

The Linguistic Landscape of Palestinian C Towns: The Case of Shop Signs in Huwwara

Montaser Motia Ujvari 

Academic Lecturer, Department of Languages, Palestine Technical University-Kadoorie, Tulkarm, Palestine

✉ **Corresponding Author:** Montaser Motia Ujvari, **E-mail:** muntaser_aldeek@rocketmail.com

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Received: March 04, 2021

Accepted: April 18, 2021

Volume: 4

Issue: 4

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2021.4.4.17

KEYWORDS

Linguistic landscape; commercial signage; Arabic; English; Hebrew; Palestine

ABSTRACT

This study looks at the linguistic landscape in Huwwara, a Palestinian town in the north of the West Bank located in Area C, which is, in line with the Oslo II accord, under Israeli control. Two areas on the main street of Huwwara were investigated: Huwwara center and Huwwara outskirts. Bottom-up signs in both areas were classified according to the languages they were written in. The signs were further classified according to language choice on the signs of businesses in each area. The aim of this study was to investigate the presence of different languages in the linguistic landscape of a Palestinian town where Arabic, English and Hebrew are in contact. A total of 297 signs were analysed. It was found that Arabic is the most prevalent language in the linguistic landscape in the two investigated areas. In addition, it was found that there is a strong presence of Hebrew on the outskirts of Huwwara, mainly on signs of automotive and household businesses. English, on the other hand, was found to have a moderate presence in Huwwara with no difference between the two areas investigated. These results suggest that the use of Arabic has both an informational and a symbolic function, whilst the use of Hebrew has an informational function, and the use of English has a symbolic function.

1. Introduction

Arabic is the only official language of Palestine. Nonetheless, many Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza speak English which comes second in status which is "reflected in the importance and extensive use of English in many institutions of higher education" (Amara 2003: 218), and Hebrew, which is "confined predominantly to the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and to some extent, as a component of limited bilingualism among certain Palestinians who have worked in Israeli towns as manual laborers or served time in Israeli jails, usually as political prisoners" (Horesh 2020: 3). Consequently, Arabic, English, and Hebrew have come to be in a contact situation in Palestine, and this language contact is clearly visible in the public and commercial signage of some Palestinian towns. This paper aims at investigating the languages used in shop signs in Huwwara, a Palestinian town located in Area C, and the significance of multilingual usage in signs in this town.

2 Literature Review

2.1 A brief overview of linguistic landscape research

Linguistic landscape (LL) research is a relatively new field of inquiry. In their seminal paper, Landry and Bourhis (1997) define the LL as "The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings" (p. 25). Gorter (2013) argues that this definition of the LL is not inclusive as it only lists six types of signs. Other types have been introduced due to technological advancements such as "electronic flat-panel displays, LED neon lights, foam boards, electronic message centers, interactive touch screens, inflatable signage, and scrolling banners" (Gorter 2013, p. 191). Therefore, the analysis of the LL should include consideration of any written form in any medium.

The study of the LL involves more than simply the presence of different languages in signs of different sorts. Shohamy and Ben-Rafael's (2015) definition of the LL suggests that it also involves "representation, meanings and interpretation of languages

displayed in public places" (p.1). Landry and Bourhis (1997) demonstrate that signs could be informative as well as symbolic. For example, the use of English in shop signs could have an informational function in that it is aimed at foreign visitors, but it could also be symbolic of prestige and modernity (Gorter and Cenoz 2008; Dimova 2007; Friedrich 2002; Griffin 2004; Schlick 2003).

Signs can be classified into two types: top-down and bottom-up signs (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006, Backhaus 2006, Huebner 2006, Cenoz and Gorter 2006). Top-down signs are official signs placed by the government in public spaces, and language choice adheres to language policies. Non-official signs, in contrast, are placed in public spaces by individuals or private organizations, and they are more flexible in terms of language choices and patterns of use. As Ben-Rafael et al. (2006, p. 10) demonstrate, "The main difference between these two wide categories of LL elements resides in the fact that the former [top-down] are expected to reflect a general commitment to the dominant culture while the latter [bottom-up] are designed much more freely according to individual strategies." In addition, Nikoloau (2016) makes a distinction between two types of shop signs based on the displayed pattern of textual arrangement: primary texts and secondary texts. Primary texts, he suggests, are texts that consist of the shop name and type, whereas secondary texts include other information such as special offers and opening hours.

2.2 The geopolitical organization of the West Bank

Palestine is internationally recognized as an occupied state. It is also acknowledged that Israeli settlements in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 are illegal. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, which was adopted in 2016, states that "the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law" (p.2). According to the Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics, the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, reached 688,262 by the end of 2018 (PCBS 2019).

