THE ABSTRACT FOR MULTILINGUALISM IN ANKARA: A LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE STUDY

The study of analyzing public signs in a bounded area, as micro-level as a street or as macro level as a city, to find the socio-cultural and socio-linguistic structures of the area is called Linguistic Landscape Studies (LLS). Turkey has been under the influence of many different cultures, hence non-local varieties. This can easily be observed simply by looking at the signs located in the streets. Literature focusing on other contexts than Turkey is abundant with research determining how different a chosen area may be linguistically given the cultures that encompass the area. However, LLS is a recent field in Turkey and only a few studies have been conducted so far with limited data (İnal et al., 2020). For this reason, the researchers have carried on the most comprehensive LLS in Turkey by investigating a total of 1000 signs all over Turkey's capital, Ankara. Data has been collected over the period of ten months. Data include sign photographs from the most central vicinities laying out the essence of Ankara, including Cankaya, Altindag, Mamak, Etimesgut, Keçioren, Akyurt, and Yenimahalle. Some researchers contributing to the literature have studied how official and commercial signs differ linguistically (Backhaus, 2006) while some have studied what functions the signs carry (Fakhiroh et al., 2018). In light of existing literature, the present study has utilized similar approaches to evaluate the signs and componentize the study into several fractions such as the most prominent language, monolingual, bilingual, and plurilingual language distribution, and several other scales. The preliminary findings suggest that the native language, Turkish, and the lingua franca, English, dominate Ankara's linguistic landscape succeeded by less dominating languages such as Arabic. The most prominent minority language, Kurdish, was rarely seen. The study, having analyzed the linguistic landscapes, includes implications for policy-making, language planning, and Turkey's overall multilingual stance.

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