

Durk Gorter / Edina Krompák (eds.)

Educational Agency and Activism in Linguistic Landscape Studies



PETER LANG

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Who is involved and why in the linguistic landscapes in educational contexts? How are agency and activism reflected in educationscapes? These questions and more are addressed in the various contributions in this volume, thus expanding the boundaries of educationscapes through enquiries that focus on educational agency and activism. In particular, the collection sheds light on linguistic, semiotic and spatial agency and activism in different educational contexts around the world. By focusing on agency as social practice and activism as an act to change, the studies broaden our understanding of the actors, and how they mobilize their linguistic and semiotic resources to shape the educationscape. The volume advances the study of linguistic landscapes in educational contexts and offers a critical approach to reflect on inequality, power and decolonization of languages in educational spaces, as well as the professional development of future teachers.

The Editors

Durk Gorter, a distinguished scholar in the field of multilingualism, held the position of Ikerbasque Research Professor at the University of the Basque Country, conducting research on multilingual education, minority languages, and linguistic landscapes.

Edina Krompák is the Head of the Institute of Language Learning and Teaching and Educational Linguistics at the University of Teacher Education Lucerne. Her research and teaching delve into multidisciplinary topics from education science, educational linguistics and linguistic ethnography.

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Cultures (FREPA/CARAP). She edited a special issue of the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (Volume 16/5), and two special issues of the *Malta Review of Educational Research* (Volume 9/1 and 10/2). She has published several textbooks, books, chapters and many articles in internationally refereed journals on language education, bilingual education, intercultural competence, learner autonomy and Maltese sociolinguistics. She is an associate editor of the *Journal of Multilingual Theories and Practices* and a member of the Advisory Board of *Le Simplegadi* (Italian scientific A class journal).

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identities and intercultural relations has explored migrant and refugee narratives and brings attention to everyday racism (see Hatoss 2012 *Discourse & Society*) and everyday exclusionary practices through discourse (Hatoss 2023 *Discourse Studies*). Her research programme on urban multilingualism addresses linguistic social justice based on a student-engaged research project exploring the linguistic landscapes of Sydney. This work has led to her research monograph entitled *Everyday Multilingualism: Linguistic Landscapes as Practice and Pedagogy* (Hatoss 2023, Routledge).

Jacina Januarie is a master's candidate and graduate lecturer assistant in linguistics at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), in Cape Town, South Africa. She intends to pursue her doctoral studies. She began her undergraduate journey in 2016 and successfully completed a bachelor's degree in Arts & Humanities at UWC in 2019; during her tenure there she was awarded a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship in 2018. In addition, she spent a month at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia (USA) working on a research proposal and presented her work. This experience sparked her interest in pursuing an academic career. Therefore, she began her postgraduate journey at UWC and successfully completed her Bachelor of Arts honours degree in linguistics in 2020 with her honours research titled, "A Social Semiotic Analysis of Linguistic Landscape of Tuckshops in Eersteriver". In 2023, she presented at the 14th Linguistic Landscapes Workshop, titled *Women Sports-in-Transition: Case of Caster Semenya and Lia Thomas*, which is an excerpt from her master's thesis titled *A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of the Representation of Caster Semenya in Social Media*. Her research focus areas are linguistic landscapes, specifically the virtual domain; media studies; multimodal discourse; semiotics; intersectionality of language, race, gender and identity; sporting landscape; and embodiment.

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Edina Krompák is Head of the Institute of Language Learning and Teaching and Educational Linguistics at the University of Teacher Education Lucerne and also a lecturer at the University of Basel. Her current research interests are the relationship between linguistic landscape and educational spaces, the exploration of educational agency and activism, translanguaging and multimodality in language learning and teaching. Her research and teaching delve into multidisciplinary topics from education science, educational linguistics and linguistic ethnography. She is a co-editor of the books *Linguistic Landscapes and Educational Spaces* (2022, Multilingual Matters) and *Language and Space. Multilingualism in Educational Research and in School* (2022, hep). She currently coordinates the website on linguistic landscape and language learning www.swiss-scape.ch and is an active member of the international network Linguistic Landscape in Education (EduLL).

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Steve Marshall is a professor in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, Canada. Steve’s research focuses on plurilingualism and academic literacy in higher education, international teacher education and linguistic landscaping. Steve’s higher education research ranges from small-scale ethnographic projects in classes across the disciplines to a large-scale impact assessment of a first-year academic literacy programme. In recent years, he has researched teaching and learning across the disciplines in Canadian higher education, in particular, students’ use of languages other than English (e.g. Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean and Punjabi) as tools for learning, as well as instructors’ pedagogical responses to linguistic diversity in their classes. In the field of international teacher education, Steve has analysed the study abroad experiences of English language teachers from several Southeast Asian countries, Japan, and Taiwan through post-programme site visits, interviews and analysis of reflective narratives written during and after study abroad. Steve’s linguistic landscaping research has focused on three areas: the educational potential of linguistic landscaping activities in graduate studies as a way to engage critically with multilingual communities; social control and public pedagogy during the Covid-19 pandemic; and the linguistic landscapes of university spaces with regard to policies of decolonisation and equity.

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Originally from Iran, Setareh has dedicated over a decade to teaching English across different levels and contexts, including bilingual schools and language centers. She is passionate about contributing to the Canadian educational landscape and continues to develop her skills in both academic and practical domains of language education.

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Silvia Melo-Pfeifer is Professor of Romance Language Teacher Education at the University of Hamburg. Her research is focused on pluralistic language education and arts-based approaches to language teaching and teacher education. Her publications include “Linguistic Landscapes in Language and Teacher Education” and “Visualising Multilingual Lives: More Than Words”. She coordinated the Erasmus Plus Project “LoCALL - Local Linguistic Landscapes for global language education in the school context”, between 2019 and 2022.

Stephan Meyer is Head of English at the Language Center of the University of Basel. His current interests focus on multilingualisms, scholarly discourse as well as the relationships between institutions and linguistic landscapes. He is co-editor of *Advocacy in Translanguaging Education* (forthcoming, Multilingual Matters). Earlier interests reflected in co-edited publications include care (*Care in Context: Transnational Gender Perspectives*), narrative identity (*Selves in Question: Interviews on Southern African auto/biography*) and southern African writing (*African Shores and Transatlantic Interlocutions*, a special issue of *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* and *Alternative Modernities in African Literatures and Cultures*, a special issue of *Journal of Literary Studies*).

Amiena Peck is a Chairperson of the Department of Linguistics and the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Western Cape. She has since gone on to specialise in linguistic landscape (LL) studies and has co-authored an edited collection of cutting-edge linguistic landscape research which explicitly foregrounds the importance of the human in research. Her volume entitled *Making Sense of People and Place in Linguistic Landscapes* (Bloomsbury Press, 2018), in tandem with a special issue in *Sociolinguistic Studies* entitled “Visceral Landscapes” (2019) has gone a long way in sensitising the field to the importance of embodiment, affect, bodies and space. Amiena Peck is an associate editor of *International Linguistic Landscape Journal* and is on the editorial board of the international *Journal of Gender and Language*. Her interest in discourse, semiotics and identity management is

also present in her contribution to teaching and learning, supervision and more recent publications on the importance of decolonising the academic Self for more grounded sociocultural research (Peck, 2021).

Amiena Peck's interest in LL research has expanded to include the virtual space on the internet and social media sites. Her work includes analysis of hashtags as forms of protest (Hiss and Peck, 2020) and identity work online (Toyer and Peck, 2023). Bringing together new voices to the field, Amiena Peck consistently advocates for the use of autoethnography as a decolonial learning and teaching tool (cf. Tufi and Peck, forthcoming). Moreover, she believes that research requires more than simply analysing "what is there", but also bringing in other (oft-overlooked) parts of researchers' lives such as emotions and experiences. Looking ahead, Amiena Peck hopes to draw on autoethnography to understand the visceral nature of the virtual LL and engage more deeply with semiotic resources of the users who co-create their realities online.

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Hilde Sollid is Professor of Scandinavian Linguistics at the Department of Language and Culture, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, and Professor II at Nord University. Sollid's field research is sociocultural linguistics, and her main research interest is multilingualism in northern Norway, with an emphasis on processes of language reclamation of Indigenous and minoritised languages. Important keywords are language ideologies, language policy and language in education. She is principal investigator of the research project Multilingualism in Transitions, financed by the Research Council of Norway (2021–2026). Her latest publications include the books *Indigenising Education and Citizenship* (2022, Scandinavian University Press, co-edited with Torjer A. Olsen), and *Samisk i norskfaget – fra plan til praksis* (2023, Fagbokforlaget, written with Åse Mette Johansen).

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motorcycle accident in which he sustained a traumatic brain injury that left him in a coma for a month and in hospital for two months. Kurt's assisting neurosurgeon gave him the startling prediction that he would "never be an academic again" - while he was unconscious. He has made it his goal to challenge this prognosis through collaborative autoethnography.

Edina Krompák and Durk Gorter

1 Introduction: Educational Agency and Activism in Public Spaces

1. Introduction

Humans are crucial in the linguistic landscape. This can be illustrated by what happened in many countries around the world at the beginning of 2020 when strict lockdown procedures were put in place because of the Covid-19 pandemic. People had to stay indoors, and the streets, squares and other public spaces were empty and off limits for humans, with some exceptions for doing essential shopping, going to the pharmacy or walking the dog. Something new, unknown, highly contagious and potentially dangerous was lurking in public spaces, and thus minimising human contact was especially important. The linguistic landscape, in the sense of all the signs that surround us in public spaces, became irrelevant. In some ways, one could claim, it ceased to exist for human beings who regulate, produce and create those linguistic and semiotic signs and, at the same time, read, perceive and negotiate their meanings in various spaces and at different times. At the beginning of the pandemic the linguistic landscape changed overnight and a diversity of new signs popped up, such as warning signs and instructions on keeping a distance, washing your hands, wearing a mask, but also expressions of solidarity and support. It was a time when the linguistic landscape was one of the resources for people to learn how to behave and interact in new ways.

Against the backdrop of political and historical events, linguistic landscapes under normal circumstances reflect *de jure* and *de facto* language practices and ideologies that can express a desire for humans to stand for their ideas, to make societal and individual opinions visible and to change society. Both producing and perceiving signs requires a range of competences, such as literacy skills and critical thinking, including reflecting on the inequality of languages (Gorter & Cenoz, 2022), as well as critical intercultural awareness and creativity. In public spaces both intentional, such as activist teaching (Seals & Niedt, 2021), and incidental learning

may take place and therefore they can be considered educational spaces (Krompák et al., 2022). It has been demonstrated that linguistic landscapes have considerable learning potential (Gorter & Cenoz, 2024a), which leads to an urgent need to unravel and capitalise on the possibilities of stakeholders to engage their agency and activism.

The aims of this book are twofold. First, the studies in this book contribute to the educational turn in linguistic landscape studies (Krompák et al., 2022) by focusing on different stakeholders who actively and intentionally engage with linguistic landscapes as agents and activists for educational purposes.

Second, the studies in this collection open up new spaces and approaches to discuss agency and activism in education spaces. The investigation of agency and activism in educational contexts represents an underexplored field of study and deserves more detailed attention. We aim to gain knowledge about the intention, mobilisation and impact of agency and activism on space and the users of the space. By doing so, in this introductory chapter, we first discuss the concepts of agency and activism in relation to language and space, and their relevance for linguistic landscape studies. Subsequently, we provide an outline of the structure of the book and draw connections between the different chapters from the perspective of agency and activism on theoretical, methodological and empirical levels. Finally, we synthesise the concepts of educational agency and activism in terms of their manifestations, which emerge from the empirical findings of the individual chapters and illuminate future directions in the investigation of agency and activism in public spaces.

2. Agency and activism in language and space

Agency and its interplay with language and space have been conceptualised differently in various disciplines and research fields. In recent sociolinguistic discourses, agency has become an important topic in the investigation of language policy and planning (LPP) (Bouchard & Glasgow, 2019; Glasgow & Bouchard, 2019a). Going beyond the definition of agency as capacity, power and free will to act, Glasgow and Bouchard (2019b, p. 2) accentuate the relationship of agency, culture and structure and define agency “in terms of complex links between people, their goals and aspirations,

their ability to exercise their own will, and the local and broader contexts in which these phenomena unfold”. Thereby, they focus on how individual and collective agents influence each other in LPP contexts. From the perspective of linguistic anthropology, Ahearn (2001, p. 112) considers agency as a social practice and defines it as a “socioculturally mediated capacity to act”. She criticises approaches that do not take into consideration “the social nature of agency and the pervasive influence of culture on human intentions, beliefs, and actions” (Ahearn, 2001, p. 114) and that define agency as a synonym for free will or resistance. She further points out that it is important to distinguish the location and the type of agency in order to gain deeper insight into the complexity of agency. The French sociologist Latour (2007, 2017) defined agency as a capacity or power to act, and he considers activism to be a manifestation of this capacity. In his actor-network theory, Latour differentiates between the agency of humans and non-humans, between the social and the natural worlds. While the former explicates the power of humans to act in and through space, the agency of space can structure the actions of humans. According to Latour (2007), agency appears in the interrelationship of humans and space. Thereby, the space has an impact on the human and at the same time human actors are empowered intentionally or incidentally to configure the space.

In line with the concept of agency as relational (Latour, 2007) and socioculturally mediated (Ahearn, 2001), Miller (2012) examines how agency is constituted in interactions, specifically how adult immigrant business owners in the United States construct their agency in their language use and learning experiences in particular spaces. From analysing interviews, Miller (2012) concludes that participants mitigate responsibility for their agency in English language learning while simultaneously presenting themselves as multilingual speakers. Furthermore, the agency of the space emphasises the “dialogic formation of these spaces” (Miller, 2012, p. 462) by legitimising or suppressing certain linguistic interactions in that particular space. Similarly, Scollon (2005, p. 173) points to the multilayered actors and intentions in the notion of agency and draws our attention to the time, space and instruments through which agency is distributed.

Agency, the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (Ahearn 2001, p. 112), is closely linked to activism. More specifically, “language activism initiatives can be viewed as communities of practice, each with their own internally-negotiated norms, goals, and dynamics of participation” (De Korne, 2021, p. 16). To understand the different strategies of language activism, De Korne (2021, pp. 19–20) developed a framework with three basic actions: creating, connecting and representing. These actions are targeted at five goals, including resources, events, spaces or structures, people or identities, and communication practices. While *resources* include non-human material such as texts, videos and other educational products, *events* focus on human exchange in the form of concerts, conferences and workshops. *Spaces or structures* refer to social spaces such as schools or other educational institutions. *People or identities* encompass the social roles of people such as learners and teachers. The final goal of language activism strategies concerns *communication practices* in various forms, written, visual or auditory (De Korne, 2021, p. 19). Against this backdrop, we conclude that agency and activism are embedded in a specific social context and represent a social practice that manifests itself in space and time and through linguistic, semiotic and spatial resources.

3. Who are the agents and activists in the linguistic educationscape?

To continue our reflections on the manifestation of agency and activism in space and time and through linguistic, semiotic resources, we use the following image to illustrate how children are mobilised as agents and activists to preserve and revitalise their Indigenous language in New Zealand (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 “Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori” parade, Wellington, New Zealand © Rob Dixon/Radio New Zealand (2019)

The photo was taken in Wellington, New Zealand, at the Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori [Māori Language Week] parade that is organised annually in September¹ to celebrate and revitalise the Māori language (<https://nationaltoday.com/maori-language-week>; King, 2018). It represents a specific geographical context (New Zealand) and social practice (celebration of Māori) by engaging children in a parade and empowering them as agents and activists to advocate for the Māori language, which is taught mainly in immersion schools. While the two (partially bilingual) posters from left to right “He pai ki a tatou te reo” [We like the language (Māori)] and “Nō tenei [tēnei] whenua, nō ōku tupuna This land is mine, inherited by my ancestors!” address issues such as societal acceptance and the value of the language, as well as heritage and belongingness, the third and fourth posters “We (heart) te reo” [We love the language (Māori)] express children’s positive emotions towards the Māori language. Furthermore, the black, red and white colours deployed in the letters index the flag of Māori

1 <https://nationaltoday.com/maori-language-week/>

sovereignty. The symbol in the first poster may represent a basic form of the traditional Māori symbol “Mania” (guardian over air, land and water, messenger between the mortal and spiritual realm). Similarly, the hearth symbol with the spiral in the middle (in the first and fourth posters) may point to the Māori symbol “Koru” (a new bud on a fern leaf) that represents new life, new beginnings, growth, strength and harmony. Accordingly, the combination of the text and the symbolic representation of the Māori flag and cultural heritage operate as a semiotic sign ensemble (see also Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee, this volume) that emphasises the linguistic meaning of the multimodal message. This example illuminates children’s explicit agency and activism and teachers’ implicit agency and activism in advocating for Māori.

While linguistic landscape was recognised relatively early on “as a powerful tool in educational contexts for development of critical thinking and activism” (Shohamy & Waksman, 2009, p. 326), only in the last decade has a discussion emerged on the importance of linguistic landscape in such educational contexts as the schoolscape (Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee, 2021; Brown, 2005, 2012; Laihonon & Szabó, 2018), or as a pedagogical resource for language learning (Badstübner-Kizik & Janíková, 2018; Gorter, 2018; Malinowski et al., 2020; Marten & Saagpakk, 2017; Niedt & Seals, 2021). Further, the investigation of linguistic landscapes has become relevant not only inside, around and beyond the classroom (Niedt & Seals, 2021), but also in broader learning contexts – the so-called linguistic and semiotic educationscapes (Krompák et al., 2022).

The educational turn draws attention to the agentive and activist role of stakeholders in education such as students, teachers, headmasters, teachers-in-training, language practitioners, policymakers and others. It is also related to critical thinking by reflecting the inequality of languages (Gorter & Cenoz, 2022), and authors’ agentive role in placing signs in public spaces (Gorter & Cenoz, 2024b), social justice in education (Piller, 2016), as well as current historical events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. By raising the question “Who controls the linguistic landscape of a school?”, Troyer (2023) explores the agentive role of linguistic landscape actors in the schoolscape. In a mixed method study conducted in three elementary and two secondary schools, Troyer (2023) focused on the ideological positioning of Spanish and English and their

relationship in the schoolscape in Oregon (USA) from a nexus analysis perspective. One of the findings emphasises the absence of language policies in the investigated schools which resulted in less awareness of the role of spoken languages. Nevertheless, some teachers acted agentively in creating Spanish signs in the schoolscape. In sharing the results of his investigation with the participating schools, Troyer (2023, p. 116) sought to “enact positive social change”.

In line with current developments, the third part of the anthology by Niedt and Seals (2021) is dedicated to activist education in and through linguistic landscapes. It includes four studies that critically and actively engaged with the linguistic landscape. The studies focus on the agentive and activist role of the Indigenous community (Chen, 2021), political signage in Germany and Ukraine (Seals & Niedt, 2021), the political sign producer in the Republic of Ireland (Strange, 2021), and university students in Israel (Michalovich et al., 2021). The study by Chen (2021) explored the way Indigenous speakers of Paiwan and Budai Rukai in Taiwan reconstructed their cultural and linguistic heritage in interactive multimodal story houses after the Morakot typhoon disaster in 2009. Thereby, the linguistic landscape of the story houses and the deployed linguistic practices were analysed using a nexus analytical approach. The findings shed light on the agency of the Indigenous communities in the revitalisation of the Paiwan and Budai Rukai languages as a symbolic and material culture. Seals and Niedt (2021, p. 178) explore “how activism in the general linguistic landscape is used *as* an educational vehicle to teach the public about social issues” (emphasis in original) and draw our attention to the activist role of graffiti, stickers, flags and poetry in Göttingen (Germany) and Lviv (Ukraine). By applying an ethnographic approach, the authors give an in-depth analysis of the multimodal political and social signage and emphasise the global and local elements in the activist linguistic landscape. Similarly, the study by Strange (2021) focuses on the educating and activist role of linguistic landscape. By doing so, the author examines the educating role of the campaign for abortion rights in the Republic of Ireland. Based on analyses of signage and interviews with members of the campaign groups, the author points to the discursive tactics of the oppositional campaign groups represented by different linguistic and semiotic resources. It follows that linguistic landscape as an (occasional) educational space reconstructs

issues of power and ideology. Another form of activism is introduced in the study conducted with university students in Jaffa, Israel (Michalovich et al., 2021). Placing the dynamic walking tour as a powerful methodology in the centre, the students explored the politically loaded context of Jaffa, a former Arab town, and collected multimodal data such as images, audio and video recordings, observations and notes, as well as interactions with local residents. The authors, who are at the same time students participating in a course taught by their supervisor, Elana Shohamy, argue that the dynamic walking tour enhances students' understanding of complex issues and empowers them to interact with space and people. By doing so, they become activists, as they report, "we were not only learning about insiders' perspectives but were also granted an opportunity to enact change, which is arguably the epitome of educational work" (Michalovich et al., 2021, p. 229). In line with this premise "to enact change", activists in the United Kingdom deployed offline and online semiotic resources in public spaces to express critique and "raise awareness of social injustices" (Sergeant et al., 2023, p. 1). The campaign of the U.K. activist group called Led By Donkeys was documented and analysed by Philip Sergeant and his colleagues, Korina Giaxoglou and Frank Monaghan (2023). The activist group has run this campaign, which includes posters and social media, since 2018 with the aim of shedding light on the hypocrisy in current political discourses in Great Britain. Using the key findings from A to Z, in the form of a graphic novel, Sergeant et al. (2023) discuss relevant forms and aspects of political activism in the linguistic landscape. According to Sergeant et al. (2023, p. 34), "activism makes use of the linguistic landscape as a semiotic resource, with particular attention to the role played by context in meaning-making", and addresses less direct consequences while raising awareness of an issue, such as social injustice in the case of the U.K. activist group Led By Donkeys.

Activism appears as one of the key dimensions in the recent development of linguistic landscape that contributes to "meaningful changes in spaces which in turn may lead to greater social justice and equality" (Shohamy, 2024, p. 270). The other two dimensions include awareness and language human rights. While awareness refers to the competence of passers-by to perceive and identify the communicative function of signage, linguistic human rights enable readers to interpret linguistic landscape

from the perspective of critical linguistic theories and social and political justice. Activism goes further to initiate protests and demonstrations “in order to create changes by critiquing and modifying the LL which is perceived by them as unjust” (Shohamy, 2024). Consequently, “activism refers to situations when groups or individuals come together in order to bring about changes and reforms in the society’s everyday life domains” (Shohamy, 2024, p. 272).

To conclude, we point to the urgent need to examine agency and activism in the intersection of linguistic landscape and education, so-called educationscapes, in order to gain knowledge about the intention, mobilisation, forms and impact of agency and activism on space, signage and the users of the space. This volume seeks to fill this research gap and introduces empirical research conducted in educationscapes with a focus on the agentive and activist role of the educational stakeholders.

4. Overview of the book

The chapters in this volume are organised in line with institutional educational contexts such as primary, secondary and higher education, where intentional learning takes place and informal educational contexts facilitate incidental learning. Furthermore, the scope of the volume provides a broad socio-geographical view of agency and activism as a social practice in highly diverse contexts. Accordingly, the intentions, mobilisation and impact of agency and activism vary, offering valuable perspectives on the complex interplay of agency, activism and linguistic landscape. We will first characterise each chapter and thereafter present some similarities shared by the different chapters.

In chapter 2, **Antoinette Camilleri Grima** provides an outline of a linguistic landscape activity for teachers as part of their professional development. Three groups of pre-service and in-service teachers from Malta created language teaching materials and wrote their reflections during and after the activity. The aims of this activity were to raise awareness, to adopt linguistic landscape as a resource, to create authentic materials, to enhance learner autonomy and to use written reflections as a metacognitive strategy. The participants subsequently shared their materials with each other and provided feedback for the instructor through their

reflections. The use of authentic and meaningful materials for teaching Maltese as a first language was evaluated positively by the participants, who were motivated by the format of autonomous learning along with the activity of producing linguistic landscape-based materials. Camilleri Grima observes that the linguistic landscape is “a versatile language learning tool found abundantly around us”.

In chapter 3, **Osman Solmaz** explores the way English teachers in Turkey apply the concept of linguistic landscape in their educational practice and reflect on it. His chapter focuses particularly on the impact of a linguistic landscape workshop on English teachers’ professional development and the implementation of linguistic landscape in language classes. In line with earlier work, Solmaz introduces a four-phase framework for the implementation of linguistic landscape in teacher education. This four-phase cycle of activities includes situated practices, guided exploration, creation and transformed practice. Based on an analysis of qualitative data, such as that obtained from semi-structured focus group interviews, open-ended surveys and teacher presentations, the author concludes that the professional development workshop on linguistic landscape offered a new perspective on language learning. Moreover, the participants outlined the positive impact of the linguistic landscape activity on students’ language proficiency, intercultural awareness and critical thinking skills. The results foreground the transformative potential of linguistic landscape activities as a powerful approach to professional development, especially in teacher education.

In chapter 4, **Dennis Walter Adoko, Medadi E. Ssentanda and Allen Asimwe** focus on the agency of linguistic landscapes. In their study they investigate the linguistic landscape as a pedagogical resource for the development of literacy skills in primary schools in Lira City, Uganda. Applying quantitative and qualitative research methods such as questionnaires and follow-up interview with teachers, as well as classroom observation and photography, the authors analysed their empirical data based on nexus analysis. Their findings demonstrated the improvement of visual, symbolic, reading, writing and numeracy skills, as well as of literacy in general. The schoolscape fits with the existing language-in-education policy. Thus, the authors suggest that the professional development of teachers should increasingly take the linguistic landscape into consideration, especially

since it can offer opportunities for language learning and enhance language awareness.

In addition, chapter 5 by **Hiram H. Maxim**, includes an emphasis on literacy. Its central dimension is a multiliteracies pedagogy structured around the four principles of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying. Based on criticisms of this framework, he adds affect, dislocation and spontaneity as new principles. His study is founded on a project that implemented this multiliteracies pedagogical framework to engage undergraduates of the Emory University (Atlanta, Georgia, USA) in the local linguistic landscape. The premise was that linguistic landscapes are full of affective, dislocating, spontaneous experiences. The students first carried out exercises in which they explored familiar places such as the campus or their hometown. Later, students investigated unfamiliar multilingual places where they critically examined social practices that involved the linguistic, visual and spatial design of textual meanings. The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the histories and participants of each place. The result of the project was a website that displayed the outcomes of the studies by the students. Those studies and the students' reflections on engaging with the linguistic landscape led to results that indicated the possibilities of the project for developing students' multiliteracies while attending to their affective capacities.

In chapter 6, **Anikó Hatoss** reports on her long-term ethnographic project carried out with multilingual students in Sydney, Australia. Drawing on a narrative approach to the linguistic landscape (Wee, 2021) and the results of her previous monograph (Hatoss, 2023), Hatoss investigated how students engage with everyday linguistic practices in different communities in Sydney. Notably, Hatoss paid attention to learners' sociolinguistic awareness by using linguistic landscape as a pedagogical tool. The rich empirical data that were collected in 2020 consist of students' photographs and their written narratives on selected signs, their blog posts on the fieldwork, interviews with residents, and interactions between the students about their experiences with the project. Based on her analysis, Hatoss concluded that through the project students developed critical insight into language choices in the multilingual signage related to the investigated speech community. Moreover, the students recognised the speakers' roles

in multilingual linguistic practices and demonstrated appreciation for linguistic diversity.

In chapter 7 by **Steve Marshall, Mohammad Al Hannash and Setareh Masoumi Mayni** the students appear as co-researchers and co-authors. In their study, the authors conducted a reflective, walking and visual ethnography at a university campus in western Canada as part of a linguistic landscape task, exploring the representation of coloniality, monolingualism and Eurocentricity in the semiotic landscape. The research data include visual data and the reflections of two students, who are at the same time the co-authors, on selected images as well as on the emerging themes of the analysis. Whilst in the top-down signs English and an Eurocentric perspective dominated, the bottom-up signage reflected the linguistic and cultural diversity of the students. The authors found examples of Chinese and a message in the Kwak'wala Indigenous language. They also encountered some examples of bilingualism, with Chinese, Japanese and French being identified on notice boards. They further present an example of grassroots activism through the writing of non-permanent bilingual signs in Indigenous languages and their translation in English on concrete pillars on the campus. The findings of the study advocate for raising awareness on equity, diversity and Eurocentric colonial cultural hegemony in higher education.

In a similar vein, chapter 8 by **Jannis Androutopoulos and Franziska Kuhlee** focuses on the semiotic landscape of six secondary schools in Hamburg, Germany. Based on empirical data obtained from the project they propose and outline a framework for the definition and classification of ensembles. This consists of a descriptive grid with four dimensions: canvas, arrangement, topic and textuality. They present three examples and data from interviews with teachers and pupils to examine three functions of ensembles: knowledge transfer, group-identity building and staff cohesion. The concept of participation formats is applied to disentangle the complex relationships between authorship and control involved in the collaborative production of ensembles by teachers and students. They demonstrate how ensembles in the classroom contribute to promoting learning, classroom management and a safe place for pupils.

In chapter 9, **Amiena Peck, Ammaarah Seboa, Jacina Januarie, Kāmilah Kalidheen, Kurt Thebus and Zoe Small** present a collaborative

autoethnography in which the group narrates how they created a web page, *Inspired Linguistics*, at their university in South Africa. The group wanted to change the negative ideas and images of linguistics as a discipline. They start from a 10-second online TikTok video-clip depicting the famous singer Rihanna, which they remade and recreated into their own promotional video for prospective linguistics students. A third video captured a traditional lecture by one group member where intertextuality is taught and in which the second, remake, video is introduced to the students who are physically present. That video went viral with a global reach and created a virtual learning space for linguistics students far and beyond. For the group, the experience with virtual linguistic landscape work showed them where they belonged, what it means to be a linguistics student and researcher and why it is worth pursuing.

In chapter 10, **Stephan Meyer** and **Edina Krompák** present a study that explored a particular occasion where alternative multilingualisms (coexistence of non-official languages) attained visibility through multilingual posters in a campaign to prevent the closure of the emergency department of a public hospital in the Swiss city of Basel. They start by identifying the need for multilingual linguistic landscapes in health communication, or what they call a health educationscape. The chapter connects professionalisation to linguistic landscapes in educational settings and beyond. The multilingual educationscape of the hospital campaign was examined from the perspective of social justice (Piller, 2016) and the communication networks in which the signs are embedded. The study explored educational aspects of both the production and the reception of these multilingual signs. Interviews with the producers of the multilingual written signs in the hospital marketing department provide insights into how some multilingual employees in the hospital were mobilised as lay linguistic mediators, as well as the way in which this contributed to their professional development as part of the marketing campaign. Key images used in the campaign highlight the ambivalences of recognition and the marginalisation of multilingual inequalities. Respondents' discussion of the posters showed an appreciation of multilingualism, as well as puzzlement about the educational message. This study complements existing knowledge on semiotic agency and integrates it with what we know regarding agency in other fields, most importantly health.

In chapter 11, **Åse Mette Johansen** and **Hilde Sollid** analyse a multilingual place name sign in Sápmi, in the north of Norway. They conceive of the sign as a multilayered semiotic and discursive artefact. From a material ethnographic perspective, the authors investigate sociopolitical discourses and how the sign has been activated in educational contexts to teach about language reclamation and reconciliation. They look at four versions of the road sign, at changes over time and of placement. They use the concept of entextualisation to analyse different historical layers of the sign related to the changes of the languages used, the discourses around the sign and the responses it received. At first, the sign was monolingual in the majority language, Norwegian, which silenced the minority languages of the community. In the 1990s, North Sámi was included in a new bilingual sign but this provoked severe conflict among the population. The sign was vandalised several times, which is seen as an expression of opposition to new rights for the Sámi population. The signs were subsequently replaced, but two of the vandalised signs became part of an exhibition in a museum and in a cultural centre, thus becoming included in two different educationscapes. In this way the signs have become part of the narrative about the history of the Sámi. The most recent version of the sign is trilingual, including the name in the Kven language. The authors conclude that entextualisation processes are part of language activism and include acts of reconciliation.