In 1996, the Oslo II accord was signed between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel which resulted in dividing the West Bank into three areas, namely, A, B, and C. In line with this accord, the Palestinian Authority takes responsibility of civil affairs and security in Area A, Area B is administered by both the Palestinian Authority, which is responsible for civil affairs, and Israel, which has control over security, and Israel takes control over Area C which constitutes around 60% of the lands of the West Bank. In fact, most, if not all, of the Israeli settlements are built in Area C, and Israeli settlers are allowed to travel freely through these areas. Palestinians, on the other hand, do not enjoy the same freedom of movement.

2.3. Research setting

This research takes the town of Huwwara as a case study. Huwwara is a Palestinian town located 8 kilometers to the south of Nablus, the biggest governorate in the north of Palestine. Around 38% of its lands fall into Area B, whereas the remaining 62% percent fall into Area C. This makes for a situation which is highly amenable to a study of contact phenomena, including language contact. According to the Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics, the population of Huwwara reached 6,659 by the end of 2017 (PCBS 2018). All of the residents of Huwwara are Palestinians from similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds who speak Arabic as their native language. In addition, some residents speak English and/or Hebrew as their L2 and/or L3. English is studied in Palestinian schools from the 1st grade, and many Palestinian labourers with permits to work in Israel and business owners in towns partially located in Area C speak Hebrew. This situation has given rise, over time, to a situation of what Sridhar (1996) calls 'societal multilingualism' (p.48) where most individuals are monolingual, but society as a whole is multilingual.

To summarise, Huwwara happens to have a highly strategic location as it is positioned on the only main street that connects Palestinian cities in the north of the West Bank to the cities in the south, and in turn, it connects the settlements in the north of the West Bank to the settlements in the south. In addition, many surrounding Palestinian towns are connected to Huwwara through access roads. Therefore, going through this town is unavoidable for many Palestinians and Israeli settlers travelling from north to south, and vice versa. As a result, Huwwara has become infamous for its traffic jams. This being the case, Huwwara has turned into an economic center, even for Israeli settlers. Ujvari (2019) points out that car mechanics, car spare parts shops, and sanitary ware shops in Huwwara have taken advantage of this situation and started offering their goods and services to Israeli settlers. Therefore, Hebrew (as this paper attempts to show) is salient on the signs of these businesses.

2.4 Language policy and linguistic landscape in Palestine

Research on the LL and language policy in Palestine is scant. The Palestinian law on signs and advertisement billboards clearly states that Arabic must be the salient language in private signs, and that it must be given prominence in comparison to any other language in such signs (MOLG 1997). In cities located in Area A, top-down signs follow this pattern; most of the signs are Arabic-English bilingual ones with text in Arabic placed above, or side-by-side with, text in English. Bottom-up signs, however, do not necessarily abide by the official language policy. Farran and Hortobágyi (2020) found that around 65% of bottom-up signs in Rubab Street, Ramallah are, in fact, English monolingual.

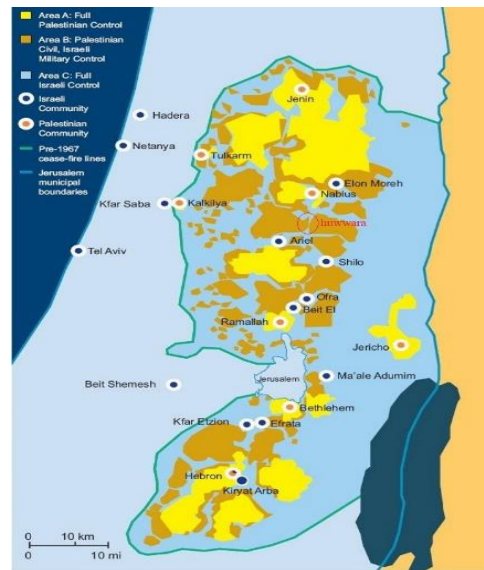


Figure 1. Map of Areas A, B, and C (n.d).

In Huwwara, top-down signs can be classified into two types: signs put in place by the Israeli government, such as road signs, and signs put in place by the Palestinian Authority, such as signs outside official Palestinian offices and other official buildings in the town. Road signs tend to be trilingual as they are put in place by the Israeli government since most of Huwwara is labelled as Area C. Placing Hebrew above other languages, namely, Arabic and English, on road signs in Palestinian towns located in Area C is symbolic of the Israeli dominance over these areas. As Gorter (2013) suggests, placing Hebrew on top in signs in the old city of Jerusalem after it came under Israeli control in 1967 “demonstrates the Israeli rule and dominance of Hebrew” (p.5). Top-down signs in Huwwara put in place by the Palestinian Authority tend to include text which is either monolingual Arabic or bilingual Arabic-English.

