

Comparative Urban Linguistic Landscapes In Kazakhstan

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Abstract

This capstone project is descriptive research that is intended to analyze the Linguistic Landscape of Nur-Sultan and Zhezkazgan. The analysis of language in the outer world, phrases, and images presented and exhibited in public places is the main focus of the developing field of the Linguistic Landscape. Displayed language in public places has individual semiotic features that spread outside its communicative role. It reveals authority interconnections, identities, and, is employed to administer or arrange them. Therefore, the LL is a symbolic frame residing in a constant dialogue with the public. The dialogue is particularly compelling in places that are experiencing socio-political reorganization, with the emergence of updated language policies and ideologies. The aim of this research is to declare and recognize the patterns of inclusion and exclusion of languages in signs, to discover social linguistic phenomena in these cities and to provide examples of them. These particular two cities were chosen on the reasoning that Nur-Sultan is displayed as an advanced capital city of the country while Zhezkazgan is one of its rural cities. The purpose is to analyze differences and similarities of linguistic composition and trends that shape the Linguistic Landscape of these places. The methodological part of this project includes participant observation, walking tours and photography, remote online photo search.

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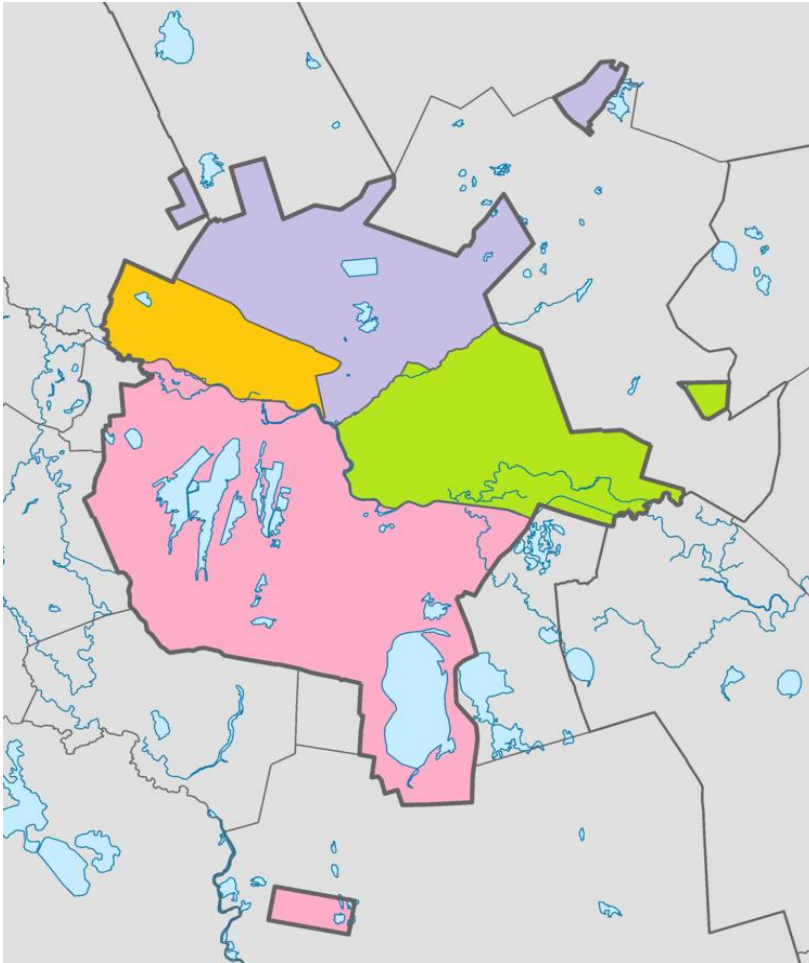
Introduction

Kazakhstan is the largest country in Central Asia with a population of more than 18 million people in 2020 (based on Worldometer elaboration). It is surrounded by Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan (see Map 1). Kazakhstan, formerly a constituent republic of the Soviet Union, declared independence on December 16, 1991. 57.7 % of the population is urban. ("Kazakhstan Population (2020) - Worldometer", 2020). People speaking Slavic languages constitute a bigger portion of the urban regions of Kazakhstan than Kazakhs. Approximately 3/5 of Kazakh families live in rural areas. Urbanization in Kazakhstan supposes much more immigration of foreigners rather than the movement of Kazakhs from the rural areas into the cities (Hambly et al., 2020).