Against the current sociopolitical backdrop of global warming and the ongoing wars between Ukraine and Russia and in the Middle East, **Sílvia Melo-Pfeifer** reflects on the chapters in her synthesising afterword. She starts from a sociocultural perspective by describing learners and teachers as social agents and conceives of learning and teaching as social practices (Kress et al., 2021). Drawing on the framework by Lourenço and Melo-Pfeifer (2022), she describes three stages of agentive and activist work with linguistic landscape that include observation, reflection and intervention. She then positions the foregoing chapters on this continuum. Further, she draws attention to social activism in the linguistic landscape and illuminates this development with visual examples related to social justice, equality and inclusion. By way of conclusion, Melo-Pfeifer introduces a framework for service learning that represents a pedagogical approach, combining academic aims with community service, as well as

underlining the potential of service learning for fostering activism in the education landscape.

Certain general trends can be observed in the contributions to this volume. Obviously, the authors carried out their investigations in different contexts and aimed at different target groups. These vary from the university context with mainly undergraduate students, to pre- and in-service teachers and pupils in primary and secondary schools, as well as visitors to museums and the employees of and visitors to a hospital. The geographic scope of the chapters includes four continents (Africa, Australia, Europe and North America), with contributions from 10 different countries: Australia, Canada, Germany, Malta, Norway, Switzerland, Uganda, the United States, South Africa and Turkey. All the chapters address in one way or another the role of English in an education context or in society at large, and all are related to the display of languages in public spaces or in educational environments. Depending on the local context, the authors analyse and either treat in depth, or in passing, the following languages: Arabic, Bahasa Sunda, Bosnian, Burmese, Chinese (both Mandarin and Cantonese), Croatian, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kiswahili, Korean, Kven, Kwak'wala, Leblango, Maltese, Nepali, Norwegian, Sámi, Serbian, Slovene, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Telugu, Thai and Turkish. This list demonstrates the multilingual environment encountered in most of the situations studied.

Methodologically, all the authors chose a qualitative approach, including visual ethnography, a narrative approach, discourse analysis, the use of interviews, written (self-) reflections, walking tours and various classroom activities. A quantitative dimension is added by Adoko et al., who look at the number of languages on display on signage and in data on literacy. All the authors are interested in finding out more about educational agency and/or activism in one way or another. We focus on that aspect in the final section.

5. Synthesis: Educational agency and activism and its manifestations

With our book we have sought to broaden the understanding of agency and activism in education landscapes. Drawing on a theoretical background of

agency, activism and their intersection with language (section 2), as well as on the empirical studies in this volume, we define educational agency and activism as the socially constructed power and the implicit and explicit decision-making involved in using, creating and transforming the linguistic landscape, as well as enhancing its potential for educational purposes. By that means, the educational purpose can manifest itself in linguistic, semiotic and spatial agency and activism, whereby these forms of manifestation are slightly overlapping and often appear in a combined form.

Linguistic agency

As observed in the various chapters, linguistic agency is practised by future teachers (Camilleri Grima), by primary and secondary students and teachers (Solmaz; Adoko et al.; Androutsopoulos and Kuhlee), by university students (Marshall et al.; Hatoss; Maxim; Peck et al.), and by hospital employees (Meyer and Krompák). In doing so, the participants are empowered to act agentively in raising language awareness (Camilleri Grima), critical intercultural awareness (Solmaz; Hatoss), and decolonialisation awareness (Marshall et al.), as well as in fostering multiliteracies (Maxim) and literacy skills (Adoko et al.) in and through linguistic educationscapes. Consequently, linguistic agency refers to participants' agentive role of critically engaging with languages in public spaces.

Semiotic agency

Interwoven with linguistic agency is semiotic agency, which describes "the potential to shape the signs that contribute to shaping us" (Meyer and Krompák, this volume). As explained in Meyer and Krompák's chapter, semiotic agency addresses questions about the emplacement, the producer and receiver of the sign, as well as the form and the content of meaning. From the same perspective of agency and activism, Melo-Pfeifer (this volume) describes pedagogical work with linguistic landscapes along the poles of observation, reflection and intervention. In agreement with these ideas, we find semiotic agency in the chapter by Androutsopoulos and Kuhlee (this volume), who studied the learning and teaching practices in secondary schools and, in particular, the decision about who creates the

sign (see also Troyer, 2023) and how sign ensembles contribute to the meaning-making processes and social justice in schools.

Spatial agency

The term “spatial agency” is borrowed from architecture (Awan et al., 2011), with the intention of describing the interrelationship between human and non-human actors (Latour, 2007), in particular, how spatial arrangements shape human action and how human actors are empowered to modify the space. Consequently, spatial agency is represented in the placement, replacement and absence of signs (see Johansen and Sollid, this volume) or in the dislocation of the sign (Maxim, this volume), and in the creating of virtual (learning) spaces (Peck et al., this volume).

Activism in education appears in mobilising students as co-researchers (Camilleri Grima; Solmaz; Hatoss; Marshall et al.; Peck et al.), as well as co-authors (Marshall et al.; Peck et al.), and in the professionalisation of teacher education by drawing attention to the significance of linguistic landscapes in educational spaces (Camilleri Grima; Solmaz; Hatoss, Androutsopoulos and Kuhlee; Adoko et al.; Melo-Pfeifer). We see further development in the practice of educational activism in creating and redesigning local and global educational spaces in order to enable “greater social justice and equality” (Shohamy, 2024, p. 270). This could be the next step in moving the academic and pedagogical discourse on linguistic landscape and educational agency and activism forward.

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Antoinette Camilleri Grima

2 The Use of Linguistic Landscape in the Professional Development of Language Teachers

Abstract: This contribution presents a professional development activity for teachers based on the linguistic landscape (LL). Two important components of the activity are (1) the creation of instructional materials for language education, and (2) written reflections during and after the process to support autonomous learning. Two groups of pre-service and one group of in-service teachers participated in this project while they were following courses on Maltese language teaching at the Faculty of Education, University of Malta. The concepts of LL and learner autonomy were introduced during the initial part of the project. This was then followed by a collection of photos from the LL. The teachers uploaded the photos that they used for the creation of Maltese language teaching resources onto a database. The resources were shared and discussed during a show-and-tell session. All stages of the project were accompanied by written reflections to create a feedback loop between the teachers and myself as a teacher educator. The teachers' feedback was very positive as they highlighted the benefits of learning autonomously while producing instructional materials based on the LL. All the teachers noted that the LL is practical and effective for language and cultural awareness and that it is a versatile language learning tool found abundantly around us.

Keywords: teacher education, language learning, learner autonomy, Maltese as a Foreign Language, authentic instructional material, written reflections

1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is the linguistic landscape (LL) as a pedagogical tool in teacher education. For the purposes of this project, the LL is understood as any written text visible in public spaces. The teachers involved in this project were teachers of Maltese, and Maltese as a Foreign Language (MFL), to learners aged six to 16 years, and were following either pre-service or in-service training. The aim was to give teachers the opportunity to experience the LL as a locus of inquiry in order for them to then feel

comfortable applying it as a valuable resource and as a multifaceted tool in class. Teachers of Maltese are trained in how to produce instructional materials because there are very few teaching resources available commercially. The instructional materials created by teachers are shared on a dedicated website available to all educators (<https://multi.skola.edu.mt/>).

In the past few years, in my work as a teacher educator and researcher at the University of Malta, I have found it very stimulating to include the concept of the LL in teachers' professional development. On the one hand, a study of the multilingual schoolscape helps teachers become aware of how they can improve their teaching environment to support language education (Krompák et al., 2020). On the other hand, a focus on the LL outside of school becomes a useful tool for various topics of, in my case, Maltese language instruction (Camilleri Grima, 2020a). The LL in Malta is clearly multilingual (Brincat, 2013; Sciriha, 2017), but for this chapter, my attention is limited to the LL in Maltese.

Furthermore, I believe that it is essential to “practice what you preach”. I cannot ask teachers to, for example, stimulate learner autonomy and to utilise the LL, and then dedicate all my time with them to continuous lecturing in a top-down, chalk-and-talk fashion. Van den Branden (2022) affirms that the first of the 10 commandments for teachers to motivate learners is for them to set an example through their behaviour. To do this, educators need to have experienced motivational learning when they were students. They also need to be motivated as teachers by the teaching strategies they adopt. Another two commandments relevant to this study are to promote learner autonomy and to familiarise learners with the target language culture (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). In what follows I show why and how I find the LL to be an ideal concept, and at the same time an instrument to practice, and not only preach these three commandments.

2. The professional development of teachers

The LL is investigated as a topic specifically in teacher education by, for example, Hancock (2012), Kim (2017), and Andrade et al. (2023). In comparison with research on the LL from a sociolinguistic point of view (e.g. Hatoss, 2023), the LL in teacher education is not yet prominent in the literature, in particular for teaching the first language of students. Here I focus on the areas of teacher education relevant to my project, namely,

the role of the LL, the autonomous learning approach (LA), and the creation of instructional material for teaching the Maltese language. Kim (2017) explains it in this way: “Considering the teachers’ pivotal role in designing theoretically valid, pedagogically effective classroom activities, it is essential to explore how the concept of LL may spark pedagogical insights in teacher training courses” (p. 66).

The LL has many advantages when used as part of the professional development of language teachers (Wilton & Ludwig, 2018). First of all, considering that teachers are expected to dedicate a substantial amount of time in school to teaching vocabulary, spelling and grammar, there is no doubt that the LL provides an ideal scenario for authentic texts, that is, language that is not contrived for a textbook. The multifacetedness of public signs makes them appealing as classroom tools because they provide a rich, organic environment for language learning (Kim, 2017). For instance, “additional language learners”, that is, learners of the language spoken in their new environment following immigration, are expected to participate in the real-life use of language by engaging in its social functions. To help them with this, the teacher can show how the LL freely and widely provides an ideal learning context. Furthermore, the LL provides a useful opportunity for the creation of a spectrum of educational materials. These can support a range of learning points from vocabulary items, through to grammatical structures, to those requiring higher-order thinking skills, as well as for practicing oral and written language interaction. The context of additional language learning is particularly suited to the use of the LL since students normally would have an immediate need to put what they learn into practice in real life, and because they are surrounded by the target language (Van den Branden, 2022).

The LL, being authentic visual text in the environment, provides a meaningful and motivating resource. It is varied and dynamic, unlike a textbook where the content and the illustrations do not change over time. It can instil in the learners a keen sense of observation of the linguistic variation ever-present in their social environment. Thus, it strengthens the potential of incidental learning, although the teacher’s guidance is required to promote the learners’ cognizance of print and text (Kim, 2017).

In an autonomous learning environment, then, there is further scope for the learners to gauge their interest and motivation, and to set their own

learning objectives, methods, processes and evaluations (Jingnan, 2011; Little et al., 2017). These cognitive, metacognitive and affective aspects are intrinsic and interrelated facets of learning. The cognitive factor requires the learners to be fully engaged in meaningful activities. At the same time, metacognitive strategies support the learners in defining their goals, and organising, monitoring and evaluating their learning experience. The affective element helps the learners succeed as long as they are strongly motivated. Motivation is necessary so that they can assign a positive value to the tasks they perform and to their outcomes (Van den Branden, 2022). As I explain below, in teachers' professional development, all these aspects can be practiced when concentrating on the production of instructional materials.

The teachers' role in creating teaching resources cannot be underestimated (Simons & Smits, 2021). McGrath (2016) points out that teachers must learn how to design teaching materials because, over time, views about language teaching and learning change, and teachers must be able to respond swiftly to such changes. Furthermore, learners' needs fluctuate over time, and published material does not always match such needs. Therefore, teachers need to be able to create or adapt resources accordingly (Jingnan, 2011). A case in point is the sudden influx of a relatively large number of migrant learners into many schools. Teachers need to quickly adapt their language teaching to a plurilingual and multicultural classroom, and this necessitates the alteration or adaptation of existing material and the production of new tools. In such circumstances, after teachers identify students' learning difficulties, they often solve the problem by creating relevant resources. Furthermore, teachers need to produce instructional materials to help learners overcome a range of difficulties related to form, meaning, language functions and skills while considering layout, size and visuals. Subsequently, they evaluate and adapt materials as necessary (Jolly & Bolitho, 2013). Environmental print provides easily accessible material that can be adapted in many ways to the varied needs of learners.

It is recommended that teachers be able to encourage learners to produce learning materials themselves (McGrath, 2016), and I find that these can be conveniently inspired by, and based on, the LL. When materials are generated by learners from their own environment, this instils

in them “increased motivation, confidence, and self-esteem” (McGrath, 2016, p. 163). When learners create classroom resources they become “teachers”; they show increased motivation and in-depth understanding, heightened responsibility and commitment to their own learning; and they will be fully attentive throughout the process (Arnold, 2021; Little et al., 2017). When “the learners change seats from the consumer to the producer of learning materials” (Kim, 2017, p. 73), they experience a major sense of achievement, self-knowledge, creativity and positive relationships in class (Arnold, 2021). Research shows that a positive affective milieu promotes self-efficacy and highly effective learning (Aljahromi & Hidri, 2023; Dewaele, 2021). Using the LL in an autonomous learning environment for collaborative resource development can be an ideal configuration for personal development and language education.

Following the digital revolution in education, teachers also need to adapt many traditional materials such as worksheets and photocopied exercises for use in a technological environment (Mishan & Timmis, 2015; Tomlinson, 2013). In today’s world, students’ expectations and skills relating to the use of technology within the educational context would be similar to those outside it, and therefore teachers also need to constantly update their digital literacy to successfully manage technology-mediated learning. Digital resources include language corpora, sometimes available online free of charge, and teachers and learners can create their own pedagogical corpora including those based on the LL. A few examples from the corpus developed in this project are given in section 4.

3. The Maltese project

This project was carried out by “particular people on their own work, to help them improve what they do, including how they work with and for others” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 227). One group of participants consisted of 13 teachers and a second group consisted of eight teachers, with both groups following a two-year day course leading to a Master’s in Teaching and Learning. Another small group of five teachers was following an evening course leading to a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching MFL. In total, 20 female and six male teachers participated. The day-course teachers had a few weeks’ teaching experience because, as part of their studies,

they spend one day a week at school throughout the two years, and they teach for five consecutive weeks each year. The evening course teachers had a minimum of five years of teaching experience. All the participants are referred to as teachers. This project was part of a study unit that satisfied the requirements set by the university. The project took place over a period of two semesters during the academic years 2021–2023.

The aims of the project were

- to raise awareness among teachers about the pedagogical potential of the LL in language education, and in the teaching of Maltese specifically;
- to adopt the LL as a resource for autonomous learning;
- to provide an opportunity for teachers to create authentic material based on the LL for use in school;
- for the teachers to keep a diary with written reflections as a metacognitive strategy, and as a feedback loop for me as the trainer.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the three cornerstones of the project, that is, Linguistic Landscape, Learner Autonomy, and the Creation of Teaching Resources for use in the Maltese and MFL language classrooms.

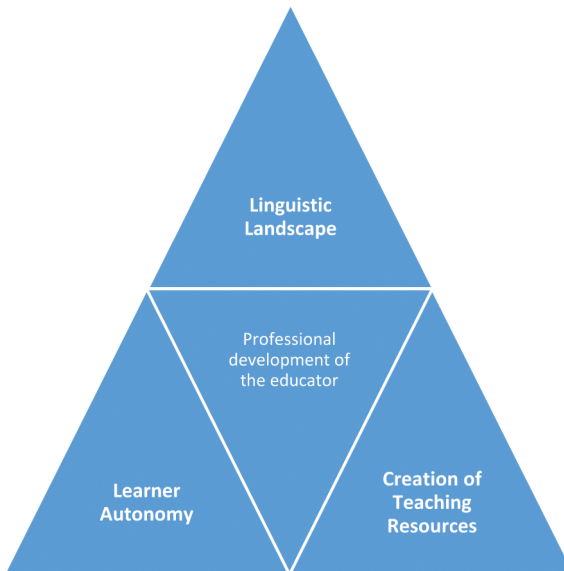


Figure 2.1 The three cornerstones of the project

The course of action followed the inquiry cycle illustrated in Figure 2.2. An inquiry cycle is helpful as it leads the practitioners to a more formative and reflective process for themselves. A predetermined structure (Baumfield et al., 2012), like the one I explain in Steps 1 to 6 below, is helpful because teachers cannot be expected to implement new approaches in school unless they have experienced them first-hand in their educational development (Scharle & Szabó, 2000). I also think that it is important for teachers to be involved in all stages of the design, development and assessment of a project (Lourenço et al., 2017), and to consciously reflect on them throughout the process.



Figure 2.2 The inquiry cycle

The six consecutive steps outlined below are analogous to the ones shown in Figure 2.2. At each step, I prompted the teachers to write their reflections in a diary kept for the purpose.

Step 1: Theory on the LL, and on LA

I started by providing the teachers with a reading list and several articles that I summarised interactively with them in class. In the meantime, the teachers were being trained to produce a range of instructional materials by a colleague. At this stage, it was ascertained that all the participants were willing to participate in this project and to embark on an experience of LA.

Step 2: Definition of aims

As a next step, I conducted two interactive sessions over four hours in order to make sure that the aims and the method to be used in this project were clear. I asked them to form groups of their own choice. The aim of working in a group was for the teachers to share ideas and help each other when creating the resources. The day-course teachers formed groups of four or five, while the evening-course teachers chose to work individually. The latter were mature persons with full-time jobs and family responsibilities and the time available to them was very limited, so I supported them by means of online individual meetings. In contrast, the day-course students were in their early twenties and were able to afford complete attention to their studies.

The first task for the participants was to decide which aspect of the LL they wanted to focus on, and then to define their individual and group aims, with the ultimate aim being to create at least one teaching resource per participant.

Step 3: Data collection

Teachers took photos of the LL in their neighbourhood individually. Some teachers chose to photograph house names, others focused on shop names, others targeted notices, and one teacher chose the LL in a big supermarket that had prominent displays of text indicating the different food and drink available. Altogether 550 digital photos were collected. The teachers uploaded their photos onto a shared Google Drive so that this database was available to all the participants. At this stage, I indicated how the instructional material to be developed could be linked to the Common European Framework (CEFR) descriptors (Council of Europe, 2020).

Step 4: Creation of resources

This phase coincided with the block teaching practice in schools and so it took about three months for the teachers to create and finalise their resources. I met the day-course teachers at regular intervals on campus to oversee their work, and to guide them when necessary. I prompted them to write about the metacognitive strategies they were using, especially regarding their aims, procedures and decisions. I asked them to answer questions such as: Which decisions are you taking individually, and as a group? Which criteria are you using for decision-making? Which type of linguistic analysis do you need to perform and where can you look for any information you need? Which aspects of the project are you enjoying most and what is difficult, and why? Their written answers to these questions provided me with some of the data presented in section 5 below.

Step 5: Show-and-tell and evaluation

During the last meeting before the show-and-tell session (in Maltese “Prezentazzjoni” in Table 2.1), the teachers worked in plenary to decide on the evaluation criteria that they were to apply individually to their project, taking into consideration the process, the resources, and the show-and-tell. The teachers decided to assess the project equally for the process, the resources they created and its presentation. The process was divided into participation, attendance and collaboration. The resources were assessed for their visual presentation, utility and content, and the show-and-tell was assessed for originality, mode of delivery and content. An example of the self-evaluation of one teacher is provided in Table 2.1. All of the teachers’ self-evaluations were very positive and similar to the one in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Teacher’s self-evaluation

Proċess	33%	Riżorsi	33%	Prezentazzjoni	33%
Parteċipazzjoni	9%	Viżiv	10%	Originalità	8%
Attendenza	11%	Utilità	9%	Mezzi	8%
Kollaborazzjoni	9%	Kontenut	10%	Kontenut	10%
Persentaġġ	29%		29%		26%
Totali (+1)					84%

During the show-and-tell session, the participants presented the resources they had created (some examples are provided in section 5). Most of the materials were interactive or included digital elements. During the presentation of the resources, the teachers asked their peers to play the game or work out the exercise they had created. It was clear that at this stage the teachers were very much at ease and having fun.

Step 6: Reflections as feedback

The written reflections consisted of two sets of data: (1) an individual diary, with reactions to the prompts that I gave the teachers during the project, and (2) final reflections on the resources created and how they were implemented in class when this took place. The aim of guided journaling was to (1) help the participants focus on the task at hand such that objectives, methods and processes became clearer to them when they wrote them down and reflected on them; and (2) give feedback to the project director (myself) about the process. The reflections themselves were not assessed.

Reflection-in-action has many advantages and it can be managed in many different ways, especially, in this case, when teachers are focused on their learning and not on that of their learners (Schön, 1991; Wallace, 1998). Reflection-in-action requires more time and energy than usual because it is not the normal type of thinking and writing that teachers do (Cohen et al., 2000). Nevertheless, it is one of the most effective ways of developing professionally, as it involves the identification, questioning and assessment of one's fundamental beliefs and thoughts (Aljahromi & Hidri, 2023). Reflection makes room for insecurity and unpredictability (Luttenberg et al., 2017), and I consider this fundamental during teachers' professional development in an education system that is focused on fixed learning plans and outcomes. As part of the inquiry cycle (Figure 2.2), the feedback provided by the teachers needs to be understood as leading to further theoretical understanding, which, in turn, guides practice. While in section 4 I describe some of the materials that the teachers created, in section 5 I discuss the insights gained from their written reflections, most of which confirm and enrich the existing literature. In section 6, I conclude with what I have learned, and how I plan to develop my pedagogy further, as a result.

4. The instructional materials

For the teaching of MFL, the teachers were advised to first identify descriptors from the CEFR, and then formulate the learning objectives for the worksheet or the digital game they planned to create. Several teachers focused on vocabulary (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 131), ranging from the A1 level, “Has a basic vocabulary repertoire of words and phrases related to particular concrete situations”, through to level B1, “Has a good range of vocabulary related to familiar topics and everyday situations”. To be able to create the resources, the teachers needed to first carry out some linguistic analyses of the LL themselves. For instance, to create the vocabulary tasks shown in Figures 2.3 and 2.4, the teachers needed first to find the most appropriate synonyms and write the definitions or descriptions of the text chosen from the LL. By way of illustration, Figure 2.3 shows one screenshot from a digital game created for use on the interactive whiteboard where learners are asked to match the words shown in the photos of street names to a synonym. Figure 2.4 shows a similar game using laminated flashcards. This consists of a matching exercise in which learners match a photo to a picture and a definition or description of the words in the photo.

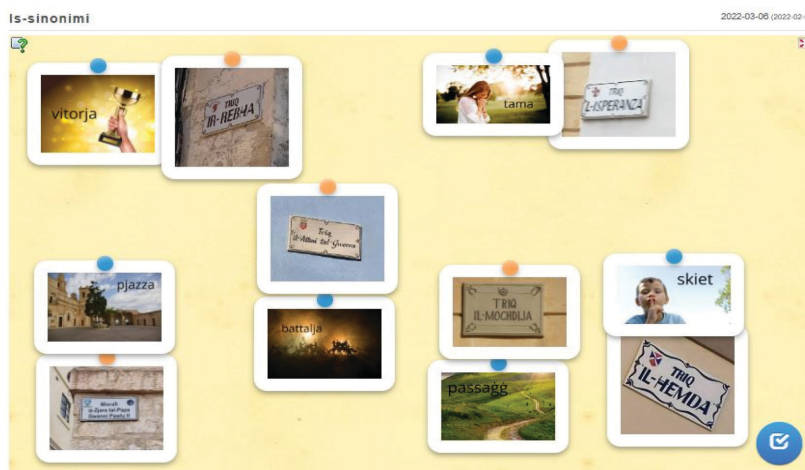


Figure 2.3 Matching synonyms on the interactive whiteboard



Figure 2.4 Matching definitions using flashcards

For the development of communicative activities, the teachers selected the A1 and A2 level descriptors shown in Table 2.2 and illustrated in Figures 2.5 to 2.9.

Table 2.2 The CEFR descriptors

Level	Communicative activity	Descriptor
A1	Overall oral comprehension	Can recognise concrete information (e.g. places) on familiar topics encountered in everyday life. (p. 48)
A2	Overall reading comprehension	Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters which consist of high frequency everyday language (p. 54)
A2	Overall oral production	Can give a simple description or presentation. (p. 62)
A2	Overall written production	Can produce a series of simple phrases. (p. 66)

For the oral comprehension descriptor (descriptor A1 in Table 2.2), the teachers produced a worksheet with a popular activity in second language learning, that is, listening and following the directions given orally, to get from one place to another shown on a map. The innovative factor this time was that the names of the streets and places on the map were actual photos

taken from the learners' own LL. For reading comprehension (descriptor A2 in Table 2.2), a photo of two notices was used (Figure 2.5), one of which was a bilingual sign that helped the learners of MFL understand the Maltese version. The photo was accompanied by a set of questions in Maltese that the learners needed to answer. For oral production (descriptor A2 in Table 2.2), teachers created a poster based on an advert found in the LL (Figure 2.6). The poster is meant to be used as a prompt for the description or presentation of a summer musical event. For the descriptor related to overall written production (descriptor A2 in Table 2.2), one teacher designed a PowerPoint presentation that emphasised the use of the five senses when observing an aspect of the LL (Figure 2.7). The learners in class are thus encouraged and guided in their writing of a narrative or a description involving the LL because they have a multimodal springboard of ideas.

Each of these activities satisfies one or more principles of language learning. For instance, in listening and reading comprehension, students will be actively engaged in interpreting text-based information, and they should be able to overcome obstacles by using memory and other cognitive processes (Van den Branden, 2022). The LL, being a familiar context, is undoubtedly good support for learners to reach their attainment targets one step at a time, and for progressing from the known to the unknown.



Figure 2.5 Two notices



Figure 2.6 Poster

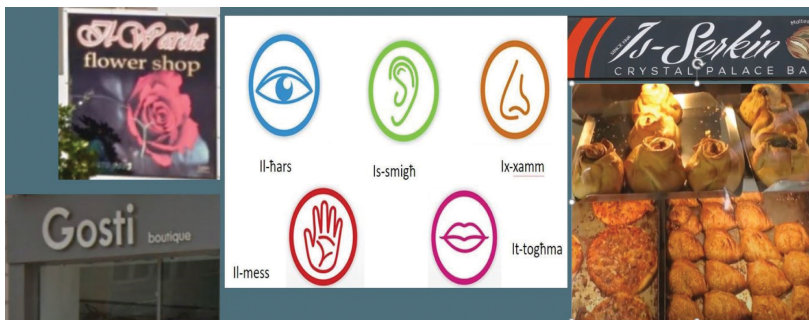


Figure 2.7 LL and the five senses

For the teaching of Maltese as L1, the teachers selected learning outcomes from the syllabus, namely those related to the grammatical article (Figure 2.8), and the grammatical number of nouns (Figure 2.9). The methodology recommended when teaching L1 Maltese is in line with autonomous learning, in that students are encouraged to observe language in use and to tease out the structures and functions in context (Camilleri Grima, 2020b). Figure 2.8 shows one slide where learners are asked to identify the correct article and explain why it is the correct one. That is, in this case, there is no phonetic assimilation by the “g” of *girna*. Figure 2.9 shows two interactive slides: on the first slide the students are shown the name of a street and they are asked to write the singular (*merħla*) of the plural noun *merħliet* (flocks), and on the bottom slide they are asked to identify what type of plural it is, e.g. in this case a ‘sound plural’.



- lċ-
- ls-
- ld-
- ll-
- lż-
- ln-
- lt-

Figure 2.8 Find the correct article and explain the relevant structure

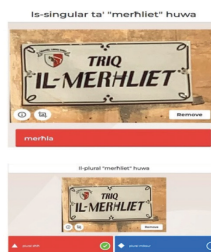


Figure 2.9 Identify the number and structure of the noun

Spelling that varies from the standard norms visible on LL signs cannot be ignored in a language-learning context. For instance, Figure 2.10 shows how the noun phrase *toghma bnina* (good to taste) is written as “Tomabnina”. This is the name of a wine bar, where the letters “gh” disappear, either due to a misspelling or as a choice to attract attention. The two Maltese words *toghma* (taste) and *bnina* (good) are amalgamated into one word which becomes a proper noun. The pronunciation remains the same, but this spelling would be considered incorrect in any other written text. Unfortunately, it was beyond the scope of this study to engage with the creators of the signs in order to find out about their intentions.



Figure 2.10 The sign “Tomabnina”

One of the most common points mentioned by the teachers in their written reflections was the versatility afforded by the LL, such that it can be adapted as a teaching tool to suit almost any learning outcome. One teacher created a digital wheel (Figure 2.11) that the learners had to spin on the interactive whiteboard and, depending on where the arrow stopped, they had to carry out the task for a given photo. The tasks include, for example, “mark the spelling as correct or incorrect, and if incorrect write it correctly”, “describe the grammatical element in the LL”, “give a synonym”, “translate into other languages”, and “mention which element of culture is implied”. The wheel activity was tried out in a school with 12-year-old students who were normally considered to have a low attainment level. In this lesson, they all participated enthusiastically and productively. They carried out all the tasks, as may be seen from one of their notes (Figure 2.12).



Figure 2.11 Spinning the wheel

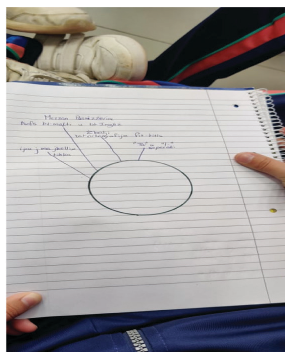


Figure 2.12 A learner's work

5. The written reflections

In this section, I highlight some of the key points that emerged from the teachers' reflections throughout the inquiry cycle (Figure 2.2). The reflections illustrate how the LL, LA, and the creation of resources were key in the teachers' professional development. The results encapsulate what Schön (1991) refers to as reflection-on-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-for-action. For the present chapter, I translated their reflections from Maltese to English, and I use pseudonyms.

First, at the start of the project, both the concepts of LL and LA were practically new to all of the teachers. Therefore, the first step of including an overview of the literature was vital.

Learning about autonomy served as a new experience for me (...). I discovered my creativity and I developed it during group work (...). As a teacher when I implemented autonomy I realized that it works well. (Terry)

Second, from the teachers' point of view, having worked autonomously reinforced their self-esteem as teachers. In their writing, they highlighted the value of working in a group while having individual responsibility for some aspects of the project, especially the development of resources:

As a group, we agreed on the type of resource we wished to make and to achieve which aims. (Jessica)

We thought, discussed, and experimented. When it came to the show-and-tell presentation we chose our preferred mode of delivery, (...) each group member

felt comfortable and at liberty to choose the style that he/she believed was the best one to transmit the content in an effective way. (Corinne)

Third, the written reflections helped the teachers consciously monitor their learning. The time factor was frequently mentioned in the journals:

I think that we could have managed the time better sometimes, especially when we spent too much time discussing minor issues. Also, as it was our first time making that kind of presentation, the filming and editing took too much time. (Marthese)

Fourth, the use of the LL generated a high degree of motivation because it deviated from traditional approaches:

In MFL it is important to plan lessons during which learners are exposed to the use of language in the LL. In that way, the teaching is provided from a real-life context and the learners will feel comfortable with it. Also, we should not feel obliged to retain learning within the classroom walls, on the contrary, I believe that if we take it outside the classroom it will be more effective. (Daisy)

These resources are easily accessible to learners in their everyday lives. They can be seen in a garden, in the home, in streets, and in many areas of any locality (...). The learners will be more motivated to learn when certain factors are in place: the content is related to their personal interests, they have autonomy and control over their work, and they feel competent. (Frans)

All the teachers expressed appreciation for the opportunity to experience learning in autonomous ways during their professional development and to incorporate the LL into the process.