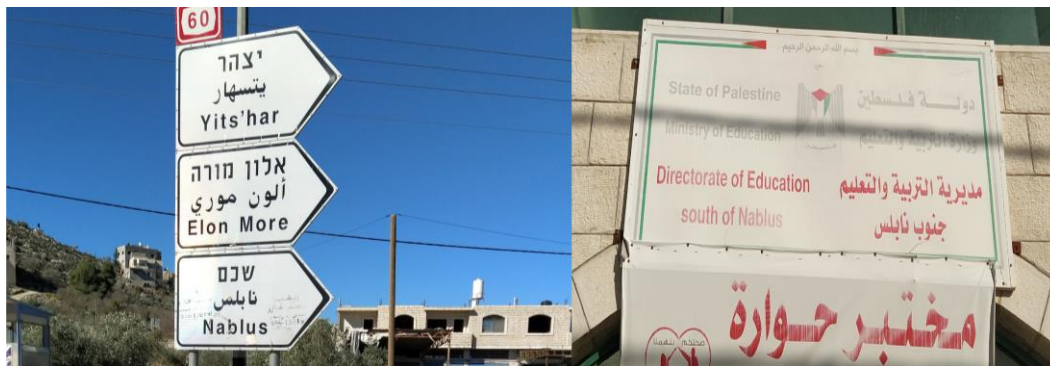


Figure 2. Top-down sign put in place by the Israeli government (left) versus top-down sign put in place by the Palestinian government (right) in Huwwara.

2.5 The rules of signs

Spolsky and Cooper (1991, p.81-84) propose a three-condition model for language choice on signs depending on the agent and the audience. These conditions are 1) the sign writer’s skills, 2) who the presumed readers are, and 3) the symbolic value associated with the signs. The first condition assumes that the sign writer is able to read, write, and speak the language they write on signs to a certain degree of proficiency. The second condition implies that the choice of language depends on the audience, who could be expected to read the signs. Finally, the third condition asserts that language choice depends on the symbolic value of the language with which businesses want to be identified, values such as power, prestige, and language loyalty. Spolsky and Cooper (1991) argue that the first condition is necessary, whereas the second and third conditions are typical but not necessary. In some recent work, Nikolaou (2016) has argued that the first condition has proven to be weak because some signs may be commissioned to sign makers by people who do not necessarily have knowledge of the language.

2.6 Research questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the signs in two different areas in Huwwara, namely, Huwwara center and Huwwara outskirts, to investigate language choice in each area. Three specific questions were asked:

1. Which languages are salient on bottom-up signs in Huwwara as a whole?
2. Is the LL in Huwwara center different from that in the outskirts? If so, why?
3. To what extent does the type of business affect language choice on bottom-up signs?

3. Methodology

A total of 297 bottom-up signs on the main street of Huwwara were analyzed. The signs were then allocated to two areas: Huwwara center and Huwwara outskirts. As shown in figure 3, the outskirts area extends from point 1 to point 2, and from point 3 to point 4 with a distance of approximately 2 km. A total of 161 signs were identified as being located along this stretch. The area comprising Huwwara center extends from point 2 to point 3, a total distance of approximately 900 m. A total of 136 signs located in this area were identified. Signs found in the suburbs or neighborhoods around Huwwara. In addition, official signs such as road signs, signs linked to government offices and banks were excluded from this study because language choices in these signs are governed by official language policies, an element which falls outside the scope of this paper. The main purpose of the study is to analyze signs of private establishments owned by individuals and to investigate the language choice motives of those responsible for these signs.

This study draws upon Spolsky and Cooper's (1991) model of language choice on signs. Moreover, it takes on Gorter and Cenoz's (2006) view on the unit of analysis of signs in that the establishment as a whole is considered as a unit of analysis rather than individual signs. As a result, businesses on the main street with more than one sign are considered as a single unit of analysis; if a given business has two signs, one written in Arabic and the other in Hebrew, it is considered to have one Arabic-Hebrew bilingual sign. Furthermore, only primary texts, which are texts that consist of the shop name and type (Nikolaou 2016), were analysed whereas, signs in the interior were disregarded. Units of analysis were classified according to 1) the occurrence of languages on signs in each area, 2) type and number of businesses in each area, and 3) the languages displayed on the signs of each business. Signs of businesses were classified according to the goods and services they offer.