Map 1: Modern Kazakhstan (source: Hambly et al., 2020)

The capital of the country is Nur-Sultan (formerly Astana, Aqmola, and Tselinograd), located in the north-central region of Kazakhstan, with a population of more than 1 million people (2018 est.) (Hambly et al., 2020). The ethnic composition of the city, characterized by a fairly stable predominance of the Russian ethnic group until the end of the 20th century, was in an active transitional period between 1989-1999 and is currently characterized by a predominance of ethnic Kazakhs (63% in the 2009 census). In addition, since the late 1990s, the linguistic environment of the city has transformed from almost exclusively Russian-speaking to bilingual. Regarding the geographical aspect, Nur-Sultan is divided into four administrative regions: Almaty (green), Baikonur (violet), Saryarka (orange) and Yesil (pink) (see Map 2). The fourth Baikonur district was formed from part of the territories of the districts of Almaty and Saryarka on March 16, 2018. Almaty and Saryarka districts established May 6, 1998, constitute the old part of the city. While the Yesil region was created by decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on August 5, 2008.



Map 2: Administrative division of Nur-Sultan (source: Wikimedia Commons)

In 2001 the state officials hired Japanese architect Kurokawa Kisho who designed Astana's (current Nur-Sultan) new broad avenues with the idea of a "symbiotic city", according to which novelties are constructed on the left bank of the Ishim river, while the old regions carrying the Soviet past are kept on the right bank (Ikonnikov 2001).

In contrast to this rapidly developing city, this project also includes Zhezkazgan as an example of small town with slower dynamics. Zhezkazgan is a rural town located in central Kazakhstan with about 90 000 citizens. According to the census in 2019, 68% of the Zhezkagan population are Kazakhs, 24% Russians, with smaller minorities of Ukrainians, Germans, Chechens, and Koreans. It is located in the basin of the Kara-Kengir River. It was founded in 1939 as a working village Kengir. On December 20, 1954, by a decree of the

Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Kazakh SSR, the working village of Bolshoi Dzhzhkazgan received city status. Translated from the Kazakh language, the name of the city means "the place where copper was dug". The basis of the industry of Zhezkazgan is copper metallurgy(Казахстан. Национальная энциклопедия, 2007). Today, Zhezkazgan still mostly functions for the industrial purposes of the country, it is populated with local people 90% of whom work for this corporation, and it is not common to meet foreigners here except the ones who came as foreign experts to consult local workers on the industrial issues. Therefore, the composition of the Linguistic Landscape of this city is mostly in local languages, which are Russian and Kazakh, almost equivalently.

This capstone project is intended to analyze the Linguistic Landscape of Nur-Sultan and Zhezkazgan to compare the language use in public places in these cities to understand its sociolinguistic phenomena taking into account their historical development and inhabitants. It will be demonstrated that the LL in these regions differ because of their role and status in the life of the country, because of the audience of the LL, engagement with international contexts, and Soviet legacy. The difference can be interpreted in light of the fact that Nur-Sultan is the capital city of the country which attracts foreigners as tourists as well as representatives of other countries (state authorities from other countries who came with a visit on political issues), foreign specialists working for companies that function according to foreign methods. This image of the developed cosmopolitan city that is not constrained by the Soviet past is necessary for the image of the country, for its reputation.

The generally applied description of the Linguistic Landscape (LL) is termed to be language expressed in public spaces (Gorter, 2006). The consideration of language in the outer world, phrases, and images presented and exhibited in public places, that is the main focus of the developing field of linguistic landscape (LL). Whereas language is utilized by people, speaking and listening, it is also shown, for the functional considerations and for

symbolic. Language in places became to be the interest of researchers who seek to survey and analyze its essence, concept, objectives, and contexts. This type of language, that is seen at every place, is tightly connected to people because of the fact that it is people who create it and select the approach to exhibit and demonstrate it in various places. People are those who create signs, produce advertisements, compose instructions. It is as well people who read these messages, interpret and notice or sometimes ignore or eliminate them.

