Materialization of spatial identity in Slavonia and Baranja's linguistic landscape changes

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Abstract

The linguistic landscape is an essential aspect of determining how language materializes in our surroundings. It is especially important in multilingual communities, as it reflects their identity. The linguistic landscape changes over time due to various factors, such as changes in politics, economics, and the national minority population. Study aims to explore how language manifested in the cultural landscape of Slavonia and Baranja, how it changed over time. Linguistic signs can also reflect the spatial identity of the population in the investigated periods (and its changes). Research compares the linguistic landscape of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries with the contemporary period. We used old postcards as sources for the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and conducted fieldwork for the modern period. The research involved analysing a vast corpus of linguistic signs in the cultural landscape. Research showed that the linguistic landscape, both in the past and present, is visible through various inscriptions on shops, craft stores, state institutions, and street names. Official inscriptions on public institutions in Croatia are written in the Croatian language, and in ethnically diverse areas, these inscriptions are bilingual, but not to the extent allowed by the Croatian Constitution. Homogeneity or heterogeneity of the linguistic landscape users determines its appearance. Croatian is the primary language in most of inscriptions. However, the status and dominance of other languages have changed, depending on the complex political and linguistic past of the region. The study has confirmed that the linguistic landscape reflects both the spatial identity as well as the heterogeneity and multilingualism of the linguistic landscape in urban and rural areas.

Introduction

Throughout history, the language and cultural landscape of a region can be traced through the pictograms found in cave walls and other inscriptions in the vicinity. This trace is reflection of the identity of the population. The materialization of language is an important component of the cultural landscape, and it serves to indicate the spatial identity. The linguistic landscape can be analysed by examining the written language, or language signs, in public spaces, both urban and rural.

The term "linguistic landscape" was first coined by two Canadian linguists, Landry, R. and Bourhis, R.Y. (1997). They defined it not only as the »distinctive marker of the geographical territory inhabited by a given language community« but also as »delineate marker of the territorial limits of the language groups witch harbours relative to others linguistic communities inhabiting adjoining territories«. The definition of a linguistic sign has since been further clarified and now encompasses all linguistic inscriptions in public spaces, including traffic signs, signboards, street signs, store names, advertisements, and more. Backhaus, P. (2007, 66) provides a more detailed description of the linguistic sign as "any part of a written text spatially

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defined by a frame". He suggests that a message can take many forms, ranging from a handwritten note on a small piece of paper to a large billboard advertisement. Examples of messages include signs at the entrance of a store, inscriptions on doormats, and botanical nameplates in a botanical garden.

The study of linguistic landscape started in the early 1970s when a geographer, Masai, Y. conducted the first survey of the linguistic landscape by studying the language used on signs of shops, cafes, and restaurants in Shinjuku, Tokyo (Masai, Y. 1972). He collected data from 3000 samples, focusing on the type of language, script, and the type of activity represented by the inscriptions. Through analysis, Masai found that English language signs were more prevalent in Japan than any other language. He also discovered a correlation between the use of language and activities. For instance, Japanese bars and traditional activities predominantly used Japanese, while Chinese restaurants used Chinese, and cafes and restaurants often opted for English names.

Tulp, S.M. (1978) and Monnier, D. (1989) studied the geographical distribution of languages in multilingual areas. Tulp focused on the language displayed on commercial billboards in Brussels and found that the distribution of languages is determined by geography. In the northern part of the city, where the Flemish population resides, Dutch billboards are predominant, while in the southern part, where the Walloon population lives, both French and Dutch languages are represented. Monnier, on the other hand, examined the linguistic landscape of Montreal and identified a relationship between the linguistic composition of a certain area and the language used on signs. He discovered a clear connection between the written language outside a shop and the spoken language inside. But those early researches had no systematic approach and faced many doubts due to the lack of research methodology (Grbavac, I. 2018).

Landry, R. and Bourhis, R.Y. (1997) recognized the potential of linguistic landscape

research, and the first phase of research began. During this phase, research focused on inscriptions in multilingual urban areas such as the USA, Canada, Israel, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Urban environments, as conglomerates of human activity, are the spaces with the richest linguistic diversity. This period gave birth to a new term – *linguistic cityscape*. The studies mainly questioned language policy and historical heritage and involved listing written signs like road signs, street signs, place inscriptions, inscriptions by places, buildings, institutions, advertisements, etc. These signs were then coded based on different variables that the researcher singled out himself. For example, the language of inscriptions, official regulations related to the use of official languages, comparison of the number of speakers and language signs in space (Spolski, B. and Cooper, R.L. 1991; Ben-Rafael, E. *et al.* 2006; Backhaus, P. 2007).

