Research Article

Functional discourses of contemporary multilingualism in urban texts: A case study of three capital cities: Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg

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Abstract: Multilingualism plays an increasingly significant role in the urban landscapes of contemporary cities. A city does not speak just one language; instead, it speaks the languages of its users, i.e. residents, visitors, companies, organisations etc. By producing urban texts, they simultaneously contribute to the communicative community that is also open to the needs and expectations of individuals who remain there only temporarily. From this perspective, a city gradually becomes a linguistic melting pot, in which the linguistic needs of a society are manifested but which also acknowledges and generates these needs. These processes result in the growing scientific interest in different aspects of textualisation of the contemporary urban space. In this paper, we attempt to describe functional discourses in multilingual texts appearing in contemporary public space. The researched corpus comprises urban texts from three European capital cities: Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg. The applied research method is based on the functional discourses and supplemented with the basic criteria of multimodal analysis carried out depending on the language or languages used in the urban text, the genre and multimodal form of the urban text, its content and function, and communicative practice. As a result of combining and interpreting the available typologies of text types, we propose in the theoretical section 10 types of functional discourses. In the analytical part, we relate these discourse types to multilingual urban texts. Thus, we identify and analyse orientation, regulatory, commemorative, commercial, educational, artistic, protest, political, identity and alerting discourses.

Keywords: multilingualism, linguistic landscapes, urban texts, functional discourse

1 Outline of the issue[1]

Multilingualism in the public space is visible not only on road signs, information boards, shop signs, posters as well as commemorative plaques on buildings but also in the form of small advertisements, graffiti, stickers or any other messages appearing on mobile media such as cars or clothing. The public space itself is filled with semiotically diverse signs and messages that each day finds a vast audience of oftentimes random recipients: passers-by, shoppers, travellers at stations or airports, and persons strolling in the park or using public transport. All these people become – more or less consciously – recipients of the texts that contribute to **the information layer of a city** (cf. Jałowiecki & Łukowski, 2008; Warnke & Busse, 2014; Pütz & Mundt, 2019), not only determining the nature of urban space but also registering and

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consolidating in the social consciousness the phenomena and processes that are currently occurring in the language, culture, or social life. Urban space, understood as the product of human activity, uses a language that comprises means, forms and codes, creating texts that vary in terms of their formality and functionality. A city communicates in the sense that its users are also producers of the texts present in it. A text constitutes the city, making it a space in geographical understanding; it is evidenced by e.g. signs outlining administrative borders or distinctive street signs. Owing to text, the city creates also a communication space, a forum for exchanging information or a social space, forging a local or sometimes a global (e.g. European) identity (cf. Matyja, 2017; Moser, 2001). The modern, dynamic means of travelling and the professional, educational and social challenges result in the multilingual textualisation of the urban space. Such multilingualism is not a new phenomenon. However, its text types (e.g. new variants or profiles, Opiłowski, 2022), linguistic forms (e.g. linguistic styles and types of languages) and communicative practices (e.g. emotive practices in the text) are dynamic and ever-changing. Furthermore, the development of visual culture changes the way in which information is formulated and shared. The urban space overtakes these new communication practices typical for the media space, adapting them to its own needs and conditions.

The aim of this paper, situated in the area of **linguistic landscape** studies (cf. Landry & Bourhis, 1997; Auer, 2010; Schmitz, 2004, 2018; Ziegler & Marten, 2021), is to identify and perform multimodal analysis of functional discourses in multilingual texts present in the public space. The paper also establishes new categories for the analysis of functional discourses in urban linguistic landscapes. **Discourse** is understood here, similarly to Purschke & Gilles (2016), as a vast network of texts that allows recognising a distinct functional theme in social communication. We assume that multilingualism in the urban text is one of many strategies and text compositions, which has a specific communicative purpose. The social conditions of large cities, the phenomenon of globalisation, the development of tourism and the professional mobility of people are causing large cities to become multilingual also in their external signage. It is therefore important to show a functional picture of this strategy as complete as possible against the background of the general functional typology developed in previous studies of texts in the cityscape.

In order to achieve the aim of the work, a case study was conducted. The investigated functional discourses are determined on the basis of photographs taken in June and July 2021 in the central districts of three European capital cities: Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg. The metropolitan and multilingual status of these cities made it possible to retrieve and record a wide array of contemporary functional discourses. The applied method of analysis is thus based on the functional discourses and supplemented with the basic criteria of multimodal analysis in accordance with the language or languages used in the urban text, the type and multimodal form of urban text, its content and communicative practice. A significant role is also played by a comprehensive perspective and reflection over the common and disparate features of texts from Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg within the framework of the same functional discourses.

Having introduced the subject matter and aim of this paper, we now present its structure. Chapter 2 is devoted to a brief discussion of several fundamental linguistic landscape theories. Chapter 3 offers a definition of urban texts and a discussion of their main functions. Types of urban texts in reference to their functions are explored in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 presents the key notions and functions of multilingualism applied in social communication. The method employed in our study, i.e. the analysis of the corpus of image data (e.g. photographs), is discussed in Chapter 6; it encompasses, first, the categories of functional discourses and then, an internal, synthetic analysis of the examples of such texts from Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg. For each functional discourse, we provide an example of a text coming from each

of the three capital cities. Hence, in Chapter 7, we gather and present all corpus elements necessary to exhibit – based on the photographs of urban texts present in the spaces of three European capitals – the functional discourses of multilingual texts. The conclusions are offered in Chapter 8.

2 From linguistic landscape to media linguistic landscape: On the influence of language, media and multimodality on the communication in public space

> A city as a complex semiotic mechanism, a generator of culture, [...] is a pot of texts and styles, which are variously constructed and heterogeneous, belonging to different languages and levels. [...] Being a point of contact between various national, social, and style codes and texts, the city embodies manifold hybridisations, re-codings, semiotic translations, which turn it into a powerful generator of new information. (Łotman, 1990/2008, p. 297)[2]

Interpreting a city through the prism of its semiotics is not a 21st-century novelty. Paramount works in this subject matter were written earlier, i.e. in the 1970s and 1980s (cf. Greimas, 1970; Krampen, 1979; Barthes, 1986; Eco, 1972/2003). The questions that were then posed regarding the city viewed through the prism of a language embedded in its material objects still remain topical today, though the language of texts creating urban space is understood differently. If we assume that, metaphorically, a modern city is a text, then – in accordance with the current medialinguistic knowledge – we need to consequently admit that it is a multimodal text, semiotically varied but functionally and semantically coherent, which can be issued by different producers and may engage its recipients to different degrees. Researchers gathered around the idea of a linguistic landscape are aware thereof and they are placing more and more emphasis on the need to academically reflect upon all semiotically different displays of communication between a city and its user.

