As a burgeoning research domain, Linguistic Landscape (LL) has recently received more attention in sociolinguistic studies. The publication of several books (Backhaus, 2007), edited volumes (e.g., Blackwood, Lanza and Woldemariam, 2016), and even an independent international journal (Journal of Linguistic Landscape) bears testimony to the vitality of this area of research.

The linguistic landscape of the Mediterranean: French and Italian coastal cities is a new book written by Robert Blackwood and Stefania Tufi, two researchers whose publications on the topic have already received several citations in the literature. This book provides a very interesting account of a large survey research done in the coastal region of the Mediterranean Sea. The book is comprised of an introduction followed by seven other chapters through each of which the LL of one region in the Mediterranean Sea is reported and analyzed from a particular theoretical framework.

The opening chapter is entitled ‘An introduction to the Mediterranean linguistic landscapes’, in which the authors furnish readers with a very analytic review of the previous studies and their own contributions to the field of LL. Following that, they introduce the methodology of their research based on Backhaus (2007). In terms of coding the signage, they have capitalized on their previous works (e.g. Tufi and Blackwood, 2010) and in selecting the survey areas they have employed a pragmatic approach, i.e. for each survey area they...
surveyed 50-metre stretches of 20 sites. The authors both have a very profound and professional command of the area, hence making the first chapter a very interesting read. In this introduction, they also define the key terms (e.g. multilingualism, plurilingualism and dialect) that permeate the whole book.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of language change and management in France and Italy. The authors employ Spolsky’s (2004) framework in language policy to discuss the LL issues in these two countries. In this chapter, the authors argue that polycentricism and linguistic diversity were advocated and promoted in Italy. As a country in which a myriad of languages are spoken, the authors, with references to recent surveys and studies, claim that vernaculars are still vibrant and spoken at least in more intimate milieus. The next part of this chapter gives a brief history of the unification process, compulsory education and higher tax payment for English in commercial signs in Italy. Also highlighted in this chapter is how the German language and German architectural style were banned in northern Italy, in spite of its tourist-attracting function. One more interesting part of this chapter is related to the Fascist language policies in Italy that banned foreign words, imposed Italian upon national minorities and promoted the eradication of dialects from both public and private domains. In brief, this chapter shows how political-ideological discourses along with socio-economic developments in Italy and France have manipulated the public space.

Chapter 2 maneuvers on the LL of the Ligurian Sea, an arm of the Mediterranean Sea between the Italian Riviera and the Island of Corsica. The focus is on Nice, Monaco and Genoa, which lie on the borderlands between France and Italy. These three locales are attractive for LL analysis as they have been historically usurped and occupied by different countries. More specifically, this chapter reports on the visibility of regional languages and dialects, e.g. Nissart and Monegasque, in the LL of Nice and Monaco. This chapter shows which languages or dialects are acknowledged widely in the landscape. In order to familiarize the reader with each of these places, the authors initially provide the reader with a very concise historical and sociolinguistic overview of Nice, Monaco and Genoa and the spread of different languages in different survey areas therein. Nice, as the fifth largest city in France, is the first site of LL analysis. Although Nice has been occupied and resided in by Italians for a long time, there is a minimal presence of the Italian language in its landscape. French and English, however, have a more dominant presence there. Nissart, once on the verge of decimation, is a dialect spoken in Nice and Monaco but is recently being revived. As a local dialect, although Nissart was used in cultural and historical artefacts and by local football fans, it did not have a respectable presence in the LL of Nice.
The second location surveyed in this chapter is Monaco. Although the LL in Monaco is largely multilingual, Monegasque, the regional language, does not have a wide presence. The last LL site was Genoa. In Genoa, the authors survey Genoese and migrant languages displayed in the landscape. In this chapter the authors strive to examine how language has the potential to differentiate borderlands. The authors contend how languages perform the act of bordering in these cities. Hence, this chapter will be very interesting for the reader interested in the studies of minority, regional or unofficial languages and dialects.