Landry and Bourhis viewed the linguistic landscape as a *signifier* of the power and status of language communities in a particular territory (Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory – de Saussure, F. 2000), and a provider of data on the informational and symbolic functions of the language used by the community. For a language sign to make sense, it must be placed in the right context. In this case, the linguistic sign is a *signifier* that refers to a *signified,* i.e. company, street, or other entity. Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory suggests that the signifier refers to the signified. However, Charles S. Peirce, an American philosopher is the 1860s, adds a third element – *the interpreter* (reader/listener). The interpreter connects the signifier and the signified with their own interpretation, determining how they will perceive a particular sign (Atkin, A. 2006). It's important to consider not just the content of linguistic signs, but also how we consume them. Research by Ben-Rafael, E. *et al.* (2004, 2006) showed that people are motivated not only by a desire to express their identity through language, but there is also a different motivation, like economic

interests. In other words, the creators of linguistic signs may prioritize attracting potential clients over presenting their own identity characteristics. Additionally, the placement of linguistic signs can be influenced by political relations, particularly in sensitive sociopolitical environments. Apart from simply listing signs and analysing their meanings, some studies have compared the results with the regulations on the use of official languages and the estimated number of speakers of each language in that area (Wenzel, V. 1996; Ben-Rafael, E. 2006). These studies introduced elements of demography and social geography into the research of linguistic landscapes. Some authors explored the spatial distribution of languages in urban areas and correlated the data with the spatial distribution of the population (Ben-Rafael, E. 2008), and some other authors correlated this with the historical geographical development of the researched area (Blommaert, J. 2016).

During the second phase of research, the focus shifts from frequent documentation of language signs to studying the semiotic spectrum. Scollon, R. and Wong Scollon, S. (2003) broaden the scope of research to include multimodal (sound, moving) signs. They believe that signs only acquire meaning when we relate them to others and consider their social and material environment. Therefore, this phase of research often investigates politics (national, regional, local), language policy, sociology, demography, and various economic activities (economy, tourism, trade), and uses two different perspectives of social relations: top-down and bottom-up. The linguistic landscape is viewed as a state (quantifying linguistic signs and explaining how they fit into the space in which they are located) and as a process (planning of linguistic signs). The papers also address the issues of personal, collective, and national identity, language policy, and expand the theoretical and methodological framework. This research also includes studies on the linguistic landscape in Croatia, specifically in Osijek (Gradečak-Erdeljić, T. and Zlomislić, J. 2014), Rijeka (Rončević,

M. 2019; Stolac, D. and Hlavač, J. 2021), Zadar (Oštarić, A. 2020), and Sinj (Bošnjak, J. 2022). By this stage the linguistic landscape had become highly multidisciplinary field, with scientists from various fields of study currently involved. Although geographers were the first to research the linguistic landscape, they are rarely involved in it today.

Among rare geographical researches is the research of marketing landscapes (Maruani, T. and Amit-Cohen, I. 2013) in which authors examined advertisements for new housing estates to understand the significance of landscape values associated with the names of investments. They conducted a comparative semiotic quantitative analysis of the advertisements, focusing on one specific component: the project name. The study provided insights into the relative importance of landscape values and identified the implications and associations that the names of housing developments generally evoked in potential buyers. Hannum, K.L. research (2022) delves deeper into the linguistic landscape, examining how language represents the imaginary landscape in the Spanish region of Galicia. In this region, the national landscape and language have become intertwined. Hannum interviewed Galician educators and found a clear connection between language and the landscape. Booth of them serve as foundational symbols of identity, highlighting how the Galician language embodies the representation of an imaginary landscape.

The linguistic landscape reflects the spatial identity of communities. According to Cifrić, I. and Nikodem, K. (2006, 2007) social identity has its dimensionality which are defined through its four conceptual categories: social, cultural, spatial and family gender. So, every identity has its spatial dimension because every individual and collective action takes place in some space (Vukosav, B. and Fuerst-Bjeliš, B. 2015; Fuerst-Bjeliš, B. 2021). In this context, spatial identity is defined by how people perceive and experience space. When shaping spatial identity (sense of belonging to a place) the naming of specific locations (toponyms) or the use of language signs plays

a crucial role (Mirošević, L. and Vukosav, B. 2010). Border regions, like Slavonia and Baranja, are particularly sensitive because their regional identity is influenced by political and territorial changes that could make them marginalized with negative feelings (Kajić, S. *et al.* 2022). Research in multilingual communities is particularly interesting as it is influenced by various factors such as the share of the national minority population, political and economic changes, and changes over time. The contemporary linguistic landscape is usually explored through fieldwork. Researchers usually investigate the cultural landscape, specifically public space in urban settlements (Miles, M. 2007; Ben-Rafael, E. 2008), as it is believed to have the highest concentration of language signs due to the largest interaction of people and dissemination of cultures. Most of the linguistic landscape research is synchronic, with a diachronic approach being rare (Spolski, B. and Cooper, R.L. 1991; Backhaus, P. 2005; Rončević, M. 2019). Some research touches on it, but few studies explore it in-depth (Gradečak-Erdeljić, T. and Zlomislić, J. 2014). Historical research can be challenging, as sources for past periods are often scarce and vary in availability across different areas. This can make it difficult to conduct research on a wider spatial framework or to make comparisons. However, one valuable and reliable source for diachronic research is old postcards.