The Linguistic landscape covers different areas and is the interest of researchers from diverse and tangent disciplines who are attentive to the comprehension of the deeper nuances and information communicated through language in places. LL elements provide abundant and thought-provoking writings on numerous layers - particular words with strong meaning and shared knowledge, bright and colored images, and many other original depictions. These depictions construct the ecology in local and global scenes and in many languages. The emergence of the Internet and various graphic technologies extend these depictions to a new level where the physical presence is not required. Technology thus has significant importance in the matter of representations in public places with its multiplicity of tools for documentation available today with cameras and other devices.

The majority of research in the linguistic landscape area has focused mainly on quantitative analysis of visual signs, with regard to categories such as "the presence of specific languages, the order of appearance, etc." (Shohamy & Gorter, 2006). The examination of quantitative data helps researchers to make conclusions regarding the societal matters concerning the niches of certain languages, encompassing ethnic/social disputes and solidarity manifested via language choices, latent agendas denoted by the discrepancy of language policy and realities of everyday language usage.

This research is a descriptive project that is focused on the following research questions:

- What linguistic phenomena can be traced in the LL in two cities?
- Where in the landscape these phenomena can be seen?
- What patterns might emerge, if we compare different regions?
- What are the possible reasons of the emergence of these linguistic phenomena?
- What knowledge can be obtained regarding the multilingualism, modern (post-Soviet) urban development, and urban identity with the help of this research?

Literature Review

Definitions of the term

The rapidly growing field of the linguistic landscape has been addressed to the sociolinguistic phenomena in a certain territory or, on some occasions, to different forms of one language or of contrasting ones (Gorter, 2006). A great number of various definitions for the term of Linguistic Landscape has been proposed, such as geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003), cityscape (Gorter, 2013) to semiotic landscape (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2011). In the Linguistic Landscape field the unit of analysis is often taken in the form of sign. Semiotics is the study of signs. According to the Peircean framework, a sign, or representamen, is something that indicates object-directed to someone. Then, the sign that was formed in this someone's head is termed to be the interpretant of the initial sign (Peirce, 1955, p.99). However, as the field of the Linguistic Landscape is still in its developing stage, the debate over the unit of analysis or the linguistic sign is continuing. The researchers do not agree upon what constitutes linguistic landscape inquiry. Backhaus (2006) terms a sign to be “any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame”, thus this term can be applied to signs that are visible for people walking by. On the other hand, Shohamy and Waksman (2009) suggest that linguistic landscape inquiry has to include all kinds of multimodal discourses: audible, spoken, visible, static, and dynamic. Therefore it is important to clarify in the research which definition will be used.

The common ground for diverse categories of definitions is that Linguistic Landscape is a written language in public places that has unique semiotic features (Backhaus, 2007, p.5-7). Another common feature that is seen in the definitions is the symbolic essence of signs, that is the way signs become meaningful to various people or groups. According to Ben-Rafael (2009, p.41), the Linguistic Landscape is a “symbolic construction of public space”, while

Backhaus (2007) in his discussion of the bilateral bond of sign and space termed the Linguistic Landscape to be meaning-making processes of visible language in public space". Shohamy (2006, p.110-112) contributed to this terminology by adding that the LL is a language policy tool. In this sense, the Linguistic Landscape and society are in dialogue with each other, meaning that political activities are reflected on the LL and the LL has an impact on society. In the original research, Landry and Bourhis (1997, p. 23) described the objective of LL research to be aimed at the exploration of " the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region " and their definition of the LL is the most cited one:

"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 & Bourhis, 1997, p. 25).

Role of the Linguistic Landscape

The informational and symbolic agendas of the LL are recognized by Landry and Bourhis (1997, p. 25-29). Concerning the elementary informational aspect, it bases on the idea that particular signs convey a particular practical message and that the LL is a tool for outlining linguistic borders. This field gives insight about the sociolinguistic structure of different communities in the given territory, and also about their authoritative connections (Reh, 2004, p.38). Furthermore, it forms language anticipation by demonstrating what languages people can anticipate being part of other spheres in certain circumstances. The Linguistic Landscape is not a precise image of the language context of a society, instead, it depicts the linguistic supply concretely applied in the public area (Extra & Barni, 2008, p. 3). With regard to the symbolic agenda of the LL, it addresses the selection of appropriate code

