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Linguistic Landscape and Language Planning

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Abstract: *Linguistic landscape, henceforth LL, is made up of public and private signs i.e.; the language(s) displayed in public space. It has recently been researched by scholars from different disciplines concerned with issues of languages in contact phenomenon which is rather a case of written languages in contact. Two factors intervene in its development. The first factor falls within the official language agencies responsible of language use and regulations while the second includes individuals, and private institutions using language(s) purposefully for their own objectives escaping the control of the authorities and thus taking the freedom of rule violation as a creative way of communication. As a field of language research it mostly deals with the sociology of language, and more particularly, language policy and planning, but it is also considered as a resource for language learning and as a place of contested identities and language conflicts and hidden language agendas. Thus, necessity rises to consider LL not only as a strategy for language management but also as the key place where it must take place. It is for these very reasons that the main objective of the present article focusses on exploring LL as a strategy of language planning and management because the bottom-up individual and private agencies constitute the active agents in issues of language use, maintenance, and promotion.*
Key words: linguistic landscape, public space, strategy, hidden agenda language policy, planning, management.
Résumé : *Le paysage linguistique est constitué de signes publics et privés c'est-à-dire ; les langues affichées dans l'espace public. C'est un domaine récemment exploité par des chercheurs de différentes disciplines concernées par les questions de phénomène de langues en contact qui est plutôt un cas de langues écrites en contact. Deux facteurs interviennent dans son développement. Le premier facteur relève des agences de langues officielles responsables de l'utilisation et de la réglementation des langues, tandis que le second comprend les individus et les institutions privées utilisant la ou les langues pour leurs propres objectifs échappant ainsi au contrôle des autorités et prenant ainsi la liberté de violation des normes de l'utilisation d'une langue comme mode de communication créatif et attractif. En tant que domaine de recherche linguistique, il traite principalement de la sociologie du langage, et plus particulièrement de la politique et de la planification linguistiques, mais il est également considéré comme une ressource pour l'apprentissage des langues, un espace d'identités contestées, un espace affichant les langues en conflits, et un espace d'agendas linguistiques. Ainsi, la nécessité s'impose de considérer le paysage linguistique non seulement comme une stratégie de gestion des langues mais aussi comme le lieu clé du management linguistique. C'est pour ces mêmes raisons que l'objectif principal du présent article considère l'exploitation du paysage linguistique en tant que stratégie de planification et de gestion des langues, car les agences individuelles et privées constituent les agents actifs en matière d'utilisation, de maintien et de promotion des langues.*
Mots clés : *Paysage linguistique, espace public, stratégie, politique linguistique, planification, management.*

1. Introduction

Scholars versed in the study of linguistic landscape, henceforth LL, approached the issue from different optical angles. The earliest study is traced back to Barthes's 1985 approach focusing on a semiotic approach, but recent developments in the field focus on applied linguistics or sociolinguistics optical angles, including language policy perspectives. This article attempts to fix its objective on the relationship and the impact of LL and language planning with special emphasis on LL as a language management strategy regarding language planning policy.

2. About Linguistic Landscape

In general, LL is about language display in public space. As regards Landry and Bourhis (1997:25), considering that language planners have paid little attention to the notion of LL in their theoretical and practical activities related to corpus and status language planning namely (Cobarrubias and Fisman , 1983; Cooper, 1989; Eastman, 1983; Tollefson , 1991) in their article entitled 'Linguistic Landscape and Ethnolinguistic Vitality: An Empirical Study' , they offer a broad notion of LL stating that it corresponds to "the language of public road signs , advertising billboards, street names , place names, commercial shop signs , and public signs on government buildings to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region or urban agglomeration." In his turn, Gorter (2006:1) considers LL to constitute "language which is all around us in textual form as it is displayed on shops windows, commercial signs, posters, official notices, traffic signs, etc." Gorter (op cit) further considers LL" synonymous with or at least related to concepts such as linguistic market, linguistic mosaic, ecology of languages, and diversity of languages or linguistic situation." For Extra, G (2010:107), LL has as its focus the public domains. In the most literal sense, that is in terms of the visibility and distribution of language. Regarding function, Spolsky and Cooper (1991) argue that LL has both an informational marker and a symbolic one as it communicates the relative power and status of linguistic communities in a given territory.

3. Recent Approach to Linguistic Landscape

This recent dynamic approach to LL seeks to infer about the different overt and covert reasons lurking behind the practice of language use in the public space in different but interrelated disciplines such as sociology, education, economics, politics and purely linguistic issues. This is because language is not used in public space at random; it is rather goal oriented as the messages it delivers are about society, people, the economy, policy, and identity. As far as language promotion, maintenance, and dynamicity are concerned, LL rises as an important environment and a key domain that either reinforces and complements a language policy or opposes any effort so directed.