Postcards depicting our cities have a history that dates to the 1880s. This means that for over 150 years, people have been capturing photographs of various places and events, whether they were amateurs or professionals. While most of these photos remained in private albums, a few were published on postcards. Postcards were not taken seriously for a long time because they were thought to be objects of transient value with no real purpose, meant only for intimate communication between friends and family. However, their popularity stemmed from their ability to influence their observers with their visual representation. Even today, postcards are still popular, with the only difference being the change in interest groups. The former broad masses have been replaced by a narrower circle of experts and scientists who view postcards as a material visual resource that provides multi-layered data, depending on research interest, for many multidisciplinary studies. Essentially, postcards serve as an archive of individual spaces, interesting views, landscapes, and important events from public life such as current events, royal visits, portraits, exhibitions, and more, all captured in their pictorial parts (Bogavčić, I. 2015).

Geography has shown interest in old postcards as a valuable visual source for numerous geographical studies. Among the most popular are cultural, historical, and linguistic geography. While postcards with landscapes were mainly produced as tourist souvenirs, their communicative aspect provides geographers with insights into the layout of urban and rural spaces, particularly cultural objects, and the way language has evolved through time in space (Zupanc, I. 2010).

The purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between language and culture in Slavonia and Baranja regions. The study aimed to determine how language was manifested in the cultural landscape over time and how it contributed to the spatial identity. To accomplish this, the study posed several research questions such as: How visible is the linguistic landscape in the cultural landscape? Who plans and designs the linguistic landscape? Who benefits from it, and how does it contribute to the spatial identity of the population? To determine changes in the linguistic landscape, the study examined the linguistic landscape during two reference time periods - the beginning of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. This study contributes to academic and practical, societal domains. Academically, it contributes to the field of geography by expanding the knowledge base on linguistic landscape, an area that is insufficiently explored in geography. The analysis of linguistic landscape, both historically and in the present, offers insights into numerous unanswered questions that geographers

encounter. This type of research can unveil the educational, economic, ethnic, and linguistic structure of a population, provide indications of migration (as a result of population migration, many cities are becoming more multilingual) and population development, aid in analysing the spatial distribution of the population, and shed light on various other demographic characteristics of a given area. By investigating diverse characteristics of signs, this study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of language and spatial identity within the Slavonia and Baranja regions. From a practical view, the findings of this research can foster language policy development and intercultural understanding in researched spaces. It is important to observe state institutions approach to managing multilingualism in their region. Understanding the prevalence and usage of different languages can guide local authorities to enable inclusive and multilingual environments and intercultural dialogue, in order of the linguistic needs of local population.

Based on the questions presented, the following hypotheses are suggested: The national government plans the linguistic landscape, and lower levels of government implement these decisions. The linguistic landscape is highly visible in the cultural landscape and is primarily designed for the ethnic majority population. The linguistic landscape reflects the spatial and ethnic identity of the population.

Research methodology

The term "linguistic landscape" in this study refers to all the visible linguistic signs present in a cultural landscape, such as the public spaces of a city or geographical area. The basic unit of analysis in this research is a linguistic sign – any part of a written text within a spatially defined frame, regardless of its size. The most common way in which language signs were observed in this research was through road signs, advertising signs, place names, signboards (and other inscrip-

tions on buildings), toponyms, and other inscriptions on postcards, among others.

The study utilized two research instruments: a camera (digital camera and mobile phone) for collecting the data and the researcher for capturing photographs of the signs within the linguistic landscape contents and later for analysing the findings. The data source in this study were the researcher's photographs of the signs (post cards and contemporary linguistic landscape signs). Samples from the older period were taken from a corpus of archival material (from private and state sources) that has been published in Širić, D. (2002) and Ivanković, G.M. (2007). Corpus is selected with an attempt to select equally random representative samples from both urban and rural areas of Slavonia and Baranja. The urban area represented in the research refers to Belišće, Daruvar, Kutjevo, Lipik, Našice, Nova Gradiška, Osijek, Pleternica, Slavonski Brod and Vinkovci, and the rural area to Aljmaš, Čepin, Darda, Kopačevo, Rajić, Vrpolje and Zmajevac. Samples were taken only from the front of the postcard. 134 postcards were collected from which 275 language signs were extracted. For the contemporary period, random representative samples were collected through field research and photographed the contemporary linguistic landscape in Daruvar (western Slavonia), Kneževi Vinogradi, and Bilje (Baranja). This area was chosen for research because it was subject to various political changes and demographic trends in the past. Slavonia and Baranja are historical-geographical regions that were administratively divided between Croatia and Hungary, and Slavonia was also under the administration of Austria (Military Frontier until its disestablishment in 1873). Noble families (like Janković in Daruvar) and military government in Military Frontier immigrated craftsmen from other parts of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (among them the Czech; still present in this area), and the Hungarians still present in Baranja as a national minority. Such a multilingual environment is very interesting for research into

the linguistic landscape. The only location that appeared in both research periods was the city of Daruvar. Postcards from Kneževi Vinogradi and Bilje were not available for analysis. Due to the limited number of postcards from examined era, the research expanded to include a larger number of locations across Slavonia and Baranja. As both regions shared similar historical and political circumstances, there was no reason to prevent such a generalization in postcard examination. Photographs for the contemporary period were taken in the central part of the settlement (500 m long main street near central square) as this is area that has the highest level of liveliness. A total of 139 photographs with 192 language signs were collected from this period. The goal was to collect photos of the signs located in a place where they are easily visible to passers-by (on the walls, streets). Field work was conducted (from February to March 2023), to research the current state of the linguistic landscape, and in November of the same year for old postcards.