> The LL field is varied, complex and rapidly developing, and there are shifts between different sets of ideas. Looking through a specific (disciplinary or theoretical) lens at a specific LL theme will be important for the researcher in question (Gorter, 2019, p. 43)

Gorter (2019, p. 42) points to the different terms and scopes of linguistic and semiotic landscapes used in the literature. Firstly, there is a **linguistic landscape**, describing the use of language in public space texts (Landry & Bourhis, 1997, Pütz & Mundt, 2019). There are also other landscapes worth noting, such as **soundscape** for spoken language (cf. Scarvaglieri et al. 2013); **schoolscape** in education (cf. Brown, 2012); **linguistic cyberspace** for online texts (Ivkovic & Lotherington, 2009); **skinscape** for body inscriptions or tattoos form (Peck & Stroud, 2015); **smellscape** for olfactory ethnography leads (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015); **linguascape** for tourists (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010); **cityscape** standing in contrast to ruralscape (Muth, 2015). Concepts closely related to this work include **semiotic landscape** (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010), which comprises all signs in urban texts, and **multilingual cityscape** (Gorter, 2006), which considers the possibility, and sometimes the necessity, of multilingual communication in public space. However, our main approach is the concept of **media linguistic landscape** as defined by Schmitz (2018).

Schmitz focuses on the use of language in texts in public space in the media environment. The assumption underlying media linguistic landscapes is that the media, in their omnipresence

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[2] All foreign-language citations have been translated into English by the article's authors.

in texts and in social communication, participate in the processing of signs and constitute meanings in texts (cf. Schneider, 2017, p. 34, Stöckl, 2012, p. 16). Media interact with each other, e.g. as semiotic signs. In a wider understanding they also co-create texts as text carriers and social institutions. In other words, media produce texts on a basic level as well as support their transfer and make them effective on a higher level. These media processes occur in most of the texts in public space, i.e. texts on and in buildings (e.g. businesses, universities, shops, restaurants), on public streets and squares, on billboards and information signs, and at stations or airports (cf. Makowska, 2020a).

A key notion and a constituting category helping to understand modern urban texts is **multimodality**. According to Stöckl (2015), multimodality can be understood as:

> [...] co-existence and association of different systems of signs on many levels in a text (e.g. semantics, directive function, etc.);
> [...] pan-cultural competence and an individual intelligence based on de-coding through 'transcribing', e.g. commenting, explaining or paraphrasing the content conveyed in one system while using other sign systems;
> [...] semiotic-cognitive activity in producing and understanding texts, which takes place in accordance with particular rules and schemes. (Stöckl, 2015, p. 115).

The first meaning is key here: the one that equates multimodality with co-existence on the level of various systems of signs. In his discussion on *language-image texts*, texts in which linguistic and visual elements are considered to be equal parts of the whole text (*Gesamttext*), Stöckl (2004, p. 7; 2015, p. 115) stresses that multimodal texts constitute communication reality and cannot be treated as exceptions; they are the contemporary norm, whereas the mono-modal text becomes an exception. According to Stöckl (2004, p. 7; 2015, p. 115), language and or image should be considered central modalities, while typography performs the function of peripheral modality, accompanying the linguistic. Thus, a physically recorded mono-modal text – using only one system of signs – virtually does not exist; for instance, in the case of texts produced only with the use of linguistic elements, the central modality, i.e. the language, requires the co-existence of peripheral modality, i.e. typography, which makes the whole text comprise two modalities: central (language) and peripheral (typography). In order to communicate using such texts, one is required to possess a multimodal competence. It is defined by Stöckl (2015, p. 45) as the ensemble of cognitive and practical actions that are necessary to create and percept texts produced as a result of the interaction between different resources of signs, combined together in a syntactic, semantic and functional whole. This competence allows one to recognise (categorise) types of images as well as to assign meaning to an image in a context. Furthermore, it enables understanding of a verbal text in relation to visual information and integrating language and image in a context, or in a process of comprehensive understanding of a text. Finally, it supports considering both vividity of the language itself and the visual layer, which is composed of the text layout and the applied type of writing (cf. Stöckl, 2015, p. 45). In the context of the notions analysed in this paper, multimodal competence is necessary to understand what – using various semiotic forms – is communicated by urban space, and thus, to read it the same way as one reads the language-image texts that are present in the media space.

3   Urban texts and their functions

It is worth noting that urban texts are variously engaged in creating the space of a given city (cf. Makowska 2020b). Hence, they should meet four essential criteria:

- they occur in urban space and they fulfil tasks that facilitate the functioning of a city and/or in a city (*text assigned to a city*);
- they are attached to a place, i.e. they have a relatively fixed place of exhibition and their locality may influence textuality (*text assigned to a place*);[3]
- they contain linguistic elements, which may share a communication structure with the signs of other systems (*semiotically recorded text*);
- in structural and functional terms, they establish a complete communication unit that can be isolated (*structurally and functionally isolated text*).

In accordance with this definition, each urban text should be treated in the categories of a text creating public space. However, not every text in a broadly understood public space automatically becomes an urban text; these notions should not be equated. In the case of urban texts, the key elements are: 1) the place of exhibition, as it may solely be an urban space; and 2) functions related to the place of exhibition, which a text is assigned to perform. According to Wallis (1979), one of the forefathers of sociolinguistic studies, the primary function of the city's information layer is the **instrumental** function, from which **aesthetic**, **cognitive** and **ideological** functions are derived. Wallis explains the prevalence of instrumental function by its informative value. While the aesthetic function is to evoke certain emotions in the recipient, the cognitive function allows one to grasp all the pieces of information that are incorporated into one's individual knowledge. Finally, the ideological function makes it possible to determine a wider context in which the information layer was produced (cf. Wallis, 1979, pp. 104–105). A slightly different and more detailed concept of understanding and describing the functions of texts in the urban space is offered by Auer (2010). According to Auer, the prevailing functions are: 1) **naming and characterising**; 2) **determining affiliation**; 3) **instructing or forbidding** (using) something; 3) **indicating direction**; or 5) **admonishing or commemorating** (cf. Auer, 2010, pp. 290–294). It appears that among the factors determining the functions of urban texts, the influence of certain defining situational factors should also be considered, hence:

- the scope of text effect: official or unofficial nature of an urban text;
- the structure of a text: formal or informal;
- the relation between a producer and recipient: institutional/individual, individual/individual, individual/institutional;
- the duration of a text: permanent/temporary.

