into account only in the cases related to use and the relations between Albanian and Serbian, as our interest has been to see the use of Albanian and English.

2.2 Instruments and Procedures

The research is based on the hypothesis that English as the language of the globalization processes emerges and it is being used heavily in the Pristina Linguistic Landscape. It should also be emphasized that in this research the Linguistic Landscape (LL) units are divided into two general categories, in public Linguistic Landscape (PuLL) units, and in private Linguistic Landscape (PrLL) units, and the whole the research was conducted based on this division. The survey was conducted in Prishtina and samples were taken in all the visible advertisements, traffic tables, and other tables, as well as in all apparently written units of the shops and other spaces in the right side along the Dëshmorët e Kombit Boulevard, Boulevard George Bush, Zahir Pajaziti Square and Boulevard Mother Theresa. In order to collect the samples for research, iPhone 6+ camera was used to photograph the Linguistic Landscape Units in Pristina. In general, we have made 226 photographs with which we have recorded 214 Linguistic Landscape Units (LLU).

3. Results

3.1 Pristina's Public Linguistic Landscape Units

In the category of Pristina's Public Linguistic Landscape Units, I have listed 31 units of the LL as a whole. Out of this total, 5 units were written only in Albanian or 16.1%, 18 or 58% were written in Albanian and Serbian, 4 units or 12.9% were written in Albanian and English, 2 units or 6.4% were written in all three Albanian-Serbian-English languages. Within the Public Units of the LL, we have found only 2 units or 6.4% that were written in English only and, to specify, these units were the traffic signs that showed the direction of the location of the private hotel.

Based on the above data I can conclude that most of the Public Units of the LL are listed in the two official languages of Kosovo, namely in Albanian and Serbian. This is done in accordance with the legal status of these languages (Munishi 2006) and with the overt language policy which is pursued in Kosovo. It should be noted that in all cases of bilingual Albanian-Serbian tables, only abbreviations *Rr./Ul (rruga, ulica)* (street, str.) have been noted in both languages, and the names *Bulevardi/Bulevar*, while the names because they were in Albanian are written with Albanian graphs, but it can be considered that they are understandable in the Serbian language.

The two single LL units which were written in all three languages were the official tables with the names of the institutions of the Government of Kosovo. These are the official titles listed in the tables of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development. Indeed, in both of these official tables, the name "*Republika e Kosovës*" (Republic of Kosovo) has been marked with larger letters than the names in Serbian and English. Below this label were the names of ministries in Albanian, Serbian and English in equal font sizes. On the tables of the University of Pristina, only units in Albanian and English are found.

With respect to the reflection of language policy and status planning and their reflection on Linguistic Landscape of Pristina, I tend to agree with Demaj and Vandembroucke (2013) that there is a discrepancy between language policy and status planning and the official languages distribution in LL in the sense that Albanian seems to be predominant vs. Serbian and other languages in Kosovo.

3.2 Private Pristina Language Landscape Units

A total of 183 different units were included in the category of Private Linguistic Landscape units. Within this total, 18 units were brand names, which, when they were single words without additional explanation, were not included in language analysis.

Based on these data, I have found that out of 183 units of LL, 53 or 28.9% were units written in Albanian only, while 30 or 16.3% units were written in English only. The majority of LL Units have been written in Albanian and English, thus the code mixing has taken place (Huebner 2006). In this category, I have included all those units in which there was at least one element of Albanian or English. For example, as a mixed unit is also found any unit that in the text written in Albanian which had even a logogram ampersand '&' which is characteristic in English (replaces the use of 'and') and vice versa, mixed unit is also considered any unit that it was written in English, but there was a piece in Albanian, even in the form of nicknames of any person. Consequently, in 183 LL units, we found 82 that were written in Albanian and English or 44.8%. Here I add that for 2 language units I have not come to understand what they mark, thus I have categorized them in the domain of firms (brand names).

In general, this data is a clear evidence of the enormous use of English in the LL, which build the public sphere in Pristina. It should be noted that in the Albanian language both the standard language and the vernacular based on the local dialect of Geghe are used in the LL Units written in Albanian. The latter is especially used in certain advertisements. In general, it cannot be said that there has been a strict and permanent application of the Standard Albanian in the private LL units.