After gathering the data, the photos of the signs that were taken were sorted based on the sites they contained, allowing a more thorough categorization and analysis at a later stage. Once the necessary data-gathering was completed, the data were ready for analysis and interpretation. A cross-sectional research method was used (diachronic approach) to examine linguistic signs from two different time periods: the beginning of the 20th century (the golden age of postcards) and the contemporary period.

The research involved using the method of analysing linguistic signs. Data on linguistic material was extracted from each sign and coded through 10 variables (*Table 1*), which were selected based on the linguistic and semiotic characteristics of the sign. These variables were designed to provide answers to the research questions (*Table 2*). Once all the data was coded, a quantitative analysis was carried out using the in-depth clustering method to group similar data and a semantic analysis of the results obtained.

Results

How visible is the linguistic landscape in the cultural landscape?

Based on the postcards, it can be concluded that linguistic signs play a significant role in the cultural landscape. However, the presence of artificially added linguistic content by the publisher can disrupt the reading experience. Excluding the artificially added content, it can be observed that there were slightly fewer linguistic signs during the first comparative period than there are today. In the past, monolingual signs accounted for 66.4 percent, while multilingual signs accounted for 33.6 percent. Croatian is the most dominant language (thus, largely autonomous), appearing either on its own or as a primary language in a multilingual combination in 90 percent of the samples. Even though Croatia was under the influence of Germanization and Hungarianization

Table 1. Variables with which language signs are coded

Ordinal number	Variables	Ordinal number	Variables
1	Serial number of the sign	6	Language of the sign
2	Types of signs (contemporary period) / specificity of the scene (postcard)	7	Number of languages on the sign
3	Types of representation	8	Order of language on the sign
4	Types of discourse	9	Whether there is language mixing
5	Sign placement source	10	Presence of features of collective spatial identity

Source: Compiled by the author.

Table 2. Relationship between research questions and analytical categories (in this research)

Research questions	Variable
How visible is the linguistic landscape in the cultural landscape?	Serial number of the signs (1), Language of the sign (6), Number of languages on the sign (7)
What are the characteristics of the linguistic landscape?	Types of signs (contemporary period) /specificity of the scene (postcard) (2), Types of representation (3), Types of discourse (4)
Who plans the linguistic landscape?	Sign placement source (5)
Who is the linguistic landscape intended for?	Number of languages on the sign (7), Order of language on the sign (8), Whether there is language mixing (9)
How is spatial identity manifested?	Language of the sign (6), Whether there is language mixing (9), Presence of features of collective spatial identity (10)

Source: Compiled by the author.

during the golden era of the postcard, the proportion of linguistic signs found in Hungarian and German is unexpectedly low. Monolingual German signs accounted for only 9 percent, while Hungarian signs accounted for 5.6 percent. On bilingual and multilingual signs, the Croatian language is once again dominant, appearing as the first language in 95.4 percent of the samples. The most common combinations were Croatian-German (82.2%), Croatian-Hungarian (8.8%), Croatian-French (2.2%), and Croatian-German-Hungarian (2.2%). As a subordinate language, Croatian appeared in 4.4 percent of the samples, with German-Croatian (2.2%), and Serbian-Croatian (2.2%) being the most common combinations. It was observed that there were no bilingual or multilingual signs found without the Croatian language. After 1918, the German language was not used in the sampled postcards, and Hungarian was only present on two language signs in the research sample. Interestingly, on one of them (a Vinkovci postcard from 1926), in addition to the Croatian language, there was also a Hungarian language sign which the publisher had crossed out due to the changed political situation, but not skilfully enough, so it can still be read.

Upon analysing the contemporary linguistic landscape, it appears that the Croatian language still maintains its dominant posi-

tion and autonomy. In fact, a vast majority of monolingual signs (81.5% in Baranja, and 47.4% in Daruvar) are in the Croatian language. The Croatian language also appears as the primary language in 58.8 percent of multilingual inscriptions in Baranja, and 66.6 percent in Daruvar. In multilingual inscriptions, the Croatian language is most combined with English (57.5% in Daruvar). Other languages spoken by national minorities, who have the right to bilingualism in the area, such as Czech in Daruvar, and Hungarian in the municipalities of Kneževi Vinogradi (Hercegszőlős in Hungarian), and Bilje (Bellye in Hungarian), are less commonly used in combination with the Croatian language. In Daruvar, Czech appears as the only language on the language sign in just 3.8 percent of cases, and as the primary language in multilingual combinations in 21.2 percent of cases. The Hungarian language in Baranja appears as an independent language in 3.5 percent of combinations and as a primary language in 17.6 percent of language combinations (as a second language in 35.3% of multilingual combinations).