for signs. It leads to two matters: the identity and impact of authoritative actors. The impact of authoritative actors underlies the fact that some languages frequently appear in public spaces while others are eliminated. Code selection might also be influenced by belonging to a particular identity. People perform socio-political regulations through the management of the discourses of that place (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p.10). Authoritative actors are able to exert control over the official signage field and thus convey ideological stances, whilst the sign owners of the private sector are able to express opposition by including or ignoring particular linguistic codes. Display of the conflicts that arise from the changes established by authoritative actors can be traced in transgressive signs. It is the signs that destabilize or break the official rules regarding the certain choice of language (Pavlenko, 2009). For example, one research demonstrated the graffiti to serve as a rebellion tool (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006). Shohamy (2006, p. 110) also analyzes this case with the idea that the LL is a part of the language policy arrangement which suggests that whether languages occur or not gives information about the stance towards the specific linguistic category. With regard to identity matter, it concerns the symbolic role of the LL. When certain language is used in the LL, its significance and position are approved. According to the conclusion drawn by Landry and Bourhis (1997), languages are written in the LL shape the favorable identity image for those whose language is applied which is beneficial for its ethnolinguistic vitality.

Multimodal approach

The formation of meaning in the LL context is displayed via the multiplicity of design modes. Moreover, such modes expand from written text to images, sounds and etc. depicting different modalities and their relation. "Meaning resides in all modes and each mode contributes to the overall meaning of the multimodal ensemble" (Kress et al., 2001, p.1). Shohamy and Waksman (2009) were the first ones to offer a semiotic approach, that is the notion that the LL is not restricted to motionless signs but rather also includes other

communicative elements that contain or convey visual information like newspapers or videos or the language on people's clothing. This idea was further supported and advanced by Jaworski and Thurlow (2010). The premise notion for that was the Scollon and Scollon's (2003) idea of interaction order. Following that, this idea served as a foundational ground for Hult's (2009) research that produced a new technique for an eco-linguistic investigation. Backhaus (2007) acknowledged the existence of the connection of the sign with the place and stated this connection to be mutual, meaning that various changes in place (in the country or city) are reflected in signage and vice versa. This technique gave rise to the focus on multimodality in the LL, extending its borders from writing to images, sounds, buildings, history and etc (Shohamy, 2015, p.154). One of the examples can be the research examining the tattooed skin as a bodily landscape, or "moving discursive locality" (Peck & Stroud, 2015, p.133-151). This changing nature of the research methods depicts the model displacement in the direction of all-embracing research and moves farther from the mindfully defined research strategy (Hogan-Brun & Brun, 2013).

Globalization

The effect of globalization on the LL is not stopping on the linguistic commodification, rather it results in the propagation and widespread presence of English (Hult, 2014). The propagation and popularity of English earned a lot of attention among the researchers. English is extensive and widespread at the cost of eliminated languages. Such phenomena can be assigned to be the result of globalization (Cenoz & Gorter, 2009, p. 57-58), in which English occurs to be the language of broader intercourse. It is noted to be used in urban places with hybrid sociolinguistic composition, touristic spots or targeted for local audiences but usually for connotative rather than informative objectives (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006). In addition, globalization has a strong effect on identity matters, especially as displayed in frames of extensive migrations. Ben-Rafael (2015) examined the way the LL is

applied by migrants, not solely to produce local and distinctive selves, but also those that traverse domestic borders. Another element of globalization comprises the proliferation of brand names at the international level, to the moment when they are exported (Tufi & Blackwood, 2010). In substance, on some occasions when it is not possible to allocate the names to their genesis language Ben-Rafael (2015,p. 33-34) defines these names to be a “code engendered by globalization” (Ben-Rafael ,2015).

Language policy

A dialogue held between the LL and society in which the LL is an output of the sociolinguistic framework, at the same time acts upon the sociolinguistic condition through impacting language perception and employment (Cenoz & Gorter, 2006,p. 67-78). Therefore, having this dialogue implies that agents are in power to alter the bigger medium. As Scollon and Scollon (2003) stated , in order to regulate the public arena it is important to have governance over the discourses there. One of the approaches to have governance over the discourses encompasses the regulation of the LL with the help of language policy. But then, the LL is also can exert power on language policy. Referring to Shohamy (2006,p.110-112), it is said that the LL has a role of the latent language policy device, applied by governing as well as by minor agents. Applying these actions, language policy is freely exploited, discussed or objected to. Whereas discursiveness in the Linguistic Landscape is to some extent because of the changeable realization of formally established language policies (Du Plessis, 2011,p. 563), it often originates from the LL operating as a language policy device. The LL is constructed with the effort of contesting socio-economic and political bodies; the ones having the authority and the ones alienated by the community of power.

