

## Multilingualism and Gentrification in Lavapiés' Linguistic Landscape

Multilingüismo y gentrificación en el Paisaje Lingüístico de Lavapiés

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**ABSTRACT:** The following interdisciplinary paper is a sociolinguistic-based analysis of the discursive strategies associated to multilingualism and interculturality in Lavapiés, Madrid. This study will focus on the visible semiotic signs observed in the public space, which in turn reflect the languages used and the products marketed in Lavapiés. However, the samples also suggest that this -genuine- interculturality is being exploited as a marketing strategy linked to gentrification. The combined analysis of both realities will allow, together with data from official sources, to draw a complete picture of this specific territory. Multilingualism and gentrification will be analysed using a Linguistic Landscape perspective, by studying the samples contained in Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography, that include traces of these two parallel processes the territory is undergoing. A detailed contextualization of the territory -where these communicative, social, and economic events take place- will also be provided since this area has historically helped shape Madrid's genuine tradition. The observed results have not only revealed that both processes are present and undergoing in this territory, but also the power imbalance between the languages, the effects of globalization -touristification and gentrification-, the organized response by the neighbours of Lavapiés, as well as the long-term effects of colonialism.

**KEYWORDS:** multilingualism; immigration; gentrification; Linguistic Landscape; Lavapiés.

**RESUMEN:** El presente trabajo es un análisis sociolingüístico sobre las estrategias discursivas asociadas al multilingüismo y a la diversidad presente en Lavapiés, Madrid. Este estudio se centrará en el análisis de la semiótica visible en el espacio público, que, a su vez, refleja las lenguas que se hablan y de los productos que se comercializan en la zona. Un primer análisis de la construcción del paisaje urbano por parte de los migrantes internacionales en Lavapiés sugirió que dicha construcción podría estar relacionada con un aumento del nivel de gentrificación. El análisis combinado de ambas realidades, junto con datos extraídos de fuentes oficiales, permitirá dibujar una imagen más completa de las dinámicas de este territorio específico. Con una metodología basada en el Paisaje Lingüístico (PL) se analizarán las trazas de los procesos paralelos de gentrificación y multilingüismo, contenidas en la Cartografía Lingüística de Lavapiés. Se proporcionará una contextualización del territorio, en el que se suceden los eventos comunicativos, sociales y económicos, y que también ha ayudado a modelar el casticismo madrileño. Los resultados observados han revelado que ambos procesos están presentes en Lavapiés, así como el desequilibrio de poderes entre las lenguas que se utilizan, los efectos de la globalización (turistificación y gentrificación), las respuestas coordinadas del vecindario, así como los efectos a largo plazo de la colonización.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** multilingüismo; inmigración; gentrificación; Paisaje Lingüístico; Lavapiés.

## INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Madrid has undergone a population readjustment due to a flux of international migrants from all over the world in the past decades. Among its Central District, even though mostly referred to as a *barrio* [neighbourhood], Lavapiés is one of the areas that conform the neighbourhood of Embajadores which presents the highest percentage of multilingualism and cultural diversity in terms of immigrant population (Torres, Vega, and Ortega, 2018; Bonfigli, 2014; Peñalta, 2010): 28% are foreigners, according to the Census of Madrid's City Council. Hence, methodologically, all data provided by the local authorities will encompass all Embajadores and not only Lavapiés.

These multicultural territories present demographic and sociolinguistic changes that have modified the multilingual landscape and hence the semiotic construction of a particular space (Moustaoui-Srhir, 2018). Academic literature has mainly focused on how these new semiotic migrant constructions have reshaped the Linguistic Landscape (LL) of Lavapiés (Saiz de Lobado, 2021; Saiz de Lobado and Revilla, 2019; Moustaoui-Srhir, 2018; Sáez-Rivera and Castillo-Lluch 2012; Castillo-Lluch and Sáez-Rivera, 2011). These studies have proved the “interdisciplinary value” (Blommaert, 2013: 5) of LL, within in the field of sociolinguistics, since it engages with different disciplines: political, economic, language policy and urban studies (Moustaoui-Srhir, 2019; Barni and Bagna, 2015; Leeman and Modan, 2009).

In order to “to map [the] linguistic diversity” (Barni, 2008, as cited in Barni and Bagna, 2015: 8) of this territory, 141 samples of such diversity were collected and uploaded to Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography (LC). These samples originally intended to analyse the presence of different ethnic minority groups in the territory. However, data suggested that the LC might not have only recorded traces of multilingualism, but also traces of the complex process of gentrification, in line with studies carried out in Lavapiés (Moustaoui-Srhir, 2018; Saiz de Lobado, 2021; Saiz de Lobado and Revilla, 2019), as well as in other territories with similar characteristics (Ben-Rafael and Ben-Rafael, 2015; Vandenbroucke, 2018).