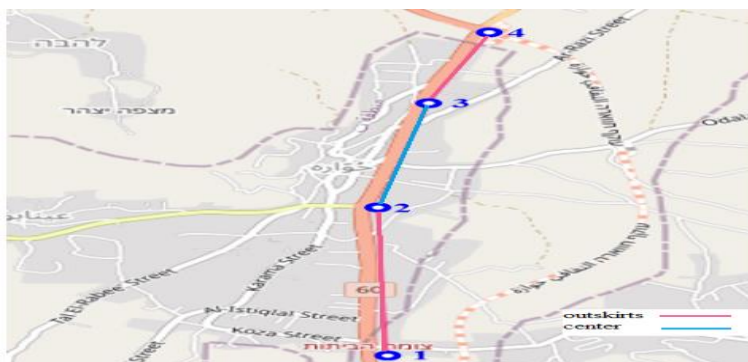


Figure 3. Context in which research was carried out

4. Results

As mentioned above, a total of 297 shop signs on the main street of Huwwara were analyzed. As can be seen in Table 1, the distribution of signs on the outskirts ($n = 161$) is slightly higher than in the center ($n = 136$). However, given the difference in distance covered by the two stretches, the density of shops in the center is higher (6.61 meters per shop) compared to the density of shops on the outskirts (12.4 meters per shop).

Table 1. Sign distribution by location in Huwwara

Signs location	N	%	km
Huwwara center	136	45.79	0.9
Huwwara outskirts	161	54.21	2
Total	297	100	2.9

4.1 Language presence based on the area

Examination of language presence on bottom-up signs in Huwwara center versus Huwwara outskirts reveals a notable difference in the distribution of monolingual and bilingual signs between the two areas. The majority of signs in Huwwara center are monolingual. As can be seen in Table 2, 76.47% of the signs in the center are Arabic monolingual, and only 2.21% of the signs are English monolingual. Hebrew monolingual signs, on the other hand, are not found in the center. Bilingual and trilingual signs in Huwwara center are not common; Arabic-English bilingual signs can be found on 12.50% of signs whereas Arabic-Hebrew bilingual signs accounted for only 8.09% of the signs examined. Moreover, no trilingual signs were found in Huwwara center. When signs in the center are combined according to the language, the presence of Arabic accounts for 97.79% of the total number of signs, which makes it the most prevalent language in the area. English and Hebrew appear on 14.71% and 8.09% of the signs, respectively.



Figure 4. Arabic monolingual sign - Convenience store

In the outskirts of Huwwara, monolingual Arabic signs constitute 32.30% of the total number of signs, whilst 4.35% of the signs are English monolingual ones, and Hebrew monolingual signs account for only 0.62% of the total. Bilingual signs on the outskirts are significantly more common than in the center. The majority of signs on the outskirts are Arabic-Hebrew bilingual as they constitute 50.93% of the total number of signs, whereas Arabic-English signs account for 4.35% only. There are hardly any trilingual signs in the outskirts. However, three patterns of trilingual signs were found: Arabic-English-Hebrew, Arabic-English-Russian, and Arabic-Hebrew-Russian. Together, these constitute 4.97% of the total number of signs: 3.73%, 0.62%, and 0.62%, respectively. When signs are combined according to language, Arabic appears on 95.03% of the signs, Hebrew appears on 55.90%, and English appears on 15.53%. Russian, by contrast, is only found on 1.24% of the signs. This being said, Arabic is the most prevalent language on the signs found in the outskirts as it is in the center. However, Hebrew appears on more than half of the signs found in the outskirts, which makes it quite salient as well.

Table 2. The presence of language in each area (% of each area's total signs).

	Huwwara center	Huwwara outskirts
Monolingual items		
Arabic	76.47% (n = 104)	32.30% (n = 52)
English	2.21% (n = 4)	4.35% (n = 7)
Hebrew	0% (n = 0)	0.62% (n = 1)
Bilingual items		
Arabic + English	12.50% (n = 17)	6.83% (n = 11)
Arabic + Hebrew	8.09% (n = 11)	50.93% (n = 82)
Trilingual items		

Arabic + English + Hebrew	0% (n = 0)	3.73% (n = 6)
Arabic + English + Russian	0% (n = 0)	0.62% (n = 1)
Arabic + Hebrew + Russian	0% (n = 0)	0.62% (n = 1)
Total	100% (n = 136)	100% (n = 161)



Figure 5. English monolingual sign - Electrical shop.