6. Conclusion

The LL has given me, as a teacher educator and as a researcher, a viable platform by way of which I can practice what I preach; in other words, to bring theory and classroom practice together in teacher education. I wanted to act as a model for teachers by implementing a training scenario that combined the theoretical and practical facets of teaching. Furthermore, autonomous learning foregrounds a dimension of personal responsibility (Lourenço et al., 2017) which is often missing when a lecture is based on passive note-taking by the students.

Using the LL for the creation of language teaching resources is both cognitively and affectively engaging. For spoken and written interactions, students must be involved in meaningful and goal-directed tasks. I consider

the use of the LL ideal as a meaningful and motivating resource, as well as for cognitive engagement. Indeed, as other research has shown, “rich, varied, meaningful and relevant input” is essential in language learning, and “cognition and affect mutually influence and reinforce each other” (Van den Branden, 2022, pp. 31–32).

During this project, the written reflections not only led teachers to be aware of their metacognitive strategies but also provided me, as their teacher educator, with each and every teacher’s opinion and perspective. This would not have been possible in orally conducted sessions because there would always be individuals who keep silent while others take over the floor. For instance, something I learned from the task shown in Figure 2.7, is the need to develop the project further by including the literature on soundscapes (e.g. Dumyahn & Pijanowski, 2011; Schulte-Fortkamp et al., 2023) and smellscapes (e.g. Lindborg & Liew, 2021; Young, 2020). This would enlarge the scope of my work to include the multisensorial experience of learners, and would provide a larger platform of ideas for the teachers to create classroom tasks. Furthermore, as I indicated by means of Figure 2.10, I would encourage the teachers to find an opportunity to talk to at least some of the creators of the signs, as this would give them insight into why the signs were written in particular ways, and why they include specific language/s and not others in a multilingual society.

The LL has been appraised by the teachers who participated in this project as a very versatile opportunity for language learning. I have showed and explained in this chapter how it can be used as a remarkable springboard for teachers’ professional development, and especially as a means for creating innovative language teaching resources.

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Osman Solmaz

3 Linguistic Landscapes in English Language Classrooms: Teachers' Practices and Reflections

Abstract: This study aimed to examine the practices and reflections of English language teachers in Türkiye who participated in a linguistic landscape (LL)-focused professional development workshop, in which they were introduced to theoretical ideas and practical suggestions related to the implementation of LL in classrooms. Teachers designed and developed materials featuring LL signs and incorporated them into their own classrooms. Later, selected teachers presented their experiences and practices at a digital symposium on LL. The data for the present study was gathered from semi-structured focus group interviews, open-ended surveys and teacher presentations. The findings indicate that participation in an LL-focused workshop offered English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers fresh perspectives and innovative ideas for recognising and integrating LLs into their instructional approaches. Furthermore, the results highlighted the transformative potential of LL-based activities in facilitating a meaningful language learning experience, promoting intercultural awareness, cultivating students' critical thinking abilities and bridging the classroom and the world outside.

Keywords: linguistic landscapes, English as a foreign language teachers, pedagogical linguistic landscapes

1. Introduction

The concept of linguistic landscape (LL) encompasses not only the linguistic components manifested through words, images, murals and graffiti in public and private spheres, but also the underlying motivations and ideologies that propel the varied array of language expressions and their utilisation within these environments. From a research standpoint, LL has garnered increasing attention within the field of second language teaching and learning in recent years. Scholars have highlighted the potential of LLs to contribute to several areas, including language and literacy development, critical language awareness and sociolinguistics, as well as

translingual and transcultural competences (e.g. Krompák et al., 2022; Niedt & Seals, 2021; Solmaz & Przymus, 2021).

Scholarly inquiry has delved into the utilisation and implementation of LLs in the context of second language teaching and learning. Previous research in pedagogical contexts has consistently demonstrated the potential benefits of incorporating LLs into language education at various levels (e.g. Chesnut et al., 2013; Kruszynska & Dooly, 2023). These studies revealed that LLs encouraged students to engage with displayed texts and develop their critical literacy skills, awareness of language use and complexities and overall language learning objectives. Additionally, LLs were found to effectively bridge classroom and out-of-school spaces, allowing students to explore the sociocultural and symbolic power of language and take on the role of “language detectives” (Sayer, 2010). Roos and Nicholas (2019) observed that young English learners in a primary school in Germany demonstrated a remarkable understanding of the social, cultural and linguistic aspects portrayed in LL images. Meanwhile, Bal (2023) investigated the systematic integration of LL-oriented tasks into high school curricula in Türkiye and found that learners developed not only language proficiency, including productive and receptive skills, but also a familiarity with LLs and concepts associated with them. These findings lend support to the notion that LLs provide valuable opportunities for language learning, despite not being explicitly designed for language teaching (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008).

Another emerging area of scholarly inquiry within the field of LLs and education focused on the domain of teacher education. In a study conducted by Camilleri Grima (2020), the examination of house names in Malta’s LL revealed that prospective language teachers actively reflected upon and interpreted the creative utilisation of language by engaging in a series of metalinguistic activities. Similarly, Solmaz’s (2023) recent research with English as a foreign language (EFL) student teachers found that their involvement in LL-centred tasks and fieldwork resulted in an increased awareness of the diverse manifestations of English in everyday contexts, as well as a deeper understanding of English as a lingua franca and of Global Englishes. In their study, Shang and Xie (2020) investigated the perspectives of EFL teachers in China regarding the pedagogical implications of the urban print. The findings indicated that while the teachers

acknowledged the educational value of the urban print, they exhibited a restricted level of acceptance of the presence of Chinese English on public signs. Meanwhile, research on LLs in language and teacher education has experienced growth with the release of an edited volume by Melo-Pfeifer (2023) that specifically addresses this topic. The volume adds significant value to the field, emphasising the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in research and education and demonstrating the potential of LLs in promoting multilingual education, both within language education across different subjects and in teacher education programmes.

Despite the growing body of literature supporting LLs as a valuable resource for language teaching and learning, the development of pedagogical models is necessary to fully harness their educational benefits (Malinowski et al., 2020; Shang & Xie, 2020). In an attempt to provide systematic ways of incorporating LLs in L2 settings beyond a one-time integration, Solmaz (2021) introduced a literacies-centred pedagogical model called Linguistic Landscapes in Second Language Teaching and Learning (LLinL2TL). The model is

intended to present new ways for teachers to engage learners in understanding how language and non-linguistic resources co-create meaning, sociocultural values placed behind such meanings, the emerging semiotic productions and activities carried out at learners' communities, and the representation of the relationship between power, ideology, and play in a particular space through a synchronic and diachronic view of LL. (p. 29)

The model promotes the integration of various modalities and processes of meaning-making, utilising a four-phase cycle of activities: (i) situated practice, (ii) guided exploration, (iii) creation and (iv) transformed practice. *Situated practice* activities are designed to help learners develop an understanding of LLs and semiotics by tapping into their existing knowledge and experiences. *Guided exploration* activities involve students in recognising and critically analysing the linguistic and sociocultural aspects of LL resources, with explicit guidance from the instructor. *Creation* activities encourage learners to engage in tasks provided by the teacher, such as designing signs or texts similar to the model. These tasks can be completed individually, in pairs or in groups within the classroom, aiming to familiarise students further with the LL materials under study. Lastly, *transformed practice* activities require students to interact independently

with the texts and signs within the genre they are studying, but this occurs outside the classroom setting. In this phase, learners are expected to find or create genuine LL signs, reflect on them, and subsequently bring their observations and analyses back to the classroom for sharing and discussion. This approach emphasises the inclusion of diverse semiotic repertoires and involves both teacher-mediated activities and contributions from learners, providing systematic ways to facilitate meaningful language learning experiences.

Considering recent developments in the field, this chapter aims to explore the integration of LL-oriented activities into EFL classrooms using the Linguistic Landscapes in Second Language Teaching and Learning (LLinL2TL) pedagogical model. By examining the experiences and reflections of English language teachers in Türkiye who participated in an LL-focused professional development workshop, this study offers valuable insights into the implementation of LLs in diverse classroom contexts. The chapter provides an overview of the workshop, details the methodology employed and presents the findings derived from the teachers' instructional practices and reflections. Furthermore, the study analyses the impact of LL-oriented practices and concludes by discussing implications for language pedagogy and teacher education, highlighting the importance of incorporating LLs into L2 instruction.

2. LL professional development workshops

The researcher, in collaboration with an experienced teacher educator, organised a series of professional development workshops for EFL teachers and teacher candidates in south-eastern Türkiye. These workshops were designed to provide EFL professionals with the knowledge and skills required for effectively incorporating LLs into their language classrooms. Participants received a comprehensive introduction to both the theoretical and practical aspects of LLs. This included presenting LLs as materials that reflect sociocultural diversity, bridging the gap between course books and authentic language use, offering meaningful real-world tasks for learners, and demonstrating the versatile applications of these resources in various contexts. A key focus of the workshops was the literacies-centred pedagogical model known as LLinL2TL (Solmaz, 2021). This model aimed

to provide educators with new approaches to help students comprehend the co-creation of meaning by language and non-linguistic elements, the societal values associated with these meanings, the development of semi-otic expressions within communities, and the interaction between power, ideology and play in a specific space, both synchronically and diachronically. In summary, this initiative aimed to support the ongoing professional development of EFL professionals and build a global network of educators committed to integrating LLs and promoting accessible second/foreign language teaching practices.

During the workshops, teachers learnt how to integrate the LLinL2TL model into their language classrooms. They were fully immersed in hands-on experiences, developing materials while actively engaging with linguistic signs, texts and images that the workshop facilitators had found in various LL contexts. This process prompted a comprehensive analysis of the sociocultural and linguistic diversity reflected in LLs, revealing numerous examples that explored a multitude of sociolinguistic issues and featured language play. This comprehensive analysis fostered a deeper understanding of the potential of LLs as authentic resources for language teaching and learning. In the next step, the teachers collaborated in small groups where they generated ideas and developed lesson plans, seamlessly integrating LL-centred themes to promote critical thinking and communication skills. This collaborative activity encouraged the exchange of diverse perspectives and innovative approaches to developing LL-oriented materials. As a result, teachers crafted their own LL-based resources and guided learners in creating their own projects using LL images by applying the LLinL2TL model. By testing and refining their lesson plans, the teachers gained valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in their materials, ultimately enhancing their ability to create impactful materials in the future and benefiting their students' LL-oriented practices. Selected lesson plans and materials were later showcased in an online digital symposium and a pedagogical guidebook, creating a repository of open-access LL-based resources for educators worldwide (see Solmaz & Przymus, 2021).

3. Methodology

The participants included a cohort of 14 female EFL teachers, spanning a wide age range from their early twenties to mid-forties, who volunteered for the study. Their teaching experience ranged from as little as three months to an impressive two decades. The group displayed notable diversity, representing multiple school levels. After participating in the LL-centred workshop, the teachers put their designs into practice by applying them in various educational settings, including secondary schools (n=5), high schools (n=5), primary schools (n=3), and a private classroom for young adults (n=1). It is worth mentioning that 80% of the participants arrived with no prior knowledge of LLs, which paved the way for valuable opportunities to acquire new insights and skills in this area.

The data for the study was collected using an open-ended survey, teacher presentations and semi-structured focus group interviews. In this study, teacher presentations played an integral role in the data collection methods, with the EFL teachers delivering a series of 14 online sessions as part of an online symposium with a pedagogical focus on the use of LLs. The symposium included talks by renowned international speakers, as well as presentations by English language teachers and teacher candidates. The teachers' presentations focused on how they incorporated LLs into their classrooms. Throughout their presentations they described their process for designing instructional materials, demonstrated the implementation of LLs, shared materials developed by their students and recommended future practices. In total, the study included 14 video recordings of online presentations, each with an average running time of 10 minutes.

The survey was conducted digitally using Google Forms after teachers had implemented their LL-oriented classes and presented their practices at the digital symposium. The survey aimed to elicit participants' experiences of using LLs in English language teaching. It began by inquiring about the participants' years of experience teaching English language and whether they were familiar with the concept of LL before the professional workshop. It then explored participants' initial perceptions of the usefulness of LLs in the classroom and how those perceptions changed after implementing LL-oriented lesson plans and activities. Finally, the survey sought participants' opinions on the LLinL2TL model for incorporating LLs into

their classrooms and invited them to share their intentions regarding the continued use of LL materials in their English classes.

Additionally, semi-structured focus group interviews, conducted by the researcher with three teachers in each group, were utilised to augment the survey results and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences. The online interviews prompted volunteers to reflect on their experiences before, during and after attending the professional development workshop, creating lesson plans, implementing LL-centred teaching and presenting at a digital symposium. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

A fine-grained qualitative analysis was conducted on the data collected from open-ended surveys, interviews and teacher presentations using an inductive approach (Cho & Lee, 2014). The analysis was guided by Mayring's (2000) qualitative content analysis steps, which provided a clear framework. The analysis process involved inductive category development, involving formulating research questions, determining categories and levels of abstraction, developing inductive categories from the data, revising categories, working through the text, and interpreting the results. Major themes and discourse strands were identified through a descriptive exploratory coding process, systematically organising the data into content-related categories that captured similar meanings and connotations. The categories were carefully defined to be mutually exclusive and exhaustive, ensuring that no data fell between categories or overlapped. Following the establishment of categories, the data set was reread to elicit codes representing ideas, key concepts and values which were then grouped into major themes. The analysis involved an iterative process of revising and refining categories and themes as necessary, paying attention to nuances and the patterns that emerged from the participants' responses and classroom practices. The findings of the analysis were then synthesised and presented by means of three main themes and sub-categories. These results were supported by relevant quotes and examples from the data, thus providing a rich and nuanced understanding of the teachers' practices. To ensure clarity in presenting the data and to protect individuals' identities, participants were assigned labels such as P1, P2 and so on, while the interviewees were referred to using the abbreviations Int1, Int2 and Int3.

4. Findings

4.1 Teachers' LL-oriented classroom practices

EFL teachers in the study utilised a diverse range of LL materials for language teaching (Table 3.1). Teachers demonstrated their ability to incorporate LLs into the curriculum through a series of innovative activities. Analysis of the collected data revealed that LL integration was present in various grade levels, indicating its adaptability and effectiveness in different contexts.

Table 3.1 An overview of teachers' LL-oriented classroom practices

Participant	Title of the Presentation	LL Materials	Grade
P1	Discovering Digital Landscapes through Virtual Trips Online during the Epidemic Outbreak	Digital spaces (Lingscape and Google Maps Street View)	5th grade
P2	From Coffee Shops to Superhero ID Cards: Introducing LL to Young Learners in a Fun and Creative Way	Public spaces (Coffee shop items, identification cards)	4th grade
P3	Teaching Classroom Rules to Young Learners through LLs	Public spaces (Signs of rule)	4th grade
P4	Introducing "Disinfectant Lama" to Young Learners as a Joyful Activity to Raise Covid-19 Awareness	Public spaces (Self-produced materials)	2nd, 3rd, 4th grades
P5	From Space to the Ground: LLs as a Tool for Teaching English	Digital spaces (The planets and weather forecasts)	7th grade
P6	Language Detectives: Discovering the LLs around Us	Digital spaces (Lingscape)	6th grade
P7	Raising Learners' Awareness and Creativity by Means of LLs of Covid-19	Digital spaces (COVID-19 signs)	9th grade
P8	Introducing the Concept of LLs to High School Students through Multiple Activities	Digital spaces (Signs on social media, product brands and logos)	9th grade

Table 3.1 Continued

Participant	Title of the Presentation	LL Materials	Grade
P9	Integrating LLs into the Curriculum: Reflections from a Teacher and Her Students	Public and digital spaces (brands and advertisements, movie posters, and other LLs)	10th grade
P10	Technological Surveillance Signs in the Everyday: An LL-centered Online Teaching Practice	Digital spaces (the technological surveillance signs)	9th grade
P11	Going beyond the Grammar: Developing English Learners' Interests through LL-based Activities	Digital spaces (signs curated from online sources)	12th grade
P12	A Tasty Introduction of LLs to English Classroom through Supermarket Products	Public spaces (supermarket products)	young adults
P13	Learning the Cultural Heritage through the LL of a Roman Castle	Public spaces (signage in and around a Roman castle)	5th grade
P14	Developing Perspectives of Secondary School Students on LLs in an English Class	Digital spaces (signs curated from online sources)	5th grade

The analysis of teachers' practices revealed a diverse set of LL sources employed to capture and maintain students' interest. These sources included LL signs found online through platforms like Lingscape, an online space featuring crowdsourced LL signage, and Google Street View, as well as authentic LL resources like items from coffee shops, Covid-19 signage and supermarket products.

Teachers drew inspiration for their LL-centred lessons from various sources, including their students, real-world observations of LLs, professional development activities, curriculum alignment, and personal interests and experiences. When designing their lessons, many teachers considered the learning preferences and interests of their students, as well as the curriculum requirements. For example, one teacher noted, "I checked the curriculum and considered the interests of my students, then brought them together in an enjoyable way" (Int1); "To be honest, I stuck to the

curriculum because I didn't want to go off track since I was working with 7th grade students, who prepared for national exams" (P5). Real-world observations of LL elements were also a source of inspiration for incorporating authentic LL materials into classroom spaces for some teachers, who harnessed the familiarity of such resources for engaging pedagogical experiences. For one teacher, it was the coffee shop and ID cards of Türkiye, which she explained as follows:

I wanted to integrate the LL my students were more likely to come across with. I was in a coffee shop, where I noticed the LL in their napkins and cups, and I really liked them. That made me think about using them in my classroom as LL. For the subject of citizenship, I was inspired by bilingual ID cards of Türkiye, and thought it would be a good idea to use ID cards as LL. (P2)

Teachers also mentioned that attending the LL workshop exposed them to new ideas, sources and inspiration for incorporating innovative LL-oriented approaches into their teaching practices. Employing a digital platform to access a large LL database, several teachers reported: "During the workshop, I learnt about the Lingscape, and I used it for my classes" (P6); and "I was inspired by the ideas offered during the workshop" (Int2). Some teachers found inspiration in their own enjoyment of catchy signboards or through personal connections with healthcare professionals during times like the Covid-19 pandemic. One teacher exemplified this by saying, "For my Covid-19-centred lesson, I was inspired by my sister and friends who are nurses and doctors, as well as some students' careless behaviours during the Covid-19 pandemic" (P7). Regardless of the source, these inspirations served as a driving force in creating dynamic LL-centred lessons that aimed to empower students to become active participants in their language learning journey.

Through the use of a rich and engaging variety of materials, coupled with creative and effective teaching approaches, EFL teachers successfully incorporated LL resources into their lessons, ultimately enhancing students' language learning experiences and fostering meaningful connections with the language and culture they were studying.

4.2 The impact of teachers' LL-oriented practices

An analysis of the teachers' LL-oriented practices revealed a positive impact on students' target language development, the cultivation of intercultural

awareness and the fostering of motivation and ownership. These three major themes, which reflect the multifaceted nature of incorporating LL into language classes, are explored further below.

4.2.1 Enhancing language development through real-life contexts

A common theme emerging from the teachers' LL-oriented practices was the use of real-life LL materials to enhance language development and provide students with a deeper understanding of the target language. By utilising resources like signs, advertisements and cultural artefacts, learners were able to expand their lexical knowledge, practise various target language skills and enhance their overall language proficiency. To illustrate, learners in P9's class created collages of advertisements and presented them to the class, using their newly acquired vocabulary of phrasal verbs to describe the products featured. Similarly, P2 introduced coffee shop-related vocabulary through sample LL signs in her class. As part of a series of activities, students designed their coffee sleeves and napkins before role-playing the owner and customers of the coffee shop, facilitating both vocabulary and functional language skills in a practical and meaningful way. P11, in contrast, engaged her learners in grammar-oriented LL activities, reinforcing their understanding of English grammar and its structures through the analysis of sample models.

Teacher practices also highlighted how LL activities contributed to effective communication and the practical application of language skills in real-life contexts. For example, teachers (P3, P4, P7) incorporated LL materials related to Covid-19, which improved learners' ability to communicate in pandemic-related situations and also their understanding of the global situation relating to the epidemic outbreak. This approach allowed learners to make "Covid signs more understandable in their daily lives, especially for those who were new to reading and writing in English" (P3), and "played an essential role in their lives as the pandemic affected all human beings" (P7). Similarly, learners applied their language skills in real-life contexts through several other activities such as finding signs in public places (P6), designing food products with a crafted brand name, slogans, colours and images (P12), and exploring signs in their immediate surroundings (P2, P12, P13), which provided a basis for in-class discussions, leading

to opportunities for communication practices. As teachers observed, LL-oriented activities “helped familiarise learners with the [target] language” (P12), enabled them to discover that “learning English can occur naturally and unconsciously by observing their environment” (P5), and reinforced the idea that “language is not just an academic tool but also a part of everyday life” (P11).

4.2.2 Cultivating intercultural awareness and promoting critical thinking skills

Through engagement with LL resources, students were given the opportunity to cultivate intercultural awareness and critical thinking skills. By deciphering cultural references and exploring the cultural context associated with the linguistic diversity present in their communities, students were able to expand their understanding of the multicultural nature of their environment. This theme emerged as a crucial aspect of the learning experience, allowing students to develop a deeper appreciation for the diverse perspectives that shape our world. To exemplify this, learners in one class (P13) engaged in an outdoor activity that involved analysing multiple languages and scripts found on an archaeological site, which featured numerous linguistic artefacts related to ancient history and the world of archaeology. Through this activity, students were able to learn about local history, trace the cultures of civilisations and compare them to modern times, thus recognising and appreciating historical and cultural nuances. As remarked by the teacher, the activities “expanded students’ understanding of archaeological sites as educational linguistic landscapes for cultural knowledge, which helped them develop tolerance towards different cultures while engaging in fun learning experiences” (Int3).

During LL activities, students were encouraged to explore and compare linguistic elements from diverse cultures and languages. By cultivating cross-cultural awareness, this process allowed them to understand how LLs serve as gateways to explore cultural heritage and local environments and develop a broader understanding of cultural diversity. For example, P8 tasked her learners with investigating product names and discussing how they reflected cultural values and beliefs. They were then asked to find similar examples in both their community and the target language

communities. By making cross-cultural comparisons and creating new brand titles for products, teachers (P2, P14) reported that learners gained a deeper appreciation for the role of language and culture in shaping our world views, which also promoted critical thinking skills and increased intercultural tolerance and understanding. Similarly, the analysis of signs collected from social media and other digital platforms (P1, P6, P8, P9, P11 and P14) prompted learners to compare and contrast linguistic elements of target language cultures, thereby fostering cross-cultural awareness. This comparative approach enabled students to develop a nuanced understanding of the significance of cultural elements in language use across various LLs. As teachers noted, LL-centred tasks helped them “develop their critical thinking skills through making cross-cultural analyses” (P8), and “foster cultural tolerance while engaging them in discovery-oriented learning experiences outside the class” (P13).

Engaging with LLs not only allowed students to discover the linguistic diversity in their communities but also expanded their understanding of the multicultural nature of their environment and fostered critical thinking skills. By examining signs and texts in multiple languages, learners were exposed to a wide range of linguistic and cultural perspectives, cultivating an appreciation for linguistic diversity and multiculturalism. One teacher summarised this aspect during the interview by stating: “This project allowed my students to apply their English language skills in real-life situations and helped me develop their language awareness and sensitivity towards different cultures” (Int2). Another teacher (P14) specified that incorporating LLs into their teaching promoted critical thinking skills and added: “Engaging my students in group discussions and self-assessment checklists encouraged critical thinking development while they analysed LL and its significance in everyday life”. Similarly, several other teachers (P3, P12) also found that LL-oriented tasks, such as analysing product packaging, creating classroom rules or designing their own LL, engaged learners in interactive activities that fostered critical thinking skills.

4.2.3 Fostering motivation, exploration and ownership

The analysis of the data revealed that LL activities effectively enhanced students’ motivation and involvement in language learning, particularly

when coupled with stimulating and imaginative activities. By establishing meaningful connections between language and real-world situations, students were able to determine the relevance and purpose of their language studies, leading to active engagement with and ownership of their learning. Data analysis unveiled that investigating LLs enabled students to connect their language learning experiences to their immediate surroundings, thus fostering a motivation for further exploration. In one class, for example, students embarked on a captivating initiative by creating their own LL of supermarket products, drawing inspiration from signs and artefacts in their immediate environment. This immersive experience with language and culture not only fostered a deep sense of motivation, but also facilitated a stronger connection to the language learning process. Through this hands-on project, students were empowered to take control of their learning journey and further enriched their engagement with the LL concept. As one teacher explained:

The participants had a great time in class and found the activity really engaging. It was unlike any English class they had ever experienced before, and it made them feel like kids again. They also became more aware of all the English words on product packaging. (Int1)

The presentations showcased a variety of engaging activities that encouraged the active exploration and creation of LL materials. Some students were tasked with designing planets, complete with descriptions of their unique characteristics and weather patterns. Other groups focused on creating multimodal posters of classroom rules, reflecting on appropriate classroom behaviour. Furthermore, some students discovered signage in public places or online, using these as inspiration to design a multitude of LL signage from their perspectives. Through these interactive activities, students were able to deliver multimedia presentations, create semiotically rich designs and participate in role-play scenarios, all of which brought LL materials to life and provided enjoyable, meaningful language practice. As observed by the teachers, LL-centred practices triggered students' curiosity and ignited their sense of wonder, transforming language learning into a fulfilling experience. According to the teachers, learners "gained confidence and felt at ease" (P5), and "had fun, enjoyed their learning experiences, and expressed happiness" (P4). One teacher further emphasised,

“Motivating students through this approach was extraordinary, because it turned them into active language learners and researchers” (P11).

4.3 Teachers’ reflections on LL-oriented practices

The data gathered provided valuable insights into the perspectives of teachers regarding the integration of LLs into their classrooms. The teachers reflected on their initial perceptions of LL and how they evolved after designing and implementing their own lessons. Some teachers had limited knowledge or awareness of LL at first, but by attending workshops, conducting research and incorporating it into their own teaching, their awareness and understanding of LL improved significantly. Some teachers noted: “I wasn’t aware of LL as a teaching material. After participating in the workshop and using it in my class, I realised how useful it was and I plan to continue using it” (P7); “LLs have significantly changed my perspectives. I hadn’t realised that the environment surrounding us could serve as a tool for teaching English as well” (P6). They also reported recognising the benefits associated with using LL in their teaching, including increased efficiency, practicality, engagement, authenticity and student motivation. One participant expressed surprise at the remarkable creativity and imagination displayed by their students after integrating LL, as well as their increased willingness to speak up (P12). Many expressed their intention to incorporate LLs into future lessons and to create new activities based on their positive experiences: “After incorporating the LL materials to my class, I am now planning on creating different activities for my students” (Int3); “After witnessing my students’ reactions, I have decided to incorporate more LL lessons into my teaching” (P9).

The integration of LL resources into lessons using the framework provided (i.e. LLinL2TL) was found to be a straightforward process by teachers. They observed that the model improved the efficacy of their teaching, rendering lessons more enjoyable, engaging and pertinent for students. One teacher, for example, remarked, “Ever since attending the workshop, I’ve been eager to use LL resources. I believe they are highly beneficial to students” (P8). Teachers also noted a shift in their perspective on the age appropriateness of LL-centred lessons. Although some initially thought they would be more suitable for younger students, they realised

the advantages of utilising LL across various age groups: “I used to think that LLs would be better suited for young learners, but I have changed my mind. It is good to implement them in all age groups” (P10). Additionally, teachers emphasised the significant role of LL in exposing students to the target language in authentic settings, creating a sense of familiarity and naturalness. This was particularly valuable for students who lacked opportunities to interact with the language beyond the classroom. During the interviews, one teacher exemplified this by noting:

In some places, students don't have natural exposure to the language. For example, they don't witness tourists speaking English or encounter anything that makes English seem natural to them. They perceive English as a subject like math. However, by using LL materials, students can feel more familiar with English and become aware that it is a language. (Int2)

Teachers also reported that students had varying opinions on different stages of the LLinL2TL model. Some students particularly enjoyed the *transformed practice* that connected language learning to their immediate environment (e.g. “The students greatly enjoyed the lesson, with a special like for the bridging activities. They also wanted more lessons like this in the future”, Int1). Others found exploring LL images to be engaging, with one group enjoying exploring signboards in Türkiye using the LL app (P1). The creative aspects of the lessons, such as designing their own LL materials and crafting their own signs, were also highlighted as exciting and enjoyable (e.g. “The most exciting part of the lesson for the students was creating their own signs”, P3). Finally, interactive activities that involved guessing, discussion and participation were identified as areas where students showed enthusiasm. Overall, students were drawn to various facets of LL lessons, suggesting that the combination of practical applications and hands-on activities fostered their participation.

Finally, teachers expressed positive opinions regarding the LLinL2TL pedagogy, viewing it as a valuable tool for integrating LL into language teaching. The *creation* and *transformed practice* stages, in particular, were frequently mentioned and deemed highly useful. The *creation* stage, which involved in-class activities that required learners to actively engage in tasks to consolidate their understanding of the subject matter and improve their language skills, was seen as empowering learners to produce original work, moving beyond passive consumption and enhancing their involvement

(e.g. “Learners understood the subject clearly and produced new things in the third stage”, P2; “Students learn better because they actively participate and create something on their own”, P11). The *transformed practice* was also frequently highlighted, encouraging students to connect language learning to real-life situations and deepen their understanding of the language (e.g. “It helped students make connections between LL and English language”, P14). Activities were praised for their flexibility, allowing learners to maintain their preferred learning styles while applying their acquired knowledge and generating new ideas (e.g. “They found a chance to apply what they learnt and created new LLs by freely using their imagination”, P5).

Although *situated practice* and *guided exploration* were not as commonly mentioned as other stages, they were still deemed crucial for implementing an LL-oriented lesson. Specifically, *situated practice* was considered an essential component for building the lesson on, as summarised by one teacher: “It is the most useful stage because it catches learners’ attention and warms them up for the following stages. The other steps would not be clear and understandable without it” (P4). *Guided exploration*, in contrast, was commonly linked to its role in encouraging student engagement and facilitating interactive lessons, as noted by one teacher: “This stage provides real materials for our students through questions that are related to them and it enables them to use the language communicatively through visual elements” (Int3).

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the incorporation of LL-oriented activities into EFL classrooms through the utilisation of the LLinL2TL pedagogical model. In order to do so, 14 teachers’ LL-based classroom activities and their reflections on their practices were examined through an open-ended survey, teacher presentations at a digital symposium and semi-structured focus group interviews.

The findings indicate that participation in an LL-focused workshop offered EFL teachers fresh perspectives and innovative ideas for recognising and integrating LLs into their instructional approaches. While some teachers initially had limited knowledge or awareness of LLs, their

participation in the workshop and actual classroom implementation led to a noteworthy improvement in their awareness and comprehension of LLs. The data further reveal teachers' reflections on their initial perceptions of LLs and how their understanding evolved as they crafted and performed LL-based lessons. These insights were evident in the teachers' practices as they successfully incorporated a diverse range of LLs into their curriculum through creative activities across various grade levels, highlighting the versatility and effectiveness of LLs in various settings. These findings, particularly the participation in a professional development event, suggest a possible solution to addressing the demand for the greater incorporation of LL-based activities in both pre-service and in-service teacher education settings (e.g. Shang & Xie, 2020; Solmaz, 2023, 2024). Despite the limited duration of the workshop, actively participating in theoretical and practical LL activities alongside supportive colleagues helped teachers gain a deeper understanding of how to integrate LLs effectively into classroom settings.