Hence, the main objective of this paper, since Lavapiés is undergoing gentrification and touristification processes, is to further analyse the samples contained in Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography, in order to study the commodification of multilingualism and diversity as a business strategy, within this specific territory. Two realities that reveal the complexities present in the area. This will be carried out through an exploratory analysis of official data, academic sources, and the samples contained in Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography (LC). This article is framed within the project IN.MIGRA-3CM that studies, from a multidisciplinary perspective, the relationship between linguistics and

the migrant population in *Comunidad de Madrid*. The first step to understand the evolution of this territory is to approach the reader to its history and development: from its origins to the arrival of international migrants and the process of gentrification in 21<sup>st</sup> century Lavapiés. It is important to remember that context is a key -yet undervalued- feature when attempting at conducting an analysis on sociolinguistics (van Dijk, 2008; 2011), hence this look back in time.

## LAVAPIÉS: HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The historical origins of Lavapiés, located in Madrid's Central District, close to *Plaza Mayor* and *Puerta del Sol*, are uncertain. Scholars support the theory this territory was developed around the 13<sup>th</sup> century, just outside the city walls (Peñalta, 2010). Some have also argued that it harboured *la judería* and *la morería* madrileñas, the Jewish and Muslim neighbourhoods of Madrid (Bonfigli, 2014; García and Sequera, 2013). Right from its origins, Lavapiés connoted to the idea of an outskirts territory occupied by outcasts. Its urban design has remained virtually unaltered since the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Torres, et al., 2018), and 70% of the buildings date from before the 1920s (Bonfigli, 2014). This area also presents very characteristic architectural structures that emerged around the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and became popular in Lavapiés around the 19<sup>th</sup> century: *corralas* or residential spaces that could accommodate several families, around a central patio (Otero, 1975).

Toponyms are markers of the semiotic construction of a given territory, in the sense that they provide information regarding policies linked to precise historical times, since "any form of effectively performed communicative practice can only be made meaningful because of its histories of production and uptake by non-randomly positioned actors" (Blommaert, 2016: 2). The following are examples of these histories that will help the reader understand how these positioned actors evolved through -centuries- time. A good example is the *Reconquista*, initiated by the Catholic Kings in 1492, which led to a radicalization of religious matters: freedom of religion and cult was reverted and all citizens who followed religions other than Catholicism had to convert, leave the country, or face execution. This, in turn, made authorities change or convert the names on public spaces (Bonfigli, 2014).

Some streets in Lavapiés: *Calle de la Fe* and *Calle del Ave María* are examples of this practice (Campmany y de Montpalau, 1863). One of the reasons why some scholars believe that Lavapiés hosted the Jewish neighbourhood is the street *Calle de la Fe* [Faith Street], formerly *Calle de la Sinagoga* [Synagogue Street] (p. 201); an example of the reinforcement of new semantic construction and values implemented this clear in 15<sup>th</sup> century Spain. According to the author (1863: 21-22), the houses on the street of *Calle del*

*Ave María* were mostly brothels. Felipe II, grandchild of the Catholic Kings, appointed a judge or *corregidor*, who was sent to this area with the scope of expelling those women from the area and demolishing the houses. As they proceeded, buried corpses appeared on the site. At the sight of the corpses, these very pious men exclaimed *¡Ave María!* [Hail Mary!], and the street was converted.

The former *Plaza de Cabestreros*, from 2014 onwards Plaza de Nelson Mandela, illustrates how territories and contexts evolve, and as a result, so do their semantic and semiotic constructions. This initiative was promoted by *Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia* [Movement against Intolerance], as a symbol against violence, intolerance, and racism.

Between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this area became a border that divided the centre from the outskirts of Madrid. In the 1950s, the barrio harboured the first internal migrations from the countryside to the city, as well as those who subsisted on illegal trade (Osorio, 2014; Peñalta, 2010). In the 80s, the consumption of drugs such as heroin and cocaine became an endemic problem in the area, which local authorities had already neglected (Peñalta, 2010).

Today, it harbours neighbourly driven initiatives conceived to tackle different issues affecting the community, as well as to increase democratization and citizen participation in the public sphere, creating an integrated neighbourhood to help combat the gentrification and touristification processes in the area (Gil and Sequera 2018; Torres, et al., 2018). Such as *La Corrala*; *Lavapiés, ¿dónde vas?* and Supercoop: a cooperative supermarket in Lavapiés, focused on transforming the traditional model of consumption, based on the project Park Slope Food Coop, funded in Brooklyn back in 1973 and still active today. As pointed out by Slater (2011), associations are becoming key agents for shaping the identity of an inclusive, anti-systemic area with a dynamic social fabric, through the development of a “sense of community” and “better mental and physical health” (Grier and Perry 2018: 32).