It is within this idea that we see LL as a language management strategy tightly related to language planning policy in short, mid and long term processes and which

in case of neglect or using the economic approach 'allow to do' policy will operate in an anticlockwise effects collapsing all efforts of language protection and promotion. The management of LL must be geared to the objectives of language planning policy and management.

4. About Management

In fact, Management theory has come a long way since the days of Fredrick W. Taylor, often referred to as the father of Scientific Management. However, the most enduring orientation in management theory is founded on the philosophical insights of Henri Fayol, who is commonly referred to as the father of modern management theory (in Stewart and Dunkerly 1980:99). The management process school traces its ancestry to Henri Fayol, and its primary approach is to specify the management functions such as planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. The major tenet of the process school is that the analysis of management along functional lines allows the construction of a framework into which all new management concepts can be placed. Referring to Webb (2002), Nkonko M. kamwangamalu (2011:896) reveals in attempting to adapt the management theory to language observes that in general terms,

Management can be described as the set of activities undertaken to ensure that the goals of an organization are achieved in an effective and efficient way. In language planning terms, however, language management refers to the actions and strategies devised to achieve language policy objectives.

The term "language management" is used to refer to the activities, ways and steps, which are taken to deal with the language promotion issues. A language management agenda encompasses the status of the language candidate, its corresponding corpus planning and its spread while in terms of status planning, it seeks to deal with language legislation and language attitude. As regards corpus, it targets everything which relates to the language under focus namely the description of the language, the standardization, and instrumentalization. This has been termed "language cultivation". Concerns about the spread of the language encompasses both status and corpus planning and seeks to influence and dominate the linguistic landscape as well as the language used on the radio, on television, in the press, and in the various domains and workplaces.

5. Forces Operating in Language Public Space Public

Language use in public space has its own rules and regulations, which either sustain, go against the declared policies; or used for language awareness activity. In fact, it is the practice of language beyond the school activity and authority.

Two different coexisting language practices mark LL. Official use known as 'top-down language practice obeying the rules of language and a 'bottom-top' one concerning daily use of language according to the target audience using different strategies of violations of standard norms of language ranging from transliteration using foreign script, to language mixing using different codes , and the use of Arbizi

scripts in the case of grapheme-phoneme non-correspondence altering the written form of the language and even phonetic release of sounds, thus rendering the official standard language to an unrecognisable status . For instance, this can be illustrated by an example taken from an advertising Mobilis billboard in which the French word 'rapid' is transliterated in Arabic as 'رابيد' and the Arabic word ' علئ' meaning 'on' using Arabizi '3la'.

It is importance to note that LL displays the use of languages in written form whether the language(s) being used are written or spoken. This is to say that spoken languages together with the oral practice of language mixing is moving from a spoken to written form using in most of the cases Latin alphabet. Latinizing languages which use other scripts is becoming a common practice in LL for attraction purposes. This represents a revival of the long ago unfruitful attempts to Romanize languages among which the Arabic language.

6. Linguistic Landscape: Some Issues

The most central function of LL is to serve as a marker of the geographical territory inhabited by a language community. The fact of using a language on public signs may also imply that the language in question is used to obtain services from public and private establishments. However, a feeling of exclusion can be experienced when the language of public signs does not fit the audience.

LL also supplies information about the sociolinguistic situation of the community. The prevalence of one language rather than another mirrors the power and status of the competing language. The use or exclusion of one's own language on public space impacts on how one feels as a member of a language community. Having one's language present on private and public signs nurtures the feeling of value and status. In fact, LL participates to upkeep the community's social identity. The absence of the language from the LL leads to the devaluing of the community's language, weakens their attachment to the language, and eats away their collective motivation if there is any to act as active agent in the language entreprise. These are symptoms we see in the Algerian LL. LL is rather employed to market the French language and develop diglossic and foreign language mixing.

The majority of private space makes use of the French language rather than Arabic. French is used in indoor markets, on shop windows, on commercial signs, on posters, on moving vehicles, on advertising, and on billboards. The "linguistic landscape" in the public space serves as an important mechanism to regulate and develop language awareness in society. For Extra, G (2010) Language visibility can therefore be used to create and maintain power relations and collective identities. Language visibility influences directly on linguistic vitality and cultural identity as well. As regards Jaworsky and Thurlow (2010) the substantial presence of language in the landscape serves as a marker for revitalization.