Regarding the effects of LL-oriented activities on learners, the data analysis indicates a positive impact on various aspects, including students' target language proficiency development, the cultivation of intercultural awareness and the promotion of motivation among learners. First, the incorporation of real-life LL resources into the classroom context facilitated the expansion of students' lexical knowledge, the practice of various target language skills and the enhancement of overall language proficiency. These findings are in tune with those reported in the literature regarding the reported outcomes associated with incidental language learning, literacy skills and language proficiency (e.g. Rowland, 2013). Previous research further underscores the potential of LL not only in fostering proficiency in particular target languages but also in nurturing transversal competencies that can be applied to the acquisition of diverse languages (e.g. Kruszynska & Dooly, 2023; Lopéz Vera & Dooly, 2023).

Second, the inclusion of LLs in language classes has contributed to the development of intercultural awareness and critical thinking skills. By offering valuable insights into the multicultural references embedded in multimodal representations, such integration facilitates the cultivation of a more nuanced understanding of diverse cultures. These findings align with previous research, such as a study conducted by Brinkmann et al. (2022),

which observed the development of critical language awareness and critical thinking skills, and an understanding of the relationship between language and culture among students through the pedagogical incorporation of LLs across multiple educational settings. Similarly, several scholars (Kruszynska & Dooly, 2023; López Vera & Dooly, 2023; Melo-Pfeifer, 2023) acknowledge that LL-based pedagogies have the potential to equip students with the necessary skills to augment their sociolinguistic awareness, promote high-order thinking skills and critical thinking, foster a critical understanding of local and community languages within their geographical contexts, and evaluate and value the presence of multiple languages and linguistic resources in their lives.

Finally, LL activities foster increased motivation and active participation among students in language learning, establishing meaningful associations between language and real-life contexts. Through the creation of a joyful and dynamic learning environment, teachers exemplified the potential of LL to augment learning outcomes and create enriching educational experiences. These findings are corroborated in previous research; both Brinkmann et al. (2022) and Lourenço and Melo-Pfeifer (2023) highlight teachers' recognition of LL affordances in creating meaningful connections between the learning environment inside the classroom and the world outside. Recent studies (Kruszynska & Dooly, 2023; López Vera & Dooly, 2023) further support the findings of the present study regarding the appeal of LL-oriented tasks to diverse learner groups, fostering motivation, engagement and positive attitudes towards learning. The study conducted by López Vera and Dooly (2023), in particular, aligns closely with the current study as both investigations featured young learners' online voluntary LL-based activities during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown and witnessed participants displaying their willingness to engage in the tasks. Overall, the findings of the present study, in conjunction with prior research, highlight the transformative potential of LL-based activities in facilitating a meaningful language learning experience, promoting intercultural awareness, cultivating students' critical thinking abilities and bridging the classroom with the world outside.

Ultimately, both teachers and students found the integration of LL resources into their lessons using the LLinL2TL model to be a straightforward process, positively contributing to the enjoyable and engaging

teaching and learning experiences. Additionally, teachers expressed positive views about various stages of the model, considering it a valuable tool for the systematic incorporation of LLs into language teaching. With its four complementary stages, the LLinL2TL model combines the two common approaches to analysing LLs in education: learning in the LL and learning through the LL (Brinkmann et al., 2022). The *situated practice* and *guided exploration* stages provide learners with opportunities to observe and analyse LL materials brought to the classroom, while the *creation* and *transformed practice* stages encourage learners to connect activities in the classroom to their immediate everyday environments. While studies generally examine LL-focused experiences either within the classroom (e.g. Brinkmann & Melo-Pfeifer, 2023) or outside the classroom (e.g. Rowland, 2013), there are also studies that involve learners in exploring LLs outside the classroom and subsequently discussing them within a formal educational context (e.g. Roos & Nicholas, 2019). In line with these approaches, the LLinL2TL model adds a creative dimension through its *creation* stage, in which learners design and develop their own LL materials and resources. Becoming active producers of LLs, learners go beyond the roles of merely examining or using these resources and actively engage in shaping the landscapes themselves. Considering the popularity of these stages among the teachers in the present study and the anticipated growth of research in this area (Lourenço & Melo-Pfeifer, 2023), it is crucial to further implement and test the LLinL2TL pedagogical model in diverse contexts. Engaging learners in the active production of LL resources, even within the confines of the classroom, can help them navigate the intricate nature of the LLs surrounding them and gain insights into the explicit and implicit ideologies embedded within them. While it is important to acknowledge that the findings of this study are based on a limited sample of teachers and are specific to a particular country, they provide valuable insights into language teachers' practices related to LLs in various contexts.

It is important to acknowledge several limitations of this study. Firstly, the research is confined to the experiences of teachers who volunteered to participate in an LL-focused workshop, and therefore the findings may not comprehensively represent the perspectives of all workshop participants. While these teachers' insights are valuable, they may not necessarily reflect

the broader range of views within the participant pool. Additionally, this study primarily relies on the self-reported experiences and reflections of teachers. While their accounts provide valuable qualitative data, the impact of LL-oriented activities is described primarily through their own perspectives. This limitation underscores the need for future research to incorporate more robust empirical measures, such as direct interviews with students and systematic analysis of their produced materials. This would offer a more holistic understanding of the effects of LL-based activities on both teachers and students. Moreover, it is important to note that the researcher was the sole coder in this study, which constitutes another limitation. The absence of multiple coders for cross-validation is a noteworthy aspect that could have enhanced the methodological rigour of the study, as their inclusion would have allowed for a more comprehensive and objective analysis of the data, reducing potential biases. This limitation should be taken into account when considering the interpretation of the qualitative findings of the study. In conclusion, while this study provides valuable insights and implications for LL-based language education, it is essential to recognise these limitations when interpreting its findings and to consider the potential for further research to address these gaps.

To conclude, incorporating LL-oriented activities into language teacher education programmes holds significant promise for enhancing language instruction. The findings of this study underscore the transformative potential of LL-based approaches in language classrooms and highlight their positive impact on language proficiency, intercultural awareness and student motivation. An important message is extended to language teacher educators, emphasising their pivotal role in equipping teachers to become agents of change in their classrooms through the application of LL-based pedagogies. Teacher educators are encouraged to integrate LL into their pedagogical training programmes, providing pre-service and in-service teachers with the knowledge and skills required to efficiently design and implement LL-focused lessons. Additionally, echoing the emphasis on the agentive role of teachers, the need for teacher educators to create an environment that fosters teachers' creativity and innovation in using LLs as a valuable resource for language learning is underscored. Recognising teachers as active agents within their teaching contexts, teacher education programmes can empower them to take ownership of their professional

development and explore LL-based approaches that align with their specific teaching environments and student populations. In conclusion, this study lays the foundation for teacher educators to embrace LL-based pedagogies and encourages teachers to assert their roles as proactive contributors to innovative and effective language education practices. These implications signify an important step towards the integration of LL-based approaches in language teacher education and everyday teaching practices.

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4 Linguistic Landscape as a Pedagogical Tool in Literacy Development in Primary Schools in Lira City, Uganda

Abstract: This chapter highlights the educational agency of the linguistic landscape (LL). Studies in the field of LL indicate that it enhances the development of skills in reading, writing, numeracy and orality. The efficiency and effectiveness with which this can be done speaks to the objective of developing the professional stakeholders involved in the development of literacy skills. In this chapter, we show how a study we conducted on the influence of LL as a pedagogical resource in literacy development among selected primary schools in Lira City, Uganda, demonstrates the positive affordances LL offers to learners' literacy development, especially the development of learners' visual, symbolic, reading, writing and numeracy skills, as well as literacy in general. Drawing on nexus analysis perspectives, the chapter highlights how the mental life and the historical bodies of agents who operate in or with LL, influence the construction of the LL of their workspaces (cf. Ssentanda, 2022). The data for this study were collected through the use of questionnaires, photography, observation and interviewing. Subsequently, the analysis was done using a triangulated design to produce a richer account. The study findings indicate that the construction of the LL in the schools studied was done within the language-in-education policy. The study suggests that teachers' professional development should consider LL forms as these have the potential to develop learners' language awareness as well as to provide opportunities for language learning.

Keywords: schoolsapes, linguistic landscape, teacher training, language policy, schools, Uganda

1. Introduction

Although linguistic landscape (LL) studies had begun by the 1970s (see Masai, 1972; Rosenbaum et al., 1977; Spolsky & Cooper, 1991; Tulp, 1978), LL studies gained ground with the work of Landry and Bourhis (1997). Over the past three decades, scholarship in LL studies has widened

its scope to include education and learning sites (see Astillero, 2017; Bernardo-Hinesley, 2020; Biro, 2016; Bisai & Singh, 2018; Brown, 2012; Chimirala, 2018; Cope et al., 2018; Dressler, 2015; Giles & Tunks, 2010; Gorter & Cenoz, 2015; Jakonen, 2018; Li & Marshall, 2018; Malinowski, 2015; Rowland, 2013; Sayer, 2010; Ssentanda, 2022; Szabó, 2015), owing to the potential impact that signage in schools has on the learners' language awareness and attitudes, as well as on how it can be used to enhance learning in the school.

In this study, we aimed at documenting how LL is employed by teachers in the learning process. We considered the context, the contents of LL in the school and the ongoing processes at such sites. We believe LL can be a crucial component of the teacher's resources and methodology to facilitate learning and can enhance the teaching–learning interaction between teachers and learners. The use of LL as a resource can lead to what has been termed by Harwell (2003, p. v) as “a high-performance culture that improves teaching in all classrooms for the benefit of every student”. The establishment of such a culture is guided by the existing legal and policy frameworks. In the case of Uganda, such frameworks include the 1992 Government White Paper on Education (Government of Uganda, 1992), and the National Curriculum Development Centre policy documents (NCDC, 2007, 2008). The policy requires the use of dominant Indigenous languages in the first three years as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) before English is initiated as the LoLT in the fourth year. Where it is difficult to choose a dominant Indigenous language, English is taken up as the LoLT throughout all classes (Ssentanda, 2013; Ssentanda et al., 2016).

In this chapter, we discuss how these legal and policy documents have shaped the LL in Uganda's primary schools. Accordingly, we pay attention to LL forms prevalent in schools and how teachers make use of them in the teaching and learning process. We hypothesise that LL can be useful in fostering education and learning processes and can lead to the attainment of literacy skills and make teaching and learning more motivating and attractive to learners.

2. Definitions and overview of LL as a pedagogical tool

A widely accepted definition of LL was posited by Landry and Bourhis (1997, p. 25), who defined LL as “the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings [which] combine to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration”. Hewitt-Bradshaw (2014, p. 1) asserts that LL “refers to multilingual and multimodal texts displayed in public places and spaces, and entails a range of language use within a speech community and/or a community of practice”. Additionally, LL encompasses the use of both verbal and non-verbal language in public spaces on governmental and non-governmental signs (Shohamy & Waksman, 2009).

In an exploration of the LL of cities across Europe, Palova (2008) aimed at promoting the languages and cultures of the cities among visitors by providing simple learning resources based on signage. Consequently, Cenoz and Gorter (2008) posited the notion that LL could serve as a pedagogical framework (Dagenais et al., 2009). Furthermore, Cenoz and Gorter (2008, p. 272) state that where L2 learning is concerned, the relationship between LL and second language acquisition has “hardly been explored”. They outline five potential benefits that can accrue to L2 learners from their interaction with the local LL: (i) the possibility of incidental language learning from LL texts, (ii) the development of pragmatic competence through the analysis of texts with different social functions, (iii) the acquisition of multimodal literacy skills, (iv) the stimulation of language learners’ multicompetences, and (v) the cultivation of students’ appreciation of the symbolic and affective power that language exudes through connotation. They focus on the role of LL as an additional source of input for language learners. Likewise, Dagenais et al. (2009, p. 255) tasked 10–11-year-olds in Vancouver and Montreal with examining language diversity in their own community by photographing the signage that surrounded them. Through that activity, the students learnt to consider their cities as “dense with signs that must be deciphered, read, and interpreted”. Relatedly, Shohamy and Waksman (2009, pp. 326–328) also describe LL as a “powerful tool for education”. Similarly, Dagenais et al. (2009, p. 266) argue that LL can be used as a powerful pedagogical tool

for language learning through creating language awareness, multilingual literacy, multimodality and the functions of signs. Lazdina and Marten (2009) describe how students conducted research using the LL collected from cities in the Baltic states. The project enhanced students' awareness of multilingualism and their understanding of language use and prestige.

Sayer (2010) demonstrated how LL allows learners to connect street language to classroom language by examining the purposes, intended audiences and different meanings of language on signs. Moreover, Giles and Tunks (2010) also note the role of environmental print in literacy development and the benefits exposure to it provides for learners. They recommend that educators working with young children should include environmental print in the early childhood classroom. Additionally, Malinowski (2015) demonstrated how learners used Korean–English images in the LL to foster reading ability and fluency in the target language and enhance learners' motivation. Leung and Wu (2012) suggested that LL can be used as “a pedagogical resource to teach pragmatics, language forms, vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, grammatical features, etc.”. Similarly, Hancock (2012) demonstrated how LL can be used to draw students' attention to linguistic diversity. Brown (2012) also examined the signs inside schools in Estonia by analysing language-related signage inside classrooms, entrances, foyers, corridors, a school museum, and in the curriculum. The study showed that the regional language, Võru, was used (in schools) as a historical artefact to enrich the national culture. In a diachronic study 10 years later, Brown revisited the schools from her earlier study, addressing pedagogical issues (Gorter, 2018a). Also, Poveda (2012) studied “literacy artefacts” among secondary school students in Madrid. The study showed that LL has connections with the academic and social life of schools. Similarly, Clement et al.'s (2012, p. 267) study titled “Learning to Read the World, Learning to Look at the LL” showed that LL fosters the ability to recognise and read signage in various languages. Bever's (2012) study of languages and scripts in Ukraine revealed that LL develops language and print awareness in both monolinguals and bilinguals. Likewise, Rowland (2013) tasked students with photographing and analysing English on signs in Japan. His findings revealed crucial benefits that LL can offer for learners' literacy development.

Hewitt-Bradshaw (2014) also suggested the possibilities for teaching practitioners' use of LL in teaching literacy and motivating learners. Relatedly, Chern and Dooley (2014) proposed an "English literacy walk" inside and outside the classroom for teaching and learning about language, while Burwell and Lenters (2015) demonstrated through a qualitative analysis how LL can be part of a multiliteracy pedagogy and how it encourages the critical study of multimodality and linguistic diversity. Likewise, Scarvaglieri and Fadia's (2015) project dubbed "educational landscapening" demonstrated how LL can enforce language awareness. In addition, Szabó's (2015) study of the schoolsapes in Budapest showed that the LL promoted organisational culture, language ideologies and nationalism. Similarly, Dressler's (2015) study of the semiotics of an elementary school in Alberta, Canada, revealed that the LL favoured English and did not promote bilingualism in the German-English programme studied. Moreover, Gorter and Cenoz's (2015) study of schoolsapes in the Basque Country revealed the various roles that the school LL plays: communicative intentions, pedagogical functions, intercultural awareness development, inculcation of values, establishment of behavioural rules and the provision of practical/commercial information.

Barrs (2016) used the LL to help third-year students of a course on World Englishes choose topics for their graduation theses. Also, Biro's (2016) study of schoolsapes in Romania revealed that the LL supported Romanian language development – exemplified in the prominence of students' works in Romanian and English – and reflected the hidden curriculum of the educators which they substantiated with the national curriculum (see Bernardo-Hinesley, 2020). Similarly, Laihonen and Szabó (2017) studied the schoolsapes relevant for teachers' and children's visual literacy by analysing the language ideologies in the schoolsapes, which could be seen as manifestations of a "hidden curriculum" about language values. Relatedly, Laihonen and Todor (2017) analysed the signage in a Hungarian-speaking village in Romania to examine issues related to local, national and global identities. In India, Bisai and Singh (2018) analysed the LL of five multilingual primary schools by documenting the frequency of visibility of the minority language in the school, and recording interviews with a teacher and a student. Chimirala (2018) studied the schoolsapes of public schools in India to analyse how students' manifestations of

their English language abilities are reflected in the LL. The findings showed that signs induce incidental learning, thus having pedagogical importance in language learning. Also, Jakonen (2018) explored students' attendance to visual and textual materials in the classroom during instructional interaction by analysing how visual material resources are used, engaged and modified for instructional purposes. The findings showed that the management and orientation of classroom texts and other material artefacts are constructed through signs and other semiotic resources.

Similarly, Gorter (2018a) contends that the LL inside schools can be used with any age group, including university students and teachers, is aimed at both linguistic competence and language awareness, and deals with issues of multilingualism, multiliteracy and diversity. Li and Marshall's (2018) ethnographic study of the LL of Vancouver's Chinatown indicated that LLs can be valuable resources for creating and stimulating a multi-modal/multisensory awareness that enhances literacy development. They conclude that LL projects can provide important avenues for multimodal and multisensory learning about sociolinguistic phenomena and practices. They add that the experience of interacting with the local LL contributes to the creation of ocular, haptic and sonic learning experience (cf. Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Cope et al., 2018).

The studies thus far have largely originated outside Africa's multilingual contexts. In the current study, we show how teachers attempt to use LL in the teaching and learning process amidst a language-in-education policy that promotes the acquisition of English even in the early years of schooling (Ssentanda, 2022).

3. Overview of Uganda's LL studies

Studies that focus on Uganda's LL are still few. For example, Reh (2004) studied writing and reading in English and L1, as well as stationary multilingual signs and texts. Similarly, Ssentanda (2022) conducted an ethnographic investigation into the power and ideological relationships between English and Luganda in the sociocultural and pedagogic spaces of rural primary schools in Uganda. Relatedly, Westbrook et al. (2022) studied the LL of public and school uses of Runyoro-Rutoro and Runyankore-Rukiga

in early childhood education in western Uganda. The study investigated the synergies and disjunctures created using local languages in the pedagogical spaces of schools in western Uganda.

Uganda's LL is both exoglossic and endoglossic. This is seen in the shifting multilingual reality within its education system manifested in the early-exit local language policy for early childhood development (ECD), Primary (P) 1 to P3, whereas in P4 there is a gradual shift to the English language while discouraging the use of codeswitching and translation (see Nakayiza, 2013; Ssentanda, 2014b; Westbrook et al., 2022). Within Uganda's LL, there exists a language-rich environment within which we read, write, listen to and hear many short stories, songs, poems, riddles, puzzles, rhymes, folk songs, folktales, vocabularies and the like (Nannyombi & Rempel, 2011). Ssentanda (2014a) and Ssentanda and Andema (2019) contend that the absence of proper policy in support of developing mother tongues has made ECD challenging. Westbrook et al. (2022, p. 2) assert that within this LL, teachers find themselves trapped in negotiating the policy stipulations of the language-in-education framework. Uganda's LL exudes a disharmony between the home, community and school language, creating synergies and disjunctures that lay a heavy burden on teachers in moulding students' language capabilities (Westbrook et al., 2022, p. 2). This is also due to Uganda's language policy, which has been exoglossic since independence, with English as the official language and Kiswahili as the second. Although Uganda's Indigenous languages are not accorded official status in formal domains, they continue to manifest in such spaces, including the education domain, owing to policy stipulations and language revitalisation efforts (see Ssentanda & Nakayiza, 2017).

The nature of the language-in-education policy in Uganda, that is, the early-exit model, and the linguistic ideologies formed over time since the colonial period have made it difficult to use Indigenous languages in public education provision (Rosendal, 2010; Ssentanda, 2022). Teachers of language and literacy find that they must negotiate the different priorities stipulated by the language-in-education policy within this LL as they teach literacy to multilingual children. This study aimed at exploring how LL is being or could be used as a pedagogical resource in Uganda's schools to achieve the desired synergies and harmonise the disjunctures.

Against this background, the study aimed to answer three key questions:

1. What is the nature of the linguistic landscape in the selected primary schools?
2. What is the pedagogical importance of linguistic landscape in facilitating literacy development?
3. How do teachers in the selected schools practise the use of linguistic landscapes as literacy resources in the classroom?

4. Theoretical framework and methodology

4.1 Theoretical framework

In this study, we applied the nexus analysis framework. Nexus analysis is the use of discourse analysis in social action. In such an analysis, the theoretical focus of the study is social action, which, in this study, refers to the teaching and learning processes in schools. The framework holds that any action is carried out via material and symbolic mediational means (semiotic tools or resources). The three key elements of the framework are (i) the historical body of the participants in the social action, (ii) the discourses in place and (iii) the interaction order.

The historical body refers to the total life experiences of an individual, encompassing their accumulated memories and accustomed practices (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). Hult (2009) notes that the historical body represents the totality of one's experiences, beliefs and symbolic practices. The interactional order deals with who takes responsibility for how a sign is made, the placement of the sign, the individual or collective action of sign agent(s), and the target audience of the sign (see Hult, 2009; Scollon & Scollon, 2004; Ssentanda, 2022). Discourses in place refer to the language(s) used in schools and in classroom interactions, the signage found in schools, the languages used on signs, the purposes for which the signs are made, and the learning activities teachers and learners engage in during classroom instruction, among others. The framework thus helps us interpret how schools are constructed by teachers. Moreover, through interviews, we discovered why specific signs in the schools were made, including the reason why a particular language was used on the sign, and how such a sign was used in the teaching–learning process.

In analysing the data, we applied nexus analysis to determine how school signage is symbolically constructed by various actors and the use of

photography/visual analysis to determine the nature of signs. We did this by examining photographs, interrogating and interpreting school signage via the three principles: the historical body, the interactional order and the discourses in place (Hult, 2009; Scollon & Scollon, 2004). We used the historical body principle to explore how teachers' experiences, beliefs and symbolic practices help them construct and modify the schoolsapes. For the interactional order principle, we used it to determine the people responsible for sign making and sign placement, the target audience of the sign and the languages used on signs and for classroom interactions. We applied the discourses in place principle to interpret the embedded and foregrounded discourses in place for literacy development (LL texts/signage, languages used on signs, the purposes of signs, classroom tasks/activities). We then documented the discourses in place using interviews and the observation of classroom displays and interactions. We employed observation and interviews to ascertain who the sign makers were and the purposes for which they made the signs.

4.2 Methodology

We conducted this study in Lira City, which is situated in the Lango sub-region in northern Uganda. We collected the data as part of a sociolinguistic survey which involved the use of a questionnaire, interviews, photography and observation of natural school settings and classroom environments. Data collection occurred from October 2020 to March 2021,¹ and entailed the administering of a teacher questionnaire, individual follow-up teacher interviews, classroom observation, note-taking and photography. We used a questionnaire consisting of closed and open-ended questions to collect data from the participants. We regarded the questionnaire as a data source that revealed teachers' perceptions about LL as pedagogical resources, while observation/photography/interviews formed data sources on teachers' classroom practices in regard to LL use in classroom interactions.

We selected the schools for what they could reveal about (i) schoolsapes and (ii) the difference between government and private primary

1 Data collection was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in the country.

schools in terms of how their LLs are used as instructional resources for literacy development.

We visited four schools located in Lira City: two government and two private schools. In our discussion, we refer to the schools as CGPS (i.e. city government primary school) for government schools, and CPPS (i.e. city private primary school) for privately owned schools.

We used purposive sampling to deliberately select participants so that they would be relevant to the research questions (Bryman, 2012; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). All the study participants were either teachers of literacy or language, or school administrators. Of the 14 teachers who participated in the study, one had a grade three teaching certificate in primary education, six had diplomas in primary education, and seven had bachelor degree qualifications in primary education.

The first author obtained an introduction letter from the university which was presented to the city education officer, after which we proceeded to the selected schools and sought permission to conduct this study from the school heads (of the government schools) and directors (of the private schools).

We administered the questionnaires to the teachers, later analysing the responses qualitatively for evidence of the pedagogical function of LL in schools. Also, we took a total of 436 photographs of signage in the school compounds of the four schools, and on the walls outside and inside the classrooms. During the interviews, we asked teachers questions about the authors of the signage in the schools, the authorial intentions behind the signage, whether the signage was used in literacy lessons (see Table 4.2), and what language(s) they preferred to use on the signage (see Table 4.3) and why. Further, we asked them what, given the chance to reconstruct the signage, language(s) they would consider for inclusion on the signs. We also inquired into what resources they used for teaching literacy. In this way, we explored issues around the use of LL as pedagogical resources for literacy development in the classrooms and on school compounds. While taking photographs, conducting interviews and making observations, we took notes related to the location of the photographs and the size of the signs, and noted anything that teachers mentioned which related to any signage. These notes enhanced our analysis of the data.

At school CGPS-1, we took 101 photographs and interviewed four teachers of language and literacy in P1 to P4. At school CGPS-2, we interviewed four teachers and took 90 photographs of signage. For schools CPPS-1 and CPPS-2, we interviewed three teachers per school, taking 126 photographs at school CPPS-1 and 119 photographs at school CPPS-2 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Summary of photographs taken per school

School type	Number of photographs
CGPS-1	101
CGPS-2	90
CPPS-1	126
CPPS-2	119
Total	436

All interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed by the first author. Where the interviews were conducted in a language other than English, they were translated into English. All school names and teachers' names were pseudonymised for ethical reasons.

5. Results and discussion

In the discussion, we show how the schoolscape reflected the use of signage as pedagogical resources in literacy development and how the signage in public and private schools reflected the language-in-education policy of Uganda through a nexus of practice. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, we raised three central questions to guide our study which we answer in the following sections.

5.1. The nature of school signage

In this section, we report on the findings related to the first research question, namely, what is the nature of the school signage in the selected primary schools? First, our observation of the signage revealed that the signage found in the schools was mainly made by teachers and learners (Figures 4.7a and 4.7b). Additionally, the signage was static and permanent

in nature. Some of the signage was written on timber or metal and stuck in the lawn on the school compound (see Figure 3a), written on the classroom walls (Figures 4.3 and 4.8), or on manila paper and pinned or stuck on the classroom walls (Figures 4.2 and 4.4). The charts or messages on manila paper were placed in particular on the sides of the classroom designated for particular learning areas or subjects and were labelled, for example, “English Corner”, “Literacy Corner”, “Science Corner” and so on (see Figures 4.2 and 4.4a).

We found that the signs in the schools fell into two broad categories: (i) management-related signage (10.8%) and (ii) curriculum-related signage (89.2%). The signage related to school management fell under one umbrella term, “talking compounds”. Talking compounds (Ibale, 2007) is a popular term in Ugandan schools and refers to teachers putting up creative messages in the school compound for management and curriculum-related functions. These messages are posted at different locations on the school compound and interact directly with the learners and guests at the school (Ssentanda, 2022). In the current study, the signage addressed learners’ social well-being, safety, health and academic life. In addition, they played a management function within the school by giving information, labelling locations and designating place function. They were used to provide guidance to learners on where to go for a particular service, for example buying items (school canteen – Figure 4.1), medical help (sickbay), haircut (school salon), or when they need to have “moments of convenience” (boys/girls toilets).



Figure 4.1 Management and place designation signage

Moreover, our analysis suggests that some of the signage in the school compound related to messages from the Presidential Initiative for AIDS Communication to Youth (PIASCY) (Ministry of Education and Sports, n.d.). As elaborated by Ssentanda (2022), these messages relate to a presidential initiative to fight the scourge of HIV and AIDS among youths in schools. Because Uganda is one of the countries that has been seriously affected by this disease, which has distorted the socioeconomic livelihoods of many families, the president came up with a total of 26 messages that teachers have to communicate creatively to learners in schools in a way that would help them understand this problem. Accordingly, teachers write such messages on school walls, or on timber and place them in the school compound, or inscribe them on the classroom walls for learners to see and read. Examples of these messages are “Our Bodies Change”, “Care for HIV Positive People”, “Avoid Early Sex”, “Avoid Bad Touches” and so on (cf. Ssentanda, 2022).

The school compounds contained signage used in managing school discipline. For example, “Speak English Always”, “Do Not Trespass”, “Always Keep Time”. Additionally, there were some signs that are meant to enhance safety at school. Such signs bore inscriptions such as “Stop Fighting”, “Let’s Talk Peace”, “Avoid Lonely Places” and so forth. These were largely found outside the classrooms.

There were also “singing walls”. These are signs that denote nationhood/statehood. We came across such signage in school CGPS-2. The signage bears the local ethnic community anthem, the national anthem and the East African anthem (Figure 4.2 below).



Figure 4.2 Examples of sociocultural and sociopolitical awareness signage

These signs are used to manage the sociocultural and sociopolitical awareness/consciousness of the learners. The school management signage also encompassed the class rules (Figures 4.3 and 4.4), the teaching timetables (Figure 4.4), the class sweeping rota (Figure 4.3), and the school rules and regulations (cf. Ssentanda, 2022). Teachers used this signage to manage the learners’ conduct, behaviour (see Figure 4.5), and activities.



Figure 4.3 Class rules

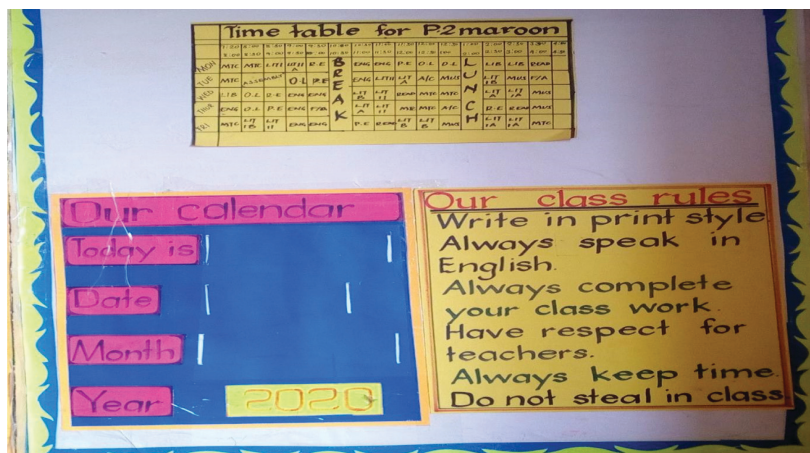


Figure 4.4 School management signage in P2 Maroon in CPPS-2



Figure 4.5 A regulatory signage posted on the compound of school CPPS-2

In addition to the management signage, we observed the use of curriculum-related signage. This is signage deployed in the classrooms for teaching curriculum-related content and comprises two subtypes: teacher-made and learner-made signage. Figure 4.6a is an example of curriculum-related signage used for teaching language structures (prepositions), critical thinking and visual literacy skills. Figure 4.6b is a sign used in Literacy I – a learning area to develop learners' knowledge of nutrition and enhance their Leblango² competence.

2 Leblango is a Western Nilotic language of the Lango people of Uganda. Classified as a Lwo language, it is the language of wider communication in the

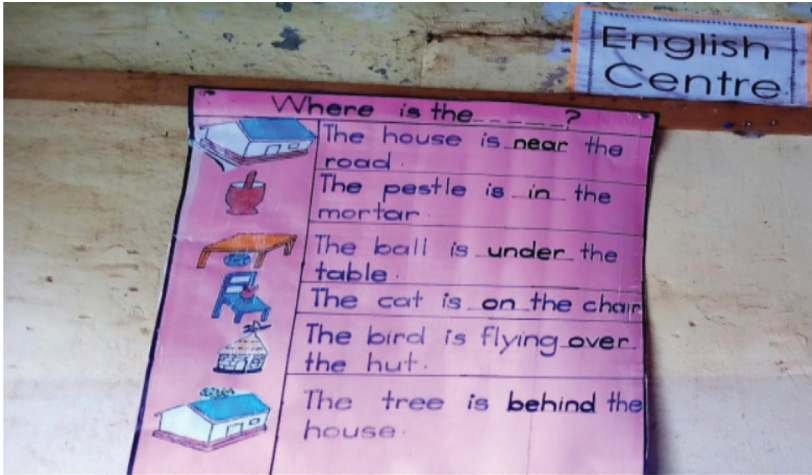


Figure 4.6a Curriculum-related signage at CPPS-1



Figure 4.6b Curriculum-related signage in Leblango at CPPS-1

Our findings show that the signs were monolingual. Signs occurred exclusively in English, Leblango or Kiswahili (see Table 4.2, Figures 4.6a and 4.6b).

