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The Specifications Of The Public Space In Algeria To Travel To Public Places

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Abstract:

The analysis of discourse in urban space and on urban space requires taking into account a set of different specificities. Our research essentially focuses on the demarcative and identity functions of linguistic practices within advertising brands and the effect of the latter on the Algerian interlocutor.

This is an urban sociolinguistic analysis carried out in the field to study the expression of linguistic plurality and identity dynamism. We aim more precisely to study and define the sociolinguistic characteristics through the advertising displays presented in the Algerian urban space. Starting from the Algerian linguistic landscape, in which several languages are in contact, we are particularly interested in the discourse of the city. Therefore, our hypothesis is that advertising posters in Algerian urban space represent the admission of plurilingualism and identity dynamism where Algerians find themselves bilingual or even plurilingual and have a favorable vision towards this plurality.**Key words:** Public espace, specifications, public services, Algeria.

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الملخص:

يتطلب تحليل الخطاب في الفضاء الحضري الأخذ بعين الاعتبار مجموعة من الخصوصيات المختلفة. يشير هذا البحث إلى دراسة اجتماعية لغوية في الفضاء الحضري الجزائري و التي أجريت خصيصا في مجال دراسة الملصقات الإعلانية و ممارسة الاتصال العام. هدفنا هو تسليط الضوء بشكل أساسي على الوظائف الترسيمية والهوية للممارسات اللغوية ضمن العلامات التجارية الإعلانية.

يشير هذا البحث إلى دراسة الطريقة التي تتواجد بها اللغات في البيئة الحضرية مع الاعتماد على الخصائص الاجتماعية و اللغوية للعديد من المدن الجزائرية. ونهدف بشكل أكثر دقة إلى دراسة وتحديد الخصائص الاجتماعية اللغوية من خلال العروض الإعلانية المقدمة في الفضاء الحضري الجزائري. انطلاقا من المشهد اللغوي الجزائري، الذي تتواصل فيه عدة لغات، فإننا مهتمون بشكل خاص بخطاب المدينة، لذلك فرضيتنا هي أن الملصقات الإعلانية في الفضاء الحضري الجزائري تمثل قبول التعددية اللغوية وديناميكية الهوية حيث يجد الجزائريون أنفسهم ثنائيي اللغة أو حتى متعددي اللغات ولديهم رؤية إيجابية تجاه هذا التعدد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفضاء العام، المواصفات، الملصقات الإعلانية ، الجزائر

1. Introduction:

In our daily lives, discourse, whether spoken or written, is at the heart of various social interactions. It is an inherent and constitutive element of society. Far from being static, the dynamics of discourse are linked to the perpetual evolution of society and the needs of individuals. These individuals have not been content to remain in the primitive form of communication, that of simply expressing their opinions and demands. Indeed, with the invention of writing in all its forms since the Stone Age, humankind has reached a new stage: expanding communication to all social spaces, including urban spaces.

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In the urban environment, in addition to verbal communication between individuals, billboards, shop fronts, street signs, election and cultural posters, as well as tags and graffiti, constantly inform us about the linguistic behaviors of those who display them. Consequently, the modern city is seen as a vast screen displaying a variety of languages, signs, and heterogeneous images. This space has become, according to Philippe Blanchet (2007), a site of linguistic conquest and "marking."

The multilingual specificity of the Algerian linguistic landscape is one of the most typical phenomena of this country, attracting considerable interest from sociolinguists. The linguistic issue in Algeria is of paramount importance. It is the point of political and ideological antagonism that places language under the paradigm of stability and stagnation.

Such is the linguistic experience in Algeria, which, dispersed among divergent peers, strives to recover its collective and diverse identity. The language issue is therefore a subject of dissension, stigma, and inextricable tensions (J. Dakhlia, 2004), giving rise to the contrast between bilingualism and diglossia. This leads to a quest for identity, which is realized through a policy of linguistic homogenization.

This linguistic policy and its direct and indirect impacts have always been our focus, due to the oppositional linguistic situation and the sociolinguistic representations related to the multilingual discourse of Algerians. Our research aims to contribute to the management of this linguistic pluralism, which is a perceived reality.

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This research therefore aims to describe and analyze the discourse displayed in Algerian urban spaces, while also seeking to define the impact of these displayed languages on the sociolinguistic representations of Algerian citizens regarding the different languages present and the attempts at linguistic normalization and standardization.

Based on three approaches—scientific, social, and individual—we posed the following questions:

What is the relationship between advertising displays and the verbalization of urban linguistic plurality? Is there a relationship of mutual impact between the linguistic plurality imposed upon the city and that practiced by urban dwellers, revealing Algerian identity and culture?