4.2 Language presence according to the type of business

Businesses were categorized into 10 different categories. As can be seen in Table 3, the most common businesses on the main street of Huwwara are automotive services/spare parts shops, convenience stores, house/sanitary ware stores, and restaurants, respectively. "Other businesses" include private offices, toy shops, vets, and pet shops. In addition, the table shows that automotive services/spare parts shops and house/sanitary ware stores are most common on the outskirts, whereas the most common businesses in the center are convenience stores, restaurants, and "other businesses".

Table 3. Sign distribution by business type in Huwwara center versus Huwwara outskirts.

Type of business	Huwwara center	Huwwara outskirts	Total
Automotive services/spare parts shops	28.75% (n = 26)	71.25% (n = 65)	100% (n = 91)
Convenience stores	68.75% (n = 22)	31.25% (n = 10)	100% (n = 32)
Restaurants	60% (n = 15)	40% (n = 10)	100% (n = 25)
Coffee/pastry shops	50% (n = 10)	50% (n = 10)	100% (n = 20)
Personal care/fitness	20% (n = 1)	80% (n = 4)	100% (n = 5)
Clothing stores	50% (n = 3)	50% (n = 3)	100% (n = 6)
house/sanitary ware stores	37.5 (n = 15)	62.5% (n = 24)	100% (n = 39)
Craftsmen workshops	12.5% (n = 1)	87.5% (n = 7)	100% (n = 8)
Healthcare stores	37.5% (n = 3)	62.5% (n = 5)	100% (n = 8)
Other businesses	63.49% (n = 40)	36.51% (n = 23)	100% (n = 63)
Total	45.64% (n = 136)	54.36% (n = 161)	100% (n = 297)



Figure 6. Arabic-Hebrew bilingual sign - Car mechanic

Table 4. The presence of languages on signs of businesses in Huwara center.

Huwara Center	Arabic	English	Hebrew	Arabic English bilingual	Arabic Hebrew bilingual	Arabic English Hebrew trilingual	Arabic English Russian trilingual	Arabic Hebrew Russian trilingual	Total
Automotive services/spare parts shops	69.23% (n = 18)	-	-	7.69% (n = 2)	23.08% (n = 6)	-	-	-	100% (n = 26)
Convenience stores	90.91% (n = 20)	4.55% (n = 1)	-	4.55% (n = 1)	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 22)
Restaurants	86.67% (n = 13)	-	-	6.67% (n = 1)	6.67% (n = 1)	-	-	-	100% (n = 15)
Coffee/pastry shops	40% (n = 4)	10% (n = 1)	-	50% (n = 5)	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 10)
Personal care/fitness	100% (n = 1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 1)
Clothing stores	100% (n = 3)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 3)
house/sanitary ware stores	73.33% (n = 11)	-	-	6.76% (n = 1)	20% (n = 3)	-	-	-	100% (n = 15)
Craftsmen workshops	100% (n = 1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 1)
Healthcare stores	33.33% (n = 1)	-	-	66.67% (n = 2)	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 3)
Other businesses	80% (n = 32)	5% (n = 2)	-	12.5% (n = 5)	2.5% (n = 1)	-	-	-	100% (n = 40)

Total	76.47% (n = 104)	2.21% (n = 4)	-	12.50% (n = 17)	8.09% (n = 11)	-	-	136
-------	---------------------	------------------	---	--------------------	-------------------	---	---	-----

As can be seen in Tables 5 and 6, language choice differs significantly depending on the area. In Huwwara center, monolingual Arabic signs are the most common type of signs. The majority of businesses, including automotive services/spare parts shops (69.23%), convenience stores (90.91%), restaurants (86.67%), and house/sanitary ware stores (73.33%), place Arabic on their signs. Hebrew can be found on signs of mainly two types of businesses, namely, automotive services/spare parts shops (23.08%) and household goods stores (20%). Still, Hebrew in Huwwara center is not very salient compared to Arabic. The use of English on signs is limited and can be found mainly on signs of coffee/pastry shops (60%).



Figure 7. Arabic-English bilingual sign - Coffee shop

On the outskirts, Arabic-Hebrew bilingual signs are the most common type of signs of certain businesses, namely, automotive services/spare parts shops (81.54%), house/sanitary ware stores (45.83%), and restaurants (60%). Moreover, Arabic-Hebrew bilingual signs are also common signs found in convenience stores (40%) and craftsmen workshops (57.14%). The majority of monolingual Arabic signs can be found on signs of "other businesses" (43.48%). English in the outskirts of Huwwara can be mainly found on signs of personal care/fitness businesses (75%) and coffee/pastry shops (30%). Surprisingly, Russian was found on signs of two businesses, namely, house/sanitary ware stores and health care.

