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Linguistic Landscape Research: Inquiry on Societal Multilingualism in Pre-Service Language Teacher Education

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Abstract

Mobility, growing urbanization and increasingly complex ways of communication in today's world urge language teachers to develop an understanding of language as semiotic practice in social life and question the ideological underpinnings of language use in multilingual contexts. The article discusses how linguistic landscape research can help pre-service English language teachers engage in reflection on their own multi/plurilingual ecologies, challenge monolingual/monocultural language education policies and potentially move towards more inclusive pedagogical practices in their future teaching contexts. The article reports on the findings attained from a linguistic landscape research, comprising İstanbul-based photographic corpora of 300 visuals from the lens of 72 Turkish-speaking prospective teachers of English, their written reflections on self-gathered data and 7-hour audio recording of focus group interviews where the student teachers engaged in evidence-based and identity-sensitive discussion on the multilingual ecology of İstanbul. The paper concludes with a discussion of if, and to what extent self-reflection and dialogic engagement among prospective English language teachers on societal multilingualism, as anchored by critical reflexivity, contribute to professional identity development and offer future directions for linguistic landscape research in teacher education.

Key terms: linguistic landscape; language teacher education; multilingualism; translanguaging; semiotics

Abstract

Sprachlandschaften: Eine Untersuchung zur gesellschaftlichen Mehrsprachigkeit in der Ausbildung von Fremdsprachenlehrkräften

Mobilität, zunehmende Urbanisierung und immer komplexer werdende Wege der Kommunikation in der heutigen Welt fordern Fremdsprachenlehrkräfte auf, ein Verständnis der Sprache als eine semiotische Gestaltung des sozialen Lebens zu entwickeln und die ideologischen Grundlagen des Sprachgebrauchs in mehrsprachigen Kontexten in Frage zu stellen. Der Artikel beschreibt, wie sprachliche Landschaftsforschung dazu beitragen kann, dass angehende Englischlehrkräfte über ihre eigenen mehr- bzw. vielsprachigen Wechselbeziehungen nachdenken und durch diesen Denkprozess die vorherrschende einsprachige bzw. monokulturelle Sprachenpolitik in Frage stellen, um in ihrem zukünftigen Unterrichtskontext integrativere pädagogische Praktiken zu entwickeln. Der Korpus der Untersuchung besteht aus 300 Fotografien, die die sprachliche Vielfalt der Stadt Istanbul visuell repräsentieren. Hierfür haben im Rahmen der sprachlichen Landschaftsforschung 72 angehende türkische Englischlehrkräfte Straßen- und Ladenschilder, Plakate, Leuchtreklamen usw. fotografiert und den Versuch unternommen, ihren Blick auf Sprache widerzuspiegeln. Dieser Korpus wurde zusätzlich durch die schriftlichen Reflexionen zu den Fotografien und einer 7-stündigen Audioaufnahme eines Fokusgruppeninterviews erweitert, in dem die Lehramtsstudierenden eine evidenzbasierte und identitätssensible Diskussion über die mehrsprachige Vielfalt der Stadt Istanbul führen. Abschließend wird in der Arbeit diskutiert, ob und inwieweit Selbstreflexion und dialogisches Engagement von angehenden Englischlehrkräften zur gesellschaftlichen Mehrsprachigkeit, die durch kritische Reflexivität verankert ist, zur beruflichen Identitätsentwicklung beitragen und zukünftige

Richtungen für Arbeiten im Bereich der Sprachlandschaft in der Ausbildung von Fremdsprachenlehrkräften bieten kann.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Sprachlandschaft; Ausbildung von Fremdsprachenlehrkräften; Mehrsprachigkeit; Translingualität; Semiotik

1. Introduction

Increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in communities as well as in schools urge learners, teachers, researchers, policy makers and other interested parties to reconsider monolingual and monocultural policies and practices rooted in language education and offer new pathways for teaching and learning which are informed by the multilingual ecologies of educational contexts. Chumak-Horbatsch (2019, p. 9) defines the multilingual turn in language education as "linguistically appropriate practice", which allows space for social justice informed pedagogies. The approach includes languages and literacies of all students, enables flows between languages in translanguaging practices, and recognizes language learning, in a socio-constructivist frame, as a personal and social process evolving in and through interaction. Based on these premises, it can be claimed that the transition to multilingual pedagogies necessitates three interdependent revisions in the conceptualization of language and language education with direct implications on teacher preparation: recognizing language use as social semiotic practice in diverse local contexts, re(defining) literacy education, and promoting reflection and criticality to achieve more democratized and inclusive teaching and learning environments.