We begin by examining the effect of language policies on the various uses of language in urban spaces. We thus describe the dynamics of language use in these spaces, the relationship citizens maintain with the languages in use, and the status they assign to them.

Furthermore, what intrigues researchers when confronted with the urban linguistic landscape in Algeria is precisely its diversity. This situation is diverse, even complex, due to the presence of a multitude of languages and, above all, the absence of operational structures capable of encompassing this abstruse reality, often permeated by latent and sometimes overt antagonisms. This situation is perceived as complicated by the presence of a society characterized by its inventive practices, multilingualism, and heterogeneous linguistic representations, resulting in diverse forms displayed on city walls.

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Given the urban linguistic landscape, the language issue in Algeria has been central to sociolinguistic research since the country's independence. Indeed, the linguistic situation in this country is a highly controversial matter and a source of disagreement among the various prevailing ideologies.

2. A City: What Definition?

What meaning is given to the concept of a city? What principles and elements can define a city? These questions seem straightforward yet are essential in urban planning.

The rural and the urban remain controversial notions among architects and geographers. They have never finished defining the term "city." Several definitions have been attributed to this word, from different perspectives. Nevertheless, all these explanations point toward one essential principle: as soon as a city is a city, it is the central part of the social sphere, constituting its core in various civilizations, and it has different characteristics and aspects.

In fact, we do not intend to offer a new interpretation of the city, but rather to choose, from among the many definitions given by specialists, one that highlights the urban space.

The city is the product of human evolution and civilization; it is its inhabitants, coming from diverse backgrounds, who shape and build it. H. Marchal and J-M. Stebe (2010:10) consider two aspects when discussing the true nature of the city:

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On the one hand, it is "a static city, if not frozen, at least circumscribed for a time within material frameworks; on the other, a dynamic city, composed of citizens and groups in interaction."

The first aspect refers to the governmental model of the city. It is the government that decides whether a city should be separated from its surrounding areas. In reality, it is the pedestal upon which the State and its political regime are anchored. B. Lamizet accounts for this aspect, which is apparent "in its history, in the configuration of urban space, and in the way that the unique practices of its inhabitants embody their commitment and citizenship" (B. Lamizet 2002: 179).

The political aspect of the city is inevitably inscribed within the real framework of its land, which "reveals the singularity of its inhabitants and their experiences of the city" (ibid.).

B. Lamizet defines the lived reality of a city as follows: "it is what the city represents for its planners, for its builders, but also for those who live in it [...], who [...], make urban space their field of activity" (ibid.).

The second aspect, which complements the first, is that of the number and activities of the people who inhabit it, as well as the kinds of relationships they maintain with one another. The strong bonds and attachments that villagers maintain with one another are based on self-interest, financial gain, and industrial relations. In short, they reflect a mentality that parallels the urban and rural models. This is evident both in the daily activities of the villagers, which are limited to agriculture, and in the life of the city, structured around commercial and administrative exchange.

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If an urban area reaches a certain percentage of its population and crosses a threshold whose definition varies from one country to another, then we call it a city. In Algeria, we define a city as "any urban agglomeration with a significant population size and possessing administrative, economic, social, and cultural functions."

In a second article, we find that an agglomeration with a population ranging from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand is considered a medium-sized city. Conversely, if it has between twenty thousand and fifty thousand inhabitants, then we are dealing with a small city.

3.1. The City in Urban Sociolinguistics:

According to urban sociolinguistics, the city is “a laboratory in motion; a place of heterogeneity and plurality, it can only be grasped in its complexity” (C. MOISE, 2002: 75). To understand this complexity, L-J. CALVET (2005) emphasizes that sociolinguistics is an approach with three main axes.

3.2. The City as a Site of Linguistic Contact:

People are increasingly drawn to the charm and appeal of the city, due to its modernity and other factors. They flock to its vibrant atmosphere with their languages and in all their varieties, leading to significant language contact. In this sense, L. Mondada states that sociolinguistics conceives of the city as “a place of heterogeneity that allows us to pose, in an

emblematic way, the question of variation, change, and language contact, concerning multiple and hybrid socio-linguistic identities and practices" (L. Mondada, 2000: 59).

The existence of linguistic plurality in the same region is said to be at the origin of several linguistic systems, such as the lingua franca and the vernacular. According to L-J. Calvet, a lingua franca "is a language used for communication between speakers or groups of speakers who do not share the same first language" (in M-L. Moreau, 1990: 289). The lingua franca can be the language of the dominant group, such as Bambara in Mali. As for the vernacular language, it is a code of identity; in other words, it is a language used by a small community to identify itself, as is the case, for example, with immigrants in Marseille when they use Arabic among themselves.