It is for these very reasons that the language profile of private signs and government signs must be organized to contribute to a friendly and coherent LL. Discordance with the government's profile will cause erasure when it comes to the

policy planning efforts. LL represents by itself a political landscape for language policy implementation.

Levine (1991:137) reveals that the sign issue is symbolically explosive. Many Montreal francophone see anything short of unilingual French signs as the continuing legacy of the ‘conquest, while Anglophones view bilingual signs as a symbol that Montreal is a social contract between two linguistic communities. In short, the debate over Montreal‘s French revolves around antithetical visions of the city: Montreal as a fundamentally French city versus Montreal as a dualistic city.

In the case of Algeria, the “linguistic landscape” suggests a considerable gap between the official language planning policy which was set stressing the dominance of the national and official language, i.e. the Arabic language, and the tolerance towards French and English to a lesser extent as foreign languages each within its restricted respective national purposes.

Certainly, On the one hand, LL is becoming part and parcel of our urban, and even, and to a certain extent of our rural aesthetic constituting, thus the decorum of public space for attraction, memorization and persuasion business advertising purposes, but it also serves as important explicit and hidden strategies to manipulate languages practices and attitudes. On the other hand, it is a fundamental showground for enforcement of language policy and creation of collective identity as long as it represents the first contact we have with the language and the script of the place. Within this context it may be used to serve as a strategy of attraction and persuasion towards the language used. Furthermore, the constant interaction between the individual and the LL participates in enhancing the symbolic and cultural functions of language as it activates the process of language awareness in either a conscious or unconscious manner generating a response from the individual who receives it; even if the response takes a silent form through inner speech. The constant contact develops a certain sensitivity to the language displayed causing a kind of smooth, long term language processing which may reach fossilization case.

As far as language learning is concerned, the print visual components of the LL contributes to a lexical visual storage which may be a kind of literacy practice in the case of children, in which case LL can serve within the social environment as a pedagogical reinforcing tool. LL can constitute one of the social agencies participating in language promotion and language marketing. For example, a billboard used for advertising has a twofold function: marketing of the product as well as marketing for the language used to present the product.

When it comes to language management and language planning policy, linguistic landscape occupies an important place in corpus planning activities. A language inevitably develops as a result of social, economic and historical processes, but a planned intervention in the case of linguistic landscape constitutes an opportunity which enables language planners and policy makers to monitor and regulate the process on the basis of the desired goals. It may even constitute a way of caring for the health of language. Displaying language and selecting what to display constitute

a case of language in contact which provides the opportunity to bring language closer to the users in a permanent way.

7. Top-down regulations

As regards language use in the Algerian public space, it displays as Rafael et al. (2006) notes top-down and bottom-top language use. In the case of top-bottom, the official language i.e. the Arabic language is the most visible language within the public space. Top-down language use predominates in names of streets, government facilities, national institutions, offices road signs and any other government public buildings such as educational ones, hospitals to name only these. Generally, top-down language use is non-business and non-profit, ie non- commercial objectives having an informative function meant to raise awareness about specific issues for the public interests.

In theory, language management and regulations as regards the linguistic landscape in Algeria are enforced by the decree n° 74-70 of the 3rd April 1974 relative to the Arabisation of commercial publicity stipulating that the Arabic language must be used in commercial publicity all over the country and that any other language use is optional, and if used must be additional either in a translated or transposed form. Again, the law 05-90 of the 16th January 1991relative to the generalisation of the use of the Arabic language stipulates that whatever form of publicity, it must be expressed in the Arabic language, and that the use of any other foreign language must be subjected to official permission of the competent authorities. Foreign Language can be used only for touristic purposes in parallel to the Arabic language. But surprisingly as it may be, these regulations are implemented only by governmental authorities. These include institutions which are non-commercial bodies that Rafael et al. (op cit) classify as top-down agencies. As far as bottom-up language use, it obeys the strategies of commercial language use which depends on the target audience.

8. Conclusion

By means of this article the main objective of which concerns the emphasis on language planning and management of the linguistic landscape an attempt is made to raise awareness about the different positive and side effects that may impact on language use. In terms of language management, LL is the ideal place where language activities and policies can either succeed or fail depending on the ways it is tailored to serve. That's the reason why, we consider LL as a strategy to regulate language use and serve issues of policy and planning, educational planning, and language awareness, standardisation, development and spread among the different fractions of a nation. This should in fact motivate developing countries when engaging in language planning policy to develop a linguistic landscape approach to reinforce their language planning policy given the importance language place in the life of a nation at different social levels be they political, economic or educational because the linguistic landscape mirrors the health and wealth of its corresponding

environment. It even serves as a measuring instrument to have an idea about the societal organization.

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