Lango subregion, in north central Uganda. It is taught in primary and secondary schools as well as at universities in Uganda.

Table 4.2 Summary of data on languages used on signage

School type	Signage in English	Signage in Leblango	Signage in Kiswahili
CGPS-1	101 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
CGPS-2	87 (96.6%)	2 (2.2%)	1 (1.1%)
CPPS-1	125 (99.2%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)
CPPS-2	111 (93.2%)	8 (6.7%)	0 (0%)

Most signs were in English. Information gleaned from the interviews we held with teachers suggested that teachers were very driven by the language-in-education policy which promotes English, the official language, as seen below:

Tr1: CGPS-1: ... most of our signage are in English but we explain to them in the local language.

Adm: CGPS-2: The school being in an urban setting we use English.

Tr2: CGPS-1: For our case here, because we have different tribes – so they majorly use English. Because when it comes to Leblango as a learning area during oral literature in P1 there, children have a lot of difficulties in reading Leblango words compared to when they are reading English words.

Note that respondent Tr2 points out that learners in P1 have difficulty in reading Leblango words and that English is easier for them. This might suggest that limited efforts are made to develop literacy in local languages because the policy requires that the LoLT in the first three years should be the learners' mother tongue and that English should be taught as a subject in the first three years. Although the study was conducted in an urban area where teachers claim to have complex multilingualism, respondent Tr1 mentioned that explanations are given to the learners in the local language. This means that the learners, in fact, understand the local language which teachers would potentially endeavour to develop.

We did not notice any sign appearing in two languages or any form of translation, translanguaging or code-mixing of languages at the schools studied. Consequently, although these signs are being used as pedagogical resources in literacy activities, they do not promote bi-/multiliteracies (cf. Cope & Kalanzi, 2011). Ssentanda and Wenske (2021) contend

that some teachers want to keep the mother tongues and English separate, and this certainly manifests in the language practices as seen in the LL of the schools in this study. Similarly, Ssentanda (2022) found that teachers regarded developing bilingual signs as expensive and so preferred to separate these languages. Certainly, this undermines the development of bilingualism in the school context, and the LL as such does not reflect the multilingual/plurilingual nature of the communities in which the schools are located (Makalela, 2016).

The findings in respect to the nature of LL revealed that the signs were bottom-up signs made by teachers and pupils, and fixed either on the compound, the school walls or hung inside classrooms. The materiality of the signs included wood, metals, walls and manila paper. The types of signs included management/regulatory signs (Dressler, 2015; Halliday, 1969), informational signs and curriculum-related signage, which were teacher and/or learner made.

5.2. The pedagogical functionality of LL

In this section, we present the findings related to our second research question, namely, what is the pedagogical importance of LL in facilitating literacy development? On the questionnaires, teachers indicated two basic functions that the signage plays in schools. Firstly, it performs a management function. Inside the classrooms, signs exist in the form of class rules, sweeping rotas and timetables. During the follow-up interviews, one teacher reported on the pedagogical functionality of LL as follows:

Tr2: CGPS-2: The ones made by both teachers and learners include sweeping lists in classrooms, and the class rules. Those ones we make together with the learners because they have to agree upon the aspects that can be used as guidelines for class operations.

Outside the classrooms, the teachers referred to the “talking compounds” which contained various signage that guided learners’ behaviour and discipline, as pointed out earlier, for example, “Avoid Bad Language”, “Sex Deviations Are Evil”, “Do Not Escape from School” (Figure 4.3), “Speak English Always” and so on. These signs form part of the contents of the hidden (informal) curricula that learners learn by interacting with the signage daily.

Secondly, the LL functions as a teaching resource. The analysis of the responses to the questionnaires completed by teachers show that the school signage is vital for spontaneous incidental and cooperative learning through peer education. From the interviews with the study participants, we gathered the following opinion:

Tr1: CGPS-1 [...] the classroom displays comprise those ones which we make together with the learners. They include sweeping lists, class rules, models and teaching-learning aids. Secondly, the ones made by teachers in order to enhance learning in the classrooms. These ones are made as teaching-learning aids. They include vocabularies which the learners learn in class, out of these vocabularies [...] there are also structures which help them to remember the concepts learnt.

Moreover, on the questionnaires, teachers reported that they used LL resources as material for self-directed learning, peer education and incidental learning. Furthermore, teachers reported that the LL helped them in orthographical, morphological and syntactic processing. The findings of this study show that LL texts in schools are useful pedagogical resources in literacy development (see Table 4.3), especially in developing oral language skills such as vocabulary, pragmatic competencies and general language awareness.

Table 4.3 Summary of data on the use of signage

School type	Signage used in English lessons n (%)	Signage used in literacy lessons n (%)
CGPS-1	15 (14.8%)	21 (20.7%)
CGPS-2	4 (4.4%)	33 (36.6%)
CPPS-1	22 (17.4%)	14 (11.1%)
CPPS-2	11 (9.2%)	4 (3.3%)
Total	52 (45.8%)	72 (71.7%)

In addition, teachers reported that the charts on the walls helped learners when reciting the spelling of words. This was supported by the classroom observations which demonstrated that teachers often referred to the wall charts when asking learners to spell certain words. Whenever a learner got

stuck, the teacher would ask the learner to look up the word on the wall chart and then spell it. In addition, teachers confirmed in the interviews that learners often visit the wall charts, individually or in groups (peer-to-peer learning), to learn even without the teacher's intervention.

One teacher was asked to explain how they used charts in class. The teacher responded thus:

ADM: CPPS-1: ... If I'm teaching P1 and in my class I'm having a cup, a spoon, or a picture of a devil put up at the time of teaching, I will use that to show the child that that is what we are calling a cup, or I will bring in the real material. So, in that way it will be aiding the learning. So, it will stop me from teaching from abstract. Upon using them, we post them on the wall so that learners can keep on using them.

RESPONDENT ADM: CPPS1 notes that teachers use LL resources to engage learners in tasks that should be performed automatically during classroom interactions in activities that require learners to name objects displayed on an LL chart. This means that the LL resources form vital components of the teaching and learning process by being used as teaching-learning aids. These LL teaching aids enable teachers to simplify concepts that would be abstract to learners, thereby assisting teachers to teach from the known to the unknown.

The study findings pertaining to the pedagogical functionality of the LL reveal that it plays a regulatory role in enforcing discipline, shaping behaviours, ensuring safety within school and inculcating moral values in learners. Additionally, it plays an instructional role by assisting in the delivery of curriculum content, in peer education and in incidental learning. These findings corroborate the notion that LLs could act as pedagogical resources (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008) or pedagogical frameworks (Dagenais et al., 2009). It further substantiates the findings by Gorter and Cenoz (2015) that LLs in schools reveal different communicative intentions, various functions related to the teaching of both subject content and language learning, the development of intercultural awareness, the teaching of values and the establishment of rules for behaviour (see also Gorter, 2018a).

5.3. Usage of LL in teaching literacy

In this section, we report on the findings related to our third key question, that is, how do teachers in the selected schools practise the use of LLs as literacy resources in the classroom?

We asked teachers to clarify how the signage in their schools was used, specifically in language and literacy lessons. Our data reveal that LL resources (images, flashcards and pictures) were instructional in nature and were purposely tailored to fulfil multifunctional roles that included serving as teaching–learning aids and resources in scaffolding learners’ oral language skills. Other roles included fostering orthographic and phonological processing skills (see Figures 4.7a and 4.7b).



Figure 4.7a The use of LL in phonological, orthographic and syntactic processing

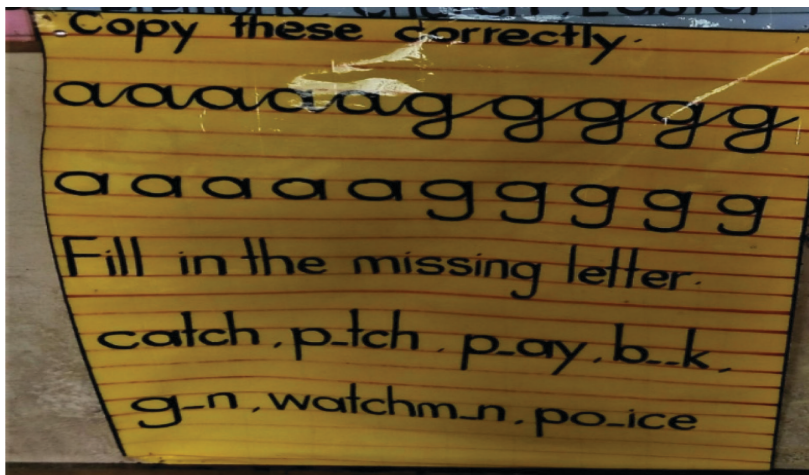


Figure 4.7b The use of LL in the orthographic processing of letters and in letter identification

Other areas included use in phonemic awareness (i.e. letter–sound identification). For instance, see Figure 4.8 below.



Figure 4.8 The use of LL signage in teaching letter–sound identification

Additionally, teachers used the LL in their classrooms to teach language structures using such activities as filling in the gaps (see Figure 4.9a below), word formation, word reordering/rearrangement, sentence rearrangement

and sentence construction. Furthermore, teachers reported that they use the LL to pass health-related information to learners, and create awareness in them about health matters. For example, Figure 4.9b gives HIV/AIDS-related information. Teachers reported that such signage is used to help learners manage issues related to their health and provide psychosocial support that helps learners learn better.



Figure 4.9a Signage used in teaching language structures



Figure 4.9b Informational signage in Leblango

Furthermore, we found that the LL was used in the development of visual literacy and critical thinking skills (see Figure 4.10). For instance, teachers explained that they used road traffic signs to teach road safety to learners. They further explained that doing so empowered learners to be able to critically weigh up situations for their own safety when crossing the road at busy junctions and zebra crossings. This leads to the development of cognitive power. Additionally, signs in the LL are designed to be used in scaffolding reading comprehension skills through the use of newspaper articles and printed stories (Figure 4.11) which teachers cut out of newspapers and hang up on classroom walls in the respective corners, as explained earlier.



Figure 4.10 Signage for developing learners' visual and critical thinking skills



Figure 4.11 Signage showing newspaper articles in class

These LL teaching–learning resources provide environmental print, or what Dressler (2015) calls “the symbols all around” that children are exposed to as early success exemplars for copying in the development of their early literacy skills – reading and writing (Reyes & Azuara, 2008). With this awareness in mind, teachers using their historical bodies create

and employ LL signage that provide the right language and literacy inputs for their learners. The use of newspaper articles pinned on classroom walls, for example, helps learners know that there is useful information, stories and so forth that they can find in the newspapers. Certainly, this would also encourage them to love reading and reading newspapers.

We further asked teachers to cite some learning areas covered within literacy and how they are taught using school signage. Below is an extract of the response we obtained.

Tr1: CGPS-1: [...] in English, we can look at roles and responsibilities of family members like in P1 or P2. But in literacy you have to describe each family member and the role played by that person. Like if you are talking about the role of fathers [...] they go to work and specifically we deal with domestic chores but not office work. So, like digging, buying food, those ones we use pictures to illustrate because we don't have their parents within or at hand at that particular time in digging the garden. Also, like milking a cow or hunting we cannot really go into the bush to look for people hunting like in an urban area like this, it is difficult to identify a character at that particular moment but we use pictures.

This excerpt reveals pictures, realia, models and real situations as crucial LL resources for teaching literacy in the lower primary school. We argue that these resources form part of the foregrounded discourses in literacy development. According to Scollon and Scollon (2004), discourse encompasses all other mediational means in the moment of social action under study, which in this case includes flash cards, posters, pictures, images, realia, charts and real situations, since they carry with them the anticipation of actions to come (in the interaction order), for example, pronouncing words correctly, spelling words accurately, the rapid naming of items/objects/letters, matching and/or associating letters and sounds, gap filling, modelling, role playing and so on. Consequently, teachers use their historical bodies to design LL texts that can fulfil the anticipated actions on the part of learners.

6. Discussion

Our findings show that the nature of school signage is largely permanent. It is found both outside the classroom, fixed on metallic plates and poles

on the school compound and inside the classrooms, imprinted on the classroom walls. The signage inside the class supports school subjects or learning areas. In relation to who makes the school signage, that is, historical bodies, teachers create relevant resources to instruct and develop learners' oral language skills like vocabulary, phonemic and phonological awareness, automaticity, pragmatic competence, understanding of the concept of print, experience with print and the acquisition of knowledge. By so doing, teachers contribute to learners' literacy development by exposing them to various forms of printed material which in the end they refer to in their classroom activities. In addition, learners interact with this signage as they play or in their peer-to-peer learning activities. Such activities include phonological processing, that is, the ability to use the sounds of the language to process oral and written language, which eventually helps them in acquiring reading and comprehension skills.

The study has also revealed that some signage is created by learners themselves through classroom activities that teachers come up with. Other signage is made by the government, for example, the PIASCY messages, which largely aim at developing the whole person. Such messages promote learners' health, social relationships and general well-being not only at school but also outside the school environment.

Moreover, teachers in this study reported that they use the LL both in and outside the classroom to enhance and help learners gain an impression of written language, to begin to learn to read, as well as to improve their reading, comprehension and general oral language abilities.

The findings regarding our third question show that teachers in the schools under study used the signage in the school to develop learners' orthographic, phonemic, phonological, morphological and automaticity skills. Furthermore, it is used in teaching language structures through such activities as gap filling, word formation, word reordering, word rearrangement, sentence rearrangement and sentence construction. It is also used in developing pragmatic competence, vocabulary skills, print awareness, reading comprehension and visual literacy skills, including critical literacy skills.

7. Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to highlight the pedagogical importance of LL as a resource in literacy development. The study highlighted the way in which schoolscapes are influenced by many considerations, namely, the language-in-education policy, teacher training and the school environment. In addition, the study revealed that school signage in the schools was the work of teachers' creativity and innovation, as well as learners' creation as guided by their teachers. Such signage is created for the purpose of developing learners' literacy competence through the use of LL tools. The study revealed teacher creativity (historical body) as crucial in developing LL materials displayed in the school compounds and on the school/classroom walls. In addition, government/ministry directives, such as the PIASCY messages, and curricula demands influence the authorship of the school LL. The study revealed the affordances offered by school signage towards the development of learners' literacy skills. It has shown that the materials, both outside and inside the school classrooms, impart social skills, discipline, order and curriculum content. Furthermore, the findings show that the LL is exclusively monolingual. Additionally, the study has revealed the management/administrative functions and the instructive role of LL in schools. Significantly, the study revealed that engaging learners in the making of LL signage led to the development of their psychomotor skills. As such, educators should deliberately involve learners in the co-creation of signage as a way of developing their psychomotor skills. Moreover, the involvement of learners as creators of school signage opens their eyes to the roles that languages can play in the school. For example, the fact that not much signage was written in their mother tongue could potentially provoke them to ask questions about the role their languages play in the school context.

From the findings we recommend that schools should ensure their signage is bi-/multi-/plurilingual. This will help schools promote multiliteracy skills in learners, as this is the goal of the language-in-education policy which is said to promote bilingualism. Although the government's language-in-education policy stipulates the use of the mother tongue in teaching learners in lower primary circles, the LL shows this is not implemented in the urban schools. A promising pathway for LL research in

this case would be an exploration of school signage in the development of bilingualism in Uganda primary schools, or a language revitalisation effort.

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Hiram H. Maxim

5 Affecting Multiliteracies in the Linguistic Landscape

Abstract: In light of the expansion, if not explosion, of new forms of communication that have arisen from increasing globalisation, mobility and internet-driven connectedness, literacy pedagogy has turned in many instructional settings to a multiliteracies orientation to capture this dramatic growth in new contexts, new textual genres and new modalities. Beginning initially with the New London Group (1996) and subsequently revised (e.g. Cope & Kalantzis, 2015), multiliteracies pedagogy is structured around the four principles of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying which aim to mobilise visual, audio, gestural and spatial modes in tandem with the linguistic to establish a composite literacies paradigm. While this framework has enjoyed wide acceptance, it has not been without its critics (e.g. Leander & Boldt, 2013), who have argued that literacy-based pedagogies need to consider more than the rational completion of a literacy activity; they also have to account for the affect, dislocation and spontaneity that arise as the activity unfolds. Seeking to reconcile these two views on literacy education, this chapter reports on a project that implemented a multiliteracies pedagogical framework to engage American undergraduates with the local linguistic landscape. Centred on the premise that engagement with the linguistic landscape is rife with affective, dislocating, spontaneous experiences, the project began with an introduction to the general principles of linguistic landscape research followed by initial exercises in exploring familiar places either on campus or in the students' hometown. Building on the fledgling methodologies practised and experienced in these familiar settings, students then ventured further afield into unfamiliar multilingual domains off-campus where they focused on critically examining the social practices involving the linguistic, visual and spatial design of textual meanings. Central to this phase of the project was gaining a deeper understanding of the histories of and participants in each place. The project culminated in a student-designed website that featured the outcomes of their respective small-scale research studies and which will serve as a site for presenting future linguistic landscape-based projects in subsequent semesters.

Keywords: multiliteracies pedagogy, affect, student research, linguistic landscapes, literacy education.

1. Introduction

Within the burgeoning field of Linguistic Landscape Studies (LLS), there has been growing interest in using the linguistic landscape as a resource for language and literacy education (e.g. Krompák et al., 2022; Malinowski et al., 2020; Niedt & Seals, 2021). The underlying premise behind this pedagogical approach is that the visible texts of a particular place are ideologically charged and can thus serve as a telling window into the relations between different language communities and the politics of societal multilingualism. A central challenge for educationally focused investigations of the linguistic landscape is developing and implementing an effective pedagogical framework for student engagement with place. On the one hand, many practitioners have reported success by providing students with a general introduction to the premise of LLS and then having them engage with their surroundings following a set of fundamental questions about the primary features of the observed landscape (Sayer, 2010). Such an approach is consistent with recent calls in language and literacy education to foster meaningful learning experiences out “in the wild” (Dubreil & Thorne, 2018) where student engagement is potentially less scripted and more spontaneous than standard classroom pedagogical practices and thus supportive of a learning-by-doing approach to learning. On the other hand, if students are completely new to the idea of research in the linguistic landscape, then there would seem to be a need for a more systematic pedagogical approach to their engagement that fosters a deeper understanding of their surroundings.

One approach for providing such a framework that has gained traction in recent years is the application of Lefebvre’s (1991) notion of space to the linguistic landscape (e.g. Malinowski, 2015; Trumper-Hecht, 2010). Centred on the investigation of how a particular space is designed and enforced (i.e. the conceived space), how it is viewed, heard and detectable by the senses (i.e. the perceived space), and how it is experienced subjectively by those who inhabit it (i.e. the lived space), this triadic approach has helped researchers and practitioners structure projects and assignments for the linguistic landscape that allow for a more thorough, triangulated engagement with space.

Another pedagogical framework to consider for guiding student engagement with the linguistic landscape is the influential work of the New London Group (1996) and its pedagogy of multiliteracies. Responding to the expansion, if not explosion, of new forms of communication that have arisen from increasing globalisation, mobility and internet-driven connectiveness, the New London Group (1996) proposed a multiliteracies orientation to capture this dramatic growth in new contexts, new textual genres and new modalities of communication. This framework has been cited and implemented widely as a principled way for conceptualising literacy education and development in the twenty-first century (e.g. Kern, 2000; Paesani et al., 2015; Swaffar & Arens, 2005), yet it has interestingly seen limited implementation in LLS.¹ From my own work as a language educator, I have found it to be a very helpful framework for guiding student engagement with cultural artefacts (Byrnes et al., 2010), yet I also have become aware of its critics who have argued that literacy-based pedagogies need to consider more than the rational completion of a literacy activity; they also have to account for the affect, dislocation and spontaneity that arise as the activity unfolds (Gaspar & Warner, 2021; Leander & Boldt, 2013). As a result, I found myself facing a pedagogical dilemma: How do I address these legitimate criticisms of a pedagogy that had become an effective approach for conceptualising literacy education in my own language teaching practices? At that time, I was becoming more involved in LLS and began to consider the application of multiliteracies pedagogy to LLS as a potentially effective way to reconcile its benefits with its limitations. My early thinking was guided by the relatively simple premise that, if multiliteracies pedagogy needs to take more account of the affective and indeterminate component of literacy practices, the pedagogy needs to be applied in a context that is rife with affective, dislocating, spontaneous experiences. Based on my own fledgling work in LLS (Maxim, 2020), I could think of no setting that elicits more emotion or engenders more spontaneity than the linguistic landscape.

This chapter therefore reports on a project that implemented a multiliteracies pedagogical framework to engage American undergraduates

1 See Lozano et al. (2020) and Jiménez-Caicedo (2023) for examples of applying multiliteracies pedagogy to linguistic landscape work.

with the local linguistic landscape.² The chapter begins with an overview of pedagogical approaches to the linguistic landscape and follows with a presentation of multiliteracies pedagogy and its potential shortcomings. Then, the methodology of the project is presented with a particular focus on the educational context, the participants and the data gathered. Following that, the chapter presents the analysis of the data to illustrate the degree to which students' experiences in the linguistic landscape were fed by "affective intensities" (Leander & Boldt, 2013, p. 22). The chapter concludes with the implications of this project for future work in the linguistic landscape aimed at fostering students' multiliteracies.

2. Relevant Literature

2.1 Language learning in the linguistic landscape

It did not take long within the field of LLS for researchers and practitioners to discover and promote the benefits of involving students in projects out in the linguistic landscape. Some of the earliest work in this direction saw the linguistic landscape as a potentially rich source of contextualised input for the development of linguistic and pragmatic competence (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008; Rowland, 2012). Not long thereafter, following the recommendation by Shohamy and Waksman (2009) that "visible texts need to be processed as 'tips of icebergs' to a deeper and more complex meaning which is embedded in histories, cultural relations, politics and humanistic inter-relations" (p. 328), scholars also began to see the potential of using the linguistic landscape as a pedagogical site for engendering student-focused critical inquiry into social, political, economic and cultural practices. Dagenais et al.'s (2009) longitudinal study with Canadian elementary schoolchildren was one of the first in LLS to highlight the possibilities and challenges of having students interrogate the presence, power and meaning of different language communities in the linguistic landscape. Since then, pedagogical engagement with the linguistic landscape has only increased as researchers and practitioners have expanded their inquiry to involve students in the study of the social meaning of English language use (Sayer,

2 This project received approval from Emory University's Institutional Review Board and was assigned study number 00006084.

2010), symbolic language use (Chesnut et al., 2013), ambiguity and silence in public language use (Richardson, 2020), issues of cultural authenticity (Lee & Choi, 2020), and commodified language use (Bruzos Moro, 2020).

In addition to the expanding number of issues that linguistic landscape scholars are exploring with their students, there is also a broad array of pedagogical methodologies employed to engage with the linguistic landscape. Ranging from walking tours (Chern & Dooley, 2014; Garvin, 2010; Ivković et al., 2019) to camera safaris (Hancock, 2012; Wiese et al., 2017) to telecollaborative conversations (Richardson, 2020; Vinagre & Llopis-García, 2023) to crowdsourcing (Purschke, 2020) to Citizen Science (Nielsen et al., 2020) to photo-journalistic applications (Hayik, 2017), scholars have implemented a variety of tools and approaches to foster student-based interrogation of the purpose, meaning and impact of public language use.

Many of these pedagogical approaches have also become more ethnographically oriented, coinciding with the qualitative turn in LLS that has focused more on the “human-sign interface” in the linguistic landscape (Zabrodskaia & Milani, 2014, p. 2). One such pedagogical framework that has garnered attention in recent years is the application of Lefebvre’s (1991) notion of space to the linguistic landscape (Malinowski, 2015; Trumper-Hecht, 2010). By investigating the conceived, the perceived and the lived dimensions of a particular space, students are able to triangulate their data gathering to better understand the heterogeneity as well as the social constructedness of the landscape. The lived space, in particular, affords learners the opportunity to ground their investigations ethnographically by examining local actors’ views and experiences through such research practices as interviews, interpretive walking tours, collaborative mapping (Lou, 2012), and participant observation. Certainly, a more challenging component of linguistic-landscape-based research than simply documenting a landscape with a digital camera, investigating the lived space nevertheless allows students to see the inherently subjective experiences of the inhabitants of a space.

2.2 The spatialised turn in language education

It is important to note that these pedagogical developments in LLS have not developed in a vacuum. The benefit and importance of providing students with contextualised encounters with the material world have taken on greater importance in the wider field of literacy and language education in the past few decades. In language education, this movement can be traced as far back as the 1970s with the shift to communicative language teaching that emphasised naturalistic encounters with the target language. Since then, there has been an even greater emphasis on meaningful, engaging learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom. These efforts have been motivated by different theoretical and empirical perspectives, but the overarching premise has been that fundamental elements of literacy and language education, such as establishing connections between language and culture, fostering critical language awareness, and developing contextual and semiotic agility (Thorne, 2013), are best supported when learners draw upon different meaning-making resources to engage productively with a variety of contexts across social and material environments. Such an approach reflects an ecological view of learning and human action that is marked by a close interconnectedness between people and the myriad of affordances available in their surroundings (Kramsch, 2002; van Lier, 2004).

This highly contextualised approach to learning results in a greater emphasis on activities that involve situated problem-solving and place-based experiences. One common instructional framework is project-based learning with its focus on learning by doing in specific contexts (Gaspar & Warner, 2021). Freire's (1993) call to focus on "reading the world" to facilitate "reading the word" can also be seen as playing an influential role when conceptualising situationally embedded learning. In the same vein, an equally vibrant pedagogical direction is the growing interest in learning "in the wild" in more naturalistic settings (Dubreil & Thorne, 2018). In their discussion of the pedagogical possibilities of augmented reality games for language studies, Thorne et al. (2021) even propose the idea of "rewilding", a term originally coined in conservation biology, as a way to "augment and integrate formal learning settings with the vibrancy of linguistically and experientially rich engagement occurring elsewhere in

the social–material world” (p. 108). As support, they cite Zheng et al.’s (2018) work on place-based education that calls for the need for learners to “break away from institutional norms and previous thinking patterns in order to develop skilled linguistic action in actual events that lead to prospective action” (p. 55, cited in Thorne et al., 2021). A common theme in all of these pedagogical proposals is the centrality of understanding the context of place, that is, the subjective constructedness of a situation or location and the need to consider one’s own positionality and subjectivity when engaging with that place. In their seminal work on geosemiotics, Scollon and Scollon (2003) make a similar case, arguing for the inseparability of social meaning from the material locatedness of language and discourse.

2.3 Multiliteracies pedagogy

Arguably, one of the most influential theoretical treatises on the multimodal, multisensory and highly contextualised nature of literacy and languaging practices has been the New London Group’s (1996) widely cited manifesto, *Pedagogy of Multiliteracies*, now approaching its thirtieth anniversary. Responding to the rapid expansion of modes and means of communication resulting from increased mobility, globalisation and internet-driven connectivity, the New London Group questioned traditional approaches to literacy education and proposed instead a focus on “multiliteracies” to better represent the many new genres, contexts and modalities now at our communicative disposal. The argument for using the plural form of literacy is precisely to capture “the realities of increasing local diversity and local connectedness” (p. 64) and to reflect that there now needs to be acknowledgement of not just the written mode, but also the spoken, spatial, aural and gestural modes. With such an understanding of literacy practices, teachers and learners now have a much wider array of options and resources for making meaning. For the New London Group (1996), the process of making meaning is centred on the notion of “design”. The meaning-making resources available to language users are considered the “available designs”, the act of realising meaning is “designing”, and the possible transformative effect that meaning has for the users and society is termed “redesigning”.

The conceptualisation of meaning-making as a design-related process has had an influential role in second language education, particularly in North American higher education (Byrnes et al., 2010; Kern, 2000; Paesani, et al., 2015; Swaffar & Arens, 2005). For Kern (2000), a literacy-oriented framework offered a textual foundation for language studies that aligned so well with the focus on literary and cultural studies in collegiate second language departments in North America. Swaffar and Arens (2005) then foregrounded the construct of genre as a helpful way of conceptualising literacy for language studies that offered both a pedagogical framework and an overarching principle for selecting and sequencing texts within a curriculum. Byrnes et al. (2010) followed with a book-length discussion of how a multiliteracies framework can serve as the basis for an entire four-year undergraduate curriculum that supports and facilitates the development of advanced language abilities. Paesani et al. (2015) in some ways concluded this fruitful period of engagement with literacies frameworks by providing detailed and practical guidance on applying multiliteracies pedagogy to second language education.

In terms of the actual pedagogical development of multiliteracies, the New London Group (1996) and its subsequent revisions (e.g. Cope & Kalantzis, 2015) structure the pedagogy around the four knowledge processes of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying. Experiencing is the process of integrating what one already knows about a topic with any new knowledge that might be necessary to make sense of a situation, practice or product. Conceptualising involves using existing knowledge structures to classify and define concepts while also learning about new theoretical approaches for doing so. Analysing consists of “analyzing text functions and critically interrogating the interests of participants in the communication process” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 5). Finally, applying entails the implementation of knowledge in appropriate but also creative ways.³ The underlying premise is that by participating in activities that engage all four knowledge processes, learners mobilise visual, audio, gestural and spatial modes in tandem with the linguistic to develop their multiliteracies.

3 For extensive examples of activities involving these knowledge processes, see <https://newlearningonline.com/learning-by-design>

The widespread acceptance and implementation of this paradigm in language and literacy education continues to this day, but is not without its critics. The most consistent criticism, perhaps most forcefully articulated by Leander and Boldt (2013), contends that the focus on design results in a conceptualisation of literacy that is aimed at the realisation of some textual end point “under the rational control of students and teachers” (Leander & Boldt, 2013, p. 24). This rationalisation or “hyperrationality” of literacy practices, as Gaspar and Warner (2021, p. 3) describe this overemphasis on attending to the rational completion of communicative tasks, ultimately precludes any focus directed towards the affective and indeterminate side of literacy activities. Indeed, as Leander and Boldt (2013) argue, literacy practices are more than just task completion; they are also situated in the “ongoing present, forming relations and connections across signs, objects, and bodies in often unexpected ways” (p. 22). It is this presence of the unexpected, affective, emergent side of literacy practices that the multiliteracies pedagogy has not accounted for nor considered a component of learning and knowing. Leander and Boldt (2013) make specific reference to “affective intensities” that feed literacy-related activities and that are different from the “rational control of meanings and forms” (p. 22). Here they are referring to moments “saturated with affect and emotion” in which the attention is not on a particular outcome or end point; rather, the focus is on the intense and unfolding emotional experience.

Seeking to reconcile the criticism of multiliteracies pedagogy with its potential benefits for literacy education, this chapter reports on a study that implemented a multiliteracies pedagogical framework to engage American undergraduates with the local linguistic landscape. In previous work that implemented multiliteracies pedagogy to guide student engagement with the linguistic landscape, scholars have found the pedagogy to be a productive framework for developing Spanish learners’ understanding of the social and political complexities of immigrant communities (Jiménez-Caicedo, 2023), as well as their critical thinking about interculturality in spaces they frequent on a daily basis (Lozano et al., 2020). This study aims to complement these initial efforts by focusing specifically on the students’ “affective intensities” within the linguistic landscape that result from a multiliteracies pedagogical framework and to analyse them as part

of multiliteracies development. The linguistic landscape presented itself as an ideal site for this study because public spaces have long been seen as rife with the type of unexpected, emotional, indeterminate experiences that multiliteracies pedagogy has been criticised for overlooking (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Pennycook, 2012). Guiding the study were the following questions:

RQ1: Can multiliteracies be a helpful framework for student-based investigations of the linguistic landscape?

RQ2: Do multiliteracies-based linguistic landscape projects address concerns about the “hyperrationality” of multiliteracies (Gaspar & Warner, 2021, p. 3)?