In urban sociolinguistics, the researcher would first need to examine the nature of languages and the impact of the urban environment, and then verify the status of each language, that is, multilingualism and its management, free from any linguistic or political ideology.

4. Conquering Space Through Languages:

If the city is structured by a set of "words," these words vary between the socio-spatial and sociolinguistic structures. In sociolinguistics, the city is a well-ordered space. Ordered by whom? And how? The city is a space ordered by the social actors who move about.

Advertising, tourist displays, urban toponymy, street names, etc., are emblematic marks of conquest that transform space into an occupied place. In this regard, V. VESCHAMBRE

writes: "behind these posters, there are actors, social groups, economic and political interests, for whom the symbolic appropriation of public space is a crucial issue, in order to deliver messages and demonstrate a presence, a strength, a legitimacy" (V. VESCHAMBRE, 2005: 291).

This analysis will therefore examine the discourses held by social actors in urban space regarding the languages in use and their varieties. The representations attributed to a linguistic community will be the focus of this investigation. In sociolinguistics, these representations are considered, on the one hand, as "images associated with languages that serve as evidence of how social situations are perceived; They also allow us to better understand the foundations and the issues surrounding the non-diffusion of languages, their maintenance or their disappearance" M-L. MOREAU (1990:407). According to H. BOYER, "representations of language are only one category of social representations" (H. BOYER, 1990: 102), meaning that the social actor conceives of language in the same way that he conceives of his social group.

4.1. Lexical Production in Urban Space:

In this framework, urban space is considered a discursive space. It allows us to understand the social system as well as the spatial organization in its disparity. In this regard, Moise specifies: "We must start with the city, understand its material and social constructions, but also understand the power and role of languages in defining cities, even in their social changes" (C. MOISE, 2003: 57).

In the city, we observe that languages rub against each other, blend together, but they also vary and progress. Calvet conceives of the city as "a great devourer of languages; it attracts

rural or provincial people who come both to earn a living and, in a few generations, to lose their languages" (L-J. CALVET, 2005: 41).

This progression, influenced by urban development, gives rise to specific language models that enrich the primary function of lingua franca with an identity-based character. The language practices of young people and minority languages are clear examples, revealing difficulties in social relations, which lead social actors to embark on a quest for identity. In this regard, Calvet shows that urban speech "is constantly shaped by these two tendencies, towards lingua franca and identity, because the city is simultaneously a melting pot, a place of integration, and a centrifuge that accelerates the separation between different groups."

Urban language practices are forms that manifest a lack of identification with a group, a lack of adherence to a homogeneous and separable entity. Hence the emergence of a "current trend, like other disciplines such as social geography, which aims to make sociolinguistics a science closely aligned with the immediate concerns of the societies it studies" (Thierry Bulot and Philippe Blachet, 2013:32).

Mondada (2000) summarizes these three approaches by explaining that sociolinguistics addresses the city in two different ways: one is to analyze discourse within the city (linguistic diversity, heterogeneous dialects, etc.), and the other is to analyze discourse about the city (taking it as an object of study). These two analytical approaches are complementary insofar as discourses within the city raise questions about urban characteristics and distinctiveness, and thus, they are closely linked to the spaces of their creation, which are of paramount importance.

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4.2. The City Through Its Linguistic Landscape: Bilingual/Multilingual Specificities:

Studying the city as a crossroads of languages and a profusion of diverse linguistic forms highlights the significance of everything displayed on its walls, including sociolinguistic behaviors, particularly written forms: graffiti, commercial signs, advertising posters, etc. The convergence of several semiotic and linguistic communication elements within a city thus implies a new perspective, as the city is viewed as a sphere of complex and evolving elements,38 given that it establishes new linguistic behaviors that must be considered, described, and analyzed. Indeed, discourse analysis in and about urban space39 requires taking into account a range of different specificities. Our research focuses primarily on the demarcative and identity-forming functions of linguistic practices.

5.1. The Sociolinguistic Landscape of Algeria:

Given the language behaviors of Algerian speakers and the coexistence of different languages in the public sphere, we can speak of linguistic plurality. This plurality can be limited to monolingualism among some individuals, where Arabic is privileged as the official language or even required in the daily lives of Algerians. We emphasize a crucial point related to the oral nature of the languages present: Arabic, Berber, French, and other combined forms that are part of the daily lives of Algerian speakers (K. TALEB-IBRAHIMI, 2004) and are used by advertising and journalism companies in various forms of writing. This dynamic largely demonstrates that the linguistic needs and behaviors of the population with regard to these languages have reached a significant level of conviction. Both the authentic and the exotic are attributed to this openness to the economic world and to linguistic forms that reveal a profound aspect that can be observed in terms of identity, otherness, and rivalry.

