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The linguistic landscape of the high street of Veszprém
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#ECOC2023 – Are we ready? The linguistic landscape of the high street of Veszprém

Tanulmányunk Veszprém egyik fő utcájának, a Kossuth Lajos utcának a nyelvi tájképét vizsgálja, a vizsgálat aktualitását az Európa Kulturális Fővárosa (EKF 2023) cím elnyerése adja. A nyelvi tájkép kutatása egy dinamikusan változó terület, amelyet nagyban meghatároz a technológiai fejlődés, például az online és offline tér összeolvadása. Az információ eloszlásának 3D-ben való ábrázolását egy új módszertani lehetőségként vizsgáltuk. Elemzésünk egy 219 képből álló korpuszon alapul, amelyet a jelek funkciója (informatív és szimbolikus), kihelyezője (top-down vagy bottom-up), a nyelvek megjelenítése (egynyelvű vagy többnyelvű), és az információ elrendezése szempontjából vizsgáltuk. Eredményeink arra világítanak rá, hogy a nyelvi tájkép elemeit túlnyomó részben valamilyen nem hivatalos szerv helyezte ki (bottom-up) és nyelvi szempontból az egynyelvűség jellemzi a Kossuth Lajos utcát. A képet árnyalja, hogy a márkanevek, amelyek a nyelvi tájképben nem nyelvhez kötődő jelzések, a globalizációt jelölik. Az EKF 2023 is elkezdte kifejteni hatását a vizsgált terület nyelvi tájképére, ami egy longitudinális kutatás lehetőségét nyitja meg a szerzők előtt.

Linguistic landscape: a field in flux

The field of linguistic landscape (LL) is indeed a growing area with 20 million results from a Google search and 736,000 in Google scholar (October, 2019). Since the 1990s, when systematic research on LL started, it has grown into a coherent body of research. Due to the relatively late start, cross-sectional studies are more prominent than longitudinal studies. As Backhaus (2019: 158) points out: “it took sociolinguists quite some time to discover this “writing on the wall” as an object of study.” The lack of consensus characterises the field in terms of definition and methodological considerations (e. g. sampling, unit of analyses, approaches, etc.) which are both crucial pillars of empirical work, therefore, a brief discussion on the current debates will be presented before the actual results of the present research are analysed.

Linguistic landscape: an expanding field

Landry and Bourhis's article published in 1997 is often cited as a landmark in LL studies, however, Backhaus (2019) refers to a much earlier work by the geographer, Masai Yasuo on *genko keikan* which is the Japanese equivalent of linguistic landscape and was published in 1972. Not only the starting point of the field is debated, but also the lack of a definition of LL, which has not yet reached a consensus among scholars. The most cited definition is the following:

'The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration.' (Landry and Bourhis, 1997: 25)

Technological developments have let us extend the types of landscape items (e.g. electronic displays), so the above list has been criticized by many scholars (e.g. Gorter and Cenoz, 2017). Our standpoint is that the definition of linguistic landscape cannot be constant and stable as it exists in different contexts (urban vs rural, eastern vs western, etc.), in different forms (digital vs non-digital, online vs offline, linguistic vs semiotic, etc.) and in different places (e.g. public vs private). Linguistic landscape has to be redefined by everyone who decides to investigate the signage of a given space as the items may differ from what Landry and Bourhis (1997) included in their list. As a result of the inclusion of more items in the linguistic landscape, several subfields have developed within LL studies: cityscape, schoolscape, cyberscape or skinscape. Halonen and Laihonon's study (2019) is a good example of how linguistic landscape can assist our knowledge of the norms of a community. They studied dog signs in two communities, one in Finland and one in Romania, to show how norms and control manifest themselves in these signs.

With the spread of internet use, our reality has been extended and blended with another; virtual reality. As Gorter (2018) points out, the distinction between online and offline worlds is now blurring and the users of the linguistic landscape are associated with both, so the two should somehow be integrated within LL studies.