3. Methods

3.1 Educational context

The study took place at Emory University (Atlanta, Georgia, USA) during the spring semesters of 2022 and 2023 as part of a one-credit linguistics course entitled “Languages across Metro Atlanta”.⁴ The course had no prerequisites, was open to any undergraduate student and required no previous knowledge of linguistic landscape-based work. As a one-credit course, it met for just 50 minutes each week during the 14-week semester and was limited in the amount of outside work that could be assigned. Moreover, the urban–suburban location of the campus in a largely white, affluent, monolingual neighbourhood with limited mass transit options meant that whole-class or individual visits to more multilingual sites in the city required time and resources.⁵ Nevertheless, the class received an

4 The author would like to acknowledge Steve L. Thorne and his team at Portland State University for their work on Languages Around Metropolitan Portland (LAMP), which served as early inspiration for this course: www.pdx.edu/applied-linguistics/language-around-metropolitan-portland-lamp

5 According to the American Community Survey 5-year Estimate from 2019 (i.e. pre-Covid-19), the neighbourhood in which the university is located reported a population consisting of 81% white residents, 5% black residents, 9% Asian residents and 5% Latino residents. Of those residents, 85% reported speaking predominantly English at home.

internal university grant to support two class outings to different locations in the city as well as individual student trips.

The participants ranged from first-year students to fourth-year seniors in their final semester of undergraduate study. A total of 19 students participated in the study (six in spring 2022 and 13 in spring 2023; 12 female and seven male). They represented a range of academic majors, with fewer than half being linguistics majors. Of the 19 participants, only one reported having had any previous experience studying the linguistic landscape. The primary motivation listed for taking the course was an interest and curiosity in exploring the city in which they were students. As indicated above, the campus location precludes frequent engagement with the city without a vehicle, yet it was clear that at least these students were eager to learn more about the city and its language communities. The university itself has identified greater engagement with the city as one of its strategic goals, but the logistical challenges of leaving campus easily, as well as the limited mass transit infrastructure in the city, pose legitimate obstacles for students.

The course itself adopted a multiliteracies pedagogical framework to introduce students to LLS and to guide them in their engagement with the city. The first class periods emphasised the knowledge process “experiencing” by drawing on the participants’ own life-world experiences, particularly in Atlanta, and by exposing them to concrete data about the demographic and linguistic background of the city. Participants responded to an opening questionnaire about their knowledge of and experiences in Atlanta. Their first assignment was also to compile a collaborative document with key historical, political, social and economic features of the city. Next, they used US census data to gather demographic and linguistic information about specific sectors and neighbourhoods of the city and then coupled that work with a virtual visit to those neighbourhoods using Google Street View. Lastly, midway through the semester the class took two successive trips to locations in the city that they had identified as having a large multilingual population: the shopping mall Plaza Fiesta that caters to a large Spanish-speaking population along the Buford Highway corridor and the community of Clarkston, once labelled by *Time* magazine as the most diverse square mile in the United States. Although neither destination is that far from campus (Plaza Fiesta is seven miles from campus

and the Clarkston community is eight miles from campus), they represent very different demographics from the neighbourhood where the university is located.

After the initial class periods that focused primarily on experiencing, the following classes emphasised conceptualising by introducing the students to terms and concepts of LLS. With so few class meetings, only a limited number of readings could be assigned, and the challenge became selecting those few background texts that provided effective introductions to the concepts and methodologies that students themselves could use. Assisted by input from Malinowski (2020), the readings started with a brief overview of developments in the field by Zabrodskaja and Milani (2014) that had proven effective in another context as an introduction to LLS (Maxim, 2020). Then, to experience some of the early quantitative work in LLS, students read Backhaus' (2006) seminal work on the linguistic landscape in Tokyo. With an eye to the students' own projects in the linguistic landscape, particular attention was paid to Backhaus' (2006) definition and categorisation of signs, his delineation of the spaces to be investigated, his distinction between top-down and bottom-up signing practices, and the influence, role and prestige of English in the public sphere. Next, to gain insight into more qualitative and ethnographic approaches to LLS, students read Lou's (2012) analysis of the linguistic landscape in Chinatown in Washington, D.C. The discussion of this reading focused in particular on the symbolic and commodified use of language, qualitative data from the inhabitants of the landscape, the material and social context of signs, the use of historical documents and context, the exploration of new semiotic domains (e.g. postcards, monuments), and the implementation of walking tours with residents. Coupled with that reading, students read Malinowski (2015) to develop a better understanding of the relevance and applicability of a triadic approach to space for their own work. Last, students read Peck and Stroud (2015) as just one example of how LLS has moved beyond a strict focus on visible signs to include other semiotic systems in the linguistic landscape. As part of their engagement with this text, students were encouraged to think about the embodied nature of language, the study of multimodal data sets (e.g. music, sound), the ephemeral and diverse assemblages in the landscape, as well as other semiotic systems besides signage in their surroundings to investigate. Parallel to each reading, the

instructor guided the students in assembling a linguistic landscape toolkit (Appendix A) which ultimately provided a summary of key issues to consider when engaging with the linguistic landscape.

In response to each reading, students also engaged the knowledge process of analysing by thinking more about the purpose, users and audiences in the linguistic landscape. Drawing again from Malinowski (2020), students completed a series of eight exercises that aimed to raise their awareness about authorship and reception within the linguistic landscape (Table 6.1). Already after their first class, students each completed a “phenomenology walk” (Ivković et al., 2019) in which they walked the same route on campus alone and recorded their experiences in a short reflection piece for comparison and discussion in the subsequent class. Then, as part of their virtual visit via Google Street View to specific neighbourhoods in Atlanta, they completed a worksheet that asked them to select a few visible signs and identify several fundamental features: the author, the intended audience, the visible languages, including the most prominent one(s), and the sign’s message and purpose. Next, for the following class, students uploaded to a shared course site a piece of data from a linguistic landscape that illustrated an important aspect of identity, diversity or cultural change from their hometown, or a place they consider home, or Atlanta. Following that, students themselves became authors of signage by designing and posting at the start of class a sign that they felt was needed in the classroom. Students completed all of these activities before the two class field trips. Then, in preparation for the field trip, students wrote their first of four 300-word reflection pieces in which they explained, at this early stage of the semester, their thoughts, expectations and questions regarding the upcoming field trips and their engagement with the linguistic landscape (see Appendix B for the prompts for all four reflections). Following each of the field trips, students wrote two more reflection pieces, each time commenting on their experiences and their early thoughts about areas for possible future research. To end the semester, students completed one final reflection piece in which they commented on the experience of completing the final project and on the course as a whole.

The final project for the course allowed students to engage the fourth knowledge process of the multiliteracies pedagogy, applying. For this small-scale project to be completed during the second half of the semester,

students worked individually or in groups to investigate a particular landscape and to demonstrate how semiotic resources were used to construct and shape a particular social reality. Completed over the course of the final seven weeks of the semester, students first met with the instructor to finalise a topic. They then conducted site visits to gather data before completing their analysis and written report. The instructor provided feedback on early drafts of their report, and the final version of their project was then posted to a publicly accessible course website for wider distribution and feedback.⁶ The students' engagement with their topic followed an iterative process consisting of regular individual meetings with the instructor to guide the selection of the topic, the formulation of appropriate research questions and the development of a feasible research design. Students completed at least two drafts of their report and then worked on a multimodal presentation of their report for publication on the website. Before final publication of the site, students also served as peer reviewers of each site to provide additional feedback.

Because of the limited scholarship on the linguistic landscape of Atlanta, this website was seen as a way to publicise and disseminate small-scale investigations of Atlanta's publicly visible multilingualism. The site remains a work in progress that is updated with each new offering of the course at Emory University, and there have been discussions with other Atlanta-based institutions to open the site to investigators beyond Emory who are engaging with the city's linguistic landscape. The site also offers the option for viewers to provide feedback on individual projects or the site as a whole, in the hope that the site can engender discussions about the public manifestation of multilingualism in the city. A complete overview of all multiliteracies-focused activities completed over the semester is listed in Table 5.1.

6 Students' final projects can be viewed at <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/lama/>

Table 5.1 Multiliteracies activities for “Languages Across Metro Atlanta”

-
- Experiencing: discussion of participants’ own life-world experiences, particularly in Atlanta, and exposure to concrete data about the demographic and linguistic background of the city
 - o Completion of opening questionnaire about knowledge of and experiences in Atlanta
 - o Completion of a collaborative document indicating the key historical, political, social and economic features of the city
 - o Collection of U.S. census data on demographic and linguistic information about specific sectors and neighbourhoods of the city
 - o Completion of a virtual visit to those neighbourhoods using Google Street View
 - o Two successive class trips to locations in the city that participants had identified as having a large multilingual population
 - Conceptualising: introduction to terms and concepts of Linguistic Landscape Studies (LLS)
 - o Overview of the development of the field (e.g. Zabrodskaja & Milani, 2014)
 - o Quantitative approaches to LLS (e.g. Backhaus, 2006)
 - o Qualitative and ethnographic approaches to LLS (e.g. Lou, 2012)
 - o Triangulated research methodology in LLS (e.g., Malinowski, 2015)
 - o Expansion of LLS into other semiotic systems beyond language (e.g. Peck & Stroud, 2015)
 - o Development of a linguistic landscape toolkit to guide engagement with the linguistic landscape (Appendix A)
 - Analysing: awareness raising about authorship and reception within the linguistic landscape
 - o Phenomenology walk (Ivković et al., 2019)
 - o Analysis of Google Street View to identify the author, message and purpose of signs, the intended audience, visible languages and prominent language(s)
 - o Presentation in class of a piece of LL data that illustrates an important aspect of identity, diversity or cultural change from their hometown, or a place they consider home, or Atlanta
 - o Posting of a home-made sign somewhere in the classroom
 - o Reflection piece #1 in anticipation of upcoming field trips
 - o Reflection piece #2 in response to first field trip
 - o Reflection piece #3 in response to second field trip
 - o Reflection piece #4 in response to final project and entire course
 - Applying: application of knowledge gained in both appropriate and creative ways
 - o Completion of an iterative, small-scale research project, either individually or in groups, that investigates a particular landscape and demonstrates how semiotic resources were used to construct and shape a particular social reality
 - o Publication of the project on a publicly accessible course website for wider distribution and feedback
-

4. Results

For the purposes of this study and its focus on students' affective intensities in the linguistic landscape, participant statements in the four reflection pieces serve as the focus for analysis and discussion. To illustrate the degree to which participants responded to the multiliteracies pedagogy and experienced affective intensities, their responses have been categorised and organised according to the four knowledge processes: experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying. Specifically, their reflections were first categorised as belonging to one of the four knowledge processes. Then, for each knowledge process, affective intensities were identified as any student expression of affect in their reflections, which could range from positive emotions of surprise and joy to negative emotions of discomfort and marginalisation.

4.1 Student experiencing

As Cope and Kalantzis (2015) remark, the experiencing knowledge process consists of weaving together new and existing experiences, those learnt in school and those learnt outside of school. Because of the students' aforementioned limited prior experience with the linguistic landscape, it is perhaps not surprising that many of their comments focused on what was new and unexpected about their initial engagements with the linguistic landscape:

- “Growing up in Seattle, I would always see a lot of different languages on all sorts of different signs. However, analyzing them in terms of their purposes and how they exist in relation to other parts of the local community was new to me” (student 1, March 3, 2022)
- “I was not expecting the level of linguistic diversity that we saw there” (student 6, March 17, 2022)
- “I feel like I’m used to seeing English and Spanish on signs or posters, but many of the languages that we saw while in Clarkston, such as Burmese or Nepali, are languages that I rarely see” (student 5, March 17, 2022)
- “Languages I assumed would be everywhere, such as Somali or Swahili, were not there” (student 3, March 17, 2022)

- “There was a sense of trust within the community that isn’t seen in non-ethnic standard American stores” (student 3, March 31, 2022)
- “Plaza Fiesta is a place that I used to visit a lot when I was a child. Upon returning, I noticed a lot of small details I hadn’t paid attention to before” (student 4, March 31, 2022)
- “I had never been to Clarkston, Plaza Fiesta, or Asian Square before” (student 2, April 29, 2022)
- “Previously, I never considered which languages were most prominent in an area, and most certainly never thought to compare quantitative data on languages in the public sphere of an area to census data” (student 18, February 21, 2023)
- “there is a lot more linguistic diversity and multilingualism than I would have expected coming to Atlanta two years ago” (student 19, April 25, 2023)

Student comments about the familiarity of the surroundings from the field trips were much less frequent:

- “When I first entered the store, what stood out to me was how similar it was to the Hispanic stores I go to back home” (student 4, March 17, 2022)
- “growing up in a community that was also a landing place, for lack of better terms, for new US immigrants, a lot of the observations I made felt somewhat familiar” (student 10, February 28, 2023)

4.2 Student conceptualising

Evidence of students’ engaging in the conceptualising knowledge process was identified as those moments when they reflected on concepts or approaches discussed in class. Specifically, their attention to the embodied nature of language, multimodal data sets (e.g. music, sound), the ephemeral and diverse assemblages in the landscape, as well as other semiotic systems besides signage in the landscape, were categorised as examples of their conceptualising. Overall, they expressed awareness of and interest in a range of concepts presented in class. Their focus was largely twofold: they commented either on different features to consider when encountering signs:

- “The top-down approach is not something I had considered before” (student 1, March 3, 2022)
- “I have learned to think about the underlying meaning behind sign placement” (student 6, March 3, 2022)
- “I think about the way in which the languages are presented, that colors that go along with, and the underlying history of the location that caused the languages that are present in the environment” (student 6, March 3, 2022)
- “Seeing if the signs were more long-term or more ephemeral” (student 3, March 3, 2022)
- “While we mostly encountered signage in relation to commercial practices (after all, we were walking in a shopping plaza), we also saw notices posted by individuals on the shops’ glass windows (bottom-up signs), generally in a non-English language, indicating a somewhat democratic component to the linguistic landscape in the plaza (people feel free to communicate in that space, and in their native language)” (student 11, February 28, 2023)
- “paying attention to the boldness, style, size, and positioning of font in a given place” (student 14, February 21, 2023)
- “I was curious how placement of language, style, font, and materials were implicated in the landscape” (student 16, February 21, 2023)
- “the lived experience in Malinowski’s triadic approach is crucial to take into consideration” (student 19, February 21, 2023)

Or they expressed interest in expanding their scope to include semiotic systems beyond language:

- “Clothing and monuments particularly interest me” (student 2, March 3, 2022)
- “I watch out for unconventional signage like statues and tattoos” (student 5, March 3, 2022)
- “I think it will be interesting to see if there are differences in the ways people dress compared to how people around me dress” (student 10, February 21, 2023)
- “Another aspect of the landscape was the beaten path that led straight from the mart to the road – the language of the land, who’s making the paths” (student 9, February 28, 2023)

4.3 Student analysing

To ascertain students' engagement with the analysing knowledge process, their reflections were reviewed for statements that addressed the function and intent of signage in the landscape. One student drew comparisons between larger commercial stores and the smaller independent shops experienced during the two class outings: "In the large commercial stores, you wouldn't see the representation of religion that was present in the small stores" (student 4, March 16, 2022). Several other students commented on the complexities involved in making sense of signs and spaces:

- "The overlapping posters of different artists challenges what a sign is" (student 4, March 17, 2022)
- "It made me think who was responsible for the sign" (student 2, March 17, 2022)
- "The signs consisted of pictures of desserts and drinks but upon asking, they were no longer serving these items" (student 4, March 31, 2022)
- "It was interesting to see the contrast between the exterior and interior of the plaza" (student 6, March 31, 2022)
- "It was interesting to see the differences in top-down and bottom-up signs" (student 6, March 17, 2022)
- "The types of signs varied greatly, from stickers on a bus stop to hand-written, paper posters" (student 10, February 28, 2023)
- "Due to the immigrant population in the area, it feels like the use of English was not to attract a white, American audience but instead as a connecting language between communities in the area" (student 13, February 28, 2023)

They were also struck by apparent contradictions in signage: "I walked into a grocery store and noticed that the store had halal meats while also having pork" (student 3, March 17, 2022). The class outings and the reflections also resulted in their commenting on the uneven incidence of multilingualism in the city: "Atlanta's visible multilingualism is confined to specific areas" (student 5, April 29, 2022). An additional theme in their reflections was their own heightened awareness of their subjectivity and positionality as outsiders from a privileged educational institution. After

their class visit to the Clarkston neighbourhood, more than half of the students (12 out of 19: 63%) remarked on the discomfort they experienced in their role as fledgling linguistic landscape researchers:

- “I don’t want to make them feel like we’re outsiders who simply view these stores as tourist spots” (student 2, March 17, 2022)
- “I felt strange taking notes and pictures in a place where I am an outsider” (student 13, April 25, 2023)
- “As we walked around the plaza and peeked into stores, I felt uncomfortable and a sort of guilt; I was worried our large group of strangers carrying white sheets of paper and taking photos inconspicuously would appear to locals as either a threat or dehumanizing” (student 18, February 28, 2023)
- “The act of entering small businesses conspicuously and observing their wares, employees and shoppers seemed a bit uncomfortable to me” (student 17, February 28, 2023)
- “I definitely felt pretty uncomfortable and like a fish out of water” (student 13, February 28, 2023)
- “I have to admit I am rather uncomfortable with the somewhat voyeuristic aspect of the experience. As a white American who exclusively speaks languages that have been used in a context of colonial domination, I feel weird intruding upon the daily lives of communities that have been historically disadvantaged in the most conspicuous fashion just to inquire about their linguistic habits” (student 11, February 28, 2023)
- “While walking around, I felt slightly uncomfortable taking pictures of what I saw around me and I was nervous my picture-taking might offend the store owners and other people in the area” (student 16, February 28, 2023)

Despite the growing interest in student-focused projects in the linguistic landscape, except for Lu and Martens’ (2022) examination of the challenges that graduate student researchers experienced in unfamiliar surroundings, little attention has been paid to the preparation for and the potential consequences of having students engage with spaces that are new to them.

Interestingly, the discomfort experienced in Clarkston was greatly reduced the following week during the visit to Plaza Fiesta. In general, students attributed the greater sense of ease at Plaza Fiesta to their knowledge of Spanish, their familiarity with the location and the open shopping mall layout:

- “The BuHi outing was decidedly different from the Clarkston outing, considering we were in a setting that was already lively and busy with customers when we got there. It felt less like we were intruding upon the daily lives of locals and rather more like we were actually joining in the indulgent gaudiness of the place” (student 11, March 14, 2023)
- “I was overwhelmed by the sense of home and the great variety of cultural objects when I was there. Everything was somewhat familiar to me” (student 12, March 14, 2023)
- “Plaza Fiesta is one of the nicest places to go to because of the many different types of Latin American cultures. It is also a place that is so familiar to me, since I have grown up in Georgia, but don’t have the chance to visit so often due to distance” (student 15, March 14, 2023)
- “Because Plaza Fiesta had such high foot traffic, and because it seemed intentionally designed for the shopper/visitor’s experience, I felt far less awkward there than I did in Clarkston” (student 17, March 14, 2023)
- “the general vibe of the merchants was much more positive and welcoming than what I experienced in Clarkston” (student 18, March 14, 2023)

4.4 Student applying

The students’ final projects for the course served as the primary evidence of their engaging the applying knowledge process. Working individually or in groups, the students worked with their instructor to select an aspect of the city’s linguistic landscape to document and analyse during the second half of the semester. By the time they chose their topic, the students had completed all the introductory readings and the two class trips to different multilingual areas of the city. They also met regularly with the instructor to discuss the topic, their findings and their written analysis. Not surprisingly, the majority of the topics (12 out of 15: 80%) focused on the two

locations visited as a class. The other three topics examined areas of the city well known to the students. The most common topic (four out of 15 projects) was an examination and quantification of the visible languages:

- Intersectionality of Cultures in Clarkston's Thriftown
- The Bumper Sticker Landscape of Plaza Fiesta
- A Comparison of the Use of English in the Linguistic Landscapes of Clarkston and Plaza Fiesta
- Language of Gentrification in the Village Shop Area

The next most common topic was a juxtaposition and comparison of visible and audible languages in specific multilingual locations:

- Spoken versus Written Languages in the Restaurants at Plaza Fiesta
- Bilingualism in Plaza Fiesta
- The Linguistic Landscape of Patel Plaza

The remaining eight topics covered a number of topics. Several focused on Plaza Fiesta, a large shopping mall catering to a Spanish-speaking population, and examined a range of topics:

- The Representation of Mexico in Plaza Fiesta
- The Gendered Clothingscape in Plaza Fiesta
- The Use of Color in Plaza Fiesta
- The Location of Signage in Plaza Fiesta
- The Multimedia Landscape in Plaza Fiesta

One other study compared the semiotic landscapes of the pharmacies in Plaza Fiesta with a more mainstream pharmacy near campus. The final two projects examined sites not included in the class visits. One studied the visible languages present in permanent and temporary signs in a neighbouring plaza catering to residents with East Asian heritage, and another investigated the representation of nations, languages and nationalities at a local grocery store known for its multilingual clientele.

5. Discussion

The discussion of the results of this study is organised around the two research questions. In response to RQ1, the implementation of a multiliteracies pedagogy focused on the four knowledge processes, experiencing,

conceptualising, analysing and applying, appeared to provide a framework that facilitated a systematic investigation of the linguistic landscape for students. By focusing first on the experiencing knowledge process, the course was able to tap into students' existing knowledge of the city while also providing targeted investigations of specific data sources (e.g. U.S. census data; Google Street View) to expand their knowledge. Because of their lack of prior experience with the linguistic landscape, as well as their admitted limited interactions with the city, this pedagogical step was central in providing sufficient demographic and contextual information about the site of their study. As the students indicated in their reflections, the class outings were especially helpful in providing them with first-hand experience of communities they had not encountered in their previous semesters of study. Particularly because of the isolated and monolingual location of the university, these off-campus class trips provided an opportunity to expand students' understanding of and connection to the city where they study for four years. The trips also allowed students to draw on and ultimately compare the census data with their own personal observations, thereby highlighting both the benefits and the limitations of the quantitatively self-reported census data.

Similarly, the subsequent pedagogical focus, conceptualising, proved essential in exposing students with limited prior exposure to LLS to foundational scholarship in the field that highlighted fundamental concepts and methodologies to consider for their own work. Again, based on their own reflective reports, it became clear that each student picked up on and gravitated to specific components of the featured scholarship. While some were interested in the materiality and emplacement of signs, others were inspired by the work of Peck and Stroud (2015) and their exemplary expansion of the field into semiotic systems beyond language. Indeed, that students chose to study clothingscapes or multimedia for their final projects points to the influence of Peck and Stroud's (2015) work. Equally influential on students' understanding of the field of LLS was their exposure to Malinowski's (2015) triadic approach to space. They appreciated this clear framework for conceptualising their own project while, at the same time, realising that the limits of a one-credit course prevented them from engaging with the lived space in any significant way.

Student uptake of the methodologies and concepts of LLS was then evident during the pedagogical focus on analysing. Many of the questions that had been raised in the assigned readings were thematised in their reflections. Students were particularly aware of the complexities of counting and reading signs for linguistic landscape-based research, and their acuity for and attention to public signage were heightened.

The one component of their analysing process that was not addressed in the readings or class discussions until students thematised it in their reflections was their varying levels of discomfort in visiting sites where they felt as outsiders. This common reaction among students raised several important considerations in working with students in linguistic landscape-focused projects. For starters, the students should be applauded for their sensitivity to their surroundings. In each instance, they were aware of their own privileged status and conscious that their presence might be seen as an intrusion into existing community dynamics. In many ways, the students experienced a common feature of ethnographically based research. Nevertheless, future iterations of this course will include readings and discussions about fundamental issues regarding ethnographic fieldwork so they feel better prepared for class outings. In addition, as the students themselves suggested, prior contact with the sites to be visited to explain the sudden presence of 10 to 15 students would potentially alleviate any perceived tension or uneasiness. These student experiences of discomfort also point to the overall limited engagement that students have with communities off-campus at Emory University. Although the university has proclaimed greater involvement in the city as one of its key strategic goals, it is clear that much work still needs to be done. One could imagine that partnerships and collaborations between students and specific communities could be established during students' first semesters at the university and then fostered through different types of programming and academic work so that a visit to an off-campus site, such as the ones conducted in this class, are not their very first meaningful encounters with residents of the city in which they live for four years. One could also envision an expanded version of this course so that students are able to spend more time at a site and ultimately even engage with the lived space, a component of linguistic landscape-based research that was beyond the scope of this one-credit course. One additional component of this experience that remains

unclear is that while the students themselves reported discomfort, it is not known whether this discomfort was reciprocated by the shop owners or residents at the sites. Only a more prolonged engagement with the community would be able to answer this question. Nevertheless, this student experience raises important questions about student-focused linguistic landscape-based work and the need to avoid touristic and even voyeuristic encounters with public spaces, particularly ones that have historically been marginalised by dominant economic and political policies and practices.

Despite any discomfort the students felt in their engagement with off-campus sites, they all responded well to the applying knowledge process and, as evidenced by the presentation of their research projects on the course website (<https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/lama/>), conducted thoughtful small-scale studies into specific meaning-making practices in multilingual spaces in the city. Through the iterative process of meeting regularly with the instructor to conceptualise a topic, study existing scholarship on the topic, develop a research design, collect data and analyse the findings, students were able to study one specific aspect of public language use in the city and begin to see the dynamics as well as the politics of societal multilingualism. Although just first forays into topics that require further investigation and analysis, the student projects nevertheless meant that students gained experience in conceptualising a research topic that relates to existing scholarship, developing a research design that allows for meaningful and feasible data collection, and conducting data analysis that respects the findings and serves to check any preconceived notions about the surroundings being investigated. Indeed, such evidence-based work would seem to be central to the mission of liberal arts higher education.

Regarding RQ2, the study's premise was that student engagement with the linguistic landscape would provide opportunities for students' affective intensities to be foregrounded and thus complement the rational attention to meaning-making that has characterised multiliteracies pedagogy. As the student reflections about their discomfort in the linguistic landscape have already indicated, their experiences on the class outings afforded them repeated occasions for affective encounters that engaged multiple senses (sight, touch, smell, taste, hearing). In many ways, one could portray their experience as one in which they entered the linguistic landscape as students but experienced it as humans. They had a clear, arguably rational,

task at hand to pursue, namely, the completion of a prescribed small-scale research project, but their engagement with the sites also elicited a range of emotions. While their discomfort, unease and even dislocation received the most attention in their reflections, they also reported positive affect in being able to see and experience a part of the city that had been their home for, in some cases, the last four years.

Other affective moments that they documented included the surprise and *unexpectedness that they experienced at the two sites. They remarked on issues such as the many languages seen and heard, the discrepancies between the perceived space and the demographic information gleaned from census data, and even the layout of certain establishments. While they wrote about the discomfort they felt at times, they also indicated surprise regarding the sense of trust that shopkeepers extended to them as outsiders in the space.

Another feature of their affective experience was the contradictions they perceived. Whether it was the presence of English in such a multilingual space or the close juxtaposition of different cultures, they remarked repeatedly about how they found themselves having to make sense of, what was to them, unexpected and counter-intuitive semiotic moments. They even commented on the contradictions on their own campus, where, on the one hand, there is almost universal monolingual English signage, while, on the other hand, the audible linguistic landscape is clearly multilingual.

One final component of their affective intensities was the constant change they experienced as they engaged with the city and moved from one space to another. The simple act of travelling from campus to another community just 15 minutes away by car allowed them to experience different institutions, events, people, bodies. However, it was not only the difference that stood out, but also the ever-changing nature of the spaces they visited. For example, some students commented specifically on how the late afternoon weekday site visits had a very different feel from when they visited on a busy weekend morning.

In sum, the multiliteracies pedagogy provided a framework for structuring student engagement with the linguistic landscape, while the landscape itself provided the spontaneity, dislocation and surprise that has been cited as typically missing from rationalised literacy events. Moving forward, the pedagogical framework would benefit from revision to more systematically

incorporate and thus prepare students for the affective intensities they will experience. In other words, rather than learning about these intensities for the first time in their reflective journals, their affective engagement with the linguistic landscape could be anticipated in the pedagogy itself. One initial step could be to include attention to the affective side of linguistic landscape-based work in each of the four knowledge processes of the multiliteracies pedagogy (i.e. experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying affect). While that level of systematic attention to affect begins to resemble the rationalised approach to literacy that has drawn criticism, it would also potentially equip students with some means and methodologies for making sense of their affective responses to the landscape.

6. Conclusion

Situated within the growing field of pedagogical explorations of the linguistic landscape, this study proposes a multiliteracies-based framework for structuring student engagement with the linguistic landscape while also acknowledging the need to consider the significant affective component in linguistic landscape-based work. Organised around the four knowledge processes of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing and applying, the multiliteracies framework provided a helpful basis for drawing on students' prior experiences, exposing them to existing scholarship in the field, providing them with key methodological guidance for analysing the linguistic landscape and guiding them through a small-scale research project. Along the way, as students shared their experiences, it became clear that their engagement with the linguistic landscape elicited a range of emotions. However, while the systematicity of the pedagogical framework prepared students to investigate and report on the linguistic landscape, it did not as systematically guide students in anticipating and processing their emotions. Perhaps most noticeably, students very quickly became keenly aware of their own evolving positions in relation to the languages, cultures and practices they were studying in the linguistic landscape. Already on their own familiar campus, the pedagogical framework afforded them opportunities to consider who was designing the spaces around them and for what purpose. This experience was only amplified when they left campus to explore communities and neighbourhoods considerably different from

their comfortable university setting. They quickly understood and were able to apply fundamental methodological procedures in their encounters with the linguistic landscape and really appreciated the guidance in considering the broader semiotic landscape to include the multisensory and multimodal features of their surroundings.

While these encounters allowed them to gather place-based data and complete the small-scale research project effectively, the next iteration of the course will build more attention on the role that their affective intensities play in this entire process. Fortunately, the multiliteracies framework can accommodate this step effectively. During the experiencing stage of the pedagogy, for example, students can describe previous affective responses to encounters with new and unfamiliar spaces and then anticipate upcoming visits. As part of the conceptualising knowledge process, readings can be supplemented with scholarship that thematises the impromptu, unexpected, affective side of fieldwork. Analysing can include questions and discussions that guide students in interrogating their experiences and positions as student researchers. Finally, the applying knowledge process could still consist of a research project but could be expanded to include occasions for the students to engage more with the lived space of the linguistic landscape so that their emotional responses can be related to and shared with those they are observing. In this vein, the opportunities and potential afforded in the linguistic landscape for facilitating students' literacy development, while also engendering new ways of being, thinking and acting, are indeed exciting and call for increased attention within the field to accommodate the intensities we all experience when we are trying to make sense of our surroundings.

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Appendix A: Linguistic landscape toolkit

Questions and issues to consider when investigating how meaning is being made in a particular space:

1. How signs represent the social world
 - a. Colour and brightness
 - b. Font/script
 - c. Representation (how realistically the participants are represented)
 - d. Materials
 - e. Composition
2. How the languages of a sign are positioned
 - a. Which language(s) is “preferred”?
 - b. Which language(s) is salient?
 - c. Which language(s) is informational?
 - d. Which language(s) is symbolic?
 - e. What functions does each language have?
3. How signs represent particular ideologies and discourses
 - a. Who authored the signs
 - b. Who the intended audience is
 - c. Which function(s) the signs have
 - d. Which message(s) the signs convey
 - e. Which symbolism is evident in the signs
 - f. Which signs are missing
 - g. Which emotions and affect the signs/landscape elicit
4. How a place is conceived, perceived and lived
 - a. How the place is designed, legislated, enforced – political dimension (top-down)
 - b. What is visible, audible, smellable, observable – physical dimension
 - c. How the place is experienced, imagined, felt – experiential dimension (bottom-up)
5. How specific artefacts in a place represent particular ideologies and discourses
 - a. Monuments
 - b. Clothing
 - c. Hairstyles
 - d. Tattoos

- e. Billboards
 - f. Products for sale
 - g. Food and drink
 - h. Other: _____
6. How hierarchies manifest themselves in the public sphere
- a. Which languages are present or absent?
 - b. Which vernaculars are used?
 - c. Which groups are addressed or excluded?
 - d. Which histories are present or absent?
 - e. Which languages are heard but not seen?