The theoretical framework underpinning the multilingual turn in education draws on the works of many scholars. To cite a few, Meier (2017), in her comprehensive thematic analysis of the multilingual turn in education, draws attention to the deterritorialized nature of language and underlines the need to see it as a "multimodal semiotic system" (p. 135), not separate from other languages, not separate from people who use it and definitely not separate from its sociocultural and political contexts of use. This revised understanding of language can find ground in pedagogy only through a renewed understanding of literacy. The New London Group (1996) proposes 'the multiliteracies approach' which brings to the fore multi-layered meaning making processes in multiple modes (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lee & Norton, 2009). A similar understanding of literacy is also underlined in 'socioliteracies approach' (Johns, 1997) which sees language as 'social semiotic' (Halliday, 1978) and relates multimodal meaning making processes to language use in social contexts with specific reference to social construction of discourses. Literacy education, therefore, requires critical and reflective engagement in exploring how semiotic practices are situated historically, culturally, ideologically, and politically. Language learners and teachers need to become aware that the choice, recognition and representation of languages in diverse multilingual contexts are largely dependent on economic, social, cultural, political and historical factors. In alignment with this view, Yael (2010) identifies multilingual space as "a dynamic social domain that reflects the nexus of ideology and everyday life" (p. 39). These views have direct implications on language education which is responsive to the linguistically diverse ecology of educational contexts. The promotion of the multi/plurilingual turn in applied linguistics without calling into question the socially constructed nature of space and the ideological underpinnings of semiotic practices in social life might remain far behind offering real solutions to problems in achieving inclusive and social-justice informed education (Kubota, 2016; Pennycook, 2010). As Pennycook (2018) comments, from a post-humanist perspective, there is need to find new ways of thinking about the relations between language, individuals, context, cognition and communication:

> Posthumanism may also be understood as an umbrella term for work that is already going on in applied linguistics. There is currently a climate of thought seeking an increased emphasis on space, place, things and their interrelationships. From studies of place and semiotics, linguistic landscapes, geosemiotics, nexus analysis and language ecology to sociocultural theory, sociomaterial approaches to literacy and poststructuralist accounts of repertoire, there has been an expressed desire to expand the semiotic terrain (beyond language more narrowly construed) in relation to material surrounds and space. (p. 8)

Following these threads of arguments, this paper proposes that new directions have to be sought in language teacher education, starting from pre-service teacher education, to help prospective teachers gain attitudes, skills and knowledge required for answering the needs of increasingly multilingual societies by developing strategies for investing in the plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires of their future students. It should here be noted that the distinction between plurilingualism and multilingualism is made on a theoretical basis, especially in the European context, the former focusing on the individual; the linguistic repertoire of language users, and the latter foregrounding social use of language; the existence of multiple language in social contexts. While focusing on the linguistic repertoires of language users, there is also the recognition that language use is always a socially situated practice; as Mohanty (2019) puts it, "[u]se of multiple languages by multilingual individuals, communities and societies is both individual and social; the individual's languages are socially constructed and social practices of languages get reified through use by language users who themselves are socially situated" (p. 18).

Adhering to the view that languages are socially situated, the present study scrutinizes how (pre-service) teacher education might be responsive to the changing linguistic ecologies of schools and societies by proposing linguistic landscape (LL) research as a valuable tool for fostering prospective teachers' awareness of urban multilingualism. LL research, in this sense, values prospective language teachers' situated experience of multilingualism and promotes co-construction of knowledge in dialogue with peers, a process which aligns with transformative, inquiry-based, dialogic learning (Martin & Griffiths, 2014; Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016).

2. Linguistic Landscape and Multilingualism

What LL is and what it includes are complex topics which need further elaboration. In a broad sense, LL entails the use of verbal, visual and all other kinds of multimodal signage such as sounds and movement in public spaces. As a study area LL has initially focused on visible public signage with reference to particular text types such as billboards, road signs, shop names, graffiti, electronic flat panel displays, foam boards but then expanded its borders to include all kinds of material sources in public areas such as menus, pamphlets, brochures, instructional manuals, objects, shopping bags, clothing, drawings and statues. Shohamy & Waksman (2009) take one step further in their conceptualisation of LL and claim that it has to be envisioned as an 'ecological arena', and therefore should "go beyond displayed 'written' texts of signs in multilingual versions and include verbal texts, images, objects, placement in time and space as well as human beings" (p. 314). In this sense, LL is an intersecting point for "interwoven 'discourses'" (p. 313). The understanding of LL limiting itself to semiotic practices in off-line spaces have also been lately challenged by considering the role digital communication plays in everyday life; to name a few, mobile devices are used for navigation, menus are read by using QR codes, tools of Augmented Reality are utilized in museum visits and games blending physical and virtual spaces are enjoyed as daily practices. As Mooney and Evans (2019) discuss, "the division between online and offline linguistic landscape is collapsing" (p. 99).