Capturing the linguistic landscape is a challenging enterprise due to the presence of technology. Gorter (2018) mentions 3 recent innovations contributing to the dynamic capacity of the LL:

- LCD displays (mainly in big cities) which are continuously changing according to the demands of the people and economy;
- QR codes which guide people to websites on the internet through their smartphones, these sites, thus, become part of the LL;
- AR (augmented reality) in which the physical real world becomes supplemented with a computer-generated overlay of reality (see Picture 1).



Picture 1. Innovations that change the definition of linguistic landscape (augmented reality, AR) on the top (source: <https://phys.org/news/2018-11-augmented-reality.html>), LCD display bottom left (own picture), QR code bottom right (source: <https://handballveszpremshop.hu/hu/termek/veszprem-cipo/>)

LL is no longer static, it has become part of people's everyday life with which they constantly interact:

“In a high-tech world, the advertising pillar (Litfasssäule), from its introduction, becomes a multilingual messaging structure that interacts with its passers-by. People engage with the linguistic landscape and linguistic landscapes react and change continually” (Gorter, 2018: 14).

Approaches in LL studies

There are no overarching theories in the field of the linguistic landscape; it rather relies on existing theories (e.g. ethnolinguistic vitality). One of the approaches, also partially adapted in this study, is geosemiotics developed by Scollon and Scollon-Wong (2003). They emphasize the importance of the social and cultural context of public signs and argue that the languages displayed on a sign index the linguistic composition of the community (i.e. geopolitical location). The languages used convey a sociolinguistic meaning, and are the markers of the identity of a territory. A basic distinction in linguistic landscaping is to be made between quantitative and qualitative approaches. While a quantitative approach has simply been considered as the counting of signs, qualitative research ranges from taking a selection of signs and drawing conclusions from them (Pavlenko, 2009), through interviewing shop owners about the languages displayed

(Malinowski, 2009) to asking opinions from the community about the signs around them (Shohamy and Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012). Besides the qualitative and quantitative distinction (or combination), linguistic landscape can be studied synchronically as well as diachronically (Csernicskó, 2016; 2018).

Usually, LL research investigates the languages that are displayed on signs, but what is considered as a *unit of analysis* is one of the most crucial questions in the field, especially when the research takes a quantitative approach. One solution was offered by Backhaus (2007: 66), according to whom the 'unit of analysis' is defined as 'any piece of text within a spatially definable frame'. Although this definition has been taken as a starting point in categorizing the signs in many LL studies, it is sometimes considered problematic and may constitute difficulties while analyzing repeated texts or a large number of signs. Laitinen (2014) for example rode 630 km on a bicycle to find out more about the role of English in urban and rural areas in Finland. He collected an enormous amount of material, but decided to only present "selected observations and impressions" (p. 60). After considering the difficulties and arbitrary decisions regarding units of analysis, Cenoz and Gorter (2006) proposed an alternative approach suggesting "the larger whole of the establishment as the unit of analysis" (p. 71). According to this definition, the unit of analyses is comprised of a group of signs placed in a larger frame (e.g. window shop). In addition to Backhaus' definition, it is important to add that signs are not necessarily fixed and static, many researchers call attention to moving objects such as buses or cars; Sebba (2010), argues for the inclusion of non-fixed mobile signs such as newspapers, T-shirts, banknotes or bus tickets.

Sampling is an important consideration when describing the linguistic composition of an area. Representativeness is problematic as different samples from the same settlement may yield different results; Huebner (2006), points out that a difference in sample selection between his own study and that of Smalley (1994) resulted in two different conclusions about the role of English in the LL of Bangkok. Authors should also consider generalizing results from a sample from a large area. Gorter (2006) states that "data are not meant to indicate the linguistic composition of the city as a whole, but (act) simply as an illustration of the linguistic diversity" (p. 3). Many studies have analysed certain streets or areas of metropolitan cities such Huebner's (2006), above mentioned study, where samples from 15 blocks from both central and suburban Bangkok, were taken. Additionally, Backhaus (2006) covered 28 streets in Tokyo. Recently, many researchers chose one or two streets as the focus of their studies. Rosenbawn et al. (1977) is the first study to analyse a single street: Keren Kayemet street in Jerusalem, which focusses on the study of Roman and Hebrew scripts on signs. Cenoz and Gorter (2006) focus on two streets in two multilingual cities in Friesland (Netherlands) and the Basque Country (Spain). The distribution of Basque/Spanish and Frisian/Dutch was reported on both top-down and bottom-up signs. In addition, the language policy in the country turned out to be closely related to the occurrence of the languages. The presence of English is also a key