Studies on the linguistic content of postcards have revealed the presence of multilingualism using two or more language signs in the same space. This often involves du-

plicating the same language sign in several languages. The occurrence of such duplications suggests that social multilingualism is at play, alongside individual monolingualism. Research into the linguistic landscape of modern times has shown that multilingualism is to some extent hidden in the cultural landscape. This is because different versions of language signs appear on separate supports, making the multilingual message less immediately visible to readers. This type of hidden multilingualism takes on partial linguistic content when a linguistic sign is written in one language and translated into at least one other language. It also manifests as complementary linguistic content when linguistic signs are present in multiple languages, and each sign complements the others. The ability of the population to read complementary language signs indicates the presence of many multilingual individuals (polyglots) *(Photo 1).*

What are the characteristics of the linguistic landscape?

Postcards can be categorized into two types, topographical postcards that show settlements and geographical areas, and thematic postcards that have a specific theme such as congratulations or propaganda (advertisements) (Bogavčić, I. 2015). Postcards can be categorized into different types based on their specific features such as art nouveau, composite, potpourri, and photo-postcards (Houška, M. 2000). However, for this research, the decorations, or the size of the displayed area on the postcard were not important so they aren't considered. The topographical postcards can be further divided into views, narrow motifs like streets and squares, and those that show isolated objects or a group of objects like churches, schools, stations, factories, hotels, hospitals, etc. In the first comparative period, the most frequently depicted scenes with linguistic content were panoramas and isolated objects, each with around 45 percent representation.

Fewer postcards depicted narrower motifs like streets and squares, which only accounted for 5.2 percent, and thematic-propaganda postcards were even lesser at only 3 percent. Further analysis revealed that they mostly depicted the structure of the settlement (58.2%), followed by individual institutions (12%), companies (10.4%), and private objects like houses and villas (7.5%). The least represented categories were sacral (5.2%) and tourist facilities (3.7%).

In the modern period, advertising ads and inscriptions (44.2%) and road signs (26%) were the most represented language signs. Other types of language signs included nameplates (15.1%), posters (6.7%), street signs (5.2%), and commemorative plaques
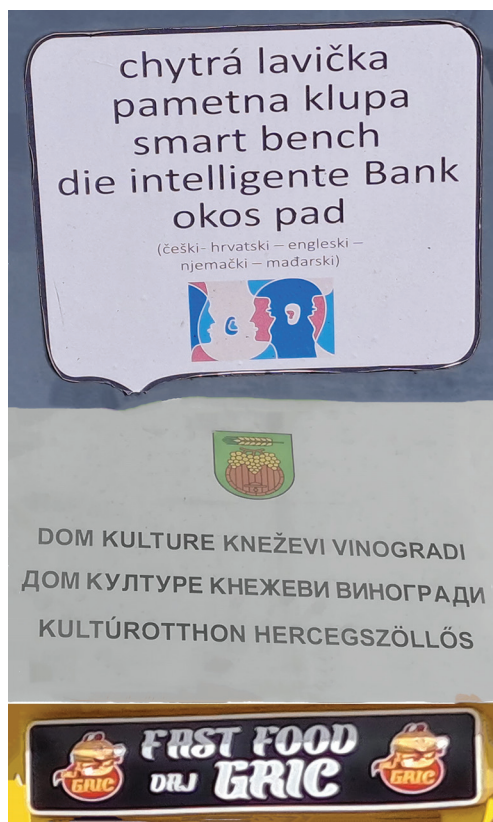

Photo 1. Various examples of language mixing in field examination

(1.1%). In that period, linguistic signs mostly represented individual companies and institutions (58.3%), and there was a significant decrease in linguistic signs representing touristic (11.4%), sacred (7.8%), cultural (1.5%), sports (1.1%), and other facilities (19.8%).

Linguistic signs can be broadly classified into three types based on the nature of discourse they convey – city-regulatory (and infrastructural), commercial, and transgressive. City-regulatory signs are usually placed by official bodies and include traffic signs, public announcements, and warnings. Commercial signs are placed by private individuals such as businessmen and traders and include signs on shops and business advertisements. Transgressive signs are placed by individuals and typically express social protest like graffiti, which violates the semiotics of place. Postcards serve as an excellent source of research to study the specificities of linguistic signs. In case of postcards at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, it was discovered that postcard publishers were the primary source of city-regulatory linguistic signs, and not official state bodies. Out of all the language signs found, most of them were official signs (74.6%), followed by commercial signs (20.2%) and mixed city-regulatory and commercial signs (5.2%). No transgressive signs were found. In the present linguistic landscape, local or state authorities are responsible for installing city-regulatory signs, which constitute the majority (56.4% in Daruvar, and 69.3% in Baranja). Commercial signs make up 41 percent in Daruvar, and 28 percent in Baranja, while transgressive inscriptions comprise 2.6–2.7 percent and are not commonly found.