Further, the LL units, namely-bottom up units, have been classified into four general categories. In the first category, which I have called "food and cafeteria", I included restaurants, cafes, and hotels. In the second category, which I have called "services", I have included a wide

range of different service stores. This category includes banks, insurance companies, clothing stores, attorneys services, construction services, property and real estate offices, and so on. In the third category, which I have called "communication and information technology", I have included all the stores that sell and offer services in the field of Information Technology and mobile phones. Meanwhile, in the fourth category, called "medicine," I have included those facilities that provide medical services.

In the first category "food and cafeteria" 38 units of the LL are included. Of these 38 units, the majority or 18 (47.3%) were in Albanian and English. 10 units or 26.3% were written only in English, 7 or 18.4% were only in Albanian, and 3 were the names of firms. These data clearly show that in the area of food, coffee, and entertainment, English is the dominant language in relation to Albanian.

In the category of "services", 100 LL units have been coincidentally included. Out of this total, 28 were in Albanian (28%), 18 (18%) were in English, 42 were in Albanian and English and 12 were names of firms that we did not consider.

Even in this category, it is obvious that most of the LL unites are bilingual Albanian-English, followed by Albanian units and in the end the units in the English language. In this area, Albanian and English appear to be used almost equally.

In the third category "communication and information technology" I found the following data. Of the total of 22 units I have distinguished in this category, only one unit was written in Albanian and English, while 20 units were written and combined in both languages i.e. Albanian and English.

This field has been one of the areas in which Albanian and English are presented in hybrid forms, whether in the form of hybrid compositions or in the form of hybrid syntax. Moreover, in this area, there are many cases of combination of Albanian and English language codes and sentences, as well as parallel uses. Hence, this was the category in which the mixing of codes has emerged as a viable phenomenon.

In the last category "medicine" I have included those LL units that have been found in facilities offering medical services. In general, I found 21 such Linguistic Landscape units, of which most of them (15 or 71.4%) were in Albanian, while 5 or 23.8% were in both Albanian and English, and only one has been the name of a firm. In this category, I have not found any case of an LL Unit that was only in English.

Data from the field of medicine of LL units show a prevalence of the Albanian language and a relative number of bilingual units. What's true in this area too, Albanian is not entirely unique, as in constructions that are in Albanian there are uses of Latin language units, which often come out as terminological abbreviations. Nevertheless, it is clear that English in this category does not seem to be used as a single language, unlike the above categories where I found many such cases.

4. Discussion

The results of the survey indicate clearly that in the linguistic landscape of Prishtina Albanian and English emerged as the language used the most. In the private LL units Albanian and English are used in parallel as both languages come with almost the same percentages. The table below summarizes all findings of both public and private LL units and their breakdown in accordance to the socio-economic realm.

Table 1:

Public Linguistic Landscape Units					Private Linguistic Landscape Units				Food and Cafeteria				Services				Communication and Information Technology			Medicine			
Alb	Alb/ Ser	Alb/ Eng	Alb/ Ser/ Eng	Eng	Alb	Eng	Alb/ Eng	Firm	Alb	Eng	Alb- Eng	Firm	Alb	Eng	Alb- Eng	Firm	Alb	Eng	Alb- Eng	Firm			
5	18	4	2	2	53	30	82	18	7	10	18	3	28	18	42	12	1	1	20	15	0	5	1
16.1 %	58%	12.9 %	6.4%	6.4%	28.9%	16.3 %	44.8 %	0.98 %	18.4%	26.3 %	47.3 %	7.8%	28 %	18%	42%	12%	4.5 4%	4.54 %	90.9 %	71.4%	0%	23.8 %	4.7%

As it can be noticed from some previous studies of LL in Tokyo, Bangkok, and Jerusalem (Backhaus et al. 2006) the use of English in parallel to local languages in the LL is a dominant occurrence, and this is a clear indication that English as the language of globalization has penetrated in the public use in the area of the Linguistic Landscape. The very high percentage of the use of English in the LL units of commercial activities could be taken as a clear indication that English is perceived as the most adequate communication tool to attract the sales of commodities and services. The same applies to Prishtina's case since English coexists with Albanian in all leisure and economic public space in downtown Prishtina.