consideration in LL studies. Lay (2015) studied the presence of different languages in Bosnia's two main streets where results show that English is the second most ubiquitous language after Bosnian with a small presence of Serbian in both streets. Coluzzi (2016) analyses one of the main streets in the capital of Brunei, Bandar Seri Begawan; the results show a high level of linguistic diversity and identified three languages which are used in most signs: Malay, English and to a lesser extent Chinese.

Another characteristic of the LL, which reveals the symbolic and informative functions of the signs, is whether it was placed by an official authority or by members of the community. LL research clearly differentiates between top-down (official) and bottom-up (non-official) signs (as in Pavlenko, 2009). Top-down signs (street and official building names, road signs, warnings and ban signs) are governmental signs, which can reflect the language policy of a country. Bottom-up signs (signs on shops and private companies, advertisements) are placed by the community, private organization owners and reflect non-official language preferences (Cenoz and Gorter, 2008; Bányi, 2016). Shohamy et al. (2006) studied the difference between top-down and bottom-up flows in East Jerusalem, Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian localities of Israel, to reveal the presence or absence of language resistance due to Jewish-Palestinian tensions. The authors concluded that the absence of Hebrew in the bottom-up items, despite its presence in top-down flows in East Jerusalem, were caused by the refusal of Palestinian inhabitants to consider East Jerusalem as an Israeli territory.

Reh (2004) provides the following taxonomy for analyzing multilingual information arrangements in signage. This taxonomy is based on the amount and quality of information displayed in different languages and the following categories are defined below:

- Duplicating, in which all of the information is presented in both languages;
- Fragmentary (or partial translation) is used for multilingual writing in which the full information is given only in one language, but in which selected parts have been translated into an additional language(s);
- Overlapping, in which some but not all the information contained in one language is also contained in the other(s) i.e. the two language versions offer partially the same information but also both convey additional content;
- Complementary, in which two or more languages convey completely different contents.

In the following sections, the results of a study, which was carried out in a Hungarian city, Veszprém, the European Capital of Culture in 2023, which requires latent multilingualism, in order to meet the needs of the European citizens visiting the city, will be reported on. We focused on the main pedestrian street of the city and analysed the linguistic landscape following the above taxonomy.

#ECOC2023 and multilingualism

In December 2018 Veszprém was elected as the European Capital of Culture for 2023. Selection was based on the submitted bidbooks containing the plans of the applicants and the 12-member jury's opinion of their visits to the applicant cities and regions. The city of Veszprém submitted a joint bid with the Balaton Region choosing *BEYOND* as its main concept. The concept itself already indicates how different Hungarian is from other languages in Europe since there is no equivalent of the word in Hungarian, as it is explained on the first pages of the bidbook (2018):

“And that is the title of our concept: BEYOND.
We will demolish the separation of our city and the region and will dare to be what we are destined for: an exciting new destination and a contiguous European cultural space.
You cannot translate *beyond* into a single word in Hungarian – our language simply does not work that way. *Túllépni saját magunkon* means going, developing beyond our current state. But it also means *Több, mint Veszprém* – which implies how can a city become more when it joins its talents and forces with a region.” (p. 9)

Another example of a unique Hungarian linguistic feature is mentioned in the last pages of the bidbook:

“In Hungarian we use the very same word for holiday and freedom. Before 1989, Balaton offered the illusion of freedom for tens of thousands of people from Eastern and Western Europe during their holiday. Now, with our programme for Veszprém 2023 we offer a new kind of freedom for Europeans.” (p. 97)

These examples from the beginning and the end of the application give us the impression that language, which is mentioned 17 times on the 100 page application, is a crucial part of the ECOC2023 plan. The contexts where *language* appears, vary from mentioning alternative ways of expressions ‘when language is off limits’, through to using it as a metaphor (‘food is the most basic language of cultural diplomacy’), to plans of language enhancement (skills of the cultural staff and locals). The bidbook acknowledges the lack of a good command of English and creates action plans to overcome this, however, the language of public signs is not discussed in the bidbook. This might be due to the fact that English is often regarded as a minor technical issue, while the book itself is concerned with more abstract and less practical questions.