Who plans the linguistic landscape?

From a top-down perspective, an analysis of historical samples from the turn of the 19th to the 20th century showed that only 5.2 percent of language signs on postcards represented government buildings or street names with official inscriptions. This means that the gov-ernment had minimal influence on the linguistic landscape found on postcards (bottom-up). Instead, businessmen, shop owners, and postcard publishers had a greater impact on the language content. The language used on postcards was not prescribed by any government decision, but rather depended on the publisher's decision and the needs of the market. The languages used on postcards in our research (Croatian, German, and Hungarian) are a true reflection of the ethnic composition of the population in general, and specifically in Slavonia and Baranja where our research was conducted. The number of multilingual inscriptions on postcards is not surprising, as this was a potential market interested in postcards. It was also not uncommon for people who sent or published the postcards to cross out unwanted languages to save circulation, giving primacy to the language more acceptable to them at the time.

Upon analysing the linguistic landscape in the modern era, it was discovered that the situation is opposite of what was expected. While the government (top-down) sets a major part of the linguistic landscape (58.3%) *(Photo 2)*, business entities (bottom-up) also significantly contribute to the setting of language signs and play a passive yet significant role in planning and creating the linguistic landscape (41.6%). Private individuals (also bottom-up) have a minimal impact on the linguistic landscape with transgressive inscriptions (0.1%).

Who is the linguistic landscape intended for?

The linguistic landscape is created for its users. Depending on the ethnic diversity of its users, it can be either homogeneous or heterogeneous. The dominance and autonomy of the Croatian language is noticeable in both the researched periods. However, the presence of other languages in the linguistic landscape has changed depending on the socio-political context. The English language has mostly replaced the former German and Hungarian languages today. The only exceptions are bilingual environments, which

Photo 2. The modern language signs set by authorities (top-down)

have the constitutionally guaranteed right to bilingualism due to the ethnic composition of the population. Under the Croatian Constitution, national minorities have the right to bilingualism. However, it is observed that they do not fully utilize this right. For instance, Czechs are entitled to bilingualism in 9 areas, but they only practice it in two. Similarly, Hungarians have the right to bilingualism in 38 areas, but they use it only in 8, and Serbs have the option in 21 areas, but they use it in only 7 (The Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities). To determine the status of the linguistic landscape in ethnically specific areas, such as Daruvar (Czechs), and the municipalities of Kneževi Vinogradi and Bilje (Hungarians), were selected for research in the modern period. In any other part of Croatia (considering the ethnic homogeneity of the population), the linguistic heterogeneity would be even smaller and would be reduced mainly

to the dominance of Croatian and the subordinated position of the English language. The process of globalization greatly affects changes in today's linguistic landscape. The mostly monolingual signs in some tourist areas have long since given way to multilingual ones. However, the type of area being investigated should also be considered. Urban areas, due to their multicultural nature, are more susceptible to this process, while rural areas are usually more homogeneous in terms of linguistic signs and are dominated by the Croatian language.

In areas with greater ethnic diversity, especially where the Constitution guarantees multilingualism, it is expected that the national minority language will have a greater presence. In Daruvar, the Czech language is predominantly present in the České beseda building complex, which is almost the only public space where the language is used *(Photo 3)*. Language is an important symbol

Photo 3. Linguistic signs in the building complex of the České beseda

of identity, and it is not surprising that a national minority will defend its identity by preserving its language if it feels threatened. If it does not feel threatened, it may have already assimilated or be on the path to assimilation. This appears to be happening with the Czech language and the Czech community in Daruvar. The situation with the Hungarian language in the Baranja municipalities is different because communal signs and notices are written in both Croatian and Hungarian, and Hungarian also appears on signboards and advertisements.

How is spatial identity manifested?

Our personal identity is not fixed at birth but is constantly being built throughout our life. While some elements of our identity such as our name and ethnicity are determined at birth, other aspects such as our spatial and linguistic identity can change over time. Language is an important aspect of our identity, which can be shaped by social factors. For instance, we may choose to modify the way we speak to fit into a particular social group or to appear more educated. We may also choose to speak in a particular dialect or standard literary language depending on the context. Ultimately, language serves as a powerful symbol of our representation.

Changes in socio-historical context led to changes in the linguistic landscape and, consequently, to changes in our identity (changes in countries, official languages, and spatial identity). In the early 20th century, language mixing was rare, occurring in only 7.5 percent of samples, such as the German-Croatian combination found in Chavrakova ulica. Multilingualism was common, but usually manifested as duplication, in which one language sign was translated into several languages, as seen in examples like Osijek,

Eszék, Essek: Sudbena palača, Justizpalais, or Lipik (Croatian), Cursale (German); Gyógytermek (Hungarian), Grandes salles et théâtre (French) *(Photo 4)*. Changes in the linguistic landscape also allowed us to follow the development of some toponyms (Osiek, Essek, Eszék, Essegg, Osijek), or patronymics (Pejachevich, Pejacsevich, Pejačević; Chavrak, Čavrak). In the modern period, language mixing is rare, occurring in only 2.5 percent of samples in Daruvar and 0.8 percent of samples in Baranja. When it does occur, it is complementary, such as in combinations like Juvelir (Bosnian) Veritas (Latin), or Fast food (English) Daj gric (Croatian).