Another element which is worth emphasizing is that in the cases of coexistence of different ethnic languages concentrated in specific parts of a town the use of those languages in LL will be determined by demography, prestige and economic factors. In this respect, Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) have found that in the case of Israel in Jewish localities Hebrew has been used predominantly in both top-down and bottom-up units of LL, while in Palestinian localities Hebrew was used more in bottom-up rather than top-down LL units which are explained as a tendency of Palestinians to adapt to market forces in a society where the majority is Jewish and Hebrew-speaking. In East Jerusalem, in top-down units, Arabic, English, and Hebrew have been used largely, while in bottom-up cases mostly Arabic and English items have been found. In all cases, English was used alongside two local languages which is a clear indication of the role English uses in globalization trends worldwide.

In terms of language policy and status planning implementation in the LL, the case of Prishtina shows that in public LL units there is a tendency to implement the provisions of the status planning of languages in Kosovo, hence most institutional signs are multilingual namely in Albanian, Serbian and in many occasions in English. Nevertheless, as Demaj and Vandenbroucke (2013) have indicated correctly in terms of LL and official language policy and status planning is concerned there is a discrepancy between the former and the latter. They observe correctly the predominance of the Albanian language in LL but haven't emphasized the extent of English use in LL units. In another research on the LL units in the city of Skopje Ibrahim and Sulejmani (2016) have found as well a discrepancy between the official language policy and the language status and their implementation in the LL. In their research they found predominant use of Macedonian relative to Albanian in both public and private LL units, while they haven't brought any data on the use of English in spite of the fact that they mention the use of other languages (Serbian, Turkish).

In general, language policy and status planning decisions are usually reflected in top-down LL units, since such units are very often put by the authorities. On the other side, bottom-up LL units are usually self-regulated and driven mostly by socio-economic and political factors.

In the case of Prishtina, another indication which comes from the survey is related to the prestige that different languages gain within a certain socio-political and demographic context. In the case of Prishtina, the demographic dominance of Albanians and their socio-political status are the main source of the prestige that Albanian language as gained after the conflict in Kosovo in 1999 relative to Serbian language which in turn used to have dominant prestige in Kosovo due to the fact that in former Yugoslavia the so-called Serbo-Croatian language was practically a *lingua franca* of the former country. The changes of socio-political and cultural circumstances have also changed the prestige of the languages which are used in the public space of Prishtina.

5. Conclusions

Research of Prishtina Linguistic Landscape has reflected an almost parallel use of Albanian and English in the LL units, especially in the private ones. The phenomenon of globalization, which, in addition to the economic character, can be considered as a social and cultural manifestation, has undoubtedly influenced the spread and use of English throughout the world, and consequently in Kosovo (Munishi 2015). Based on the units treated in the research I have found that English is used especially in those areas that are affected by the phenomenon of globalization, such as information and communication technology, financial services, banking and law, food, catheter and entertainment, clothing and fashion, as well as other services of aesthetic nature. Also, based on this research we have concluded that the use of English is more limited to medical services. Based

on these findings we can conclude that the influence of English as a language of globalization is extremely pronounced in the public sphere, reflected also by its intense use, alongside the Albanian, in the linguistic landscape.

On the other hand, in the Public units of Linguistic Landscape language policy of Kosovo is reflected, and the provisions related to the implementation of the status planning of languages are followed, although in this field Albanian appears to be dominant. In the public LL units, there is a use of Serbian as an official language, while the use of English comes out as a result of an extraterritorial status that English has not only in Kosovo but also in many other countries of the world, as a dominant language and a world-wide *lingua franca*.

With regard to Albanian the latter it is used in its two varieties, both standard Albanian and local vernacular, and it can be said that there is no consequent implementation of the orthographic norm of Albanian. Nevertheless, I would like to draw attention that there is room for further research on the linguistic structure of the linguistic landscape units not only in Pristina but also in other cities where Albanian is spoken.

All in all, it can be said that the research has proved that in the Linguistic Landscape of Pristina it can be noticed that both informational and symbolic functions have been realized in the used languages. Also, the research has also reflected the relations of the social power of the languages encountered in the LL. In this context, the social status of the Albanian appears consolidated, English appears with an empowered status as a consequence of the global use of the latter, while Serbian emerges in a less favorable situation. The relations between Albanian and Serbian are dominated the demographic factors and the composition of the population of the city of Pristina, especially its central part.

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