On this basis, we assume that texts present in urban spaces can perform two main types of functions:

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[3] At this stage of the research, urban texts occurring on mobile media such as cars or clothing are excluded from the analysis; the focus is on texts that are a permanent or relatively permanent part of the linguistic landscape.

Table 1

Types of urban text functions (own study)

FUNCTIONS OF URBAN TEXTS	
Type I functions in official, formal, institutional and permanent texts	**Type II functions in unofficial, informal, individual and temporary texts**
symbolising	e.g. discursive and conceptual ideologising
identifying	e.g. establishing image/prestige
informing	e.g. advertising
facilitating orientation in time	e.g. establishing urban identity through commemorating persons or events
facilitating orientation in space	e.g. establishing urban identity through naming places
ordering/forbidding/warning/instructing	e.g. appealing for help, searching, asking for support
determining purpose	e.g. spreading awareness / educating / propagating
explaining use	e.g. providing entertainment

Taking into account the significance of type I functions, we can consider that texts with these functions: (1) are usually official and symbolic; (2) are highly formalised, following a pattern both linguistic and visual; (3) are issued by institutional actors; and (4) are durable, that is, fixed for a wide audience. Thus, type I functions are primary to type II functions realised by texts that do not organise the urban space but create it and give it a specific character. While texts fulfilling type I functions largely have a purely utilitarian nature, as they inform, indicate, direct, and explain how to use the urban space, texts performing type II functions are important in terms of building the urban community and strengthening its identity ties.

In the context of the functions of urban texts, particular attention should be paid to texts characterised by **overlapping functions**. They are produced as the result of a dialogue occurring when an urban text contains elements (e.g. linguistic) that did not belong there initially (e.g. footnotes, comments, etc.) but significantly change its structure and meaning, thus influencing its primary function. The phenomenon of such informal dialogue between various authors, which occurs on the level of language in urban texts, has been analysed by, among others, Schmitz and Ziegler (2016), who indicate seven properties of such dialogues between a producer and recipient in urban text.

4   Types of urban texts based on functional discourses

Having discussed the functions of texts, it is beneficial to order and label the types of texts in accordance with their function. To fulfil this aim, we draw directly from the functions discussed in the previous chapter as well as build on the types of functional discourses in the public space as presented in the works of Scollon & Scollon (2003, p. 167), Purschke & Gilles (2016), Opiłowski (2020, 2022) Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee (2021), and Makowska (2022). However, text typologies offered by these researchers follow divisions based on different criteria, e.g. functional (e.g. regulatory texts), thematic (e.g. pandemic texts), situational (e.g. transgressive texts) or actor-related (e.g. subcultural texts). The aim of this paper is to propose a functional typology for texts occurring in urban space. We assume that the main pragmatic feature of the text types is their communicative and social function which determines the social purpose of a text. It is also the main reason why the producers produce texts and the recipients receive them. In order to capture the core functions, it is necessary to evaluate the vast communicative space

of texts characterised by their similar functional purpose. In other words, the goal is to analyse and synthesise a communicative discourse, in which many of the daily texts perform one dominating function. The summary of text types drawing from the works of Scollon & Scollon (2003, p. 167), Purschke & Gilles (2016), Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee (2021), Opiłowski (2020, 2022), and Makowska (2022) forms the basis for the subsequent analysis of multilingualism in accordance with functional discourses[4]:

- **orientation texts**: these texts are used for efficient and accurate temporal and spatial orientation in the city; all types of road signs, signposts, or street and institutional signs belong to this category. These texts usually follow top-down standards determined in relevant official documents;
- **regulatory texts**: their aim is to formulate the rules applying to the users of a given urban space. This group comprises texts that prescribe and instruct how to behave in a given place, including what is forbidden; they are characterised by a relatively high level of language and image standardisation;
- **commemorative texts**: they serve to mark persons or events related to a given place. These are, for instance, commemorative plaques placed on public or residential buildings where well-known and respected persons were born or lived;
- **educational texts**: they serve to share socially important knowledge;
- **commercial texts**: these are both shop signs and advertisements of products, business offices, or services. They are characterised by a relatively significant freedom of composition, originality and imaginativeness, hence components that are to ensure the text will be noticed and remembered;
- **protest texts:** they express society's criticism of the existing system of behaviour, authority or worldview and, at the same time, formulate a demand for a new order; they are performative and employ creative communication practices;
- **political texts**: they exert a persuasive, institutional influence on the sphere of people's worldviews; they convey the messages of political parties and groups concerned with political structures and objectives relevant to the functioning of society; they are embedded in an integrated and structured communication system in the form of intermedia and multi-genre relationships (e.g. leaflets, election posters, political slogans);
- **artistic texts**: they transmit information on altruistic and community-wide ideas, have epistemic value, and raise social and cultural awareness in society; broadcasters are cultural institutions or groups such as cinemas, museums or theatres; they are characterised by intensive use of visual means in the written and visua layer;
- **identity texts**: a set of texts characterised by a different social status of the sender in comparison to the general public; such texts express human subjectivity, goals, expectations and needs. The sender may be an individual or a group of anonymous people. Identity texts often include texts described in other typologies as transgressive, i.e. texts such as stickers, inscriptions, and unauthorised messages;
- **alerting texts**: they have a distinct emotional quality; they address people and refer to altruistic values, e.g. requests for help in finding a missing person, item, or pet.

Summing up the presented classification of urban texts, it should be emphasised that in many cases various functions may be simultaneously performed, and a given text may represent various types of urban texts, depending on which function will be considered as prevailing by the recipient. It is heavily influenced by the assumed manner of communication with the

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[4] The list is not exhaustive and may be further modified along with the changes occurring in the urban spaces or due to the cultural backgrounds that are typical for a given location.

recipient and by the means used to convey the message, such as the semiotic elements and their configuration.