LL brings along revised understandings of 'space'; it indicates how semiotic sources are used in public spaces and how, in turn, these everyday semiotic practices (re)construct the notion of space. In this sense, LL is an explorative field questioning how power, ideology and symbolic functions of language(s) are enacted to convey "the social meaning of the material placement of signs in the world" (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 110), a concept defined by the authors as 'geosemiotics'. In other words, the placement of a sign in a geographical space conveys social meanings which trigger multiple interpretations on the part of the receivers who try to unravel the intention of the sign-maker, the meaning of the sign and the social construction of space. Shohamy (2012) rightly argues that "LL not only focuses on signs per se, but on how people interact with them" (p. 538). LL is grounded in social semiotics which is theorized as a form of communication, involving a social agent who is involved in the production of a sign in pursuit of meaning creation in a particular environment by using multiple modes and an interpreter who might potentially attend to the sign, find it salient and interpret it in alignment with his/her own interests. Every encounter with a sign implicates a process of re-making the sign as the receiver engages in interpretation and meaning-making (Gualberto & Kress, 2018). This understanding of social semiotics-driven communication enacted in public spaces shows that LL is always "a point of reference for self-positioning" (Garvin, 2010, p. 266).

LL is, therefore, a rich research area exploring social multilingualism in terms of absence, presence, and representation of languages in public spaces and the inhabitants' attitudes to LL of their multilingual spaces. It also enables a close focus on political, economic, historical and cultural motivations in language choice and use and offers a platform to discuss how public space is a negotiated and usually 'contested' arena (Lefebvre, 1991). Furthermore, this arena displays complex networking of languages; challenging the traditional separatist understanding of multilingualism treating languages as discrete units and opening new ways of seeing language practice in social life through a translanguaging lens. These aspects of LL potentially make it a useful pedagogical tool in language teacher education, a topic which will be explored in the following section.

3. Linguistic Landscape Research in Language Teacher Education

LL research supports an inquiry-oriented, reflective approach which can foster (prospective) language teachers' awareness of language as social semiotics and offers affordances for teacher learning by helping them explore the relation between space and identity. McEntee-Atalianis (2019) explains this relation as follows: "[o]ur physical and social relationship to space and place can impact on our sense of belonging as well as our perception and portrayal of community and self-identity" (p. 209). Having first-hand experience of urban multilingualism, pre-service language teachers can reflect on the relation between language and space, gain new insights into needs of their future students and explore possibilities for developing context-sensitive language education practices. The theoretical lens used for this approach derives from the work of Lefebvre (1991) who conceptualizes space in three interrelated dimensions: 'spatial space', the physical space that can be observed and documented; 'conceived space' that is planned and shaped through policies, and the 'lived space' that is actually experienced by the inhabitants. Through LL research prospective language teachers can observe and document how language is actually used in social spaces and question the disparities between multi/translingual practices in everyday life and the underlying power and ideologies which support or restrain the use of certain languages in public spaces. This understanding of language-space relation can also be projected to language learning contexts when classrooms are seen as 'linguistically complex ecosystems' (Creese & Martin, 2006; Chumak-Horbatsch, 2019). As Little (2016) discusses, education systems must support language competency of pupils to help them attain academic success and make them become connected with the wider society especially when their home languages are not the

language of schooling but need to achieve this by helping pupils develop "integrated plurilingual repertoires" (p. 150). This might empower learners to have access to social and economic resources and foster social cohesion while also enabling literacy development in all languages. Nevertheless, in many educational contexts, as Mohanty (2019) rightly argues, policies and practices in education impose "linguistic divides" (p. 183) and "fails to capitalise on the linguistic diversity as pupils' resources" (p. 160). The multilingual 'lived spaces' of many students are ignored or constrained by policy-driven monolingual practices in classes which are designed or 'conceived' by the authorities. Based on this discussion, the 'lived spaces' are directly related to the teachers' professional development as it entails 'self-positioning'; teachers need to be aware of their students' needs, construct their own philosophy of learning and teaching, and develop diversity-informed pedagogical agendas. Inspired by this theoretical frame, the article discusses how LL research was implemented in pre-service English teacher education in a Turkish context to seek answers to the following questions:

1. How does prospective English language teachers' LL research pave the way for critical inquiry on the status of different languages in the multilingual ecology of İstanbul?
2. How does their research-based exploration on LL stimulate new understandings of language as social semiotics?
3. How does the participants' evidence-based joint reflection on LL of İstanbul help them raise questions on power and ideology in language education with reference to language and language education policies?
4. If, and to what extent prospective teachers' critical reflection on social injustice triggers the emergence of new ideas on inclusive and transformative pedagogies?