Table 5. The presence of languages on signs of businesses in Huwara center.

Huwwara outskirts	Arabic	English	Hebrew	Arabic English bilingual	Arabic Hebrew bilingual	Arabic English Hebrew trilingual	Arabic English Russian trilingual	Arabic Hebrew Russian trilingual	Total
automotive services/spare parts shops	15.38% (n = 10)	1.54% (n = 1)	1.54% (n = 1)	-	81.54% (n = 53)	-	-	-	100% (n = 65)
Convenience stores	50% (n = 5)	-	-	10% (n = 1)	40% (n = 4)	-	-	-	100% (n = 10)
Restaurants	30% (n = 3)	10% (n = 1)	-	-	60% (n = 6)	-	-	-	100% (n = 10)
Coffee/pastry shops	60% (n = 6)	10% (n = 10)	-	20% (n = 2)	-	10% (n = 1)	-	-	100% (n = 10)
Personal care/fitness	25% (n = 1)	-	-	75% (n = 3)	-	-	-	-	100% (n = 4)

Clothing stores	66.67% (n = 2)	-	-	-	-	33.33% (n = 1)	-	-	100% (n = 3)
house/sanitary ware stores	37.5% (n = 9)	-	-	4.17% (n = 1)	45.83% (n = 11)	8.33% (n = 2)	-	4.17% (n = 1)	100% (n = 24)
Craftsmen workshops	42.86% (n = 3)	-	-	-	57.14% (n = 4)	-	-	-	100% (n = 7)
Healthcare stores	60% (n = 3)	-	-	20% (n = 1)	-	-	20% (n = 1)	-	100% (n = 5)
Other businesses	43.48% (n = 9)	17.39% (n = 4)	-	17.39% (n = 4)	17.39% (n = 4)	8.33% (n = 2)	-	-	100% (n = 23)
Total	32.30% (n = 52)	4.35% (n = 7)	0.62% (n = 1)	6.83% (n = 11)	50.93% (n = 82)	3.73% (n = 6)	0.62% (n = 1)	0.62% (n = 1)	161



Figure 8. Arabic-English-Hebrew trilingual sign - Snack bar

5. Discussion

Examination of bottom-up signs reveals that there is a strong presence of multilingual signs in the LL of Huwwara. However, language choice is dependent on 1) the area in which the sign is placed, and 2) the type of the business. Despite being only 2.9 km long, the patterns of signs on the main street change dramatically when travelling from the outskirts to the center of the town.



Figure 9. Western-style restaurant (left) versus traditional Palestinian restaurant (right) in Huwwara outskirts.

In Huwwara as a whole, Arabic can be found on most of the signs. The use of Arabic can be both informational and symbolic; it aims at informing the Palestinian population about the business and indicates that Arabic is an inseparable part of the

Palestinian identity. The symbolic value of Arabic is reflected in its use in signs that are associated with the Palestinian lifestyle and traditions such as restaurants that offer traditional Palestinian food. In addition, many businesses in Huwwara are named after the owners by placing their full name, family name, or *kunya* in signs. *Kunya* is a phenomenon widely spread in the Arab world where a person is called by the name of his oldest son as a way to show respect. In *Kunya*, 'Abu' (means father of) is followed by the name of the oldest son (Hedden 2007). Therefore, using Arabic script is necessary in naming such businesses as can be seen in signs in figures 6 and 9, which read "Abu Ali Al-Asmar's Garage" and "Abu Tamer's Restaurant", respectively. On the outskirts, Arabic can be found on almost every sign as well. However, in certain types of businesses, namely, automotive services/spare parts shops and house/sanitary ware stores, Arabic is accompanied by Hebrew on more than half of the signs. However, the occurrence of Hebrew is found to be less frequent in the center. This contrast in language choices can be argued to be attributed to economic motivations.

As can be seen in Table 3, the total number of automotive and household businesses is 91 and 39, respectively. It is hardly likely that these businesses are only aimed at a town with a population of approximately 7000. Indeed, these businesses are aimed at passers-by as tens of thousands drive through the main street of Huwwara on a daily basis, including Israeli settlers. Some businesses on the outskirts opted for placing Hebrew on their signs to attract Israeli settlers, and indeed, this is the case. It is not uncommon to see Israeli settlers having their car repaired or washed on the outskirts of Huwwara. After all, automotive services are cheaper in the West Bank than in Israel. These findings are consistent with those of Ben-Rafael et al. (2006) who argue that the salience of Hebrew on commercial signs in Tira, an Arab town in Israel, is due to the economic interest of Palestinian-Israeli traders or professionals. In both cases, shop signs can be regarded as informative since they are aimed at attracting Israeli Jews to their businesses. Hebrew does not have a symbolic value for Palestinians. Ujvari (2019) demonstrates that Palestinians in general have negative attitudes towards Hebrew although they do not mind learning it.