This review flows further to the topic of agency, namely the categories of top-down (state) and bottom-up (private) that decide differently on the question of the LL. Dissimilar

designing unfolds the fact that top-down sign authors follow the language policy when bottom-up sign authors showcase a higher level of diversification (Shohamy, 2009). This division on agencies is especially helpful when it comes to the investigation of whether language policy corresponds to the real linguistic practice, studying in this way the performance of the policy. This then helps to detect the LL- public dialogue when a big political shift happens. Such shifts result in the transformations of the stances towards language policy, that in turn alters the LL (Pavlenko, 2009). This effect is clearly seen in the episode of layering, a concept provided by Spolsky and Cooper (1991) to address the synchronous subsistence of the identical kinds of signs in sundry forms because of being under diverging policies. This notion was related as evidence of language shift, notion primarily established by Fishman and bound to the Linguistic Landscape by Pavlenko (2009).

Major trends in post-Soviet LL

After the collapse of the USSR, the titular representatives who used to be against the Soviet obtrusion of the Russian language supported the necessity for a unifying state code in successor countries for nation-building plan. It included: 1) establishment of rules for administrative, educational institutions and media to be managed in titular language, 2) exclusion of Russian language usage in official documentation and public spheres, 3) derussification of the titular language, 4) substitute Soviet place names with local ones, 5) promote learning of the titular language, 6) promote learning English to serve as a lingua franca instead of Russian (Pavlenko, 2013, p.266). However, the nation-building plans imply the desire to create a monolingual society with the help of every citizen including linguistic minorities. In 1991 successor countries was homeland to more than 36 million L1 Russian speakers. Therefore, this fact prevented the full success of derussification model. In addition, the nativization process was difficult in Kazakhstan as it was noted to be among those countries where russified municipal titulars with a low level of titular language

comprehension and loyalty mirrored language ideologies which associated titular languages with the rural realm and Russian with modernism and urbanization (Pavlenko, 2013, p.267).

In July 2007, state authorities of Kazakhstan declared the initiation of a new cultural program, Trinity of languages. The aim of this program is to enhance trilingualism so that citizens communicate in Kazakh, Russian and English. In accordance with this program, the Testing Center worked on the examination of Russian language knowledge for government employees. This was done in order to avoid biased selection and to examine whether job candidates show adequate knowledge in both official languages, Kazakh and Russian. Kazakhstan still seeks to achieve consummate nativization of management, yet this idea was decelerated because of the domestic counteraction and low levels of the Kazakh literacy knowledge of governmental employees (Smagulova, 2008). Moreover, Russian continues to prevail on the Internet. The youth in Kazakhstan reported to prefer web sites in Russian to ones in Kazakh because of the former to be in better quality and more diverse (Pavlenko, 2013, p.268).

LL research relates to more than one discipline and helps to gain an understanding of other domains of people's lives. Consequently, it is less likely that the LL will evolve as an independent and closed area. Nevertheless, several theoretical backgrounds and fine methodologies that were formulated will reduce the inclination to arbitrary research projects that have fascinating but unexampled outcomes. Even though such multiplicity upgrades and contributes to other spheres, the LL now is at a stage where its analytical examination has to rely on previous theoretical progress.

Methodology

This project uses the definition of the sign provided by Backhaus (2006) that is “any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame”, the signs of public places that are easily visible for the passersby of the major streets of the given districts will be analyzed.

The methodology of this project includes five months of participant observation, walking tours and photographs, remote online photo search (Barni & Bagna, 2009, p.130).

Participant observation is important in the way that it provides an opportunity to collect data straight away and to view the signs in general, not one by one as during the online photo search and thus get an overall impression regarding the linguistic composition of the street under investigation.

The remote online photo search implies searching for pictures of the signs via Google Maps, 2Gis and websites of the places. This way of collecting data (pictures) was included in order to make this process faster and more feasible due to time constraints and the fact that it is physically difficult to digitize the streets (Barni & Bagna, 2009, p.131).