4. Research Background

The explorative fieldwork on LL was conducted in an applied linguistics course by the participation of 72 senior students of an ELT Department at a state university in İstanbul. In the first phase of the research, the student teachers were asked to observe and document multilingual public signs in İstanbul. There were no specifications offered on the type of the sign to be documented and no instructions given on the choice of district and location (i.e., indoor or outdoor) as the aim was to see how the prospective language teachers as co-researchers capture the multilingual reality of everyday life in the city from their own critical lens. This aligns with a research technique defined by Malinowski (2010) as 'self-positioning', the "defamiliarization of the familiar" (p. 211) to help student teachers "discover media and the very processes of remediation (ibid.)". The second phase involved the student teachers' production of a written reflective work based on the multilingual signs they documented; they were asked to comment on what they find salient in their own data, how verbal and non-verbal elements in the sign interact to open new spaces for possible connotations and what implications their research has on language teaching pedagogy. Following the collection of 72 reflective essays, in the third phase of the research 5 focus group interviews were conducted with 27 students who volunteered to engage in further reflection on the multilingual ecology of İstanbul and to discuss implications of this project on language and language teacher education. There was nearly 7 hours of audio recording (6 hours 54 minutes) collected from focus group interviews. At the interview phase the student teachers were asked to reflect on the changes in the LL of İstanbul as they have observed in time and were also encouraged to comment if and to what extent LL research has contributed to their identities as language users and as future language teaching professionals.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methodologies but in a frame which can be defined as majorly qualitative-centralized (Creswell, 2014). A quantitative perspective was applied only to the visual corpora of collected 300 images to arrive to an understanding of what the participants found most salient in terms of their İstanbul-based LL research. To this purpose, a categorization based on six features was created: 1. language(s) 2. district 3. location (indoors/outdoors) 4. multimodality 5. type 6. domain (functionality). Quantitative data was used complementary to qualitative data in order to capture LL data from the lens of the participants and scrutinize 'absence' and 'presence' in the participants' self-gathered visual corpora.

For the analysis of the qualitative data obtained from participants' reflective written reports and the verbatim transcription of 7-hour audio recorded interview data, a two staged qualitative thematic analysis was conducted with a progressive focus (Dörnyei, 2007). At the initial stage, the student teachers' own multimodal analysis of documented images were analysed in an interpretative frame to identify main and subcategories of topics emerging from their self-reports on the LL of İstanbul. The parts which inform the research questions were identified and coded. The preliminary coding is revised and modified to avoid overlaps in categorisation. The findings attained at this phase were used during interviews to get deeper insight on their perceptions of the LL of İstanbul, their attitudes to urban multilingualism and its pedagogical implications. Interview data was also analysed in a number of cycles to attain emergent categories. Within the limited scope of this study, findings will be discussed under two themes: LL from the reflective lens of prospective English language teachers and implications of LL research on professional identity development.

5.1 Linguistic Landscape of İstanbul from the Lens of Prospective English Language Teachers

Photographic corpora of LL and the prospective teachers' analysis and discussion of their data in reports and during the interviews offered various focus points on multilingual signage in the public spaces of İstanbul. The following section discusses four of these themes which are found to be significant in terms of understanding the prospective language teachers' knowledge, beliefs and attitudes to urban multilingualism in İstanbul context.

5.1.1 Domains of Signage

The student teachers' photographic corpora offered a rich portrayal of the linguistic diversity of İstanbul: the public signs were photographed in more than 24 different districts of the city. One of the most significant findings of this research was the student teachers' tendency to associate LL with public signs located outdoors; 260 pictures from a total of 300 images were taken outdoors. Pavlenko's (2010, p. 134) main categorization of signs as 'official signage', 'commercial signage', and 'private signage' have been very helpful in gaining an understanding of how student teachers in this project envision multilingualism in the public spaces of İstanbul. The analysis of data revealed that they associated urban multilingualism with commercial activities; 286 pictures were related to commercial signage including shop names, shop fronts, billboards, digital running signs. The findings confirmed Ben-Rafael's (2009) view that businesses become a salient aspect of linguistic landscape in today's world where there is the "predominance of a cosmopolitan consumption culture" (p. 41). A major area where inhabitants of a big city experience multilingualism in everyday life is through private signage; i.e. graffiti, tomb stones, personal notes on public spaces. The corpora involved only two; a poster of a missing person on a bus stop and a personal note on the notice board of a dormitory for female

students. The research findings also showed that official signage was extremely limited in the student teachers' corpora. Except for a warning sign in metro and another instructional sign on how to wear life jackets, the rest of the official signs included invitations to fair organizations or information on certain landmarks, all of which were in English and Turkish. The absence of other languages in official signage is an issue related to monolingual policies of the state which allows for the representation of national language and English as the global language. Schools are an important part of LL but there was no photographic data collected from these sites. The other domains which was thoroughly absent in the trainees' work were religious and political domains. Needless to say, İstanbul provides a very rich multilingual context for documenting signage in political sphere such as statues with informative tablets, posters, commemorative signs as well as in religious sphere including signage in mosques, churches, synagogues. The corpora did not include any images from these domains. The study showed that the student teachers had the tendency to associate visible aspects of multilingualism in İstanbul with commercial life. The focus group interviews created further discussion on the topic; for some, İstanbul was not a venue which truly recognizes its multilingualism; that is to say, languages spoken by various communities do not find spaces in the public area and for others, signage in the commercial domain was exceedingly multilingual to the extent that in some cases Turkish disappears from the scene.