Chapter 3 is titled ‘Peripherality in the border areas: Trieste and Northern Catalonia’. In this chapter, the authors survey the LL of Friuli-Venezia Giulia (FVG) and Northern Catalonia by taking a centre-periphery paradigm. The focus of this chapter, in other words, is on two other countries, namely Spain to the west and Slovenia to the east, neighboring the Mediterranean Sea and affecting the LL in the French and Italian territories. They concentrate on Slovenian and Triestino in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (in Italy) and Catalan and Castilian Spanish in Northern Catalonia (in France). In this chapter, like the previous one, the authors first provide the reader with a concise and informative history and sociolinguistics of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Trieste and Northern Catalonia and then report on the display of official and minority languages/dialects in their landscapes. More specifically, the authors survey how the three main European language families, i.e. Romance, Germanic and Slavonic, are displayed or downplayed in the LL of Friuli-Venezia Giulia (FVG). FVG hosts languages and dialects including Triestino and other Venetan varieties, Slovenian varieties, and Italian. Since FVG is neighboring Slovenia, the authors focus on Slovenian in its landscape. Also Triestino, as the local dialect of the region, is surveyed. Their survey results showed that Italian was dominant. Other languages in the landscape were Chinese, Danish, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Slovenian, Spanish, Russian, Triestino and Turkish. The results of the survey in Northern Catalonia, on the other hand, showed that French was the dominant language and other minority languages including Catalan, English, German, Greek, Italian, Latin and Spanish were marginally present in comparison to French.

Chapter 4 reports on the insularity of the LL of the capitals of the three Islands of Corsica, Sardinia and Sicily. Similar to the previous two chapters, the authors first give a historical and sociolinguistic overview of the three Islands and their capitals. The authors start with Sicily and its capital, Palermo. They surveyed the area to spot Sicilian and migrant languages in the LL of Palermo. The results of the LL survey of Palermo showed that 74.5% of them featured Italian as the
sole language and 14% had Italian together with other languages. Local and regional forms of Sicilian were identified in 48 signs (0.45 per cent) in graffiti, commercial signs on vans, on restaurants and other eating establishments, and on clothing items for sale. The results of this section also show that migrant languages are visible in the LL of Palermo. Among the migrants, the authors refer to the Bangladeshi migrants who struggle to land appropriate jobs in spite of their educational background. They also refer to the Ghanaian migrants and their businesses and language and identity displays in the landscape. In the next part of this chapter, the authors present their data on Sardinia and its capital Cagliari. The authors argue that Sardinian has gone to the periphery and a gradual shift to Italian has occurred. This can be seen in the inconspicuous presence of Sardinian in the landscape of Cagliari. The authors conducted 20 surveys, 12 in the city of Cagliari and eight others around the city, and came to the conclusion that Italian (79%) had a more visible presence in the landscape of the city of Cagliari. The results also indicated that in Cagliari and its environs, migrant languages had a very marginal presence. The last part of this chapter pivots around the LL of Corsica Island and its capital Ajaccio. Like the previous parts, the authors initially provide the readers with a concise history and sociolinguistics of Corsica. In this part the authors note that Corsica was a diglossic community for a long time where Tuscan Italian and Corsican had the H and L status respectively. In this section, the authors discuss that in the early ’80s Corsica began to be recognized in the LL but later its use as the co-official language along with French was struck down and disapproved. The results of the survey showed that French (82%) was the dominant language in the LL of Corsica. However, Corsican language was also visible either as the sole language or in combination with French. The results of this section showed that Corsica was less multilingual in landscape in comparison to Marseille and Sardinia discussed in the fifth chapter. This chapter is interesting and useful for the reader who would like to learn more about the instances of language management and revitalization. Corsica is a good example of these two phenomena.