The question that arises here is why Hebrew is more salient on signs of automotive and household businesses on the outskirts than in the center? One reason is that the outskirts offer more discretion for both Israeli settlers and business owners. Israeli settlers may prefer not to stop in a crowded area, maybe finding it safer to stop on the outskirts, at a distance from the centre of the town. In addition, there is a strong negative perception by Palestinians about doing business with Israeli settlers. Many believe that it is socially, morally, and religiously unacceptable to do business with Israeli settlers. In spite of this, there is a view among shop owners that it is necessary to do business with settlers, justification for this being that doing this is the only option for these businesses to survive amid the Palestinian economic crisis which the Israeli occupation is blamed for. Our intention here is not to judge or take sides in this argument.

Differences in language choice between the center and the outskirts can also be found on signs of other types of businesses. For example, some restaurants and convenience stores on the outskirts place Hebrew on their signs while Hebrew is found on only a few signs of such businesses in the center. This is because these businesses are mainly aimed to serve the Palestinian population even though these businesses do not mind serving Israeli settlers as well. In addition, restaurants and convenience stores tend to serve many people at the same time, so they tend to be crowded, especially in the center. Therefore, Israeli settlers may opt to avoid these places. Similarly, the Palestinian population may find it unacceptable to find settlers in these shops.

There is no clear evidence that English is more present in either of the two areas of Huwwara distinguished in this study. However, it can be seen that English, when it is used, is more likely to be found on signs of certain businesses such as barber shops, hairdressers, gyms and coffee and pastry shops. These shops are typically associated with youth, modernity, and prestige. Therefore, the use of English on bottom-up signs in Huwwara has a symbolic function. In addition, the presence of English in the streets of Palestinian cities and towns can be attributed to the "the high literacy rate among the Palestinians, who understand both Arabic and English as well as the prestigious dimension related to the language as a *Lingua Franca* for the whole world" (Farran and Hortobágyi, 2020, p. 256).

Surprisingly, Russian was found on two signs in the outskirts even though it is uncommon to find native speakers of Russian in Palestine or even speakers of Russian as foreign/second language. On investigation, it was found that Russian has a symbolic value for the owners of these businesses; one is a dentist who completed his studies in Russia, and the other is a carpet shop owner who has spent some time in Russia. This suggests that these people may wish to be identified as having some sort of Russian connection.

These findings support the second and third conditions of language choice on signs discussed by Spolsky and Cooper (1991). The use of Arabic and Hebrew has an economic motivation to make Palestinian and Israeli settlers familiar with the products and services available in the shops. By contrast, the use of English, and to some extent Russian, can be said to be symbolic of modernity and language loyalty.

6. Conclusion

Examination of the LL of the Palestinian town of Huwwara located in Area C revealed that Arabic is the most prevalent language in the town as a whole. However, when comparing the LL of Huwwara center versus Huwwara outskirts, it becomes clear that there is a very strong presence of Hebrew on the outskirts, but not in the center, especially on signs of automotive and household businesses. The presence of Hebrew on the outskirts but not in the center can be attributed to discretion. Israeli settlers may find it safer to stop in the outskirts, thus further from the centre of the town, partly for reasons to do with discretion. In addition, many Palestinians are against doing business with Israeli settlers. Therefore, shop owners tend to place Hebrew on signs in the outskirts to avoid criticism.

In addition, it was found that English has a moderate presence in Huwwara. In Palestine, English has a symbolic value as the language of youth and modernity. In line with this, the presence of English was found on signs of businesses associated with modern lifestyles such as gyms and coffee shops. This being said, language choices in Huwwara adhere to the conditions governing such choices on signs proposed by Spolsky and Cooper (1991): the use of Arabic on signs adheres to the second condition, which states that language choice depends on the audience, as well as with the third condition, which states that language choice can be attributed to the symbolic value of the language. The use of Hebrew, on the other hand, adheres to the second rule as it has an informational function only. The use of English and Russian adheres to the third rule; globally, English is indicative of modernity, while Russian in Huwwara has symbolic value for the few who speak and want to be associated with it.

Research on LL in Palestine is scant. Therefore, further research on the LL in Palestinian towns and cities is recommended. This study only investigates bottom-up signs in Huwwara. Further studies could study top-down signage in Palestinian cities and towns and compare the LL in Palestinian cities and towns located in Areas A, B, and C.