LL research enabled student teachers to call into question the boundaries between private/public and official/non-official spaces while also helping them arrive to a deeper understanding of communication as a multimodal meaning making system which requires the receivers' critical-reflective engagement for interpretation. One of the participants' analysis and discussion of her own LL data shows how she creates the bonds between LL and urban multilingualism.



Figure 1: Crossing boundaries between private/public – official/non-official in multilingual spaces

The participant's reflective report on the "Lost Sock" revealed that she found the sign significant for a number of reasons: first of all, the city is carrying its multilingual repertoire to institutional spaces including state dormitories, especially following the rise in the number of international students. Secondly, the sign is a unique example of translanguaging where not only the verbal but also non-verbal modes interact in creative ways to make authentic use of multiple languages and define register. As she discussed, putting the real object conveys multiple meanings; it evokes an element of humour while also questioning the logic of having just one of the pair, writing in capitals and in different colours and also writing on a piece of paper directly torn from a notebook add up to meaning and personalizes

language use. According to the participant, the place where this note is displayed is the most salient aspect of the signage as it redefines 'space'; it exemplifies how private space can pose a challenge to institutional space. She noted that this board is at the entrance and this space is specifically reserved for official announcements by the dormitory management, and all signage is, therefore, in Turkish. Choosing this particular place is significant in terms of showing how multilingual practice of languages are becoming deterritorialized, blurring spaces between the private and the institutional while challenging monolingual practices of the dormitory. She concludes that "message, agency, time, location, size, colour, function" all interact to allow space for the emergence of multiple meanings.

5.1.2 Visibility and Invisibility: Language Representation in the Multilingual Urban Spaces

Student teachers documented linguistically identifiable presence of multiple languages in LL of İstanbul; the corpora yielded rich evidence in the use of English, Arabic, Russian while also displayed, to a limited extent, the use of French, Spanish, Indonesian, Japanese, Ottoman Turkish and even Latin. Changing politics, new layers of migration, changing population of tourists were all cited by the participants as factors influencing the signage in the public spaces. One related argument emerging from data was the dichotomy between 'stability' and 'instability' in terms of the presence of languages in the LL of İstanbul. The presence of English in the commercial space was defined as a relatively 'stable' phenomenon; 234 signs from the whole corpora included English, 24 written signs displayed only English and the rest illustrated the use of English with other languages. Turkish-English signage was commonly observed but corpora also included images where Turkish is not represented; i.e. English-Arabic, English-French, English-Spanish, English-Indonesian, English-Russian. Student teachers discussed the prevalence of English in relation to its recognition as a global language, and outcome of a global strategy for appealing to tourists. They further commented on the status of English as a 'prestigious' language evoking various associations such as being "elite", "modern", "trendy", creating a sense of "quality". According to the participants, the names, slogans, mottos of the multinational companies also add up to the status of English as the language of global commerce.

During focus group interviews, many student teachers shared the view that the notion of 'instability', the dynamic changes and moves in response to the economic, social, and political climate of the time, has found its true expression in the case of Arabic. The status of English in the cityscape was identified as the de facto situation while increasing numbers of signs in Arabic were perceived as a marked phenomenon. The visual corpora involved 102 signage in Arabic, either in a monolingual form or used along with other languages. As expressed by a number of participants, it is the sudden increase in Arabic signage that influenced them to become more attentive to multilingualism and the issue of language choice in the public spaces. As one student teacher explained, LL of İstanbul especially in bazaars are extremely responsive to the economic, political and social climate of the time and space, a phenomenon which can be defined as 'language shift'.



Figure 2: Language choice and positioning of languages

In the illustration above, following the name of the shop, “Capone outfitters”, the information “wholesale and retail” is duplicated in many languages including Arabic, English, Turkish and Russian. One of the student teachers discussed language choice against the backdrop of the political and economic dynamics of time and space; in this frame of analysis, along with language choice, the positioning of the languages needs to be analysed in depth to understand the economic, social and political undercurrents shaping multilingual signage. The top position is given to Arabic whereas Turkish finds space only after English and it is apparent from the positioning that the leading role Russian played for years in some trade centres of İstanbul leaves its place to Arabic. As the student teacher noted, German which was once the mostly commonly used language in commercial areas disappears from the scene due to the sudden decrease in the number of German-speaking visitors.