Appendix B: Prompts for student reflections

First reflection prompt

For the first weeks of the semester we have been exploring different approaches to examining multilingual language use and meaning-making in the public sphere. Beginning with quantitative approaches (LL 1.0), moving to qualitative methods that take into account the histories of place (LL 2.0), and concluding with approaches that examine semiotic resources besides language (LL 3.0), we have quickly (!) aimed to develop a fledgling toolkit for critically encountering and engaging with multilingualism in public space.

As we prepare for our first class outing to the Clarkston neighbourhood, write a short piece (ca 300 words) in which you reflect on where you are in terms of your thoughts and approaches to the linguistic landscape around you. Questions to consider could include:

1. What new perspectives have you gained for engaging with language use in the public realm?
2. Are there specific aspects of the studies reviewed or exercises completed that are particularly compelling to you when thinking about meaning-making in the public realm?
3. Which aspects of public meaning-making are particularly interesting to you (e.g. signs, monuments, clothing, sounds, tattoos, graffiti)?
4. What are you particularly looking forward to exploring out in the city?

5. What concerns do you have about engaging with multilingualism in the city?

Second reflection prompt

We finally ventured out into the city this week! For this reflective piece, share your thoughts, experiences, emotions from the visit to Clarkston. What caught your eye? What impressions were you left with? What questions arose? Feel free to also use this piece to brainstorm a bit about ways to investigate the multilingualism of this place further. Consider addressing any specific methodological approaches we have talked about (e.g. LL1.0, LL2.0, LL3.0, lived/perceived/conceived spaces).

Third reflection prompt

This reflective piece consists of two parts:

1. Share your thoughts, experiences, emotions from the visit to Buford Highway. What caught your eye? What impressions were you left with? What questions arose? Feel free to also use this part to brainstorm a bit about ways to investigate the multilingualism of this place further.
2. Write down your latest thoughts about topics for mini-project(s) that you would be interested in pursuing. Feel free to refer the LL toolkit that was distributed last week as a guide for thinking of possible topics. Also, consider addressing any specific methodological approaches we have talked about (e.g., LL1.0, LL2.0, LL3.0, lived/perceived/conceived spaces).

Fourth reflection prompt

Within the constraints of a one-credit course, this semester we have been exploring different approaches to examining multilingual language use and meaning-making in the public sphere. Now that the semester is coming to a close, write a short piece (ca 250 words) in which you reflect on how you now think about multilingualism in the public realm. Questions to consider could include:

- Are you thinking any differently about how language is used in public?
- Are there any particular aspects of multilingual public meaning-making that you would like to explore further (e.g. signs, monuments, clothing, sounds, tattoos, graffiti)?
- How would you characterise what you have seen so far about Atlanta's multilingualism?
- A theme from both our class outings was the level of discomfort that some felt at each location. Feel free to respond to this by suggesting ways to address or come to terms with this.
- If this had been a three-credit course, what else would you have liked to have done, studied, visited?

Anikó Hatoss

6 Developing Intercultural Competence through a Linguistic Landscapes Project: Linguistic Social Justice in Multicultural Communities

Abstract: Everyday interactions are essential acts of conviviality for which the linguistic landscape (LL) provides an important medium. As Goebel (2015) states, all kinds of semiotic exchanges are part of our interactional conviviality, and these interactions develop our social relations. In this chapter, I argue that the LL is a unique pedagogical tool – both for experiential and formal learning – in developing students’ intercultural competence and critical sociolinguistic awareness (Hatoss, 2019a, 2023). While most studies in educational contexts have focused on developing intercultural competence within classroom walls, this chapter argues for the utility of LL projects in educating learners to become more culturally aware and responsive citizens and to practise citizen sociolinguistics (Martín Rojo, 2020). The chapter draws on the Linguistics Landscapes of Sydney Project (Hatoss, 2023), an ethnographic, student-directed study of everyday multilingual practices in Sydney communities. The project takes a narrative approach to the LL (Wee, 2021). Students collected and examined multilingual visual data, narrated their fieldwork and discussed their lived experiences in the landscape. The examples presented in this chapter highlight student participants’ reflections on everyday multilingual practices in multilingual *linguascapes* (Pennycook, 2003). In this chapter, I first present a rationale for using the LL to develop learners’ intercultural competence in the context of multilingualism and linguistic social justice in Australia. In the second section, I outline the project methods and provide examples to illustrate students’ engagement and intercultural learning. The chapter concludes by summing up the pedagogical value of LL fieldwork and its contribution to the social justice research agenda in multicultural communities.

Keywords: linguistic landscapes, critical sociolinguistics, narratives, critical sociolinguistic awareness

1. Introduction

This chapter describes a linguistic landscape (LL) project and its pedagogical utility, immersing learners in the urban landscape of Sydney, Australia. The project was motivated by two key challenges: firstly, the pedagogical challenge of developing intercultural competence as a critical graduate attribute for third-year linguistics students. While interculturality is often associated with social interactions between nationals of different countries (e.g. Australians interacting with foreign businessmen, tourists and other sojourners), this chapter argues that intercultural skills are increasingly needed *within* the diverse populations of local communities. The challenge, therefore, is not directed at a better intercultural understanding with foreigners but to prepare young citizens to appreciate and understand the diversity that surrounds them in their local communities. Secondly, this project was inspired by the methodological challenge of adequately describing and theorising societal multilingualism. This means avoiding the traps of seeing languages as static and language communities in isolation as positioned side by side in the horizontal linguistic ecology and, on the policy level, responding to the needs of superdiverse communities. As Silverstein (2015) aptly argued:

[T]he phenomena of “superdiversity” seem in fact to emerge as troubles for such statist vision of the *longue durée*; they constitute really an aggregate index of the fact that the institutional forms of these contemporary nation-states are outstripped by what they face in the way of language (and culture) in the communicative richness of our present-day world. (Silverstein, 2015, p.17)

This richness of superdiversity is increasingly present in contexts of mobility. While the term “superdiversity” has been interpreted and used in many ways, the definition by Vertovec provides a succinct summary of why the term is significant in investigating linguistic diversity in contemporary societies:

Super-diversity is a summary term proposed also to point out that the new migration patterns not only entailed variable combinations of these traits, but that their combinations produced new hierarchical social positions, statuses or stratifications. These, in turn, entail: new patterns of inequality and prejudice including emergent forms of racism, new patterns of segregation, new experiences of space and “contact”, new forms of cosmopolitanism and creolization. (Vertovec, 2019, p. 126)

While the English-speaking world, especially the traditional inner circle of colonising countries where English is either an official or a de facto national language, is known for its reliance on other nations and migrants to learn English and engage with them in all aspects of life through English, these societies are increasingly characterised by superdiversity, where languages come into diverse contact relations. Superdiversity, as Silverstein argues, captures linguistic difference and hybridity beyond static notions of languages, and it serves as an empirical site to develop a new kind of sociolinguistics. This approach aligns with critical sociolinguistics as it “renders(s) problematic the taken-for-granted concepts of state-focal vision” (Silverstein, 2015, p. 14).

Although the term “superdiversity” may seem superfluous (see, e.g. Piller, 2016), as diversity existed in the past, most scholars agree that the nature of linguistic diversity is changing rapidly and is qualitatively and quantitatively different from previous trends; these changes call for new research methods. As Silverstein (2015) puts it, superdiversity “presents multi-dimensional fluidity and excesses of language-ing” (p. 8), requiring new epistemologies, linguistic descriptions (ontologies) and policy approaches. In addition, as linguistic diversity is constantly changing, there is an additional research challenge to focus on monitoring these changes rather than describing de facto demolinguistic features of societal multilingualism. Responding to these challenges and following calls for linguistic social justice (Harvey, 2009; Lamb, Hatoss, & O’Neill, 2019; Piller, 2016), this chapter focuses on linguistic difference that becomes socially relevant in everyday interactions. Such difference in the context of the LL relates to observing and critiquing the enregisterment (Agha, 2015) of multilingual practices: the normalcy of multilingual practices in contemporary multicultural speech communities (Hatoss, 2023).

Since language contact is always intertwined with power relations, such research endeavours to provide critical insights into the human aspect of linguistic diversity and enlightens us about the way linguistic diversity shapes human relations. A hierarchy of languages is present in all multilingual communities (including Sydney suburbs), and nation states have failed to account for the needs of the intersecting multilingual communities as their policies have resulted in the minoritisation of some communities. The hierarchy is even deeper on the level of linguistic differentiation:

The governmental apparatus of the state or the state's compatible surrogates in the public sphere operate with some form of de facto differential bias with respect to categories of languages and thus to their speakers. (Silverstein, 2015, p. 8)

There is no doubt that state-level intervention and policy are a *sine qua non* for creating more equitable conditions for linguistic diversity. However, everyday interactions are primarily determined by the language attitudes and language ideologies driving the linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991), favouring some languages and marginalising others. This power arrangement means that languages and dialects come together in one space on an unequal footing. This is most evident within the context of contemporary Australia, where linguistic diversity is not *added* diversity but a *replacement* of the Indigenous landscape where over 300 distinct languages with many dialects were spoken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Indigenous people of Australia were highly multilingual, often speaking four or even more languages and dialects. Sadly, only a small number of these languages are still being handed down to the next generation, with 15 being learnt by children as a first language, and most of these languages are spoken in the remote parts of north Australia (Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2019). Nevertheless, there are important revitalisation efforts, and I will touch on one of these as connected to the discussion of the data.

In Sydney, lesser spoken but nevertheless fast-growing immigrant languages, such as the languages of refugee and other migrant communities (e.g. Hazaragi, Khmer, Dinka, Dari, Farsi, Burmese and Tamil (FECCA, 2016)), are less powerful and typically restricted to private domains. In contrast, others with more speakers (e.g. Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese and Cantonese [see (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021)]) are given more affordances in the public sphere. This hierarchy is symptomatic of the unequal relations between speakers of these languages and is reflected in the LL, where language signage appears in some languages while others are invisible. Therefore, using multilingual signage in public spaces is instrumental in challenging the status quo of the local spatial arrangements vis-à-vis language use. Consequently, through the study of the LL, we can unpack these power relations and advocate linguistic social justice for all languages and their speakers regardless of their official status. In this sense, the LL is a crucial site of language policy.

2. Education and language policy for intercultural understanding

Current societal changes triggered by superdiversity require educational and pedagogical responses that do not simply “accommodate” migrant communities by assisting them in perfecting their English. Instead, these policy and pedagogical interventions should go beyond seeing migration as a source of linguistic problems and actively and agentively develop educational programmes that foster multilingualism. This language policy and planning agenda has a multitude of dimensions and avenues, including (1) the introduction and expansion of other languages in the curriculum for public schools; (2) support for ethnic schools in the maintenance of heritage languages; (3) the integration of translanguaging practices in mainstream education to foster positive attitudes towards minority languages; and (4) the cultivation of positive cross-cultural attitudes. In this chapter, I focus on the last mentioned, employing a specific agentive pedagogical opportunity utilising LLs to foster intercultural competence and critical sociolinguistic awareness (Hatoss, 2023) in contemporary multicultural communities. For this, LLs provide a unique perspective and an ideal learning context to address these challenges from a pedagogical and research point of view. The LL not only reflects linguistic diversity but also serves as a medium for intercultural interactions.

Australia is known as one of the very few Western democracies with an explicit policy of multiculturalism. Multicultural policies were introduced in Australia in the early 1970s (following Canada) with policy responding to the needs of post-Second World War migrants (Galbally, 1978). These policies were the first explicit statements about the value of immigrant cultures and languages in Australian society. However, the policy rhetoric was initially poorly matched with supporting heritage (immigrant) languages. The early policy iterations were centred on supporting migrants integrating into the anglophone Australian community. To this effect, several policies were introduced to assist migrants in learning English through the well-known Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP, see <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/about-the-program>). It was only in the 1990s that policy discourses changed from an integrationist ideology of a monolingual anglophone society to seeing immigrant

languages as essential resources that contribute to the development of immigrant communities and benefit the whole nation. These discourses emphasised the economic benefits of Asian languages, and therefore language policy focus was centred on Asia literacy throughout the 1990s (Henderson, 2003;).

Nevertheless, Australia was home to the first (and only) comprehensive national language policy (Lo Bianco, 1987), which spoke to multilingualism for all segments of society and listed four reasons for supporting language education: (1) cultural and intellectual enrichment; (2) economics, including vocational and foreign trade; (3) equality, including social justice and overcoming disadvantage; and (4) external, that is, Australia's role in the region and the world. The policy emphasised the benefits both on the social as well as the individual level. As a social benefit, Lo Bianco highlights the role of language learning in developing intercultural skills and improving “the quality of relations between the component groups of Australian society” (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 47). This emphasises the value that immigrants bring to “expanding the cultural horizons and ways of thinking of all Australians” (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 47).

These early policy directions were followed by implementation challenges, such as which languages to teach in the public system, how to match community needs with language provision, and how to respond to the needs of speech communities with over 300 immigrant languages. For example, while schools in New South Wales provide programmes in 63 languages within the Community Languages Schools Program (Department of Education NSW, 2023) outside school hours, mainstream education is limited to a small number of languages – Arabic, Auslan,¹ Chinese, Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Framework for Classical Languages including curricula in Classical Greek and Latin, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese (ACARA, 2020). In addition, owing to the sheer number of languages, the emphasis in policy and education has somewhat shifted to fostering language awareness and intercultural skills. Primary schools can offer programmes

1 Auslan is the Australian Sign Language used by the deaf community.

oriented towards language awareness, how to learn a language and intercultural understanding (Kohler, 2017). Also, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), makes two important statements related to the experiential community-level aspects of language learning in Australia within the context of the importance of language learning:

[L]earning to communicate in two or more languages is a rich, challenging experience of engaging with, and participating in, the linguistic and cultural diversity of our interconnected world.

The Australian Curriculum recognises Australia's distinctive and dynamic migration history. Language-learning builds upon students' intercultural understanding and sense of identity as they are encouraged to explore and recognise their own linguistic, social and cultural practices and identities as well as those associated with speakers of the language being learnt. (ACARA 2017, Australian curriculum: languages, retrieved May 22, 2023, from www.acara.edu.au)

As this policy discourse demonstrates, it has become increasingly apparent that intercultural competence and self-identity are intricately connected and, in a multicultural society, cannot simply be viewed as a meeting point of two “national” cultures and languages where one is seen as that of “home” and the other as “foreign”. In addition, intercultural encounters are highly complex, and multilingualism is not simply an additive but a transformative linguistic condition, resulting in qualitatively different language behaviour. This situation urges educationalists to abandon stereotypical approaches to teaching the cultural practices associated with nation states and banal nationalism (Piller, 2011).

Therefore, the LL as pedagogy can respond to these social changes and help us rectify this ontologically static viewpoint, as well as contribute to the agenda of decolonising sociolinguistics (Jaffe, 2006; Ndhlovu, 2021) by not treating “languages” as countable homogeneous units but as rich resources in the linguistic ecology that multilingual speakers can deploy. This goal requires pedagogical practices where learners are encouraged to draw on their full linguistic repertoire and engage in translanguaging practices. While the field has significantly advanced and multilingual practices are normalised, there is still work to be done to explore the social fields where such practices are contested. Such spaces of contestation are the LLs that offer unique educational and pedagogical opportunities to raise learners' awareness of the linguistic power relations and hierarchies that drive

language choice, ultimately shaping harmonious conviviality (Blommaert, 2014). While previous research has shown that mere exposure to other languages does not necessarily lead to increased cultural awareness or more positive cross-cultural attitudes (Ingram, 2001; Ingram & O'Neill, 2002), with the right innovative approaches that enhance experiential learning, students can gain a higher level of intercultural competence and enhanced critical sociolinguistic awareness.

3. The linguistic landscapes project: Context and method

3.1 The context

Considering Australia's demography with (1) a large proportion of the population either speaking a language other than English at home or having some other language speakers in their household; and (2) the international make-up of the student population at Australian universities, the LL of the Australian urban landscape is filled with linguistic diversity which "talks to" and reflects the diverse linguistic make-up of the population. The multilingual *linguascapes* (Pennycook, 2003) of society provide an ideal ground for developing educational projects through which students cannot just bypass linguistic diversity but have to actively engage with it and critically comment on its linguistic and semiotic make-up, the functions the various languages fulfil, and the way that they, as individual social actors, and others, mobilise their agency to engage with them.

Such a pedagogical endeavour was implemented through this project, which was designed to address the "social injustices brought about by the problematisation and marginalisation of plurilingualism and multilingualism, palpable in the invisibility of particular languages not only in the school curriculum but in everyday life of citizens" (Lamb & Vodicka, 2018, p. 20). In this project, students came to understand better how language works in the urban landscape and what role various languages play in shaping social relations and the character of the suburbs. As the students were speakers of diverse languages, representing varied residency and migrant trajectories, their voices added a more profound and nuanced perspective, reflecting participants' positionings and identity work. They allowed us to see the LL through their eyes.

3.2 The method

3.2.1 *The narrative approach*

This study engaged 20 third-year undergraduate students at a major Australian university to conduct an LL project as part of their coursework assignment (Ethics ref. HC190424). The project aimed to develop students' fieldwork skills and enhance their critical sociolinguistic awareness of societal multilingualism. For this, students were asked to take photos of the LL in their suburb and present these photos as part of an oral presentation and as a written narrative (blog). The data presented here were collected from a cohort of students (N=20) who explored "linguaging the city" (Fiorentino & Fruttaldo, 2021) in 2020. Students came from diverse backgrounds; some (N=8) were international students residing in Sydney temporarily, while others were local students (N=12), with many of them being second-generation migrants (their parents immigrated to Australia) (see Table 6.1 for participant details).

Table 6.1 Profiling the student researchers

Gender	17 females 3 males
Age range	20–29
Languages other than English spoken or learnt (number of students)	French (3), Mandarin (7), Greek (1), Korean (2), Thai (1), Indonesian (3), Bahasa Sunda (1), Japanese (6), Cantonese (6), German (4), Telugu (1)
Country of birth	Australia (12) China (1) Hong Kong (3) USA (2) Singapore (1) Indonesia (1)
Residency/student status	Local (12) International (4) International exchange (4)

(continued)

Table 6.1 Continued

Major study area	Biology (1) Chinese Studies (1) Education (4) English (2) French Studies (1) Japanese Studies (1) Linguistics (12) Psychology (1) Sociology (1)
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This diversity within the groups allowed for a deeper enquiry into the relationship between attitudes towards multilingualism, intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2008; Del Villar, 2017; Hatoss, 2006), and multilingual practices. While most studies of intercultural competence (ICC) are focused on one cultural group interacting with another, the diverse nature of the student cohort allowed for the research to come to overarching conclusions about the relationship between language use and language attitudes, regardless of residency status. It was also crucial that identities were multilayered and contested, as second-generation speakers of a heritage language were often assigned a migrant identity, which was in sharp contrast to how they identified themselves, being long-term residents of Australia and having been wholly socialised into mainstream Australian society. These tensions in identity allocations also gave nuanced revelations about the ideologies that drive the linguistic ecology and characterise social spaces in urban multicultural settings.

3.2.2 *Data collection and analysis*

Using a narrative approach meant that the LL was treated as a social-semiotic space which “talks to people” (Blommaert, 2013). Therefore, data were collected using multiple methods: (1) LL photography accompanied by students’ written narratives on the photography; (2) blog posts on the fieldwork experience; (3) student interviews with residents; and (4) audio-recorded classroom discussions about the fieldwork experience. These narratives gave valuable insights into how participants engaged with the LL and positioned themselves in the rich multilingual milieu. These

accounts became the analytical focus for identifying students' dispositions towards linguistic diversity.

LL photography and blogs

Students were asked to collect photographic evidence of the presence of multilingualism in their chosen suburb and domain and write about how they experienced different languages in their suburbs. While they collected numerous pictures, they were also tasked to describe three of them in more depth, using concepts from Scollon and Scollon's (2003) geosemiotic framework: (1) the study of interaction order (how people interact in and with a given space); (2) the semiotics of space (what is visibly present); and (3) the semiotics of place (what makes the space a place). The pedagogical aim was to make students unpack the various multilingual signs in terms of the audience (*who was the sign created for?*), the author (*who created the sign?*), and the intended message (*what function does the message fulfil? What function does the choice of linguistic code fulfil?*). The classroom discussions were self-recorded by student groups, which followed a loose set of instructions for discussing project fieldwork. Students were given the following prompts for their project blogs:

- Are there any potential conflicts around the use of non-English signs? Share some pictures here and explain what they are.
- Which languages do you see/hear around you when you travel in your suburb?
- Some languages are more visible and audible than others in Sydney streets. Why is this the case? Is it only due to demographics or are there other factors?
- Some people do not like hearing other languages in public. Why do you think this is the case? What drives monolingual attitudes?

Student interviews with local residents

Students were free to recruit their interview participants either from their own social network or from their chosen suburb. They were asked to record either three short five-minute interviews or one longer 15-minute interview. Altogether, 44 interviews were collected by this cohort of students. The interviews followed the schedule given below:

Interview questions

About using languages:

- Do you speak languages other than English? Which ones?
- Do you use these languages in your daily life?
- What role do these languages play in your life?
- Do you have a favourite language?
- Do you think Sydney is a multilingual city?

About hearing and seeing languages:

- Do you hear and see other languages spoken and written around you in your suburb? Which ones?
- How do people around you feel about hearing and seeing other languages?
- When you use other languages, how do people react to you?

About multilingualism:

- In your view, what are the benefits of being multilingual?
- What can be done to enhance multilingualism in Sydney?

These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, and students used them in their final project reports and discussed them in the classroom.

Classroom discussions

Students were asked to discuss their weekly fieldwork in their groups during class time. During these classroom discussions students reflected on: (1) the demography of the suburb and their speech community; (2) their LL photography; (3) the interviews; and (4) their project experience. The project was completed in five weeks, and students presented their findings in an oral presentation and a written report. The full data set comprised 60 photos with written commentary, 44 interviews with local residents of approximately ten minutes each, 14 written blog posts posted onto the project website (www.unswll.wordpress.com), and four weeks of classroom discussions.

Data analysis

The data sets were analysed using qualitative methods drawing on thematic analysis. Firstly, key themes were coded using NVivo software (<https://lumivero.com/products/nvivo/>) and student accounts of the LL were coded according to these themes. Secondly, selected segments were transcribed in more detail and subjected to narrative analysis. All audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and selected segments were subjected to refined transcriptions using a simplified version of conversation analysis-style transcription conventions. The aim was to represent speech as closely as possible to the original in terms of intonation, emphasis, loudness and pauses. This approach used positioning theory (Bamberg, 1997; Davies & Harré 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1991) to unpack participants' dispositions towards multilingual practices. Positioning also provided an analytical tool for gaining insight into the speakers' identities and their attitude towards their own multilingual resources and the languages around them. This analytical method was used to delve deeper into selected segments from classroom discussions and segments from interviews with residents.

4. The LL project narratives

4.1 Conjecturing language choices in multilingual signage

The following sections provide examples of how students explored the functions of multilingual signage through their accounts of their LL photography and reflected on the functions that various languages play in people's lives (through their interviews). They "conjectured" (Gal & Irvine, 2019) what influenced people's language choices and thought about the ideologies that drive them. The photography revealed two major trends: (1) Asian languages are replacing European languages with Chinese gaining a role of a second lingua franca; and (2) the functions of multilingualism in the LL are sharply different across more affluent "white" suburbs in beachside and inner-city locations and less affluent "ethnic" suburbs in the western parts of Sydney. These contrasting functions of the linguistic diversity in the landscape were a source of reflection and prompted students to discuss the linguistic choices shop owners make in making their signage multilingual. An example of an image showing a public water

fountain (see Figure 6.1) and a corresponding written blog is shown in Vignette 1:



Figure 6.1 Multilingual signage on a public water fountain
(Photo taken in Strathfield, 2020, Group F)

Vignette 1

This photo depicts a water fountain/bubbler located in Strathfield Square. What is interesting about this find is that it was the only example of top-down signage that we observed in the suburb that was not exclusively in English. The absence of languages other than English on top-down signage sheds light on the power play between different languages in the area. On the sign, English is dominant – it is written in a larger, bold blue font at eye-level. One thing I found especially interesting was the ordering of the three other languages: Chinese on top, Nepali/Hindi in the middle and Korean on the bottom. While this ordering could be entirely arbitrary, it gives the impression that it might reflect the prevalence of each language in the area. However, from the most current census data, Korean was reported to be the most spoken language (other than English) at home at 10.9%, Mandarin came in second at 10.6% and Nepali fourth at 5.3% (ABS, 2016). Korean being relegated to the lowest position on the sign also seems to go against our observation of its dominance elsewhere on the main street (Group F, Blog 2).

Students examined language choices by drawing on semiotic theory and analysing the size of the various fonts and spatial arrangements. In this example, the student conjectured about the reasons behind the choices made by the sign maker (in this instance, the local council). The student used the census data to point out the discrepancy between the local linguistic demography and the representation of languages in the signage. The student made the critical observation that the ordering of the languages presented on the sign reflects the relative power of these languages as perceived by the authorities: “Chinese on top, Nepali/Hindi in the middle and Korean on the bottom”, even though the demographic data did not quite match this order.

The analysis has shown that students thought carefully about the representation of each language and critically analysed the choices while considering the demography of the local population. In other words, from a pedagogical perspective, it was more important to develop deeper insight than to account for the exact representation of languages. These narratives were complemented with more detailed metadiscursive texts that were generated through their classroom discussions, and in the next section I turn to these.

4.2 Classroom discussions about fieldwork

With the aim of following a narrative approach and incorporating lived experiences of the landscape, students were asked to reflect on their fieldwork in class. During these classroom discussions students also talked about their interviews with locals. This gave their narratives another layer of positioning, since they not only expressed their own feelings, attitudes and experiences as language users, but they were also speaking for another (Schiffrin, 2006): they laminated the findings with their own words and positioned themselves in relation to what their interviewees said and what they experienced themselves. This involved a great deal of identity work and positioning in the real world, exposing their ideologies of normalcy in language use.

In the following section, I provide an example of this complex reflexivity when students explored residents' ideas about how to enhance multilingualism in Sydney. In the following example, a local student, Danielle, commented on the value of languages, admitting that even though she came from a Thai-Cambodian background, she did not learn her heritage languages. The group discussed whether people in their suburb embrace multilingual practices or expect people to use English. This discussion took place between three girls: Danielle (Thai-Cambodian heritage, also a French speaker, born in Australia); Melanie, an international student from Hong Kong (a speaker of Cantonese, Mandarin and German); and Sandy, a local student (a speaker of Mandarin, Cantonese and Japanese).

Excerpt 1

- Danielle: 1. // so it's like "what's your perception of other languages" (.) because I guess (.) in the Sydney area (.) it is very multicultural
 2. and then I guess
 3. it depends on the suburb but Strathfield in particular (.) it's just seen as normal↑ (.)
 4. so I guess it depends where in the country you're asking (.)
 5. cause I think everyone like assumes that everyone *should* learn English because (.) it is like the de-facto- it is the lingua-Franca
- Melanie: 6. Mhm
- Danielle: 7. But I don't know how ((x2)) strongly people think like "you *have to* speak only English"↑ (.) yeah

Excerpt 1

- Sandy: 8. Well I mean (.) that though doesn't have to be prevalent like just (.) now (.) like if you asked someone that question maybe like five or ten years ago (.) it'd probably- you'd probably have like a *slightly* not so warm reaction↓ (.) in my opinion↓
- Danielle: 9. I (.) nu:hh I would agree with that (.) I think it's changing↑ (.) like (.) and I think there's a lot of people now growing up hearing different languages on the street is kind of part of a normal part of growing up↑ (.)
10. and all the people I interviewed (.) they've grown up in like really multilingual suburbs
- Melanie: 11. Mm ((agreeing))
- Danielle: 12. // so they don't even really notice it that much anymore
- Melanie: 13. Mm
- Sandy: 14. Well (.) I mean it really depends on like how you grew up (.) and like where you grew up really
- Danielle: 15. // yeah (.) cause I know um (.) cause the school I work in- at (.) is a very Anglo-Saxon (.) um (.) community
- Sandy: 16. Mhm
- Danielle: 17. // suburb //
- Sandy: 18. Mhm
- Danielle: 19. // and sometimes I would- they go to like different schools around Australia and they would (.)
20. like one time they were going to go to Cabramatta and they were going to write their reflections and it's just so: *funny* ((laughing)) to see how this is such an *eye-opening* cultural experience for these kids (.) when like Cabra- like my parents' house is two suburbs over↑
21. (.) when they write about it (.) it's like they're going to (.) like a foreign country or something
22. cause they just so: trapped in that *bubble* of Anglo-Saxons community
- Melanie: 23. cause it's like (.) what I feel when I'm (.) on the train for example from the city to Paramatta (.) like the trains stations (.) like stations and stations are all different countries↓
- Danielle: 24. Yep ((x3))

In this classroom discussion, Danielle expressed the view that people's "uptake" of the diversity in the LL depends on how people are raised to appreciate linguistic and cultural diversity. As she explained, her interview participants grew up in parts of Sydney with a high density of linguistic plurality brought in by migrant communities. As a result, they were

socialised into the urban landscape so that they became more accepting of cultural and linguistic differences. As she put it, multilingual practices are normalised to the extent that “*they don’t even really notice it that much anymore*” (Line 12, Excerpt 1). Then, she shared a narrative about schoolchildren who had to do an assignment in a neighbouring suburb with high linguistic and cultural diversity, and they had to reflect on the experience. In this story, she positioned herself as someone who grew up in a multilingual and multicultural milieu and expected others to embrace diversity. She found it rather amusing that the kids did not find much diversity in their local suburb and needed to explore another area as if visiting another country. This narrative illustrates how different the various Sydney suburbs can be in their linguistic make-up. That is also why Sydney is often called the city of villages. Her evaluative comment at the end of the story is evidence of her critical stance on the monolingual ideology dominating the social space in many suburbs: “they just so: trapped in that *bubble* of Anglo-Saxons community” (Line 22, Excerpt 1). This horizontal arrangement of multilingualism is also emphasised by Melanie, describing her suburban train commute experience, where each train station feels like another country, showing a markedly different ethnic and linguistic make-up.