According to the data provided by the official census, the second decade of the 21st century presents a high percentage of immigration in Embajadores, over 25%, in 2016, to 28%, in 2020. Although, it is important to take into account that from 2010 onwards there has been a decrease in the number of overall inhabitants in this area: particularly families, retired citizens and immigrants outside the OECD, mainly due to the increase in real estate prices and residential housing is being repurposed for the tourism industry, as explained in the next section.

The immigrant population in Embajadores represents over 80 nationalities (Osorio, 2014). These originate from the following regions: 31.5% Asia -67.7% from Bangladesh and 14.8% from China; 24.9% America -12.9 % from Ecuador; 24.7% Europe -30.2% from Italy; 13.2% Africa - 48.5% from Senegal; and 0.6% from Oceania (Madrid’s City Council).

The reader should always take into account that the official figures provided throughout the text only correspond to those immigrants registered in the census. Therefore, the official data regarding the percentage of foreigners who live in Embajadores will be lower than the actual figures. Although the LC shows that the territory has kept its essence of diasporic area where immigrants socialise and consume goods and specific products (Moustaoui-Srhir, 2018: 206), the percentage of citizens from countries outside the OECD, who reshaped the LL of Lavapiés before it became a market for gentrifiers, has decreased, according to official figures by the City Council.

Although, Lavapiés is still a meeting ground due to the products some businesses market, targeted at particular immigrant community or minority groups (Pérez-Agote, Tejerina, and Barañano, 2010), also known as “ethnic economies” (Riesco, 2010: 287). These are “immigrant or minority business(es) and employment sector(s) that coexists with the general economy” (Light, Sabagh, Bozorgmehr, and Der-Martirosian, 1994: 65). Mostly are interethnic businesses: a version of ethnic economies that are targeted to the population at large (Güell, Parella, and Valenzuela, 2015), that through commerce “introduce their languages in local exchanges (and) make them visible” (Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015: 73).

## DECONSTRUCTING GENTRIFICATION IN LAVAPIÉS

Glass coined the term gentrification in the 1960s, as a way of explaining the socioeconomical process that the neighbourhood of Islington, London, was undergoing at that time, characterized by displacing the “original working-class occupiers” and “the social character of the district” (Glass, 1964: xix). A remarkably similar transformation to the one Lavapiés has undergone: from shaping Madrid’s genuine tradition or *casticismo madrileño* to being chosen by Time Out the “best of the barrios”, in 2014. This evolution entails the risk of turning these territories into “upper-middle-class playgrounds” (Shaw, 2008: 1698).

Which are the variables under consideration when deconstructing and measuring gentrification in a given area? Torres and his team (2018) calculated an index to measure Lavapiés’ gentrification, the IGENLAV, by identifying socioeconomic variables in the area, which showed a steady increase in value for the years analysed: from 100 points, in 2013, to 210 points, in 2017. For the purpose of this study, touristification will be considered a variable that measures the degree of gentrification (Torres, et al., 2018: 68), since they are both interrelated and their consequences are similar (Cummings, 2015, as cited in Sequera and Nofre, 2018).

The first variables, directly related to the index, measure the percentage of population with postgraduate degrees, and the level of income and job description: new highly edu-

cated inhabitants will have a higher income level than the previous neighbours (Torres, et al., 2018). According to Madrid's City Council, Embajadores is the lowest income neighbourhood in Madrid's Central District, and one of the lowest income areas in all Metropolitan Madrid. Consequently, the effects of these new arrivals will affect the social structure of the territory, since these new higher income groups will demand different goods and services, will translate into "a sense of marginalization and a displacement of consumption opportunities for longer-term residents by consumption opportunities for new residents" (Grier and Perry, 2018: 30). This will cause Lavapiés to shift towards a leisure area (Shaw, 2008).

The following two variables, which are inversely proportional to the INGELAV, measure the demographic changes pertaining the aging index and the number of households with children, since it is unlikely that these groups will be able to afford the new rental prices (Torres, et al., 2018).

The fifth variable contains the number of nationals who belong to countries outside the EU and the OECD. Since they usually have a lower income level, their presence is inversely related to the INGELAV (Torres, et al., 2018: 60). Even if the overall number of immigrants has decreased in the area, according to official figures, they still socialize and consume goods in Lavapiés. It is also ironical that the marketing trait that attracts diversity-seekers and boosts gentrification is inversely related to the index that measures the very same phenomenon. The genuine multicultural meeting ground has partially shifted into a marketing strategy to attract tourism.

Festive and commercial expressions of cultural diversity are gaining popularity in (...) Europe's gateway cities. The fact that they attract the attention of mass tourists and have become economically significant underscores the emerging connections between the new service knowledge economy, and immigrants as potential generators of urban socio-economic development (Rath, 2017: 3).