Veszprém: the city of many cultures

Multiculturalism has been present in Veszprém for centuries starting in the 1st century when the Hungarian state founder, Stephen I, established the first episcopate in the city and his wife, the Bavarian Gisela, founded the cathedral. Legend has it that Gisella spent a considerable time in Veszprém but due to the lack of written documents it remains a legend and strengthens the Gisela-cult in the city of queens. As a result of the policies of the king, the country opened up to Christianity and to the West. Stephen I writes in his Admonitions (in Latin: *De institutione morum*; in Hungarian: *Intelmek*) to his son, Emeric: “A monolingual and monocultural kingdom is weak and fallible”. Before 1920, Hungary had been a multilingual and multicultural country, but then it lost 50% of its population and became linguistically more homogeneous. The country has 13 official minorities, German being the 2nd largest and they constitute 2.4% of Veszprém’s population. As part of the history between Germans and Veszprém, it is worth mentioning that during the times of communist rule, prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and its powers in Europe, the Veszprém and Balaton region had a secret intercultural community. People from east and west Germany used the region as a meeting point. ‘Europe existed here earlier than anywhere else in Hungary.’ (ECOC2023 bidbook, 2018: 5).

Veszprém is a city of 56,624 citizens (KSH) and according to the 2011 census besides the 83.9% Hungarian majority, the city has a historical German minority making up 2.4% of the population. The second largest ethnic group are the Roma (0.7%). The remaining are all marginal (0.1% or below). It is obvious, that the composition of the population in Veszprém does not require a multilingual linguistic landscape. There are other factors though, which can be considered as crucial in displaying other languages in public signs: e.g. tourism, international festivals, the presence of international students and of course the coming ECOC2023. As it is aptly put in the bidbook, *seasonality overshadows* the cultural life in the city as well as tourism. Tourists from abroad usually visit the city and its historical and cultural sites for a day or two. In terms of multilingual touristic signs, the Old town is well-equipped (see Figure 1). The city is famous for its international festivals, the Street music festival, Veszprémfest and the Auer Violin festival being the 3 flagship international events, which attract crowds from Hungary and abroad. Veszprém is also famous for the University of Pannonia, which attracts an increasing number of international students. Besides Erasmus+, students from countries outside the European Union, are enrolled through the Stipendium Hungaricum programme and Chinese students come with the help of agencies. Finally, many students come self-funded. Due to the positive tendency of interest in the academic programmes of the university, the presence of international students in the city is now very visible. All these groups share one characteristic: they do not speak Hungarian. English, on the other hand, is a language spoken by most international students (the courses they are enrolled in are delivered in English) and tourists too.



Picture 2: Public sign using Hungarian and English (Veszprém old town)

Linguistic landscape, and thus public signs can have two functions: symbolic and informative (Laihonen 2012) It is clear that the composition of Veszprém does not call for the symbolic display of languages (communicating relative power and status Shohamy et al. (2006), but the informative function is growing into a necessary element of the landscape.

Methodology

In this study, the target area was the main pedestrian street of a city. In order to study the visualization of multilingualism in Veszprém, two different sources of data are considered, allowing for a comparison between documentary and observational data. The primary data source is the visual data consisting of photographs of signs taken in Kossuth Lajos Street, Veszprém (hereon in referred to as Kossuth Street). The secondary data source shall be the policy data consisting of official documents articulating the linguistic policies of the country with respect to official languages, languages of print, and other policies related to linguistic landscape. In addition, we will consider the regulations pertaining to the forms of signs in addition to the content, for example, their size, placement, and physical characteristics.

Pictures were taken in daylight and only fixed objects were photographed: shopfronts, street signs, public and private stickers, posters, advertisements and billboards in the street. Following Backhaus (2007), a *one frame - one token* approach underpinned the study enabling an organized construct since one picture may contain more than one frame.