Chapter 5 explores the social representations in the LL of the two ancient cities of Marseille and Naples. For so doing, the authors explore the LL of these two cities in France and Italy to divulge the social representation of both regional and migrant languages in their landscape. They first present social representation theory as the backbone of data analysis for this chapter. Then, they focus on the data collected and how the data can be discussed through social representation theory. The results obtained showed that both Marseille and Naples showcase Mediterranean stereotypes in their landscape. In this chapter,
like the previous chapters, the authors give a short and sweet account of the history and sociolinguistics of the two cities. An interesting part of this section is on the representation of Marseille in the media, especially in films, i.e. what languages are used in movies set in the city of Marseille. The authors also furnish us with short and interesting historical pieces of information about Naples and its place in the history of the Mediterranean region. All the information given in this section helps us better envisage the LL of the two cities. As the third most populated city in Italy, Naples has attracted people from different parts of the world and has therefore become an epitome of multilingual use and practice. However, the authors in this chapter try to investigate if multilingualism can also be observed in written form in its landscape. Like Marseille, Naples has historically been a good location for moviemakers. People in Naples, in the majority of these movies, have been shown speaking a Naples dialect with their traditions and customs, hence portraying a stereotypical image of people from Naples. The results of the survey indicated that in the ten most central districts of Marseille, French was the dominant language in 82% of the signs. In Naples, likewise, Italian either as the only language (69%) or in combination with other languages (14%) was the dominant language. In this chapter, rather than focusing on French and Italian in Marseille and Naples, the authors focus on two issues: How the regional languages and dialects form the public space and also which migrant languages have been brought in the landscape of these two cities by immigrants. Among the regional languages identified in the landscape of Marseille include Provençal as a language or a variety of Occitan. The authors bring the debates over the term Provençal and Occitan in the literature too. Although Provençal is locally used, it had only a minimal presence in some parts of Marseille. Another dominant migrant language in Marseille, according to the census in France, belongs to the Algerians and Comorians who speak Arabic. In spite of the presence of large Arabic-speaking communities in Marseille, Arabic was seen in only 45 of signs, which is quantitatively very marginal. The surveys also showed that the Neapolitan dialect is minimally present in Naples in spite of the use of this dialect not only in Naples but in some nearby areas. Neapolitan, in contrast to Provençal and Arabic in Marseille, had a presence in some not-surveyed areas as the sole language or in combination with Italian or English. The results also showed that Neapolitan was used by the younger generations in social media such as text-messages and e-mails. The authors have also brought some photos from the LL of Naples where Russian (for Ukrainians), Tamil (for Sri Lankans) and Chinese have been displayed. All in all, the results of the surveys presented in this chapter show that Marseille was less cosmopolitan in regards to
multilingualism in its landscape in comparison to the four other locations in France surveyed in the previous chapters. In the majority of the signs surveyed, French was unquestionably the dominant language.

Chapter 6 is on the ‘Cosmopolitan linguistic landscapes of the Mediterranean’. At first, the authors define cosmopolitanism from different perspectives and then analyze the LL in Italy and France by capitalizing on the theory of cosmopolitanism. The authors start with Italy and discuss how English – as a sign of cosmopolitanism, globalization and transnational flows – has become a pervasive language in the Italian landscape. In this part, the authors talk about Anglophilia and Italophilia. The authors have also reported on the invasion of English language into Italian. They argue that the purist position of Italian linguistics with regard to the proliferation of English words and expressions has been negligible. This part is valuable for those researchers interested in the global effect of English on other languages. In the next part of this chapter, the authors talk about the relationship between English and French in France. In contrast to English in Italy, which is welcomed by the Italians and has a prestigious position among them, the French have an Anglophobic approach to the English language. Nonetheless, English has invaded French language, and several words, especially from commerce and art, have profusely entered French. To discuss their results, the authors claim that English in the Italian LL has a wide range of cosmopolitan identities and functions including a sign of modernity, tourism, transnational cosmopolitanism and polylinguaging, *inter alia*. English also adds a cosmopolitan flavor to the businesses in the French LL. In brief, the authors argue how English language functions as a semiotic resource in the creation of city subjectivities. The authors further discuss how English as a global lingua franca has more visibility, currency and commodification in the LL of the cities along the Mediterranean coastline. Another interesting result presented in this chapter shows that English does not have a threatening presence in the LL of France and Italy and does not dominate the national languages of French and Italian but it does dominate the local and regional languages and dialects such as Corsican.

In the concluding chapter, the authors talk about ‘The transformative power of emplaced language’. Here, the authors discuss their findings from different perspectives, namely: national spaces, regional spaces and localized identities, transnational spaces and identities, and finally English and cosmopolitan spaces. The authors reiterate here that the two national languages, i.e. French and Italian, make the national space for the coastal regions in the Mediterranean Sea. The other languages visible in the LL include to a larger extent English and to a much lesser extent the regional dialects and languages. They also discuss how the
minority languages play out the role of providing regional space to the landscape and hence display a localized identity. In the last part of the conclusion, the authors conclude that ‘LL is constructed by people with competing motivations, desires, and tendencies’ (p. 214). In other words, all people living in a community are agents who create the LL based on their needs, desires, intentions and the reality they strive to show.

In brief, it should be noted here that in spite of the availability of some similar books in the literature, this book written by Robert Blackwood and Stefenia Tufi is the result of valuable research and is essential for those who intend to be informed of the most recent theoretical and methodological approaches and findings in the study of LL. I believe that the novelty of the method and theories in this book puts it among the best examples in the literature. As a result, this book is highly recommended to researchers and students in the field of LL, language policy, language and identity, multilingualism and minority languages/dialects.

References


(Received 22th April 2016; accepted 11th May 2016)