5   Functions of multilingualism in urban texts

Searching for answers to the question of which language the contemporary cities speak – both metropoles as well as smaller urban centres and non-urban centres – it should be undoubtedly emphasised that it is never a homogeneous language. The progressing globalisation and the dynamic migration result in urban space being produced by messages that vary in not only structural and functional but also linguistic terms. Thus, a city does not speak one language but various languages of its users. By producing urban texts, the city's residents simultaneously contribute to the communicative community, which is also open to the needs and expectations of individuals who remain there only temporarily. A contemporary city gradually becomes a linguistic melting pot, in which the linguistic needs of society are manifested, but which also acknowledges and generates these needs. Urban texts have varied producers and recipients, hence they need to be adjusted to their communicative competences. The languages that create urban space come into contact with each other in different places and form different configurations, for instance, on street signs or on commemorative plaques. From this perspective the study aims to seek answers to the question in which functional discourses multilingualism is used; whom the sender of a multilingual text is addressing, and why; and what multimodal practices he or she uses to achieve the communicative goal. Such aims are justified in view of the social and communicative trends addressed above.

The study of multilingual messages in public spaces is complemented by the concept of **lingua receptiva** (cf. Rehbein, ten Thije & Verschik, 2011; Steciąg, 2020). In receptive multilingualism, Steciąg (2020) notices a communication phenomenon occurring mostly in the borderlands of countries whose national languages are more or less closely related because of historical tradition, geographical closeness and long-standing neighbourly relations that lead to the emergence of receptive competence. We think, however, that similar communication conditions exist in large cities, where young and older generations of residents, tourists, students, corporate employees and artists share communication space and thus all participate passively, i.e. receptively, and actively in multilingual communication. Rehbein, ten Thije & Verschik (2011, p. 249) underline that the notion used interchangeably with receptive multilingualism is lingua receptiva, which describes

> the ensemble of those linguistic, mental, interactional as well as intercultural competences which are creatively activated when listeners are receiving linguistic actions in their 'passive' language or variety. (Rehbein, ten Thije & Verschik, 2011, p. 249)

It can be assumed that a lingua receptiva understood in this way results in slightly different lexical and grammatical structures that are short, unambiguous and easily understood. Indeed, much depends on the communicative situation and the function of the urban text, but such a general trend seems very likely. Góral (2011) also pays attention to the role of languages that create the urban space. The author notes that linguistic landscape constitutes a significant source of information on communities residing in the given area:

> It is the people who are the authors of linguistic signs [...] Simultaneously, it is the people who pay attention to the available information and interpret it, or sometimes overlook or completely ignore it. The urban space is an ideal place to present one's views and to share all kinds of information." (Góral, 2011, p. 43)

Góral (2011) stresses that in relation to the linguistic sign which is a component of urban space, one may identify the **informative function**, which makes it possible to determine territorial borders of an area where one or more languages may be used, and the **symbolic function**, which indicates the value and status of respective languages constituting the urban landscape. The presence of a minority language in urban space increases its status, hence increasing also the sense of social group identity in the social group that uses this language. Androutsopoulos (2008, p. 4) pinpoints the power and predominance issues that occur between the social minorities and majorities in urban communication: "The linguistic landscape is not simply a reflection of local socio-demographics, but the result of and the resource in a complex interplay of demographic and power relations between majorities and minorities." (Androutsopoulos, 2008, p. 4). Thus, the official production of urban texts is also a kind of "resource for the symbolic recognition of the cultural and ethnic diversity" (Androutsopoulos, 2008, p. 5).

These research aspects are investigated also by Bobryk (2019, p. 66), who conducts studies on multilingualism encoded in street names of **Vilnius**. The author stresses that in the case of street names, the key issues are not only who or what these names should commemorate but also in what language they should be written. According to Bobryk (2019), the language applied in street naming practices influences the establishment of cultural identity through displaying its homogeneity or heterogeneity. The example of Vilnius shows that including the minority language in street naming may serve to build the image of a city as open, tolerant, and being a significant centre in international relations. Language thus becomes a material trace of the presence in urban space of people who use it as producers or recipients of certain messages: it determines their strength, power and economic status, hence performing the **identifying function**.

Another function of public texts emerges from the study by Góral (2011, p. 44), who emphasises that "the language that appears on signs may even influence language behaviours, e.g. seeing English, a society may use it more frequently" since it will be perceived as an international language, associated with modernity and prestige. In such contexts, multilingualism present in the urban space may also be assigned to the **function supporting education,** which was particularly evident during the coronavirus pandemic (cf. Piller, Zhang & Li 2020, pp. 507–508).

Multilingualism in urban texts performs many crucial communicative functions (e.g. informing function) as well as social functions (e.g. identifying function). Hopefully, the typology offered in this paper and the analysis of functional discourses succeed in combining communicative and social perspectives to demonstrate the fullest possible functional range of multilingual texts. Depending on the geographical area, text producers, recipients, and their knowledge resources, some functions may prevail or even overlap. In the next chapter, we discuss functional discourses in relation to the compilation of the text corpus.

6   Corpus presentation and analysis method

The corpus contains 33 photographs taken in June and July 2021 in three European capital cities, Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg. The inclusion of three cities captured a relatively large, international area and the functional nature of the multilingual texts. The photographs of the texts were taken in a central district in each of these cities, as it was expected that the largest numbers of texts with multilingual content were to be found there. Although the analysed photographs were selected from a collection of several hundred photographs capturing multilingual texts, it should be emphasised that this study is rather qualitative than quantitative and should be understood as an overview **case study**. The aim was to capture and identify all

the textual features present in the studied areas. Working with a corpus reveals the urban and international variety of texts in the public space. The variety concerns mostly the functional types of discourses, the description of which constitutes the aim of this paper, as well as the multitude of text types. The value of the analysed corpus lies also in its representativeness grounded in the use of the analysed texts in three linearly neighbouring societies.

The compilation of the corpus is based on naming a particular functional discourse and presenting an adequate example of it. For every discussed functional discourse, we provide an example of a text from each of the three capitals. Therefore, it can be initially assumed that all presented functional discourses are optimally represented in the three cities.