The data is comprised of 219 pictures analysed according to a set of criteria, including: the distribution of mono- and multilingual signs, information arrangement, languages displayed on top-down and bottom-up signs. In addition to the “traditional” methods of analyses a useful tool was introduced to aid visualization and distribution of the information with an innovative 3D elevation. The data set is available here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=19uMn-rjILxww3rGXyeYWAEHypHBVEmx->

Linguistic landscape regulations in Hungary

Before presenting the results, it is important to note, that the languages of public signs are regulated in many countries and Hungary is no exception. As Bányi (2016) points out, the monolingual perspective of Hungary overshadows regulations on public signs. In 2001, the *XCVI Act on the economic and business advertising signs, as well as some public announcements published in Hungarian* was issued.

Section 2 (1) The name of the shop – except for the name of the business, the slogan and the mark referring to the goods sold in the shop – as well as the announcements informing the consumers in the shop and shop window shall be displayed in Hungarian.

(2) The requirement set out in paragraph (1) may be fulfilled by displaying, in addition to the same text (body of text) in the foreign language, its Hungarian equivalent, at least as easily recognizable and at least the same size as the foreign text (body of text).

Section 3 (1) Information on the safety of passengers and the use of public transport in public areas, public buildings, private spaces and buildings open to the public in Hungary and signs containing service announcements – outside the scope of economic advertising – must be displayed in Hungarian.

(2) The requirement set out in paragraph (1) may be fulfilled by displaying, in addition to the same text (body of text) in the foreign language, its Hungarian equivalent, at least as easily recognizable and at least the same size as the foreign text (body of text).

Kossuth Street

The main street of a city changes its face many times according to trends, historical events, demographic changes, economic demands, etc. Besides architecture, language can be used as a key element to add to the expressive power of a public space. Looking back at the 20th century, the main street of Veszprém, Kossuth Street, has gone through considerable changes to which the language of public signs has contributed considerably (pictures 3, 4, 5 and 6). The most salient feature of pictures 3 and 4 is that the public signs are exclusively in Hungarian and the proper names used as names of shops are also in Hungarian (e.g. Szigetvári (Picture 3 from 1937), Judit (Picture 4 from 1983). The building on Picture 4 in 2018 can be viewed by Google Street View: <https://bit.ly/2yA1ysk>.



Picture 3: Picture of Kossuth Street (1937)
(Source: <https://www.veol.hu/kozelet/helyi-kozelet/vegigetaltunk-veszpremi-kossuth-utcan-1937-tol-napjainkig-2142665/>)



Picture 4: Picture of Kossuth Street (1983)

Snapshots of the same street in 2018 were taken, and Picture 5 and 6 are examples of the languages represented. Hungarian is still the predominant language of the signs, but the use of international brand names as well as other semiotics, such as logos, have become the new way of conveying messages to customers.



Picture 5: Picture of Kossuth Street 1 (2018)



Picture 6: Picture of Kossuth Street 2 (2018)

Results and discussion

The analysis is based on a set of 219 pictures collected in Kossuth Street. As we mentioned earlier, technological advancements contribute immensely to the development and change of the field of LL. Apart from data collection techniques, the representation of data has also developed. This new technique of representing signage density, underpinned the division of the street into even squared areas where the number of signs in each area are calculated in a vertical column. In this study, Kossuth Lajos Street, almost 509 m long, was divided into 35m even areas (14.5m each), which was considered to be enough of a focal distance for the human eye. Following this, the data was then fed into MS Excel 3D maps plug-in, the final results are shown in Figure 1.

This initiative aims to contribute and ameliorate the representation of data and to aid policy makers and appointed governmental officials in taking steps towards more necessary and balanced alterations concerning signage distribution and accessibility of information. Further studies are expected to support this technique in this field.