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It is worthwhile to study how advertising language adapts to local linguistic needs. We are often struck by the linguistic specificities of Algerian advertising language, which requires a large-scale approach. We can take, for example, linguistic hybridity as a result of a multilingual environment that has eliminated border zones and prohibitions imposed by language policies that advocate monolingualism. The interdependence between these two dimensions results in a remarkable hybridity in the daily life of the Algerian speaker. Taking all these specificities into account reveals the economic character that combines with a "semanticization of space" (LEVY, 2000) cited by Vincent VESCHAMBRE (2005).

In an era dominated by commercial monolingualism, driven by the presence of English and new technologies, information and communication services are receptive to the needs of this unique linguistic space and, in a way, are demanding a reassessment of certain boundaries and principles previously violated by advertising and sponsors.

Indeed, advertising agencies and sponsors are using language as a tool to capture people's interest through relentless advertising, whether direct, indirect, or semi-direct. While advertising dissemination may simply rely on examining the market and the social and even economic customs of potential customers, analyzing advertising language from an urban perspective requires a sociolinguistic analysis capable of grasping its two-dimensional (linguistic and social) diversity. Therefore, hybrid advertising discourse, when presented in the "urban space" (the city), requires a consumer-oriented vision, initially bilingual or multilingual, to retain the necessary information. Furthermore, linguistic usage, social and cultural background, lifestyle, customs, and language behaviors are introductory elements that allow one to leverage the advertising message. The consumed product transcends its function as a

concept capable of consumption; it fulfills a social role and results in a socio-cultural representation.

5.2. Bilingual/Multilingual Advertising Signs in Algeria:

Advertising posters should first and foremost capture the reader's attention. The goal is not simply to attract attention, but to elicit a reaction from the consumer. The consumer will then linger over the poster and, consequently, ask questions about the message conveyed. As a result, advertising agencies constantly strive for inventiveness and originality. This is readily apparent in the proliferation of billboards in Algeria.

From the 2000s onward, advertising inventiveness has been perceived through its content and illustration, and bilingualism/multilingualism has been a prime example of this. In this context, Valérie Sacriste (2001) addressed the issue of identity, as advertising posters occupy a social position alongside their economic role. It is a social reality that doesn't show consumers their way of life as advertisers do; rather, it illustrates that lifestyle.

Through our research, we observe that the language used in advertising embodies lived reality (urban language). The rise of telephone operators is a prime example highlighting this linguistic diversity in Algeria.

The "Djezzy Eich la vie" campaign largely catalyzed the reactions of advertising departments, leading to a long exploration of multilingualism embodied not only by telephone operators but also by beauty products, food, and so on. In recent years, we have noticed a complete break with standardized, even bland, advertising. It's time for inventiveness and

uniqueness, but also for linguistic diversity, as advertisers focus their attention on the consumer's daily life, embodying it through their on-screen narratives.

5.3. Statement and Illustration in Urban Space: What is the Relationship?

In his work "Semiology and Urbanism," Barthes demonstrates the mediating relationship between image and text in urban space. This means that the statement is strongly linked to its illustration. However, he contradicts himself in relation to his experiences in Japan. In this specific context, he clearly demonstrates the effect that image and text had on his perception, stating that "The text does not comment on the images. The images do not illustrate the text: each one was for me the starting point of a kind of visual wavering" (Barthes, 2005).

5.3.1. Specificities of bi/plurilingual advertising:

According to Roland Barthes, urban space can be intelligible and clear when it is a mixture of semantic elements: roads, streets, alleyways, which together provide meaning. The advantage of the city is that people come there having clearly read all its ramparts covered in various types of writing. The city is thus a transcription whose message the reader is expected to decipher and update.

In this regard, Belkacem Boumedini (2009) discusses "literacy" in his article on code-switching. He shows that code-switching concretely illustrates the situation of individuals who have integrated the graphic form into their cognitive processes. Once it penetrates their thinking and expressive mechanisms, it becomes difficult for them to present themselves or

even orient themselves without it. Semantically speaking, the illustration serves as a secondary support to reinforce the inculcation of this written form, which is not always easily understood. In this context, the illustration corresponds to a suitable and rewarding level of literacy.