The offered typology of multilingual functional discourses is based on our classification discussed in Chapter 4, hence it draws from the studies of Scollon & Scollon (2003, p. 167), Purschke & Gilles (2016ff.), Opiłowski (2020, 2022), Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee (2021) and Makowska (2022). Similarly to the studies cited, our classification is also condensed while the analysed research material is presented in a concise manner due to the fact that in our discussion, we focus on internal, textual construction of functional discourses and we seek to answer the question of how multilingualism in a text fulfils a given type of functional discourse. Drawing from the new method of analysis of texts in public space offered by Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee (2021, 210 pp.) and simultaneously modifying it for the purpose of this study, the following analysis criteria are applied:

a) **functional discourse** (type of function in multilingual text);
b) **text type** (typological classification);
c) **multilingualism** (number and kinds of languages in a text);
d) **urban space and text placement** (situational factor of broad and narrow scope);
e) **agents** (producer, potential characters in a text, recipient);
f) **multimodality** (language-image meaning);
g) **communicative practice** (rhetorical and graphic strategy to support the function of the text and contribute to its effectiveness).

Aiming to present a concise yet efficient analysis of multilingual texts and to explain the mechanism of functional discourse, we consider in particular the criteria that are key to the urban text. The order of the criteria has been set in such a way as to logically and coherently explain functional discourse. Therefore, the analysis opens with (a) the declared type of discourse, followed by (b) and (c) typological and (d) and (e) situational attributions, and finally (f) content analysis and (g) communicative practices. Each analysis collectively refers to all three examples representing the functional discourse in question.

7 Functional discourses in multilingual texts (Warsaw, Berlin, Luxembourg)

In this chapter, we present the classification of the types of functional discourses and their analysis. Each of the distinguished types is illustrated respectively with corpora from Warsaw (W), Berlin (B), and Luxembourg (L). This means that for ten types of functional discourses, 33 examples of co-constructed urban texts are presented and discussed.[5]

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[5] In this article, ten overarching functional discourse types are presented. However, one of them, i.e. regulatory discourse, comprises an additional subcategory, i.e. a regulatory discourse with a pandemic theme. This theme was noticed to be strongly present particularly in the texts forming the regulatory discourse of Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg.

7.1 Orientation discourse

In the first example (see photograph set 1 below), there is a discourse concerned with spatial orientation in an infrastructural city, in which the city government (W/L) and a community organisation (B) provide information about existing streets and offices (W/L) and the location and type of organisation (B). Example W is a street signpost, whereas examples B and L are information signs. Multilingualism is revealed in the names of institutions in Polish and English languages (W); in the full name of the Turkish association in Berlin-Brandenburg given in German, Turkish, English, and French languages (B); and in the names of legal and court institutions in French and German languages (L). Examples W and L, which indicate streets, government buildings and districts, comprise a vast city space, whereas example L refers to only one place, i.e. the seat of organisation. Each sign contains a graphical element, which indicates direction (W), identifies association (B), or visualises buildings on the district map (L). Linguistic communicative practice names places, while visual practice either points to (W) them or visualises (B/L) them.

Photograph set 1:

Orientation discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)
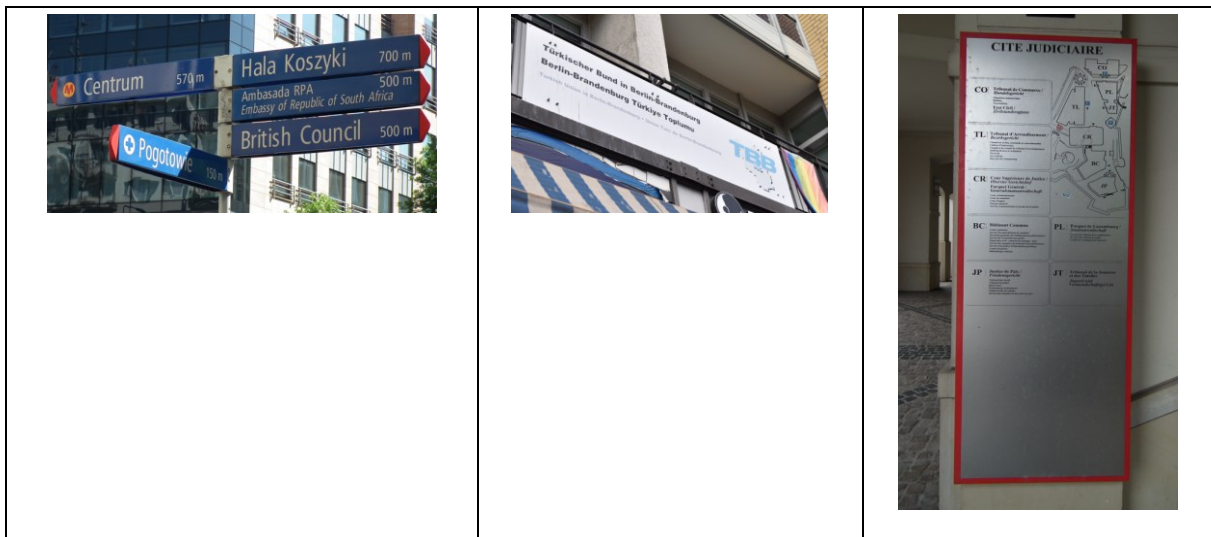
7.2 Regulatory discourse

A shared feature of the urban texts displayed in photograph set 2 below is that, as texts constituting regulatory discourse, they serve to determine rules imposed on the users of a given urban space. In the metropolitan space, multilingualism plays a key role; it is fulfilled in each of the discussed examples: in (W) by the Polish and English languages, in (B) by the German, English, Russian, Spanish, and French languages, and in (L) by the French and German languages. Typographic placement of message in a given language within a particular urban text indicates that in the investigated cities, the dominating role has been respectively assigned to the Polish language (W), the German language (B), and French and German language in equal measure (L). Fulfilling the primary function, which is ordering/forbidding/warning/instructing, concerns respectively a smoking ban on the public

transport stops (W), a drone ban in the area belonging to the Russian Embassy (B), and an order to keep the area clean (L).