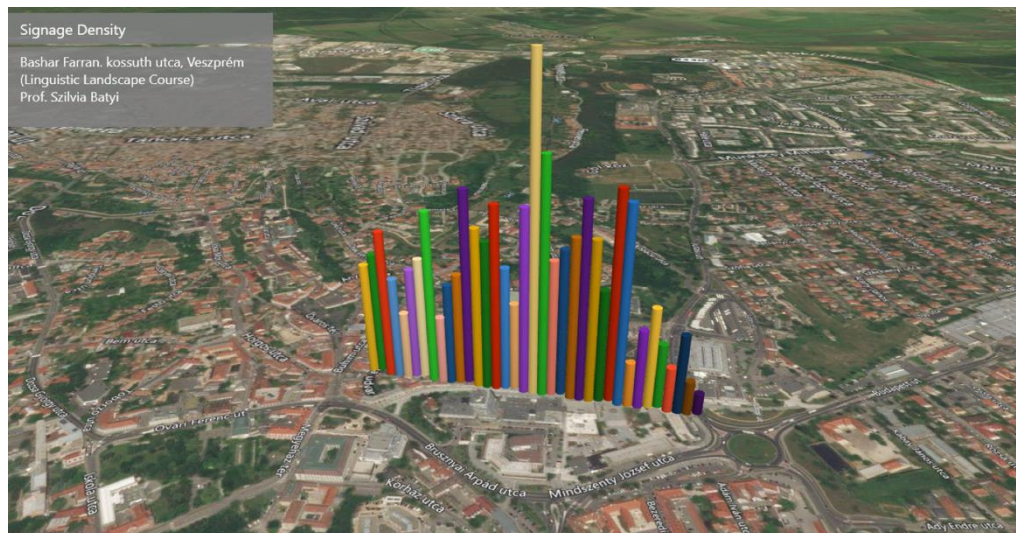


Figure 1. Sign density in Kossuth Street

The centre of the street contains most of the signs, while the entrance to the street has very few, which may aid policy makers and business owners when planning the positioning of future signs.

Top-down and bottom-up signs

Signs were categorized according to authorship, whether the sign was placed by official authorities or by non-official autonomous organizations and private business owners. Official signs are labelled as top-down signs, while non-official signs are bottom-up signs. It is not surprising that the main street of a city mostly contains bottom-up signs (189) and only 30 of the 219 are top-down signs. Eventually, 93% of the signs of the sample are nonofficial signs. This

demonstrates that the multilingual landscape of Kossuth Street is shaped more by the citizens than by the authorities.

Both the top-down and the bottom-up signs were analysed according to 1) the language displayed on them, 2) the arrangement of information displayed in different languages according to Reh (2004).

Type of sign	Bottom-up	Top-down
Monolingual Hungarian	141	19
Monolingual German	1	–
Brand names	32	–
Bilingual (Hungarian & English)	14	10
Multilingual	–	1
sum	188	30

Table 1. The number of public signs according to the languages displayed on them

Table 1 presents the number of languages displayed on the signs. There are 11 signs that contain more than one language, while the majority are monolingual Hungarian.

Concerning the brand names, the question of categorization may arise with regard to the languages they contain. The outcome will reflect implications on the analysis process and the coding of street signs. What emerged from our analysis is that a standalone category is more convincing as it requires no English fluency on the part of the reader. That is to say, the meaning of the brand names is obviously inferred by the observers through the previous and geosemiotic contexts of the names.

On the part of the business owners, brand names - mainly in English - denote excellence in commerce and reflect prestigious taste especially for elite customers. This tendency of prioritizing certain classes of society comes at the expense of excluding a large population of various other social classes, socially and financially. Edelman (2009) observes that brand names in linguistics landscape are not meant to be written in a fully comprehensible language for observers as they do not transmit factual but rather sensual information.

According to Scollon and Wong-Scollon’s (2003) key elements of place semiotics, the visual signs take their meanings from the place they are located in, however, they also expect brand names to fall into a decontextualized system of emplacement, where they always appear in the same form no matter what the context. Therefore, in our research brand names received their own category in the analysis.

On multilingual signs, information was provided in 5 different languages, namely: Hungarian, English, French, German, and Russian. It is important to note that multilingual signs mostly constituted the *No Smoking* sign which is a pre-

designed format with 5 languages displayed (Picture 7). Interestingly and surprisingly, information on all column street signs is displayed only in Hungarian (Picture 8). One can argue that in the age of smart-phones these columns have little practical relevance as maps are default applications in our gadgets but it cannot be doubted that displaying information in a language that is understood by tourists and international students (namely English) would add to the sense of being welcomed to the city.