Collective identity characteristics were present in Slavonia and Baranja at the beginning of the 20th century were most visible in specific elements of the cultural landscape – ergonyms and toponyms. These linguistic signs include horonyms (Slavonia), hydronyms (Bosut, Sava, Šumetlica), ojkonyms (Daruvar, Osijek, Vinkovci, Aljmaš, Slavonski Brod), and hodonyms (anthropohodonyms such as Čavrakova ulica, Mollinaryevo šetalište, Ulica Franje Josipa, Ulica Franje Ferdinanda, Jelačićeva trga, endonymous ethnonyms such as Deutsche Gasse, endonymous anthropohodons such as Ferencz József-út, Franz-Josef Platz). In this sense, full names are a symbol of the identity of a mostly national (less often regional) community. Ergonomics appear in the space in various forms such as Brodska imovna općina, Salon mode Mijo Rajal i sin (Michael Rajal and Son), Villa Dr. Breitwieser, Hotel and Restaurant Lifkay, kasarna vojvode Mišića, vojarna Trenk, pivana Alex Boskowitz.

Similar identities are also found in modern linguistic content (in 21.8% of samples in Daruvar, and 12.3% of samples in Baranja), and in space, they are manifested in the same forms as on postcards – horonyms (Slavonia, Baranja), hydronyms (Drava,

Photo 4. Postcard of Lipik in several languages

Danube, Toplica), ojkonyms (Bilje, Tikveš, Kneževi Vinogradi, Daruvar), and hodonyms (anthropohodonims such as ulice Lajoša Košuta, Svetozara Miletića, kralja Zvonimira, Stjepana Radića, Republike Hrvatske, dvorac Eugena Savojskoga) *(Photo 5)*. Full names serve as symbols of the identity of national or regional communities. In the modern space, ergonyms can take the form of various establishments such as smještaj Jurini Dvori, pekarnica Edi, cvjećarnica Lana, Ribarnica Čizli, kickboxing klub Princ Eugen Savojski (in Baranja), lječilišni park Julijev park, dvorac grofa Antuna Jankovića, Češka škola Ferdy Mravence, Savez Čeha Jednota (in Daruvar). These full names are a representation of the local or regional community's identity. In today's linguistic landscape, not only are important people from the past recorded, but there are also many ergonyms where full names related to the present era are mentioned. Full names play a significant role in contributing to the multilingual character of the community's spatial identity.
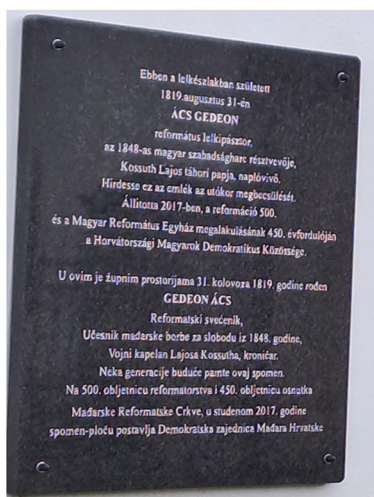

Photo 5. Examples of language signs that show characteristics of collective identity. (Photos taken by the author.)

Discussion

This research can be linked to the findings of REH, M. (2004), who studied visible and hidden multilingualism in the Ugandan town of Lira. The primary difference between Lira and Slavonia and Baranja is their official language. English is the official language in Lira, but most of the population speaks Luo. In contrast, Croatian is the official language in Slavonia and Baranja, but most of the population also speaks English. Despite these variations, both surveys showed similar results – most of the population is bilingual. While government institutions and non-governmental organizations use the official language in both regions, the unofficial language is used in all areas of economic activity in Slavonia and Baranja, unlike Lira, where it is primarily used among the agricultural population. As a result, it can be inferred that the social and linguistic dichotomy is not as pronounced in this research as it is in Lira.

It's reasonable to wonder how the English language fits into our contemporary identity. Is it only used to create a fashionable, cosmopolitan image? The dichotomy between the English and Croatian languages has likely affected the entire country. In today's globalized world, English is considered a *lingua franca*. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (CRYSTAL, D. and POTTER, S. 2024), English is the official language of almost 60 countries, is the mother tongue of more than 350 million people and is one of the most

widely spoken languages in the world (about 1.5 billion speakers). It is also the most learned language. Most scientists publish their works in English today, and most international conferences are held in English or in multilingual combinations that include English. However, the English language has not only spread in science (Fuerst-Bjeliš, B. 2021). Thanks to the increasing cultural globalization in the world, including in Croatia, the influence of the English language is growing stronger in all aspects of our lives, including the linguistic landscape. More English linguistic signs are often found in marketing discourse and on graffiti (House of LoVra, Aurora beauty, Kickboxing club Princ Eugen), but not to the expected extent. Therefore, this research confirms the findings presented by Stolac, D. and Hlavač, J. (2021) in their research on Rijeka's linguistic landscape.