In their discussion of the data, the student teachers noted that the marked increase in Arabic signage was not merely due to the increase in the number of Arabic-speaking visitors for touristic reasons. According to them, the new layers of migration especially from Syria have definitely transformed LL of İstanbul. The newly settled population uses the multilingual repertoire for cohesion but, as many of the participants noted, some neighbourhoods have become places where Arabic rather than Turkish domineers the scene. Some of the prospective teachers’ selection of signage indexed a phenomenon which can be defined as ‘emerging monolingualism’; in some residential areas with a high population of Arabic-speaking immigrants, the language choice symbolically represents a ‘collective- identity marker’ (Gorter, 2013, p. 197), thus territorializing a specific area and marginalizing the dominant language of the wider population. The study showed that some of the participants were more tolerant towards commerce-driven multilingual signage where Arabic appears along with other languages than monolingual signage created only in Arabic, especially in non-commercial areas. This finding shows that there is deep-rooted view of seeing “language as a marker of nationality” (McEntee-Atalianis, 2019, p. 222).

5.1.3 Translingual and Transcultural Practices in Urban Spaces: Language on the Move

The prospective English language teachers' engagement in LL research sensitized them to an awareness of the dynamic interplay among various languages by means of which both linguistic forms and cultural elements become hybridized, blended and mixed in unique ways. The more conventional understanding of multilingualism addressing to the presence of different language communities in urban sites has left its place to a new understanding of multilingualism as 'language on the move', characterizing the translingual and transcultural phenomenon encountered in everyday social life. The student teachers offered data-led discussion of various linguistic and cultural flows: cultural allusions and symbolic associations attained from names, places, landmarks strategically echoing foreignness or global connectedness such as Shakespeare *Tekel* [tobacco shop] or other kinds of "cultural hybridization", as is found to be the case in the shop front of an Indonesian restaurant which claims to be specialized in Kebab and Fish, the signage including an image of Taj Mahal next to a blue bead, which is traditionally believed to protect a place from an evil eye in Turkish culture and is widely used on the walls of houses, shops and restaurants.

The analysis of the photographic corpora showed that the prospective teachers identified different types of translingual practices: duplicating, complementary multilingualism, blended morphological units, world level sound associations, syntax level blended forms, orthography and scripts borrowed from different languages. In the limited space of this article, each type of translingual forms identified in the corpora will be discussed with a few examples but with the recognition that representations do not lead to generalizable findings especially when working on translingualism as individual and social practice. Duplicating is offering the same information in different languages, which was exemplified in the analysis of the signage "Capone outfitters" in the previous section. Complementary multilingualism was widely used in shop names, that is one part of the name was in one code complemented with another part in a different code such as "*Mor* Shoes" [Purple Shoes], "*Işık* Secret" [Light Secret], "*Reem Kuaför*" [*Reem* Hairdresser]. As concerns the last example, the participant reported that "Reem", is an Arabic name for females meaning young deer, mythically associated with unicorn. During focus group discussions the student teachers reflected on the use of these complementary forms from different angles. As the sign "*Reem Kuaför*" shows, the use of Arabic-Turkish blended forms does not just hold an informative function, it indicates the emergence of a transculture which Malinowski (2010, p. 210) defines as "neo-culture", an outcome of the direct encounter between the existing lingua-cultural sources with the linguistic and cultural sources of the new settlers. Blending linguistic forms was also found to be a common practice in the commercial spaces of İstanbul; "*La Mangal*" [the barbeque], "My *Halı*" [my carpet], "*Pilav's*" [of rice] the Turkish word with the addition of possessive form in English meaning belonging to rice or everything about rice, "*Honey'ci*", '-ci' suffix in Turkish indicating the person who makes or sells the product mentioned, in this case meaning beekeeper or honey seller. The prospective teachers also noted examples of blending through word level sound associations. For instance, the verbal form "muud" [mood] was used in a banner advertising a new music application, implicating that depending on your mood you can download different playlists. The word does not exist in Turkish but the English word "mood" would be spelled as "muud" in Turkish to be read accurately. As one of the participants commented, a very global social-media driven concept 'mood' was adopted to the sound system of Turkish to reach to a target group of young people in İstanbul. The student teachers also brought into focus syntax level blended forms such as the banner "Fit *Ol* Sports Center" [be fit sports centre], "fit" is a word borrowed from English and in this case used with the verb "ol" [to be] in Turkish creating an imperative statement. When commenting on the notion of translingualism (more specifically code-meshing here), student teachers also reported cases where orthography of a different code such as Arabic script being used in Turkish signage. In their view, plays

on orthography create metaphorical, symbolic associations rather than fulfilling an informative function. The participants' attitudes to these blended forms differed; the application of a grammatical item of one code to another code was conceived as a creative act by some of the student teachers who considered these translingual practices as a strategy, making the sign memorable, but there were also counter views claiming that this caused nothing but confusion, deterioration, and deficiency in language use.