In short, what we have observed regarding advertising and urban wall displays is that the written word is undeniably of great importance. However, this does not mean that the written word can do without illustration, the value and effectiveness of which are undeniable, especially in competitive advertising where the aim is to excel in linguistic inventiveness, fueled by ingeniously chosen illustrations, the objective of which is to capture the consumer's vision.

5.3.2. Script in Algerian Advertising Posters: Bi/Pluri-Script:

The script of advertising billboards embodies a perceptible written mark that provides indications of the linguistic character and form it conforms to, as well as the vocabulary and its subject matter. Therefore, the transcription of languages is done primarily according to three writing styles: Arabic, Latin, and, to a lesser extent, Tifinagh. Through these three modes of transcription, advertising posters are not intended exclusively for monolingual speakers and do not exclude the other segment of the population, which is also likely to be monolingual in the language they speak and therefore possess more of. Calvet speaks of the "tri-graphic" nature of Jerusalem, embodied by the Arabic, Semitic, and Latin (English) transcriptions, which simultaneously attest to the past, present, and future status of the language. Referring to a survey conducted by R. Kahlouche (1997) on posters in Tizi-Ouzou, Calvet compared the linguistic situation of Tizi-Ouzou with that of Jerusalem. He thus reveals the alternation

between Arabic, Berber, and French transcribed using the Arabic, Tifinagh, and Latin alphabets. This is the situation in the majority of Algerian cities, particularly in the western region of Algeria, which is our field of research.

The influence of these two languages is clearly evident in their modes of transcription. Thus, the question is not simply which language(s) is/are used in the Algerian public sphere, but rather how each individual interacts with this linguistic plurality, taking into account their lifestyle and the language they speak. Regarding the language displayed on walls in Algerian cities, it is explicitly observed that the spoken and written languages are complementary within a changing context that grants individuals the freedom to move and orient themselves within the urban space while remaining familiar with its name and specific characteristics. According to Bulot, advertising signs provide access to an understanding of the "identity constructions" of cities.

6. Globalization and Culture Through the Urban Landscape in Algeria:

The strengthening of communication processes resulting from globalization thus prioritizes the creation, transmission, and use of culture through democratization, enabling the penetration of different cultures. Cultural openness makes it possible to clearly see cultural elements from around the world and makes them accessible to everyone.

According to Jean-Pierre Warnier (2004), language and culture are two closely linked concepts, without being synonymous. We cannot assimilate a language without culture, and vice versa. Globalization and economic openness have created an arena where translation,

hybridization, code-switching, and other linguistic forms adorn cities and thus generate a certain competition between the different languages present.

The predominance of French and translation is particularly evident in the urban landscape of Algeria. This phenomenon reflects the linguistic reality of the country and what Algerians have gained as a form of cultural exchange. Designers of all types of urban signage therefore try to maximize the rate of language alternation and competition in order to serve all social categories, especially young people.

The opening of borders thus allows for the discovery and assimilation of other cultures and consequently other languages, whether by necessity or by choice, because practicing different languages and progressing in Diverse cultural knowledge is becoming increasingly popular and even sought after, particularly in the professional sphere.

The speech of young Algerians clearly reflects what we have just mentioned. They are more freely and easily engaged in projects, thanks to globalization and the learning of various languages available on the linguistic and cultural market, which reflects the country's positive progress.

In order to disseminate and better safeguard languages and cultures, globalization remains the most crucial means. Therefore, guaranteeing linguistic pluralism and independence in linguistic and cultural choices is a shared goal worldwide, while simultaneously eradicating the dominance of one language over another or one culture over another. Thus, if all modalities are accessible in every nation, globalization gives lesser-known languages and cultures the opportunity to gain recognition.

7. Conclusion:

We now live in an era of globalization where city walls are covered with countless posters of all kinds, without which the urban space would seem to lack its vibrancy. Through their aesthetic and vehicular nature, combined with their ability to convey their sociolinguistic, cultural, and identity-related content, urban visualizations have a real impact on the public, as evidenced by their acceptance as an inherent part of the city.

At the current pace, Algeria is undergoing a transformation on both a sociolinguistic and a cultural/identity level, giving poster artists free rein to design their wall-mounted works with complete freedom and in harmony with the social group.

In conclusion, we can say that despite the Arabization policy implemented by the Algerian state, the urban linguistic landscape reveals a very perceptible linguistic plurality. In this perspective, our contribution has been able to demonstrate that this linguistic pluralism, which constitutes a truth, is solemnly accepted in urban displays for utilitarian and pragmatic reasons positively assumed by citizens.

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