According to surveys carried out by the Spanish Centre of Sociological Research (CIS), one of the matters that worried Spaniards the most in 2011 was immigration (Saiz de Lobado, 2015); although in this particular urban context, the perception on immigration seems to have turned and evolved into "desirable diversity" (Blockland and van Eijk, 2010: 316). New York also underwent a similar process in the 70s: "the collective move (...) of the middle class into inner New York in the 1970s was represented as an interest in social and cultural diversity" (Shaw, 2008: 1699). This, in turn, translates into "city branding" or "the representation of difference and, in particular, ethnical diversity" (Hassen and Giovanardi, 2018: 45) as a strategy to attract consumers. Marketing research has already confirmed this new trend of consumers who are "highly interested in diversity

and may proactively seek out products, services, and experiences of cultures different from their own” (Brumbaugh and Grier 2013: 152). Even though “diversity- seekers” try experiences outside their cultures, there is no evidence to support a link between these consumers and a higher level of commitment or network development with minority groups (Grier and Perry, 2018; Blockland and van Eijk, 2010).

The next two variables measure the evolution of the price of real estate purchase and rental prices in Lavapiés. Rental prices, in Madrid’s Central District, have increased by a 39.1% overall (Gil and Sequera, 2018: 28). The discursive strategies used to market the area usually take the form of euphemisms such as “revitalization”, “renaissance” (Smith, 1982: 139–140), “rediscovery” of the territory or “recapture the value of the place” (Zukin, 1991: 192 as cited in Shaw, 2008), and their corresponding Spanish equivalents, to list a few.

The last variable, directly proportional to the INGELAV, is touristification or the percentage of businesses devoted to the hospitality industry (Torres, et al., 2018). Apropos, the category *Restaurants* is the one that present the highest number of repetitions in the LC.

However, new high-income diversity seekers are not the only ones responsible for the increase in the prices of real estate and the touristification index; P2P platforms have also contributed. The most popular P2P real estate renting platform, Airbnb, increases the cost of purchasing and renting (Gutiérrez et al., 2017: 280), although it was initially conceived as a form of “collaborative consumption” (Guttentag, 2015: 1195) or sharing economy, that would bring the resident some extra income by renting a spare room. However, and mainly due to the lack of regulation, only 4.3 % of the listings in Madrid can be considered sharing economy, the remaining 95.7% are entire homes or apartments (Gil and Sequera, 2018: 28). According to the same study (p. 28), Madrid’s Central District has a hospitality rate of one tourist per two residents. With an overall population of approximately 149,718 inhabitants, it has already lost 10,000 neighbours, as the shifts in the socioeconomic context of this area have resulted into the loss of residential housing, to list one immediate consequence.

## LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE AND LAVAPIÉS LINGUISTIC CARTOGRAPHY (LC)

Landry and Bourhis coined the term LL as “the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings” (1997: 25). Shohamy and Gorter decided to include bottom-up communication strategies and widened the definition: “Language in the environment, words and images displayed and exposed in public spaces” (2009:1), which “incorporates multimodal theories to include also sounds, images, and graffiti” (Shohamy and Gorter

2009: 4). Also, from a methodological perspective, there is a misleading belief: “the equivalence of immigrant communities and immigrant languages does not indicate the real degree of vitality of immigrant languages in the areas where immigrants reside” (Barni and Bagna, 2015, p 8-9; Moustououi-Srhir, 2013; Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015). The same authors also stress the importance of deeply understanding the space or territory, since contextualizing the analysis is key to understanding the semantic construct.

Traditionally, LL has focused on multicultural settings and the use of different languages in each territory, that translates into power imbalance among the languages and hence, the groups (Barni and Bagna 2016; Ben-Rafael, 2009, Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015). According to the Bourdieusard hypothesis, language is not only a mean for communication, but also “an economic exchange which is established within a particular symbolic relation of power” (Bourdieu, 1991: 66). Hence, power relations will govern the configuration of the LL (Ben- Rafael et al. 2006), as illustrated in Barni and Bagna’s (2016) analysis of the 1st of March 2010 immigrant demonstration, where the linguistic samples of LL depicted Italian as the main vehicular language. This strategy is in line with the fact that “language choices and attitudes are inseparable from political arrangements, relations of power, language ideologies and interlocutors’ views of their own and others’ identities in particular time and space” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2001: 243 as cited in Barni and Bagna, 2016: 67) since the protesters’ interlocutor is the Italian government. This, in turn, relates to the complex relations of power and identity negotiations, which influence the “ethnolinguistic vitality” (Pappenhagen, Scarvaglieri, Redder, 2016: 147) of the different groups when semantically constructing the public space.