Although there were different attitudes to hybridization in language, many of the participants recognized 'space' as a dynamic, ever-changing concept which both shapes and is shaped by the translingual practices in public places. The following example from the corpora, the front image of a *Döner* Restaurant in İstanbul, verifies this renewed understanding of space and illustrates the blurred line between online and offline spaces:



Figure 3: Revisiting the notion of space

As one of the participants explained, "BOA" is a widely used abbreviation for "Best of All", a form extensively used by Turkish-speaking young people in their social media communication but it is the location of this signage which reveals the embedded meaning; the Turkish pronunciation of "BOA" resonates "*boğa*" [bull], a popular meeting point for young people, the landmark taking its name from a bull statue. This example also shows the situated meanings in contexts which are open to multiple interpretations.

The close analysis of the LL helped student teachers discover how various language sources, including the ones which are less accessible by the wider public are being adopted, blended or even twisted to serve the needs and intentions of the producers. For instance, as one of the student teachers discussed, the banner in neon lights for a fitness centre uses Spanish sounding, "Asta la vista" [*Hasta la Vista* -See you later] but the initial letter "H" is dropped because if it were written in the original form, it would be "*Hasta*" [patient or sick person] in Turkish, a connotation which is totally opposite to the idea of fitness, being healthy and strong. According to this participant, the use of Spanish in a location which is largely inhabited by monolingual speakers of Turkish might be just for the rhythmic and playful impact Spanish creates.

5.1.4 Signage as Narrative: Linguistic Landscape Research Fostering Social Cohesion

One emerging result of the research was the prospective language teachers' understanding of some signs as narratives. They claimed that the preference for multilingual signs in the commercial domain is the outcome of a far more complex process than being a strategic device for selling. In their interpretation of some signage, they claimed that signs have stories to tell and meanings are dependent on who tells the story, where and when. In their view, certain signage has to be read as narratives, abridging past and present while opening new paths for future, and therefore requiring diachronic readings. The following LL data paved the way for reflection on how awareness of urban multilingualism in İstanbul can promote tolerance to the settlement of new communities and foster social-cohesion:



Figure 4: Multimodal signs as narratives

The signage for the restaurant includes verbal input in Arabic, Turkish and English. There is limited use of English including the words "food" and "modern". Arabic is foregrounded followed by a complementary text in Turkish; "*Şam'ın Osmanlı Mutfağı*" [Ottoman Kitchen in Damascus], and the name of the shop is "*Tarbuş*" [Fez], a kind of headdress worn by men during Ottoman times. After offering a comprehensive multimodal analysis of the data, the participant reflected on how she actually reads this text; in her view, there is the historical bonds established between different cultures and the sign communicates a narrative, "[w]e are not that different from you. We have cultural bonds established throughout history. Now we can be together again and food can be a way to unite us".

The critical, contextualized and multimodal frame which was used in data analysis helped the prospective teachers invest in language awareness and explore the salient aspects of multilingual practices in urban public spaces with respect to social, cultural, historical and political contexts they resonate. LL research also gave them a chance to explore how translingual practices are embedded in social life. The following section discusses if and to what extent they relate these experiences to their future professional lives.

5.2 Professional Identity Development: Pedagogical Implications of Linguistic Landscape Research

The findings showed that LL research encouraged the prospective language teachers to reconsider their pre-conceived ideas and reflect on their self-positioning with respect to urban multilingualism. The following data exemplifies how this research, for one of the participants, stimulated transition from a 'monolingual mindset' to social awareness:

> I used to be very critical of signage in other languages. I kept on saying it should all be in Turkish. As I was writing my report, I thought OK new people are coming and our environment will eventually change and it is a very normal thing.

The same participant, when reflecting on the pedagogical implications of this process remarked that she would like her future students to develop a similar awareness of multilingual practices and adopt a more flexible and open attitude to the existence and use of other languages along with Turkish.

LL research also stimulated identity-sensitive discussions; as many of the participants commented, the use of English in the commercial spaces of İstanbul was something they have long been aware of and sort of normalized in their minds due to its 'privileged' status as a global language but the rapid increase in Arabic signage in a relatively short space of time was indexed as a factor which made them become more sensitive to the issue of "representation", "language choice" and "asymmetrical distribution of languages" in public spaces. Some of the participants noted that the marked presence of particular languages helped them question the absence of other languages, especially the ones which have established speech communities in the city.

During focus group interviews, many of the participants stated that LL research made them more attentive to the multilingual ecology of their city and they continued to observe and document even after the closure of the project. In their view, LL can be utilized for "contextualized leaning", and hence improve "language awareness"; exploring contacts between different semiotic modes and languages was conceived as an effective pedagogical approach for introducing multiliteracies education. As one of the participants put it, "[w]e can make our learners be aware of mediated images of people, places, things, ideas, values in real life". Moreover, the participants' data driven reflections on translanguaging showed that it addresses a complex meaning making process highlighting "the importance of feeling, experience, history, memory, subjectivity, and culture" (Li Wei, 2018, p. 17).