These texts are formal, permanent, issued by institutional producers, and they represent the genre of official statements. Two of these texts (W/B) apply multimodal solutions in order to more forcefully illustrate the pertaining smoking ban (crossed out cigarette) and drone ban (crossed out drone). Such measures may be considered to provide additional support to the multilingual message; regardless of the language used by a user of urban space, the graphically conveyed message will be fully understandable and clear. The communicative practice in W/B is the prohibition expressed in words and images, whereas the L example is a solely linguistic request.

Photograph set 2:

Regulatory discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

A special case of regulatory discourse is its pandemic type (see photograph set 3). This example is given due to the extent and impact of pandemics worldwide and the occurrence of numerous pandemic texts in the public space. The example (W) presents a two-part regulatory message about shop behaviour. The regulatory message in Polish means 'Only one person at a time is allowed in the shop' and is complemented by the linguistic and graphic message in English: No mask, no wine. The text from the Berlin corpus (B) is an inscription made on the pavement; it utilises four languages: German, English, Turkish, and Arabic. The text producer reminds people about the requirement (imperative form) to wear protective masks. To support the message conveyed by linguistic means, a gender-neutral icon of a face in a mask is used, which makes this urban text multimodal as well. The third text (L) is also a regulatory message and utilises three languages: French, German, and English, informing about the recommendations (not a requirement) concerning the use of protective masks. Visual elements (images showing male and female faces in masks) play a prominent role also here; due to their location on the top of this visual plane, they catch the recipient's sight first and lead them to the message expressed by verbal signs. All three texts (W/B/L) develop the communicative practice of prescribing in an overarching regulatory discourse.

Photograph set 3:

Regulatory discourse with the pandemic theme (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

7.3 Commemorative discourse

Urban texts constituting yet another type of functional discourse, i.e. commemorative discourse, serve to celebrate the memory of persons or events connected to a given place, as can be seen in photograph set 4 below. Thus, they perform type II function within the scope of building urban identity through remembering persons or events. This role may be successfully fulfilled by plaques placed temporarily or permanently in urban space, e.g. on the walls of various buildings. Texts constituting the commemorative discourse are significantly more formal in terms of their linguistic and visual layer. These texts are usually permanent and issued by institutional producers. Multilingualism becomes their important asset, which is evidenced by the presented examples: (W) the Polish and English languages; (B) the Russian and German languages; (L) the Luxembourgian, English, French, and German languages. Using languages other than the national language in texts that constitute the commemorative discourse is a gesture towards foreign-language speakers; it introduces them to persons or events celebrated in urban space.

Owing to multilingualism, a random passer-by may become a real user of a particular urban space due to the possibility of experiencing its historical dimension. Multimodality becomes apparent primarily in examples (W) and (L). In the first one (W), the Polish-English caption explains the historical situation in the photograph, i.e. the passage of the Polish president with a foreign delegation through Warsaw in 1937. The communicative practice in this example is direct information. Example (L) is a graphic visualisation of the historic Wenzel road in Luxembourg, which is described in four languages. The lowest level of multimodality is found in example (B), as it only entails linguistic direct information and, simultaneously, a mention of the distinguished Russian diplomat A.M. Gortschakov.

Photograph set 4:

*Commemorative discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)*

7.4 Educational discourse

The main aim of the presented examples in photograph set 5 is to convey socially relevant knowledge about the place and community. The first example (W) is a mural on the wall of a Warsaw block of flats, which has Polish and English captions and commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Visegrad Group. Example (B) is a multi-segment poster in English and German. It visually conveys knowledge about the appearance of the German traffic signal man (*Ampelmännchen*) and its European variants. Example (L), on the other hand, is a street poster with the headline in French *Feux spécifiques pour les cyclistes* and an additional slogan in four languages *Keep your eyes and ears open*. It informs about special traffic rules and street signs. Examples (W) and (L) are aimed at the entire city community, while example (L) is aimed at drivers and cyclists. The educational discourse is delivered through language and image; example (W) informs and educates in mostly linguistic terms, yet it also uses the visual practice of art and play to enhance the effectiveness of this educational message. Examples (B) and (L), on the other hand, convey knowledge about the iconic *Ampelmännchen* figure and the rules of traffic respectively mostly through imagery and, hence, perform the visual practice of the authenticity of place and situation.

Photograph set 5:

Educational discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)
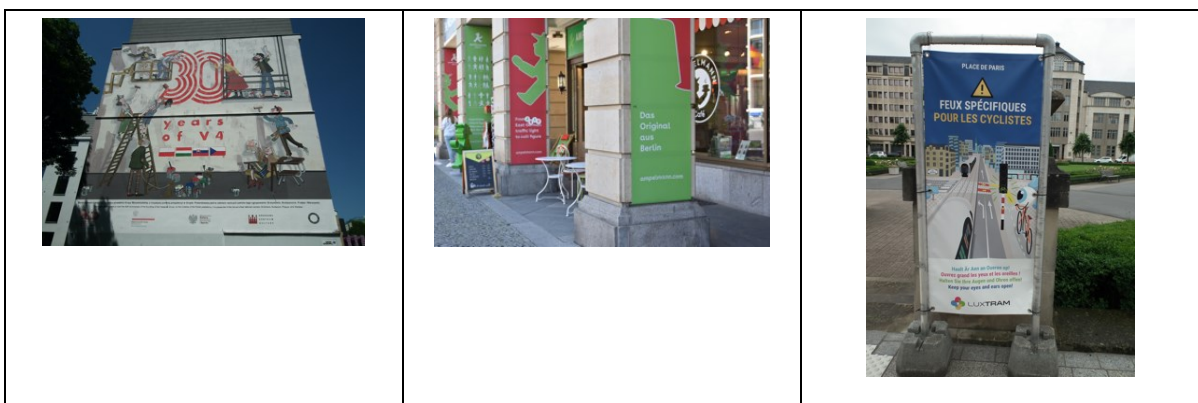
7.5 Commercial discourse