However, in some contexts, the actors belonging to minority groups might not be subordinated, since they have already acquired their own right to construct and legitimize the use of different languages in the LL of a territory (Calvi, 2018; Moustououi-Srhir, 2018), this time actively developing the public sphere. These multicultural constructions of the public space, in the case of Lavapiés, are directly linked to the idea of a diasporic territory, in which the members of different communities socialize due, in part, to ethnic goods and products marketed to these very specific communities (Riesco, 2010; Moustououi-Srhir, 2018). Also, Pappenhagen and her team found that immigrant languages were key in “establishing and upholding group identity” through the “communitarian dimension of language” (2016: 158). Semantically, linguistic and cultural diversity can also be conveyed or reinforced through “semiotic elements such as flags, geographical/national references (...), pictures of emblematic buildings” (Martín Rojo y Portillo, 2015) or locations.

The previously mentioned dynamics are present in multilingual settings and account for most research in the field of LL, as part of the deterritorialization process, which



“brings labouring population into the lower class sectors and spaces of relatively wealthy societies” (Appadurai, 1990: 301) and also has the potential to create new markets related to “imagined worlds” that are “constituted by the historically situated imaginations” (Ibid. 296-297) of those in diaspora. In terms of landscapes, deterritorialization translates into the reterritorialization by the communities in terms of “transforming the local space” (Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015: 77). Appadurai (1990) points out five different dimensions, two of which are particularly relevant to this study: ethnoscapas and ideoscapas. The former refers to the landscape of people who “constitute the shifting world we are living in” (Appadurai, 1990: 279), whereas the latter has to do with political ideas that are also reflected in the landscape. Both the space and the linguistic practices are interrelated, since the former is no longer considered as a container, but as “active generators of new practices” (Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015 73), hence the importance of analysing the contextualization or social construction of the territory.

The current study aims at unveiling the traces that reflect the process of gentrification from the samples contained in Lavapiés Linguistic Cartography (LLC), masqueraded as multilingualism. Lavapiés’ LC was collected in December 2016 and updated until December 2019. Initially conceived as a field activity for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students pursuing the degree in Translation and Intercultural Communication, at *Universidad Europea de Madrid*. It is important to point out that the samples were collected by the students after at least two years of academic training in these academic fields, and were also validated by members of the research project IN.MIGRA3CM -H2019/ HUM-5772 and upgraded by the author of this article. The validation of the samples is very relevant, due to the fact that translingual practices or multimodal creativity and other types of communicative practices that “constitute(s) a major language resistance resource” (Moustaoui-Srhir, Prego Vázquez and Zas Varela, 2019, p.15), can be difficult to identify for the untrained eye, and hence create bias. The LC includes 141 photographed handwritten and/or manufactured samples of linguistic diversity from Lavapiés. These include languages other than Spanish, as well as varieties of Spanish other than Castilian, as well as the symbols accompanying the words, that reinforce the localization of the products marketed or as expressions of identity creation. This is an important feature to consider: Spanish is a diasystem (Castillo-Lluch and Sáez-Rivera, 2011) - meaning that speakers from different varieties will share common lexical units- and hence can also be a marker of ethnolinguistic vitality, since it is also de first language of speakers from territories outside Spain due to the fact that European languages were exported to the colonies.

These samples of diversity were then classified by location and uploaded to Story-Map, the open software developed by the research group *Knightlab*, at Northwestern University, which supports images and audio files, allows for content geolocalization

and has the potential for comparative diachronic studies, an interesting future line of research, according to Barni and Bagna (2015). The reader is invited to access the visual resource at <https://goo.gl/MQp1pr> while reading the next section to consult the samples, which are numbered. Similarly, other research groups have used different software to upload the corpus of images, such as the case of Urban Voices, a collaborative project at the UAM. In any case, and regardless of the software, providing the full corpus of samples will allow the reader to better navigate the content and allows for comparisons with other corpora. It is important to point out that within this period no significant changes have been identified, excluding bottom-up posters and graffiti.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Herein, the analysis of Lavapiés' LC will be discussed, in light of the studies regarding the sociological data that have already confirmed an increase in the level of both immigration and gentrification in the territory. The 141 samples contained in the corpus of images or LC have been categorized in the following different groups: *Travel agencies* (n=4), *Grocery stores* (n=26), *Fashion and accessories* (n=27), *Hair and beauty* (n=15), *Restaurants* (n= 34), *Craftwork shops* (n=9), *Posters* (n=6), *Graffiti* (n=8), *Others* (n=12). The categorization that has been established responds, either to the type of businesses where the samples (both words and images) were found, or to posters or graffiti, which mostly focused on protest.