Based on these findings, it can be claimed that, at least for some of the participants, LL research contributed to the construction of their "personal knowledge" , which Kumaravadivelu (2012) defines as "the ability to critically recognize, reflect, review, and reinvent their own identities, beliefs and values" (p. 32). Nevertheless, the study also showed that further steps have to be taken to help student teachers relate this personal knowledge to 'professional knowledge', that is reconsider established monolingual and monocultural practices in language teaching contexts and (re)hypothesize new approaches which will enable learners to utilize their plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires. The analysis of prospective teachers' reports showed that the photographic corpora did not include any data from schools and there was no comprehensive discussion on how LL research might potentially influence their identities as future practitioners. Nonetheless, a close analysis of interview data revealed that focus group interviews offered a dialogic platform for building "cognition-in-interaction, referring to the ways in which teachers construct knowledge, understandings and propositions in interaction" (Li, 2017). When discussing teaching English in multilingual classes, one of the participants first claimed that the presence of students with different linguistic backgrounds will strengthen the position of English as the contact language and will offer a justifiable motive both to learners and

teachers to implement English-only policy in classroom communication. After engaging in constructive dialogue with other prospective teachers, she revised her conceptualization of multilingual classes:

> Suppose we have three students who are speakers of different languages. At the end of the term students might develop an awareness of three languages. Students always support each other so there will always be language shifts and exchange of their linguistic resources. I mean, they will learn from each other.

Data also revealed counterviews; some of the prospective language teachers shared their concerns on mixed proficiency levels in the same class. These fragmented views generated further discussion on the macro forces influencing language education environments. As one of the participants discussed, there is the policy-driven dilemma of recognizing urban multilingualism as a source of richness but seeing multilingual classes as a problem case. One final related point raised on this issue was the absence of teacher education programs which might guide them to function effectively in multi/plurilingual language education contexts.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to explore new pathways in teacher education which will help pre-service teachers become more responsive to the changes in their environment, utilize their own plurilingual/pluricultural repertoire to solve out the dynamics of language as social practice and translate this understanding to their own future teaching contexts. From this perspective, the study is centralized on LL research in teacher preparation which goes beyond “demolinguistic mapping of variety” (Blommaert, 2013, ix) to include prospective English language teachers’ attitudes to LL of İstanbul. The study also draws on the view that liberatory and dialogic pedagogical approach to language teacher education (Tezgiden-Cakcak, 2018) in Turkey as well as in other contexts can foster teacher cognition which is “socially constructed” (Li, 2017); a process involving “language teachers’ knowing, thinking, conceptualizing, stance-taking and doing through interactions in various settings” (p. 3). Li mainly centralizes her concept of ‘cognition-in-interaction’ in educational contexts. While being inspired by this view, the current study adopts a broader understanding of ‘interaction’ which entails prospective language teachers’ encounters with their own multilingual and multicultural social contexts and their use of data-led explorative fieldwork on LL in developing teacher cognition in interaction with peers.

Exploring urban multilingualism from a critical lens encouraged the prospective teachers to see language as semiotic practice in social contexts and consider ways of implementing multiliteracies education. While being effective in consciousness raising, the findings also revealed that there needs to be further steps taken in helping student teachers revisit prevailing assumptions and beliefs in language education and question deep rooted monolingualization and homogenization policies and practices in school contexts. The analysis of the student teachers’ self-gathered photographic data was mainly centralised on signage in commercial spaces and none of the participants saw schools as components of the language ecology of their urban contexts. There was also limited discussion on how they could possibly move towards socially fair pedagogies which vitalize a non-essentialist understanding of language learning, allowing plurilingual and pluricultural repertoire of learners to be constantly expanded and reshaped. This implies that systemic action has to be taken in teacher education programmes to offer new possibilities and prospects on plurilingual responsive pedagogies, tools, resources and assessment. Drawing attention to the challenges in the operationalization of multilingualism in education, Myklevold (2021) comments that there is need “to mend the gap between multilingualism in research and multilingualism in practice” (p. 77). In a similar vein, King (2016) calls for a transition from "celebrated ‘multilingualism’ to genuine support for linguistic

diversity" (p. 188) in urban landscapes as well as in schools which are parts of this complex language ecology. Attitudinal exploration of LL or other kinds of inquiry-based pedagogical approaches supporting critical reflection on multi/plurilingualism in language teacher education might pave the way for the constitution of more democratic and inclusive learning environments which are responsive to linguistic and cultural diversity. Further LL research in teacher education with a specific focus on school environments might be effective in promoting multi/plurilingual initiatives and resources.

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