The essence of commercial urban texts – which encompass, *i.a.*, shop signs or plaques informing about business offices – is encapsulated in informing about a certain offer or service in such a way as to reach the widest possible audience, including foreign-language users of a given urban space (see photograph set 6 below). Therefore, two fundamental type II functions may be assigned to urban texts constituting this type of discourse, i.e. a function within the scope of advertising, and a function within the scope of building image or even prestige. The first function is fulfilled by, for instance, the urban text from the Berlin corpus (B), which advertises an eating place with Turkish cuisine. In the remaining two cases (W/L), the function that dominates is within the scope of building image and prestige, though it is clearly connected to the function within the scope of advertising. The multilingualism of the message may be considered an important element of building prestige in both urban texts (W/L): urban text from the Warsaw corpus utilises five languages, i.e. English, Vietnamese, Polish, Chinese, and Russian; the Luxembourgian, on the other hand, utilises two, i.e. French and German. In the first case (W), the dominance of the English language shows in both the English name of the company (WBC Consulting, *we simplify life*) and the position of English in contrast to the other languages. In the second case (L), the dominance of the French language over the German is based on: 1) using solely French in the name of the company; 2) connecting French and German languages in the description of the company in such a way that French visually dominates over German (the text in French is presented as the first one and distinguished with big capital letters).

Bilingualism also characterises the urban text from the Berlin corpus (B), which uses the German and Turkish languages. Furthermore, it should be stressed that regardless of the reading direction (left-right), the message in German remains in a privileged position. The presented examples confirm that commercial texts are characterised by originality and relatively high freedom of text composition. They are neither official nor formalised, while their producers enjoy significant liberty in terms of the message content or form. Multimodality is a key element of these texts, substantially widening the scope of possibilities in terms of creative dissemination of information and accomplishment of functions assigned to this discourse. The linguistic practice of communication names products and services, while the visual practice represents or visualises them and contains stronger persuasive elements.

Photograph set 6:

Commersial discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

7.6 Protest discourse

Another type of discourse is the protest discourse as visualised in photograph set 7 below. The texts that belong to this category express social criticism of the existing system of behaviour, power or worldview and simultaneously formulate a demand for a new order; they are performative and employ creative communication practices. In the Warsaw example (W), the message is constructed using the graphic element of the lightning bolt as a symbol of the Women's Strike[6], which is accompanied by eight stars, unambiguously associated in Poland as an expression of disapproval of the ruling party. Although no words are used in this message, the graphic elements used – the stars – develop a certain mental discourse, unambiguously perceived by the involved as an expression of rebellion and protest against the authorities. It is an example of individual dissent, similarly to the message from the Berlin corpus (B), *leave no one behind*, handwritten on cardboard and displayed in the window of a private flat. This is a case of the use of English in a German-speaking environment, a kind of appeal not to remain indifferent sent by an anonymous sender to an anonymous recipient, a user of urban space. In the space of Luxembourg, a text with the slogan *Equal love, equal rights* is on the borderline between protest and support for the idea of equality, which is widely accepted in Luxembourg. The poster encourages respect for the rights of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation. The verbal message is visually supported by the motif of the rainbow flag associated with LGBTQ+ communities. The communication practices used are primarily visual, ranging from the symbols of protest, i.e. lightning bolt and stars in (W), to an authentic cardboard box as text carrier and handwritten text in (B), to the open, multicultural rainbow symbol in (L).

Photograph set 7:

Protest discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

7.7 Political discourse

As a seventh type of discourse, we present political discourse (see photograph set 8 below). The texts that belong to this category are characterised by their persuasive nature: their senders are institutional actors, e.g. political parties and their candidates in elections, presenting their programme and demands in the public space, as well as related actors. The example from corpus (W) proves that politics is present in the space of Poland's capital city, e.g. on billboards that were supposed to convince the Polish that drastic increases in energy prices were forced on Poland by the EU. The message is monolingual and strongly persuasive, both in the verbal

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[6] The Women's Strike is the term applied to the protests held in Poland in 2019 over the restriction of abortion laws.

layer, where it is suggested that as much as 60% of the cost of energy production is the EU's climate levy, and in the visual layer, which includes a light bulb on which the EU logo is used, convincing that 60% of the costs are imposed by the EU. The poster equates EU climate policy with expensive energy and high prices. Both verbally and visually, manipulation has been committed in order to install in the minds of the public the image of the EU as the reason for increasing prices in Poland.

Another example of a highly persuasive text co-creating political discourse is the poster from Berlin (B), depicting Ivonne Hoffmann, who, as a representative of the political party *Die Partei*, advocates the introduction of a monarchy in Germany. Hoffmann displays her monarchist sympathies both verbally (*Vote for the Queen, Monarchie statt Wahlqual, Königin von Westend*) and visually (Victory gesture, and styling reminiscent of the British Queen). Example (L), on the other hand, is a set of multilingual texts spray-painted on the pavement leading away from the Luxembourg Parliament, whose author(s) are supporters of democracy. It represents an original form of political canvassing; the location of the texts – the pavement – means that the voter is even guided to a place where he or she can support democracy through his or her vote.

The communication practices used in example (B) are more elaborate in both verbal and visual layers. Those used in example (L), on the other hand, should be considered sparer in form due to the use of single words and arrows; they may still prove effective due to, among other, the original location of the messages. Against the background of these two examples from Berlin and Luxembourg, one can see how political discourse is implemented differently in the space of Warsaw: 1) the discourse is temporally limited almost exclusively to the pre-election period – this is when numerous leaflets and posters appear; 2) the discourse is decidedly Polish. This demonstrates that Polish politics is strictly national in character and its actors do not see the need to solicit the support of foreign speakers. This definitely distinguishes Warsaw's political discourse from those observed in Berlin and Luxembourg.

Photograph set 8:

Political discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

7.8 Artistic discourse

The eighth type of discourse, as shown in photograph set 9 below, is the artistic discourse, which comprises texts that convey information about altruistic and community-wide ideas, which have epistemic value and raise the social and cultural consciousness of society. The broadcasters of these messages are usually institutional entities: cinemas, theatres, museums. In presenting their offer, they usually use diverse visual means, including graphic motifs (B) or stylised typographic solutions (W), which have become fixed in social memory. In the case of texts creating artistic discourse, text design plays a key role, which can result in a reduced verbal

layer. The languages used therein are sometimes assigned different roles. In example (W), the proper name is given in the national language and the institutional name in English. In example (B), English is used for the name of the exhibition of the foreign artist Banksy, while the national language (German) provides information on the time and place of the exhibition. Example (L), on the other hand, uses multiple languages (English, Dutch, French, German), but visually seems to be dominated by a stronger visual layer.