The following subsections will be devoted to analysing whether the samples of multilingualism contained in the LC are an expressions of identity creation and negotiation, or business strategies that reflect the semiotic construction of the new process of gentrification (Saiz de Lobado and Revilla, 2019). It is important to note that many of the variables compiled in the INGELAV (Torres, et al., 2018) are invisible when carrying out a LL analysis -such as P2P accommodation platforms, since they are online businesses. However, the LC has also recorded traits that can be linked to the consequences of the processes of gentrification and touristification (Saiz de Lobado and Revilla, 2019). Note that the same categories might contain samples where multilingualism acts as a marker of gentrification, whereas other samples belonging to the same category might reveal traces of genuine diversity.

### TRACES OF MULTILINGUALISM AS A MARKER OF GENTRIFICATION IN LAVAPIÉS' LC.

Marketing research has already proven that immigration has turned into a “potential generator of urban socio-economic development” (Rath 2017, 9), and hence expressions of multiculturalism. This means that traces of linguistic diversity are not only business

strategies targeted at specific or minority communities, but also targeted at “diversity-seekers” and tourism (Grier and Perry, 2018; Hassen and Giovanardi, 2018; Torres, et al., 2018; Brumbaugh and Grier, 2013; Blockland and van Eijk, 2010). Herein, overlapping processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization take place. On one hand, delocalized groups of immigrants reterritorialized Lavapiés and transformed the ethnoscape, as seen in the previous section. However, globalization and capitalism have exploited and taken advantage of this ethnoscape, by commodifying multiculturalism and multilingualism, and using these as a business and marketing strategy.

The multilingual section Others include all samples of activities that have registered very low repetitions (<3). Examples of strategies depicting fabricated interculturality as a business strategy can be found in Sample 72, an internet coffee shop with a sign that reads “my home” in several languages, and include other languages spoken in the country, such as *Euskera* or Basque, which do not qualify as foreign. According to Madrid’s City Council Census of Business Activities, in 2019, four launderettes operate in the territory, but none of which was active in 2014. Since, culturally, most homes in Spain –and long-term rentals– tend to have washing machines; the launderette depicted in Image 1 acts an indicator of the consequences in the shift in consumption needs and services provided in the area, due to the increase in tourism and P2P rentals (Gil and Sequera, 2018).



Image 1. Source: Lavapiés’ Linguistic Cartography

Although mostly run by immigrants, *Craftwork shops* market traditional souvenirs to customers outside their cultural group, mostly from Northern Africa and Latin America. Spanish is the main language found in these samples, paired up with visual semantic reinforcements, which link the products to the regions of origin, such as the case of the Egyptian pyramids, Sample 18, or the Peruvian Machu Picchu surrounded by llamas,

Sample 33. Also, 3.5% of the overall accounts for *Fashion* related businesses that sell clothing souvenirs, similarly to *Craftwork shops*.

*Graffiti* usually act as symbols of bottom-up communication, focused on protests or identity creation (Saiz de Lobado and Revilla, 2019; Scollon and Scollon, 2003). However, Image 2 presents some particularities that have led researchers to believe it had institutional support, due to the errors found in the alphabetic script (Moustaoui- Srhir, 2018), as well as its location, the lateral façade of a building -not easily accessible from the street.



Image 2 Source: Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography

The representations of both diversity and *casticismo* –Madrid's genuine tradition- are also relevant and reinforce this potentially misleading construct. For instance, the scripts and languages used in the *graffiti* include groups -such as Hebrew or Japanese- that have almost no representation in the area, according to the City Council; similarly to the examples in the category *Others*. The legend “Cervantes was here” refers to the fact that the author of *Don Quixote*, lived in number 21 of *Calle Magdalena* for a short period of time (Veksler, 2004). It is interesting to point out that, in this case, foreign languages and scripts are not translated into Spanish or transcribed into the Latin alphabet, since their main semantic function is to convey the idea of interculturality. In this case, the choice of English -the *lingua franca* of globalization and tourism- “is associated with internationalization, globalization, modernity, and economic success” (Shohamy, 2007: 129).

The category *Restaurants* (Samples: 2, 3, 10, 19, 26, 36, 53, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 69, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 91, 96, 97, 102, 106, 107, 109, 115, 132) accounts for the largest percentage of repetitions -24.10%- and is directly related to the area's level of touristification (Torres, et al., 2018). English and Spanish are displayed next to foreign scripts, in order to accentuate the exotic origin of the dishes. Also, some of these restaurants annually organize *Tapapiés*, an Intercultural Festival of *Tapas* and Music, since 2013. As mentioned earlier, traces of a particular languages or cultures in the LL do not necessarily relate to the presence of nationals who reside in the area (Barni and Bagna, 2015), such as the case of restaurants marketed as Indian (n11= in Lavapiés' LC), since the 2020 census records the presence of 51 Indians and 2,582 Bangladeshis. The reason for this is that Indian cuisine is considered more prestigious -the way some languages do (Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015)- and, as a matter of fact, only Sample 61 specifies that the food is both Bangladeshi and Indian. Which indicates that these restaurants are conceived for the outgroup and are not ethnic groups. However, this does not happen in Senegalese restaurants, where we often find nationals from that country.