References

- [1] Amara, M. (2003). Recent foreign language education policies in Palestine. *Language problems & language planning*, 27(3),217-232. doi:10.1075/lplp.27.3.02ama.
- [2] Backhaus, P. (2006). Multilingualism in Tokyo: A Look into the Linguistic Landscape. *International Journal of Multilingualism*. 3. 52-66. doi:10.1080/14790710608668385.
- [3] Ben-Rafael, E., Shohamy, E., Hasan Amara, M., & Trumper-Hecht, N. (2006). Linguistic Landscape as Symbolic Construction of the Public Space: *The Case of Israel*. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 3(1), 7–30. doi:10.1080/14790710608668383
- [4] Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2006). *Linguistic Landscape and Minority Languages*. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 3(1), 67–80. doi:10.1080/14790710608668386
- [5] Dimova, S. (2007). English shop signs in Macedonia: Cultivating a linguistic landscape. *English Today*, 23(3&4), 18–24. doi:10.1017/S0266078407003057
- [6] Farran, B., & Hortobágyi, I. (2020). The Linguistic Landscape of Ramallah, Palestine: A Case Study of Analysing the Dominance of English vs. Arabic as L1 in the Main Street of the City. *SYNERGY*, 16(2), 242–258.
- [7] Griffin, J. L. (2004). The presence of written English on the streets of Rome: A review of English in Italy, with evidence of its infiltration into the public life. *English Today*, 20(2), 3–8. doi:10.1017/S0266078404002020
- [8] Gorter, D. (2013). Linguistic Landscape in a Multilingual World. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33, 190-212. doi:10.1017/S0267190513000020
- [9] Gorter D., Cenoz J. (2008) Knowledge about Language and Linguistic Landscape. In: Hornberger N.H. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer, Boston, MA. doi:10.1007/978-0-387-30424-3_160
- [10] Hedden, Heather. (2007). Arabic names. [The Indexer: The International Journal of Indexing](#) (2007), 25(3), 0-6.
- [11] Horesh, U. (2020). Palestinian dialects and identities shifting across physical and virtual borders, *Multilingua* (published online ahead of print 2020), 000010151520200104. doi:10.1515/multi-2020-0104
- [12] Huebner, T. (2006). Bangkok's Linguistic Landscapes: Environmental Print, Codemixing and Language Change. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 3(1), 31-51. doi:10.1080/14790710608668384
- [13] Isleem, M. (2015) Druze linguistic landscape in Israel: indexicality of new ethnolinguistic identity boundaries. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 12 (1), 13-30. doi:10.1080/14790718.2013.868467
- [14] Landry, R., & Bourhis, R. Y. (1997). Linguistic landscape and ethnolinguistic vitality: An empirical study. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 16, 23–49.
- [15] [Map of Areas A,B, and C]. (n.d). Retrieved on February 11 from [claire-voltaire.medium.com/settle-down-12b679c6a50e]
- [16] Nikolaou, A. (2016). Mapping the linguistic landscape of Athens: The case of shop signs. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 14(2), 160–182. doi:10.1080/14790718.2016.1159209
- [17] Palestinian Ministry of Local Government (1997). *Law of signs and advertising billboards*. Retrieved on 13 March, 2021 from <http://www.molq.pna.ps/AR/Categories/73/#> (in Arabic).
- [18] PCBS Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2019). Israeli Settlements in Palestine - Annual Statistical Report. Ramallah: PCBS. Retrieved on 29 March, 2021 from [www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/SETT8E-2019.html] (in Arabic)
- [19] Schlick, M. (2003). The English of shop signs in Europe. *English Today*, 19(1), 3–17. doi:10.1017/S0266078403001019
- [20] Shohamy, E., & Ben-Rafael, E. (2015). Linguistic landscape: A new journal. *Linguistic Landscape*, 1(1/2), 1–5. doi:10.1075/ll.1.1-2.001int
- [21] Spolsky, B. and Cooper, R. (1991) *The Languages of Jerusalem*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- [22] Sridhar, K.K. (1996) Societal Multilingualism. In: McKay, S.L. and Hornberger, N.H., Eds., *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 47-70. doi:10.1017/cbo9780511551185.005
- [23] Ujvari, M.M. (2019). The Effect of Linguistic Landscape on Palestinian's Language Attitudes towards Hebrew in the West Bank. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Translation*, 2(4), 01-11. doi: 10.32996/ijllt.2019.2.4.1
- [24] UN Security Council, *Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) [on cessation of Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem]*, 23 December 2016, S/RES/2334 (2016), available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/587f347a4.html> [accessed 30 January 2021]