That research analysed the representation of English language signs in the Rijeka area and identified several new marketing trends. The study found that some advertisements use English abbreviations such as "OMG" (meaning "Oh, my God!") in Croatian language signs, while in other cases, English letters are used to write Croatian names (JSL – Je si li?), although they are not commonly used in the Croatian language. Additionally, some English words are used to avoid Croatian diacritical marks (Beertija → Birtija; Boonker → Bunker; Kolach → Kolač; Chevap → Ćevap). Although the use of English in the Slavonia and Baranja regions has not yet become widespread, some trends towards its use are visible. For example, certain businesses such as "Caffe bar PUBLIC" (coffee bar near cinema) use English in their names. Perhaps the linguistic landscape of Osijek would be like Rijeka (regional centres of equal size), but this requires further investigation. Study focused on these areas because of their minority ethnic composition and their languages. However, the study found that these languages are unlikely to be replaced by English soon.

The use of English words in the Croatian language has been criticized Opačić, N. (2007, 24) who pointed out that the world is threatened with the loss of autochtonousness (and diversity!) and that a world of one product is being created in which "local cultures and identities are eradicated and replaced". Language is an important part of spatial identity, and the decline in awareness of its importance and the introduction of English words may lead to a modification of identity (this research did not determine any modification). Although the use of English has not yet become widespread enough to require revitalization of the Croatian language, the study suggests that the Czech language in Daruvar and Hungarian in Baranja may need revitalization, as the ratio of linguistic signs in these languages is approximately equal to that of English.

The Croatian language has been a matter of concern during significant historical and political events in the past. For instance, in the 1990s, Croatia gained independence. Another example is when it joined the European Union in 2013. However, taking care of one's language should not be a sporadic effort (Vrcić-Mataija, S. and Grahovac-Pražić, V. 2006) as it contributes to preserving our cultural and spatial identity. While it is not necessary to avoid English idioms in the linguistic landscape entirely, we should sort them out using scientific principles (Štimac, V. 2003).

Conclusions

In the modern period, official inscriptions on public institutions in Croatia are written in the Croatian language and the Latin script. In ethnically diverse areas, these inscriptions are bilingual, but not to the extent allowed by the Croatian Constitution. Surprisingly, there are more unofficial inscriptions in Croatian standard language than expected. Croatian is the primary language in most of inscriptions. The Companies Act requires store names to be in Croatian, but the situation is different and many store names are multilingual, although their meaning usually corresponds to what is offered within. In the early 20th century, the planning of the linguistic land-

scape was left to individuals, businessmen, and merchants, but their influence today is not as significant as it was then. While they still play a role in shaping the linguistic landscape, other factors are more influential in the modern period.

The linguistic landscape, both in the past and present, is visible through various inscriptions on shops, craft stores, state institutions, and street names. The most common type of linguistic landscape refers to specific isolated objects such as companies and institutions. In the early 20th century, this type of landscape represented 45.5 percent of all samples, while in the contemporary period, it represents 58.3 percent. It is noteworthy that propaganda language content was the least common in the past (3%), while today it accounts for the majority (44.2%). The source of the signs that convey urban-regulatory discourse differs between the past and contemporary periods, which is closely related to the dynamics of linguistic landscape planning. Commercial discourse has always been present in the space in a significant proportion, whereas transgressive discourse rarely appears.

The homogeneity or heterogeneity of the linguistic landscape users determines its appearance. The dominance and autonomy of the Croatian language are visible in both researched periods, given that Croats are the most numerous ethnic group in the area. However, the status and dominance of other languages have changed, depending on the complex political and linguistic past of the region. Migration has significantly contributed to the linguistic richness of the environment, which is further fueled by the increasingly strong process of globalization in this modern period.

The study has confirmed that the linguistic landscape reflects the spatial and ethnic identity of the population. The study has confirmed that the linguistic landscape reflects both the spatial identity as well as the heterogeneity and multilingualism of the linguistic landscape in urban and rural areas. Language communication can only be fully understood when a spatial context is considered. Landry, R. and Bourhis, R.Y. (1997) identified two functions in the linguistic landscape: informative and symbolic. In this study, the informative function was observed through horonyms, hydronyms, and ojkonyms, which remained constant in both time periods analysed. The symbolic function, on the other hand, was found to be changeable, and was expressed through ergonyms and hodonyms. The status of the Croatian language was not only reflected in its appearance but also in the symbolic meaning that language signs conveyed to their users. The naming of businesses, streets, and squares after people and events from the past is particularly significant because it indicates the presence (and meaning) of features of collective spatial identity, as well as its changes over time.

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