Picture 7. No Smoking sign in 5 languages (2018)



Picture 8. Hungarian monolingual street column (2018)

Bottom-up signs are often divided into commercial signs and graffiti since the importance of the latter has been emphasized in the LL literature. Although Scollon & Scollon-Wong (2003), for example, see graffiti as examples of “transgressive discourse” aimed at challenging social authority and commonly held expectations, graffiti of the present study was not considered as relevant data due to the fact that it only contained unclear doodles conveying no meaning.

Hungarian signs dominate the linguistic landscape in terms of bottom-up signs and only 15 signs display other languages. Bilingual signs are exclusively Hungarian and English with Hungarian dominance, being the first language on the signs. German is present in only one sign for a now non functioning Hungarian restaurant for German customers.

Linguistic landscape is an area which tells us a lot about processes such as globalisation, commodification of languages (Lanza and Woldermariam (2014), Pavlenko 2012), ethnolinguistic vitality (Laihonen 2012), language contact, language change, etc. Information in Table 1 confirms that the commodification of languages, a very powerful tool, is not employed to attract more customers. Commodification means the transformation of goods, ideas (languages) into commodities (products with economic value). The commodification of languages

undergoes a transformation when the language of the customers is used to sell products. This phenomenon was also labelled as the *commodification of affect* by Pavlenko (2012). The main street of Veszprém shows a minor characteristic of globalisation with the presence of English but no ethnolinguistic vitality regarding the German minority.

There is one sticker (Picture 9) posted on the traffic sign at the opening of the street which is solely in English and it constitutes 1% of the bottom-up signs which was also a commercial one. Other languages do not appear in any of the bottom-up signs at all.



Picture 9. Monolingual (bottom-up) English sticker on an official sign.

Info. arrangement	Bottom-up	Top-down
Duplicating	1	–
Fragmentary	14	11
Overlapping	–	–
Complementary	–	–

Table 2. Information arrangement on multilingual signs

The data show that only one single non-official sign in Kossuth Street contains two languages in order of appearance: Hungarian and English. It also reveals that 14 non-official and 11 official signs presented the full information in the

Hungarian language with a number of selected parts translated into additional languages such as German, French, and Russian.

Conclusions

The present study focused on the analysis of urban multilingualism in Veszprém through the examination of public signs and the distribution of languages in the main pedestrian street. The relevance of the study is justified by the fact that Veszprém has been elected as the European Capital of Culture for 2023. Besides the expected flow of foreign visitors, the number of temporary international citizens is also increasing. All these factors contribute to the heightened expectancy of the appearance of English in the linguistic landscape.

The centre of the city can be divided into two parts: the historical part of the city centre and the area of the main shopping street (Kossuth Street). While the former has been provided with multilingual signs due to the increased number of tourists, Kossuth Street has remained relatively linguistically intact by the authorities. This study aimed to find out whether the bottom-up signs contain any information in languages other than Hungarian.

Firstly, although the Hungarian signage regulations postulate that only Hungarian is the official language in Hungary (see Act XCVI), some top-down signs included English as an additional language. With respect to the official *de facto* language of the state, Hungarian is evidently the dominant language with regard to its visibility on public signs in the linguistic landscape. Minority languages were almost entirely missing from the linguistic landscape, which might indicate that they were largely assimilated.

Secondly, the majority of bottom-up signs were also in Hungarian showing that even the informative function of this global lingua franca has no significance or importance in the main street of the future European Capital of Culture. Neither authorities, nor business owners seemed to realize the power of the commodification of language(s), which could help them make the street more attractive to foreigners. As Backhaus (2019) notes as a quality of linguistic landscape: “It gives us a sense of being in a particular place or which affects our perception of that place” (p.161). The perception of visitors will definitely be shaped by the languages around them in 2023 and the awareness of the necessity of multilingualism is gradually rising. Since the data collection in 2018, a new establishment, whose signage is entirely in English, has appeared in Kossuth Street. We plan to repeat data collection in 2023 in order to see the changing face of the linguistic landscape of Veszprém.



Picture 10. #VeszprémBalaton2023 office in Kossuth Street

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