The LL items for this project were collected between August 2019 and March 2020. The corpus of this study consists of about 500 photographs from the three geographical divisions of Nur-Sultan where the walk tours were conducted. With regard to the geographical distinction, Zhezkazgan has one major central street, while Nur-Sultan in this research was divided into 3 regions for the convenience of data comparison. In order to make the analysis clear and to allow the data to be comparable and of different compositions, the photo collection comes from old, new and transitional (old but the one where constructions are always made) regions of Nur-Sultan. The old region implies the streets of Vokzal (Saryarka district), the transitional region is the wide streets of Respublika and the new

region is the Expo site, Mangilik streets (Yesil district). All of these collected photographs were then organized in folders categorizing them as:

- 1) in Russian and Kazakh (in Cyrillic)
- 2) monolingual
- 3) in English
- 4) presence of foreign language (other than English, Russian and Kazakh)
- 5) colorful
- 6) use of Latin script
- 8) wordplay/funny

This categorization is designed on the basis of the common linguistic phenomena that are seen on the majority of the signs. In this way, the goal of the research is to provide evidence in the form of photographs for the linguistic phenomena observed in the Linguistic Landscape of Nur-Sultan and Zhezkazgan.

In addition, these particular categories were chosen on the basis of the observable sociolinguistic phenomena. For instance, the use of Latin script illustrates the adherence to the language policy of trilingualism; the colorful font is used for the audience whose decision mostly relies on the visuals, namely for children; the presence of foreign languages as well as of English highlights the superior status of the place, creates "elite" image; signs with wordplay are common for entertaining places; use of Russian and Kazakh that is not written in Latin script may create some Soviet vibe.

After the categorization of the data,, it was important to define where in the LL each of the phenomena is most common, and the purpose was to describe the possible reasons for these patterns.

Furthermore, there is a folder that includes photos of signs from both cities that demonstrate salient differences and similarities in these places. This was done in order to make the flow of the analysis clear and to come up with such conclusions that will have intelligible evidence. In addition to these categories, the distinction was made among commercial and governmental signs. It is assumed that commercial signs have more freedom for expression while governmental signs are more moderate and display the state language ideology. In general, the number of pictures of commercial signs prevails over governmental ones as there are more of them and because they constitute the diverse signs while governmental signs are written according to the state standards. The walking tours were conducted on the main streets of two cities, namely Nur-Sultan and Zhezkagan, in order to compare further in the analysis the differences and similarities of urban and rural linguistic landscapes. These main streets were chosen on the basis of the frequency and a large number of passers-by as well as the high prevalence of signs per building.

The labeling of the pictures are as follows:

Figure1.# for signs from Zhezkazgan, Figure2.# for signs from Vokzal region, Figure3.# for signs from Respublika, and Figure4.# for signs from Yesil district.

Analysis

Regarding the category "in Russian and Kazakh", it is the largest set of signs in both Nur-Sultan and Zhezkazgan.

Considering this category in Zhezkazgan:



Figure 1.1



Figure 1.2



Figure 1.3



Figure 1.4

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 use Kazakh names but written in Cyrillic. In Figure 1.3 we see that the name of the store itself is in Russian, while in Figure 1.4 the name of the place is itself in Kazakh. However, both signs give explanatory information in both Russian and Kazakh. This trend when the name of the place is either in Russian or Kazakh and the descriptive information (beauty salon, pharmacy, flowers, etc.) is in both of these languages is seen in 90% of signs. The explanation of this could be that the population here speaks in Russian and

Kazakh mostly and these trend has been taking place for years and the names of these places have not been changed for this time.

Considering this category in Nur-Sultan:



Figure 2.1



Figure 2.2



Figure 2.3



Figure 4.1

Figures 2.1 -2.3 come from Vokzal region. It worth to note that in Figure 2.3 the sign includes Russian, Kazakh both in Cyrillic and in Latin. This phenomenon of the combination of Russian with Kazakh (in Cyrillic) on signs, in Nur-Sultan, is greater in Vokzal region and lower in others, yet there are some cases as in Figure 4.1 (Yesil District), nonetheless, such instances are rare compared to the old part of the city. Similarly, as in Zhezkazgan, this trend can be attributed to the language spoken by its inhabitants as well as the age of the region. It is considered to be old part of Nur-Sultan as it was built in 1998. In addition, there are no malls or any other entertaining places so there is no considerable flow of people who want to spend their free time in these places. However, it is different from Zhezkazgan in the way that

the new signs in Russian and Kazakh have Kazakh written in Latin script while in Zhezkazgan it is still mostly in Cyrillic (even if the sign has been renewed).