Photograph set 9:

Artistic discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

7.9 Identity discourse

The senders of texts creating an identity discourse are usually individuals or groups of individuals who, through such a message, want to emphasise their different status in relation to the general public, express their subjectivity, and define their goals and needs (see photograph set 10). In order to emphasise their singularity, they use various types of language games and allow themselves to play with language by creating compounds, contaminations and neologisms referring to two or more lexemes/meanings, such as *wegeguru* (W). The term *community of plant power* in the restaurant's signboard can undoubtedly be considered a verbal element of identity construction around the idea of veganism. The identity discourse merges and collaborates functionally with the commercial discourse. Similarly, in the case of example (B), the sender emphasises what values, attitudes and actions are important to them in relation to their business. Example (L), on the other hand, can be taken as evidence that urban space can be conducive to building a multilingual (Dutch, French, German, English, Italian) community of people who use public water intakes instead of, for example, buying water in plastic packaging. Texts of this type are therefore part of a type II function in terms of advertising and building image and prestige (W/B) or raising awareness and educating (L).

Photograph set 10:

Identity discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

7.10 Alerting discourse

The last one of the distinguished discourses is the so-called alerting discourse, captured in photograph set 11 below. The texts that constitute this discourse are strongly emotionally charged and serve, for example, expressing requests for help in finding a missing person (B, L) or animal (W) or drawing attention to an important issue (B, against racism). The linking between the language and image planes plays a very important role in these texts as it ensures a multifaceted representation of the object in question, i.e. describing and visualising it, which is supposed to create optimal conditions for the realisation of the function of this type of text. This is demonstrated by examples (W) and (L). Example (B), while lacking a photograph as a graphic element, strongly exposes the names of people – victims of racism – and informs in as many as ten languages that racism kills. The texts creating this type of discourse are often **transgressive**, appearing in places not originally intended for this, but which are considered to be frequented. Another feature of the texts forming alerting discourse is that they are neither present for so long in the urban space as, for example, texts of orientational, regulatory or commemorative discourses, nor are they as durable, because their carriers are often ordinary and easily damaged pieces of paper.

Photograph set 11:

Alerting discourse in multilingual texts (Warsaw / Berlin / Luxembourg)

8   Conclusions

From a functional perspective, it should be stressed that the analysed corpus comprising data from three European metropolises has made it possible to distinguish 10 types of functional discourses that are characteristic of multilingual urban texts. These are orientation, regulatory, commemorative, commercial, educational, artistic, protest, political, identity and alerting discourses. The functional discourses have not only been proven by empirical evidence, but the categories themselves are part of the development of theory.

We consider this to be the author's case study-based interpretation of the functional discourses discussed in the literature, which we have applied to the field of multilingualism. Multilingualism is present – albeit to varying degrees – in all of the discourses we have identified. Against the background of Berlin and Luxembourg, Warsaw appears to be a city with a poorer linguistic landscape in terms of multilingualism, which can be explained, i.a., by the situational and/or transmitter-receiver conditions prevailing at the time of collecting research material. Furthermore, it can be noticed that discourses such as political, protest, identity and alerting in particular are much more multilingual in Berlin and Luxembourg than in Warsaw, which may indicate that the linguistically diverse communities of Berlin and Luxembourg are more likely to use the public space to manifest their views and fight for their rights than the community of Warsaw. It may also be observed that the coronavirus pandemic produced a number of texts that fit into the types of multilingual functional discourses we discussed. Their strong representation was visible in each of the metropolises described. This is particularly evident and intensified in the case of regulatory discourse, which led us to distinguish a subcategory of this discourse, i.e. regulatory discourse with a pandemic theme.

The basis for identifying the multilingual discourses we have distinguished are respectively: Functional discourse (type of communicative and ludic function in a multilingual text), text genre, text type (typological assignment), multilingualism (number and types of languages in the text), city space and place of the text (broad and narrow situational factor), actors (sender, possible characters in the text, receiver), multimodality (linguistic and pictorial meanings), communicative practice (rhetorical and graphic strategies supporting the function and contributing to the effectiveness of the text). The motivation behind a discourse is each and every time a specific strategy employed in a text, which makes it prominent, creative and

possibly impactful to a recipient. Multilingualism always offers a challenge to an author of a text and a communicative value to its recipient, who feels noticed and informed on a certain topic in a given place or in a space of their own (or another) city.

A medialinguistic analysis of selected urban texts from Warsaw, Berlin, and Luxembourg provides a basis to claim that they are not only an important element of a city's image but also interesting research material, which may inspire interdisciplinary discussion on the trends registered in urban space and concerning its textualisation. The analysis has made it possible to demonstrate that contemporary urban texts display high structural similarity to media texts while urban space willingly adapts solutions used earlier in media to serve its own needs. Multimodality is the category that undoubtedly links both spaces. Using multimodality in a manner that is conscious, deliberate and consistent with the rules of semiotic economy makes is possible to produce an urban space that is friendly, productive, and aesthetic.

What distinguishes urban and media texts is the catalogue of functions they perform, in which – apart from the type I and type II functions – one may distinguish also overlapping functions that occur as a result of unplanned dialogue with the users of an urban space who add visual or verbal transgressive elements to original texts, hence creating not only a new urban text but also a new multimodal text. Regardless of the type represented by a given urban text and the function it performs, the multimodality applied makes the message more attractive and authentic, thus making it a distinctive element of the urban landscape. In the case of urban texts, a particular role is also played by their locality understood as a place of exhibition. Locality is a feature of urban texts that – together with multimodality – strongly determines the textuality of messages occurring in urban space. Therefore, one may conclude that these texts are not only semiotically recorded on a plane but also spatially assigned to a place. Urban texts brisk the city space, adding certain dynamism to it and shaping it both visually and verbally. Furthermore, like a most sensitive barometer, they can register changes resulting from the influence of various social factors. Owing to the fact that most of them are based on a synergy of different systems of signs, the urban landscape is multimodal in its nature. Thus, when discussing texts in a city, one should be fully aware of not only the visual diversity but more so the semiotic, functional and semantic complexity of messages that comprise the textualised urban space.

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