### TRACES OF GENUINE MULTICULTURALITY IN LAVAPIÉS' LC

This subsection includes all the samples that provide identity construction and negotiation of immigrant communities in the area. Such as interethnic businesses (Güell, Parella, and Valenzuela, 2015; Riesco, 2010) that market specific products for minority groups. In these cases, multilingual strategies have the purpose of making immigrants feel more identified, since they are the main target of these businesses; although, in order to attract at a wider range of customers, the use of the Castilian variety of Spanish has also become a common strategy (Calvi, 2018, Moustou-Srhir, 2018; Garcés, 2011; Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015).

Within the category *Others*, the chemist's, Sample 9, uses Chinese and Arabic also as a marketing strategy, displaying the different scripts in the windows of a business owned by Spaniards, and hence legitimizing and recognizing the linguistic otherness present in this territory (Moustou Srhir, 2018: 216). Also, *Travel agencies* (Samples: 6, 7, 15, 35) mostly present multilingual signs (Arabic, Spanish, English), and images depicting locations from all over the world. In these cases, as Appadurai (1990) points out, some businesses "thrive on the need of the deterritorialization population for contact with its homeland" (302), that in turn is linked to the "imagined worlds" of the population in diaspora, and these travel agencies are a good example. In these examples, English works rather as a language to attract cultural groups who might not yet be familiar with the Spanish language -such as those originating from Bangladesh- but do speak English, due to the colonial past of the country. Also, Arabic, written in Latin and aliphatic

alphabets, is displayed in smaller fonts than Spanish.

Similarly, *Grocery stores* (Samples: 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 40, 54, 55, 57, 66, 70, 73, 80, 86, 90, 92, 103, 127, 129, 131, 134, 136, 138) also display multilingual content. Spanish is generally used in these interethnic economies, together with locations of the world, most of the times combined, such as “*Alimentación: latina, árabe, africana*” (Sample 17). Albeit some samples are only written in the language of the specific target group, such as the case of Image 3, handwritten in Bengali.

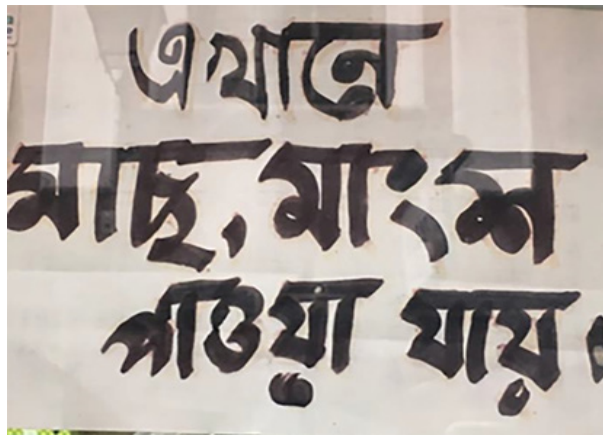


Image 3. Source: Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography

In this last category, the word *halal* appears in several samples (20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 66, 134, 136, 138), as a reflection of the identity negotiation and construction of a growing community of consumers of goods and products different from the ones used in local traditions (Moustaoui-Srhir, 2018). This reflects “the incorporation of this community not only as customers but also as merchants” (Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015: 89).

Also, businesses that provide *Hair and beauty* products and services (Samples: 4, 11, 13, 16, 23, 31, 71, 74, 76, 108, 110, 111, 118, 133, 137), such as make up suitable for skin tones or hair types other than Caucasian, are examples of ethnic economies that market specific products and services to a specific group of consumers, rather than to the population at large (Riesco, 2010). These present a wide range of communication strategies: from the ethnic economy reflected in Image 3, which by only displaying information in Bengali targets a very precise linguistic and cultural group; to Sample 71 that includes both Spanish and Arabic, to broaden the consumer's target and to reflect the business' interethnic identity. Whereas Sample 23 follows the most common strategy: to broaden the target by only using the local language (in this case Spanish), although geolocalizing the products provided –*africanos*– as well as using images depicting models belonging to those ethnic groups the products target.



Image 4. Source: Lavapiés' Linguistic Cartography.

Most *Fashion-related* business that operate in the area are interethnic Chinese fashion and accessories wholesalers (74%), not linked to the gentrification process. Image 4 portrays one of the few exceptions and a particularly good example of cultures and languages in contact through colonization.