Moving to the next category of "monolingual" signs, consider the case in Zhezkazgan:



Figure 1.5



Figure 1.6



Figure 1.7

Regarding this category in Zhezkazgan, it can be said that the signs are written in one language when the sign speaks for itself and no descriptions are necessary. In Figure 1.5 the audience of the game club will be able to recognize this place and thus no explanation is needed for it, as for instance with the shop it is directed toward larger audience (almost to every citizen). The sign in Figure 1.6 already has the purpose of the place written in its name as well as the sign in Figure 1.7 (moreover it has the iconic representation in the form of a burger).

This category in Nur-Sultan can be combined with the category of "English" because it was noticed that the majority of monolingual signs are in English and located in the new region of the city.



Figure 4.2



Figure 4.3



Figure 4.4

The sign in Figure 4.3 also has an iconic representation in the form of a tooth, it gives a hint about the place. These signs do not have a description of their place as well. Taking into account that these places are located in the Yesil region it can be supposed that the targeted audience of these places is foreigners or that perhaps this was done for design reasons, so as to sustain coherency.

Regarding the "English" category of signs in Zhezkazgan:



Figure 1.8



Figure 1.9



Figure 1.10



Figure 1.11

It can be said that the usage of English on signs in Zhezkazgan is not complicated and does not require excellent knowledge of this language to understand and perhaps read them as signs use common words that are familiar to people who do not speak this language. The decision to write the name of the place in English can be attributed to various factors, in the case with Zhezkazgan it can be to stand out from other names as the city mainly uses signs in Russian and Kazakh. Interestingly that the explanatory information in Figure 1.10 is written in Kazakh and English, perhaps with this place it is done in order to appear fancier.

Moving further to the category of " presence of foreign language". This category was almost absent in Zhezkazgan and only one example can be demonstrated:



Figure 1.12

Regarding the presence of foreign language on signs in Nur- Sultan:

In the case of motivation for these types of signs in Nur-Sultan, it can be seen that as in Zhezkazgan with English words, the foreign words in Nur-Sultan are of simple kind (for instance frequently occurring word "casa") and perhaps are chosen also to stand out in a great number of signs in English that have become so popular in the new part of the city. The usage of foreign languages is not as common as of English but still is notable in the Yesil district, in addition, these signs can be explained as brand names or franchise, meaning that the decision to name the particular place was not voluntary but required.

The category of "colorful" signs is similar in both cities.

Colorful signs in Zhezkazgan:

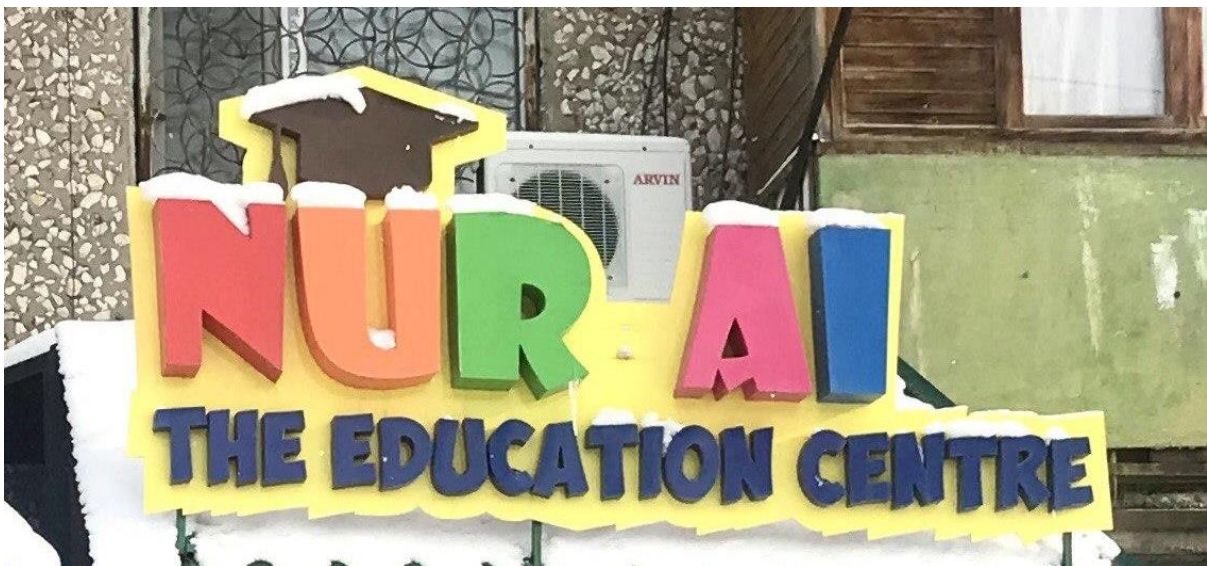


Figure 1.13



Figure 1.14

Colorful signs in Nur-Sultan:



Figure 4.7



Figure 4.8



Figure 4.9

These colorful signs are observed in buildings directed toward children, such as educational centers, cloth shops for children, etc. It seems that the stylistic design for these places is standard among all the cities during all the times. It is like a psychological tool to attract the attention of children and provoke their interest and desire to enter the place with a colorful sign.

The usage of Latin script in signs in Nur-Sultan are the most frequent in Yesil district, however, the region of Vokzal has an increasing number of Latin script as well. This can be attributed to the adherence to the language policy on trilingualism and that the signs in the capital are more surveyed rather than in Zhezkazgan as the old signs in Zhezkazgan keep being renewed with its old script. Examples from Nur-Sultan:



Figure 4.10



Figure 4.11



Figure 3.1

In Zhezkazgan the usage of Latin script can be seen only on new signs and places, for instance, the places in the given photos opened this year. However, not all new signs are written with Latin script, some of them are just renewed with an old name and alphabet.



Figure 1.15



Figure 1.16



Figure 1.17

Another category to consider is "wordplay/funny" signs. This category is not as popular and spread in Zhezkazgan as in Nur-Sultan. The explanation for this could be the fact that in Zhezkazgan there are a small number of places designed for entertainment and which would require some creativity for the creation of its name. The main part of the small

enterprise is made up of grocery stores and a couple of clothing stores. New places are rarely opened here because there is no such culture of entertainment and of going out.



Figure 1.17

In contrast, in Nur-Sultan some places in the new part of the city show a great diversity of wordplay in their signs.



Figure 3.2



Figure 3.2



Figure 4.12



Figure 4.13



Figure 4.14

This phenomenon can be attributed to consumerism. The prevalence in the new region is explained by the existence of such places that offer various activities to spend there time and money. Interesting names of various places attract people with their creativity and novelty thus visiting such places can be considered to be fancy and their visitors acquire some superior status. It is common nowadays to tag the location of oneself on social media, in this way the chain of the potential audience can be easier constructed with unusual and funny names as they are better remembered.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Linguistic Landscape in Nur-Sultan is going through the transformation from its Soviet past much faster than Zhezkazgan. The Yesil district that was constructed with this purpose of becoming a new modern city can serve as a demonstration of the way new plans and new language policies can affect the linguistic landscape of a city and the way the symbolic performance can form new urban spaces. The age and demographics of each district can serve as an explanation for the constitution of signs in that specific district. Regarding Zhezkazgan the transformation is not as rapid as in Nur-Sultan, however, some salient Soviet signs (such as monument of Lenin, old street names of Soviet poets, and other historical individuals replaced by Kazakhs' names) have been removed long ago. Since its independence, Kazakhstan has been on its way to derussification, the increase in the usage of English on public signs and the transition toward Latin script is one of the evidence of that.

In addition, because of the fact that the LL in Nur-Sultan and the new part of the city, in general, has been planned and specially designed, it makes the LL look coherent and in one style of light, colorful and modern signs. However, because the right bank was not reconstructed to this extent it creates a strong contrast between the two banks.

This project has numerous limitations. Initially, it was planned to conduct interviews with sign owners to ask them about their motivation for naming their place with a particular name in a particular language and style. The scope of the research, the amount of collected data could be increased to provide a better comparison and preciseness. The choice of "funny" signs is subjective, as it may seem funny for one person and not for another. These gaps should be taken into account when further studying the Linguistic Landscape.

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This project represents my own original work in accordance with Nazarbayev University's
Student Code of Conduct.