The flag of Senegal in the background, that acts as an “ethnicising elements” (Martín Rojo and Portillo, 2015: 93), and the name of the shop in French – Senegal’s current official language– indirectly reveal traces of Europe’s colonization processes, where languages acted as the “principal tool(s) in the imposition of colonial rule” (Goke-Pariola, 1993: 223). Sample 99 not only reflects linguistic French colonial traits, but also, the second tool of colonial rule: religion. The word *Khalifat*, in Islam, refers to the successors of Mohammed. This one sample reflects two different colonial legacies, which have diachronically shaped Senegal’s current culture.

*Posters* (Samples: 14, 48, 63, 67, 82, 141) contained in the LC mostly address to specific cultural and linguistic groups, not the general population; therefore, the least dominant language is Spanish. Conversely, the remaining *Graffiti* (Samples: 5, 41, 42, 43, 44, 109, 140) describe the colonization process from a bottom-up transgressive (Scollon and Scollon, 2003) perspective, mostly in Spanish, and can be considered, in the taxonomy developed by Appadurai, as ideoscapes. See Saiz de Lobado and Revilla (2019) for an extensive analysis and discussion of these two categories.

## CONCLUSIONS

The observed results of the analysis of each category have shown that the processes of gentrification and touristification are present in 37.6% of the samples contained the LC, within the categories: *Restaurants* (24.20%) and *Craftwork shops* (6.40%), and the corresponding percentage within *Fashion* (3.5%), *Others* (2.8%) and *Graffiti* (0.7%). Also, 59.86

% of the samples of linguistic diversity in Lavapiés reflect a “proceso de interacción y negociación de diferentes identidades y formas de pertenencia” [process of interaction and negotiation between different identities and ingroups] (Moustaoui-Srhir, 2018: 218). This percentage is the sum of the LC samples of the categories: *Travel agencies* (2.8%), *Grocery stores* (18.4%), *Posters* (4.3%), *Hair and beauty* (10.6%), and the corresponding percentage within the categories *Fashion* (15.56%), *Others* (3.2%), and *Graffiti* (5%). The overall descriptive analysis of Lavapiés’ LC is in line with the official data and previous studies. Traces of gentrification and those of identity negotiation between different cultures in the territory differ by 22.26%, which indicates, at least at an observed level, that multiculturalism seems to still prevail over gentrification.

On the one hand, these results show the high percentage of immigration in the area as well as evidence of the complex gentrification process that this territory has been undergoing in recent years. On the other, the figures also remark the fact that both processes seem rather scalar and interdependent; particularly gentrification, since it requires the adequate territory to flourish. The results also revealed the need for a critical approach of the analysis of urban LLs in order to understand the complexities of the internal dynamics of a given territory such as Lavapiés. In this sense, LL becomes “not only a significant tool for documentation and inquiry, but also a powerful vehicle within a framework of [...] activism and language rights” (Shohamy and Waksman, 2009: 314), and even social rights.

As expected, Spanish is the language that prevails, present in 84.4% of the samples, since most businesses target the population at large (Calvi, 2018; Barni and Bagna, 2016; Garcés, 2011), although with some exceptions explained in the previous section. The presence of these ethnic or interethnic economies does not only change the languages used, but also the products marketed; particularly, specific beauty related products, as well as food related items, such as halal meat. The analysis of the linguistic samples also reflects linguistic traces of Spanish, French and Arabic colonization processes. English has mostly functioned as the *lingua franca* of tourism and gentrification in the cases contained in the present analysis.

Finally, it is relevant to mention that neighbourly-driven associations and cultural centres in the area actively work to develop a “sense of community” (Grier and Perry 2018: 32) in order to mitigate the effects of gentrification in Lavapiés and to prevent multiculturalism from becoming “a mere attribute of a ‘loft-living’” style that is showcased in city tourism brochures or in a leaflet advertising newly refurbished cosmopolitan districts, aiming to attract a highly-selected and mainly bourgeois type of residents”. (Hassen and Giovanardi, 2018: 46).



Marketing research has already confirmed the tendency of certain territories to depict diversity as a leisure-related element that will mostly attract diversity-seekers; this, in turn, has a negative impact on the social fabric of the area (Grier and Perry 2018; Rath, 2017; Brumbaugh and Grier, 2013). Lavapiés seems to have followed this tendency and has rebranded diversity as a desirable characteristic (Hassen and Giovanardi, 2018; Blockland and van Eijk, 2010). According to Moustouli-Srhir (2019), this territory seems to have turned into a merchandising platform where products and languages are advertised, instead of a space reserved for daily interactions among the population. Although there might still be a way to revert the process, it would be interesting to replicate this study within some years in order to further explore the evolution and changes this territory experiences.

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