The implication for pedagogy is to redirect intercultural learning from learning *about* multilingualism seen as a horizontal multiplicity of languages to the study of multilingual spaces where languages overlap in the vertical space and power relations shape the linguistic space. This is in line with the pedagogical stance of “transpositioning” (Li, 2023), which is “a process where participants break from their preset or prescribed roles and switch perspectives with others, through communicative practices such as translanguaging and trans-modalities and through co-learning” (p. 10). As Li Wei argues, this process leads to greater empathy for others. Such opportunities occurred through the LL project as international students exchanged their views with local heritage language background students and participated in co-learning about the multilingual LL. Part of this transposition was rethinking what languages are and how multilingual communities draw on their rich linguistic resources. These new ways of conceptualising languages have led to transformative effects in students to mobilise their linguistic repertoire, as Sandy explained:

Vignette 2

I think I have developed a more open mind to trying to communicate to ethnic groups in your language (whether it is a word or a few phrases). I think I am now more open to try speaking in a language I am not confident in (although not actionable yet). (Sandy, speaker of Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese and Korean)

This reflection demonstrates the transpositional effect of the project, making students move away from monolingual conceptions of multilingualism and purist ideologies of what language competence is, and the agentive potential for them to practise their multilingualism. In several other blogs, they talked about the value of translanguaging (García, 2014; Gorter & Cenoz, 2015; Li, 2018) and polylinguaging (Jørgensen, 2008). Another critical aspect of the linguascape is the notable absence of the languages spoken by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. While these communities are demographically outnumbered, their minority status is further exacerbated by the low level of intergenerational transmission of their languages and the lack of affordances for their languages to be used in public spaces. One student in a previous cohort noted this absence with the following words:

Vignette 3

I believe that not only the fact that the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population is a minority but also the lack of education leads to this loss of and “invisible” Indigenous languages. These Indigenous languages are a part of our Australian history and should be taught in order to enhance the use of these languages in the future. A great example of this, is when I was in primary school we would sing one verse of the national anthem in Dharawal, where in my area, the Sutherland Shire is known as Dharawal county. (Blog 4, Group 1, 2017)

While this reflection does not make a direct reference to the impact of the LL project as a way to enhance the appreciation of linguistic diversity, it demonstrates the student’s commitment to linguistic social justice and highlights the importance of education in supporting Indigenous languages. To stress her point, the student shared her personal narrative from her primary school years when they learnt the national anthem in the local Aboriginal language, Dharawal, which is the first Indigenous language heard and documented by Europeans. Its home is a vast area of Botany Bay, extending as far south as the Jervis Bay area, across to the Georges River in Sydney’s west. The Aboriginal community of La Perouse

(the Botany Bay area of Sydney) has an ongoing language revitalisation programme developing community-based resources to teach Dharawal to adults and young learners (see <https://www.gujaga.org.au/>). This vignette is a stark reminder that linguascapes are highly layered in the Australian context, and multilingualism is often associated with languages brought by immigrants, while there is a lack of awareness of the presence and vitality struggles of the Indigenous languages. The LL project brought some of these issues to the fore, transposing traditional divisions between Indigenous and migrant language struggles. This division and relative absence of Indigenous languages is also illustrated by the classroom (see Excerpt 2 below):

Excerpt 2

- Isabel: 01. and then funny enough (.) Greek is third (.) following with Spanish and Italian (.) which I didn't realise Italian was common- I would not *expect*
- Kayla: 02. I thought it would be like an indigenous² language or-
- Isabel: 03. -yes (.) that's what I thought too (.) and it's not (.) it's *ITALIAN*. that's fifth and I'm like (.) because I don't (.) from my knowledge there's not really a lot of Italian background people living in like my area.

In Excerpt 2, students discussed the census data in their suburbs and evaluated some unexpected census statistics. As Isabel stated, she did not expect Italian to be spoken in her suburb (line 5). In fact, she expected to see Indigenous languages (line 2). This demonstrates her awareness of the uneven power relations between languages and the fact that Indigenous languages have been largely pushed to the periphery, with most of them being highly endangered. In another group, students also discussed the presence of Aboriginal languages and shared the commentary below (see <https://unswll.wordpress.com/2017/04/11/indigenous-languages-and-multilingualism/>):

At the McDonald's in the Penrith Plaza food court, the main language spoken was English, though we observed a small family speaking Korean, they didn't want to be interviewed. We were, however, able to talk to a manager who only speaks English. When asked about their experience with customers or employees

2 Indigenous languages are the languages spoken by First Nation people in Australia.

who spoke indigenous languages, they had almost no experiences with indigenous language speaking employees, but they did encounter customers on various occasions who they assumed to be speaking indigenous languages amongst themselves but noted that they used English to order their food. When asked why they thought they experienced so little use of indigenous languages, they simply said it was probably because there weren't many indigenous people living in the area. Their experience is reflective of the demographics, as only a small percentage of the population are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. We asked them if they felt there was a stigma towards indigenous languages, they agreed that there is a general negative attitude towards the use of indigenous languages, and they suggested that more representation of indigenous languages in mainstream media may help overcome this problem.

This blog commentary demonstrates the student ethnographer's strategy for investigating the reasons behind the absence of Aboriginal languages spoken in the chosen location and provides evidence of their critical approach to understanding the attitudinal and ideological dimensions of the LL. The comments provided confirmed the assumed negative attitudes and stigma attached to Aboriginal languages in the community, especially by monolingual white Australians. The narration concludes with a solution, suggesting a better representation of Indigenous languages in the media to "help overcome the problem". This highlights the need to think of the linguascapes as incorporating all channels and media of communication, and the need to do two things: on the one hand, provide affordances for Indigenous languages in public spaces; on the other hand, educate mainstream society about these languages through their enhanced visibility and audibility.

To sum up, as we have seen from the examples provided, the LL project has engaged students in deeper learning about multilingualism. Their narratives tell us a great deal about the complex processes that students went through when formulating their ethnographic observations in their written blogs and during their classroom discussions. In the next section, I turn to the reflections in their final blog posts, which explicitly asked them about the value of the LL project as a learning activity.

4.3 Project reflections and pedagogical implications

4.3.1 *Awareness of the sociolinguistic space governed by power relations*

In this section, I focus on student blogs on the project itself and how they saw it help them in their learning. These blogs highlighted important experiential learning outcomes, which are too numerous to analyse here within the scope of this chapter. Instead, I will briefly overview the key pedagogical benefits of using LL for developing ICC and raising critical sociolinguists. By engaging in this project, student ethnographers developed their critical language awareness and became more attuned to the diversity in the landscape. This awareness was not superficially informed by a survey-type counting of languages on display, but by in-depth enquiries about authorship, participation and deep-seated ideologies that drive language choices. Students, therefore, became “critical sociolinguists” (Rymes & Leone, 2014). This was evidenced in their commentary on the power relations between languages, and the mismatch between the demography, visibility and audibility of languages in the landscape. They also reflected on their own language practices and exercised their agency to identify spheres (e.g. in education) where languages other than English are excluded or socially censored from peer interactions. This recognition of the inequitable linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1986, 1991) enhanced students’ intercultural competence. Students reported on this learning experience in their project blog. For example, Brenna, an international exchange student from the United States, stated that she learnt to enjoy Sydney much more while staying in Australia owing to her heightened awareness and appreciation of the various languages and cultures in the city:

Vignette 4

That was the most important part of all this for me; I was forced to tune in to the different languages and cultures spoken around me, was told to ask questions and use it as an opportunity to learn more and benefit personally by having this information. It also made me recognize the relationship, but not the entire similarity, between language and culture. They are of two different compositions, but each play a role in the other. (Brenna, American exchange student, monolingual speaker of English)

Another international student from Hong Kong reported that she had developed a better awareness of how language choices depend on the affordances that the space provides. These affordances are governed by policy (top down), but also by the rules of everyday interaction:

Vignette 5

Language attitude and language choice is not simply impacted by an individual's learning ability and mother tongue. It is affected by society as well. It helps me to further think about the order and relations among language, people and nation. Language shapes people's mind and develops a nation which shares a similar mindset, while the social norms and the government policy in a country influences individuals' attitude and choice simultaneously. (Melanie, exchange student from Hong Kong, speaker of Cantonese, Mandarin and German)

4.3.2 *Awareness of the value of multilingualism*

Students also exhibited a better understanding of the relationship between the LL and the role various languages play in individuals' lives as well as in shaping the character of the suburbs. For example, Levi, a local student from a Cantonese background, reflected on his deeper understanding of the relationship between language skills, identity and heritage and this made him more aware of the decline in heritage languages in Australian society. He was brought up in Cantonese and English and learnt Japanese at university. His engagement with the LL project no doubt brought a critical reflection on his own personal journey of being a heritage speaker of Cantonese with only limited vocabulary and basic oral skills.

Vignette 6

The interviews, which were a vital aspect of the project gave deep insight into the attitudes of individuals in relation to existing languages in an area and how they are perceived and used. Also, personal questions regarding language repertoires helped gain an understanding into the complex nature of language use through the facets of language expertise, affiliation and inheritance, as well as speech communities and the decline of community languages. (Levi, speaker of Cantonese and Japanese)

As second-generation speakers of heritage languages often shift to using English only and do not maintain their heritage language, this reflection provided an interesting insight from a heritage speaker regarding the appreciation of his migrant linguistic heritage. Some other students from

immigrant backgrounds shared similar thoughts and felt that the project made them more motivated to learn and maintain their heritage language.

4.3.3 *Accepting other cultures*

Some students reflected on the way the LL project enhanced their awareness of language choices and their deeper understanding of the connections between language use and identity. They developed a more open mindset about other cultures and languages. An international student from China expressed this with the following words:

Vignette 7

Most of my interviewees expressed their distinctive perspectives on their identification of self which really broaden my views about language choices and how one sees themselves through the use of languages. I definitely think this project makes my interviewees and me more aware of the existing issues and also the open mindset about accepting other cultures and languages. (Kayla, speaker of Mandarin and German)

Several other comments (see Vignette 8) related to how languages in the LL contribute to enhanced social harmony. Lynn, a local student from a Chinese background, who described herself as a multilingual, commented that through multilingualism society can grow to be more aware and accepting of other languages and cultures. Lynn makes a self-mention to reflect on her own multilingualism (*my multilingualism, multilingual myself*). Her emphasis is on the people who are already multilingual, implying that even multilingualism does not necessarily make someone appreciate the languages spoken by others. This reflection suggests that language skills themselves are not sufficient to develop intercultural competence and awareness of others. Without explicit and targeted metadiscursive reflections on the role of multilingualism, even multilingual individuals do not necessarily develop an appreciation for other languages. As Fay commented, intercultural learning was enhanced as they had to “*actively seek out different languages in public spaces as well as multilingual individuals*”. This idea was reinforced by Shana, a local student from a Thai and Korean background, and Fay, an international student from Hong Kong. Beth, a local student from a German and Filipino background, critically reflected on the difference between awareness and acceptance of other

cultures and languages. She stated that further action was required to turn awareness into acceptance.

Vignette 8

By doing this research project, I was able to more readily recognise the importance languages can play in these cases which made me appreciate my multilingualism a bit more too. [...] We are able to grow more accepting and embrace linguistic and cultural diversity amongst our communities. Again, as an individual who is multilingual myself, this project allowed me to realise a lot more things about linguistic diversity within our community. (Lynn, speaker of Mandarin)

I think this project definitely raises the awareness of how multilingual our city is. I think that hearing others' experiences and ideas about language use can make us more accepting and understanding of linguistic diversity. (Shana, speaker of Thai and Korean)

Personally, yes, I think this project will make people more aware of other cultures and languages as we had to actively seek out different languages in public spaces as well as multilingual individuals. I also think that it will make people more accepting of other cultures. (Fay, speaker of Cantonese and Japanese)

I think that if people were to see all our findings and results, they would certainly be enlightened to the fact that Australia is not a monolingual society (if they didn't already know that). Acceptance might not come as easy, however. [...] I think this project allows people to be aware of Australia's multilingual nature, but action and further education will bring them towards acceptance. (Beth, speaker of Japanese and German from German and Filipino background)

Beth's reflection (Vignette 8, last para) engages the reader in a hypothetical narrative about putting the project findings out there for others to read or "see". It makes a clear reference to the monolingual ideology of Australia, and refutes it, adding emphasis by a bracketed comment "*(if they didn't already know that)*". It also evidences the need for LL projects to go beyond merely accepting multilingualism to developing teaching strategies that transposition (Li, 2023) learners in the multilingual space. Such transpositioning needs to embrace diversity not just as *out there* but as practised in daily interactions in which multilingualism is the norm and the status of being migrant, sojourner, foreigner or local is secondary to the interactional multilingual space and the value that these languages bring to shaping communities and the urban landscape.

In summary, based on the student narratives about the LL project, I offer seven points highlighting the suitability of LL projects for developing learners' intercultural competence (Hatoss, 2019a, 2023):

1. The LL project gives learners a perspectival view into everyday multilingual practices. Students in this project discussed multilingual signage and the language choices embodied in their making. International and local students, on the other hand, engaged in co-learning and reflected on the complex relationship between language use and identity, with many heritage-language-speaking students also finding connections between the visibility of languages and their own heritage-language learning experience.
2. Since the LL is in constant flux, it provides a unique opportunity for experiential learning as the experiences change over time. The classroom discussions also highlighted how local and international students reflected on the multilingual city and the contrasting experiences across space and time.
3. LLs are always incomplete in that they are not the languages on display that should be the object of ethnographic student fieldwork, but rather the interactions between participants in the landscape and the interaction between the researcher (student ethnographer) and the landscape. To this effect, this project used a narrative approach, analysing interviews with local residents, classroom discussions and written student reflections.
4. The LL project allowed for a transposition (Li, 2023) to occur. Students conducted their discovery starting from the semiotic landscape, and then moving towards exploring the social actors in the landscape. Students did not simply focus on “languages” as countable monolithic entities but learnt to appreciate multilingualism in its true essence of more than merely a collection of multiple monolingual practices (see Excerpt 1). They moved from seeing the urban space as the context within which race, ethnicity, language use and identity are interconnected in multiple overlapping layers. This transpositioning allowed for the development of empathy (Li, 2023).
5. The LL as a pedagogical tool allowed for an educational transformation where communities were not seen as segregated in terms of migrants and locals. The LL connected the macro and the micro, and this connection was explored by students when they reflected on the visibility of some of the languages and the invisibility of others.

6. The LL forms a unique learning context for exploring intercultural relations. Students in this project not only reflected on the LL as visual multilingualism but also conjectured about the language choices that the people residing there make. They recognised the agentive role played by multilingual speakers in shaping and contesting normalised practices.
7. Finally, these normalised practices were under constant reassessment. Students' reflections on the normativity of English versus other languages provided empirical evidence of their critical sociolinguistic citizenship and their speaking out for social justice to enhance the acceptance of multilingual practices.

5. Conclusion

The LL project presented here provided empirical insights into everyday interactions with multilingualism, as perceived by young Sydneysiders from diverse backgrounds. The project enabled university students to deploy their agency in practising their linguistic citizenship (Martín Rojo, 2020). This agency was expressed in their metapragmatic narratives through which they voiced their critical perspectives on the monolingual ideologies prevalent in Australian society, not just in terms of not expecting to hear and see other languages in the landscape but also of largely reducing Australia's multilingualism to that of immigrants. Even local second-generation speakers were seen as outsiders and there was a lack of visibility and awareness of Indigenous languages. Students developed their critical awareness of these issues and took a stance on linguistic diversity, which clearly aligns with the epistemic and social justice in contemporary spaces of multicultural Australia.

From a methodological point of view, the benefit of the classroom-based project was that participants represented an intersection of society not engineered to represent purposefully selected language speakers or language communities. They included international students, sojourners, residents from migrant backgrounds and anglophones who shared their views about their interactions in the landscape within the safe classroom environment. The definition of the LL in this project was extended to incorporate not only the visible indexicalities of public signage but also the audible

multilingualism and the lived experience of linguistic diversity (or lack of) in the urban landscape. Against the backdrop of Australia's long-standing multicultural policy, which is best described as static diversity occupied with the separation of languages and their speakers, participants in this project gave accounts of complex and dynamic linguistic intersections and critiqued the status quo of the English-centred monolingual ideology of the Australian landscape (Hatoss, 2019b). Through their empirical work and active agentic engagement in exploring the LL of the suburbs, they developed a deeper appreciation of linguistic diversity and of the role various languages and dialects play in the everyday conviviality of communities.

A central task of education is to educate young people about the negative social impact of such differentiation and to help them unlearn the negative indexicality attached to linguistic forms that are “from somewhere” (Silverstein, 2015), that is, from “*somewhere else*”. This ability to move away from a top-centre positioning and to decompose the ethno-semiotic construct of Australianness and anglophone linguistic practices is at the heart of intercultural competence in the true meaning of the word: it does not reduce intercultural relations to the meeting of “foreign” cultures but embraces multilingualism “*within*”, as the core of connectedness in a multicultural society. For this, the LL project provided the ideal experiential learning opportunity.

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7 Reflecting on Linguistic Landscapes during Decolonising Times: A Case from Canadian Higher Education

Abstract: In our study, we present data from an applied linguistics graduate programme (made up primarily of international students) at a university in western Canada, in which students carried out a linguistic landscaping task at the campus on which they were studying. Following an approach of reflective, walking, visual ethnography (Lee & Ingold, 2006; Pink, 2008) for the study of linguistic landscaping (Li & Marshall, 2020; Marshall, 2023), the students walked around their campus looking, thinking and engaging with the linguistic landscape (LL) around them, capturing images of signs, artefacts and spaces that they felt represented issues of relevance to their studies and to their (lack of) inclusion as international graduate students. In particular, students were asked to look for representations of coloniality, monolingualism and Eurocentricity in an institution that is highly multicultural and multilingual with a stated policy of engaging the world.

In this chapter, the instructor and two students from the programme analyse a selection of images collected during the course activity and present excerpts from retrospective reflections in which the students wrote about their journey around a campus that was dominated by images and names (e.g. of lecture halls and buildings) which reflect Eurocentric cultural dominance and monolingualism. We illustrate how it feels for two international students to navigate such spaces and conclude by asking how universities that are engaged in decolonising initiatives can move forward in inclusive ways which address and challenge colonial cultural hegemony on their campuses.

Keywords: linguistic landscapes (LLs), higher education, Canada, decolonisation, equity

1. Introduction

The study of linguistic landscapes (LLs) has evolved over the years from accounts of how languages are represented on public signs to studies that

focus on how linguistic landscaping can serve educational purposes in various contexts, including language schools, elementary and secondary schools, higher education and public spaces. There is now an opportunity for those engaging critically with LLs, particularly in educational settings, to investigate how public and institutional signage relates to aspects of diversity, equity, inclusion and decolonisation, which are important topics being engaged with in many educational settings today. In Canadian higher education institutions, for example, a critical, decolonising lens is of particular interest, given widespread moves to come to terms with Canada's colonial past in which the lands of Indigenous peoples were lost to settlers and immigrants, and through which Indigenous children were forced to attend residential schools run by Christian denominations, stripping them of their ancestral languages and cultural practices.

We present data from a linguistic landscaping activity that students carried out during a Masters of Education course at Simon Fraser University (SFU), British Columbia, Canada. Our work is located in a space that is named and defined by colonialism, and where a decolonising lens on LLs is particularly apt and timely. We work in the province of British Columbia, named after the country Great Britain and indirectly after Christopher Columbus; in a city, Greater Vancouver, named after George Vancouver, a British Royal Navy officer; and in a university carrying the name of Simon Fraser, a fur trader of Scottish ancestry who is credited with establishing the first European settlements in the Indigenous lands that are today British Columbia. The university, like most other Canadian higher education institutions, is in the process of change through the promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives. This process includes initiatives aimed at indigenising the curriculum by including perspectives and teaching materials that aim to address Canada's painful colonial history and the suppression of Indigenous peoples, as well as recognising the value of Indigenous epistemologies and ways of learning.

The goal of the linguistic landscaping activity that we based our study on, in a graduate class made up primarily of multilingual international students, was to observe and analyse the use of languages on campus signs and other sources of information to reflect on who is included and who is not in the university "schoolscape" (Laihonen & Szabó, 2016; Tódor, 2014), and to reflect on the experience through writing and discussion. We thus

present selected images collected by the three authors during the activity, as well as excerpts from students' retrospective written reflections (written by Authors 2 and 3) which illustrate their journeys around a campus that was perceived as being dominated by images, signs and building/room names that reflect a predominance of English monolingualism, British/European Whiteness and colonialism. We conclude by considering, with specific reference to LLs, how universities which are engaged in equity and decolonising initiatives can move forward in meaningful, inclusive ways that address and challenge colonial cultural hegemony in the LLs on their campuses.

2. Linguistic landscapes: From describing signs to a critical pedagogical focus

We use the term “linguistic landscape/ing” in a general sense with reference to the visual language and linguistic objects that are present in different public spaces (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Lou, 2016), which typically include public signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names and commercial shop signs (Landry & Bourhis, 1997), as well as different forms of grassroots artefacts that local people contribute to their local LLs in different ways (Barton & Hamilton, 1990; Blommaert, 2008; Blommaert & Maly, 2014; Marshall, 2023). In addition to analysing how, where and why different languages may be used in public spaces, of great interest to our study is how the university LL in question could be understood in terms of control, belonging, membership, power relations and regulation in ways that organise the social dynamics in a nexus of competing discourses (Blommaert & Maly, 2014; Sollid et al., 2023).

The university campus where we carried out the study aligns well with the tradition of studying LLs in multilingual urban environments, as seen for example in the works of Backhaus (2007), Barni and Extra (2008), Blommaert (2013), and Shohamy and Gorter (2009). Moreover, educational settings are rich sites for the study of linguistic landscapes, not only in terms of analysing how languages are used in signs to provide information and regulate behaviour, but also in terms of the potential of studying LLs as a pedagogical tool for teaching and learning about the position of languages in society, and the histories behind them.

Cenoz and Gorter (2008) highlighted five potential benefits of language learners interacting with local LLs: engaging in incidental language learning from LL texts, developing pragmatic competence, gaining multimodal literacy skills, stimulating learners' multicompetence (Cook, 1992), and gaining appreciation of the symbolic power of language. This pedagogical shift in the field of linguistic landscaping, highlighted by Cenoz and Gorter (2008), has been accompanied by several studies that have looked at the potential of linguistic landscaping as a tool for learning in literacy and language teaching-related contexts, including Dagenais et al. (2009), Shohamy and Waksman (2009), Sayer (2010), Rowland (2013), Lozano et al. (2020), Sayer (2020), and Ravindran et al. (2020), to name but a few. Recent studies have also focused on linguistic landscaping and pedagogy beyond the language classroom, for example the collection of works edited by Niedt and Seals (2021), and a growing number of recent studies on linguistic landscapes as public pedagogy (government signs and grassroots artefacts) during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as Douglas (2022), Gu (2023), Hopkyns and van den Hoven (2022), and Marshall (2023).

In the specific context of Canadian higher education, Li and Marshall (2018) and Ravindran et al. (2020) studied how a linguistic landscaping activity as part of a graduate course allowed students to engage critically with local communities, finding connections to the theories of multilingualism studied in the course. Moreover, and of close relevance to our study, Sterzuk (2020) studied the use of linguistic landscaping in a Canadian pre-service teacher education programme as a tool for developing critical multilingual awareness and noticing the textual practices of public spaces to build awareness of colonial history and imperialistic oppression. Building on Sterzuk's work, our study looks at the use of linguistic landscaping to develop students' critical engagement with representations of (de)coloniality and (lack of) multilingualism on a university campus that is engaged in a process of promoting equity and decolonisation initiatives.

3. The study and methodology

We carried out the study at the highly multilingual, multicultural Burnaby campus of SFU in Greater Vancouver, British Columbia. The Greater Vancouver area has a population of approximately 2.6 million people,

with 42.4% reporting speaking a mother tongue (the term used in census statistics) other than English or French, Canada's two official languages (Statistics Canada, 2022). The rich multilingualism and multiculturalism of the city is evident on the three SFU campuses in Greater Vancouver, where it is very common to hear students speaking multiple languages in and outside of classes. Moreover, according to internal data collected through self-declaration during students' enrolment process, around 35% of students at the university reported using English as an additional language, while another institutional survey with a smaller response rate put the figure at 41%.

In our study, we bring together and build upon the above trends in research and practice by analysing data from a Masters of Education graduate programme (made up mostly of international students¹) at the university, in which students carried out a task relating to the higher education LL in which they were studying. Following a qualitative approach of reflective, walking, visual ethnography (Lee & Ingold, 2006; Pink, 2008) for the study of linguistic landscapes (Li & Marshall, 2020; Marshall, 2023), the students walked around the campus looking, thinking, and engaging with the LL around them, capturing images of the signs, artefacts and spaces that they felt represented issues of relevance to their studies and to their sense of (lack of) inclusion as international/graduate students. In particular, students were asked to look for representations of coloniality, mono/multilingualism and Eurocentricity in an institution that is highly multicultural and multilingual with stated policies of engaging the world, of equity, diversity and inclusion, and of promoting Indigeneity.

Author 1 taught the course and set up the linguistic landscaping activity, while Authors 2 and 3 were students in the class. One of the classes in the second part of the course focused on linguistic landscaping and pedagogy. Before the class, students were asked to read three articles that focused on linguistic landscaping as a pedagogical tool: Lozano et al. (2020), Marshall (2023), and Sterzuk (2020). After a presentation of the

1 The term "international student" is used with reference to students who are in Canada on student visas. The term does not accurately cover the case of students in the graduate programme who had recently moved to Canada as permanent residents.

texts to the group of 16 students by Author 2, the students and instructor spent around 90 minutes walking around the campus collecting images for discussion and analysis. Students were given a free rein as regards what images they should collect; that said, and with an aim to engaging with key themes from the course, students were given pre-task instructions that asked them to pay particular attention to images that reflected two focal themes: multilingualism, or lack of it, and representations of (de)colonisation. After the group reconvened, the two key themes, among others, were discussed and students were given the option of writing a narrative reflection on the activity to be included in an assessed end-of-course portfolio.

A factor of note is the period when the activity took place. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 13-week course, which began in January 2021, was delivered remotely for the first eight weeks and then in person for the final five weeks. During the remote learning period, the group met informally for walks around areas of cultural and linguistic interest in the Greater Vancouver area – to get to know each other and simply to get out and exercise and get some fresh air during a lockdown period in British Columbia, during which most teaching in higher education was delivered remotely. The walks and related discussions in and outside of classes also served to familiarise students with the practice of reflective, walking, visual ethnography mentioned above. The data collection, therefore, took place during the early, cautious stages of a return to in-person classes on campus. As such, the campus was rather quiet, lacking the normal lively bustle and vibrancy of pre-pandemic days, for example, with student notice boards that are characterized by vivid, colourful multilingualism looking rather ragged, worn and not up to date.

In this chapter, we analyse a selection of images collected during the course activity, as well as excerpts from retrospective written reflections in which Authors 2 and 3 write about their feelings during a journey around a campus that was dominated by images and names (e.g. of lecture halls and buildings) that reflected Eurocentric cultural dominance, colonialism and prevalent monolingualism. We illustrate how it feels for two graduate students to navigate such spaces, and we conclude by asking how universities that are engaged in decolonising initiatives can move forward in inclusive ways that address colonial cultural hegemony on their campuses, in particular with reference to LLs.

It should be noted that the images that we present in this chapter do not provide an accurate overview of the complete LL of the university as a whole – they show what we found on one specific day, in a specific place, in an activity guided by pre-task class discussion on key themes of interest. The images we present were gathered from a large area of one of three campuses and selected from more than 100 images taken by the three authors. Reflective notes were taken during the activity, typed up after the activity, and added to during walks around the campus up to one year after the activity. We have selected those that relate to the specific images we present.

4. Data analysis

In this section, we present a collection of images collected by Authors 1, 2 and 3 during the linguistic landscaping activity described above, along with Author 2's and Author 3's written reflections. We arrange each group of images around four key themes: (1) Backdrop: A colonial campus?; (2) English-only signs; (3) Non-English monolingual signs; and (4) Multilingual signs. We recognize that our selection of these themes was guided by a form of thematic analysis that was carried out within a deductive framing of the activity (Braun & Clarke, 2012, 2020) around the themes of multilingualism, critical pedagogy and decolonisation studied during the course and which were studied and discussed prior to the activity. After presenting each group of images, we will show selected excerpts from the written reflections of Authors 2 and 3, followed by a brief analysis in which we aim to make connections to the themes raised in the review of literature above. A more detailed analytic synthesis will follow in the upcoming "Discussion and conclusion" section.

4.1 Backdrop: A colonial campus?

As stated above, a theme of much discussion at the university has been how best to respond to initiatives that promote equity, diversity and inclusion across all levels of the campus, along with policies focusing on the decolonisation and indigenisation of the curriculum. In class, prior to the data-gathering activity, we discussed what the campus of a university promoting such policies should look like, with a specific focus on its LL.

Would we find a campus whose LL would reflect such initiatives, as well as reflecting the city in which it is located, or one playing catch-up? And how would it feel as an international/graduate student navigating this educational space?

We present below a selection of images that illustrate the backdrop of what we found to be a colonial campus, dominated by English monolingualism and Eurocentric names and images.



Figure 7.1 Connotations of a Eurocentric campus

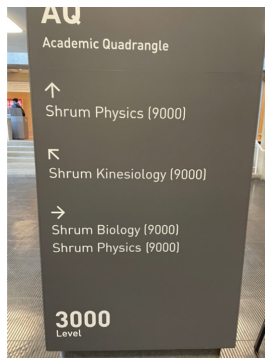


Figure 7.2 Connotations of a Eurocentric campus

Figures 7.1 and 7.2 above illustrate our view of a Eurocentric campus dominated by English monolingualism and named centres of learning

(buildings, lecture theatres) that offer connotations of a White Eurocentric history. Figure 7.1 is a sign for the Robert C. Brown Hall, while Figure 7.2 directs students to a number of learning spaces under the name Shrum. In discussions following the activity, we wondered who these named individuals were, speculating that they were renowned academics or perhaps benevolent donors to the university.

The connotation of Eurocentric coloniality was also evident in Figure 7.3 below, a poster from 2001 promoting the university's world champion bagpipe band.



Figure 7.3 Pipe band

Perhaps in a nod to the Scottishness associated with Simon Fraser, whose name the university carries, bagpipes are an important symbolic feature of the university. Student graduation days are characterised by kilt-wearing bagpipers marching to the ceremony amid great pomp and ceremony. This ceremony represents a deeper connection to North American Scottishness. This affiliation can be seen in the university's history since its founding in 1965, in the form of its original coat of arms being granted to the university by Lord Lyon, King of Arms, the chief heraldic officer of Scotland, and a borrowed motto of "Nous Sommes Prêts" from Clan Fraser in Scotland. Graduation ceremonies on convocation days have historically presented this symbolism with the carrying of a 23-pound ceremonial mace and a claymore (great sword). The latter is said to have been used by a member of the Fraser Clan at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, in which the dreams of an independent Scotland ended, and at the Battle of the Plains

of Abraham in 1759, in which British forces defeated the French (Symbols of Simon Fraser University, n.d.) for colonial control of the Indigenous territories of Québec and the rest of what is today Canada.

While the image of the piper, passed by thousands of students weekly in the main academic quadrangle of the university, represents a symbol of tradition and of pride in musical success, on another level it could be argued that it also represents the normalisation of European cultural hegemony on those passing.

Author 2 reflects on Figures 7.1 to 7.3 below in a retrospective field note:

Reflection 1 (Author 2)

The presence of White English names and the process of naming university halls after White scholars imply that the campus is part of an institution from which Western knowledge emanates. Robert C. Brown (Figure 7.1), for example, is a geographer who was the dean of the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies at SFU. The fact that these images are fixed and stable enforces an association of superiority of the Western epistemology in a setting that is marked by diversity of students, who come from a wide range of cultural and knowledge backgrounds.

From a Gramscian perspective, we understand cultural hegemony to be a form of social power that is reinforced by people's passive, unquestioning acceptance. Or as stated by Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014), who discuss hegemony with regard to educators, action research and critical pedagogy, hegemonic dominance is not gained through coercion but rather through the wilful submission of individuals via the normalisation of dominant cultural values in educational contexts. Accordingly, they state, reflecting on hegemony allows educators to consider the oppressive nature of certain educators' practices even when their motives are good (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). This view of culture can be applied to the above figures as follows. In terms of motives, the three images show good intention: recognising the work of key scholars in the early years of the university by naming places after them, and celebrating the success as world champions of the university's bagpipe band. And, so goes the argument, it is through unquestioning acceptance of the associated images in the university's LL that the Eurocentric colonial connotation, and hegemony, persist and pervade. In this regard, in Reflection 1 above, Author 2 reflects on the implication of the images, the emanation of Western knowledge, and the fixedness and stability reinforcing Western epistemologies.

4.2 English-only signs

The second group of signs and images that we analyse (Figures 7.4 to 7.8) falls under the category of English-only signs. Most of the signs that we present in this subsection are top-down signs as defined by Ben Rafael et al. (2006), that is, the products of institutional agencies implementing policies, as opposed to bottom-up signs created by individuals or groups that are created with autonomy and usually for non-official purposes.



Figure 7.4 Academic support for students

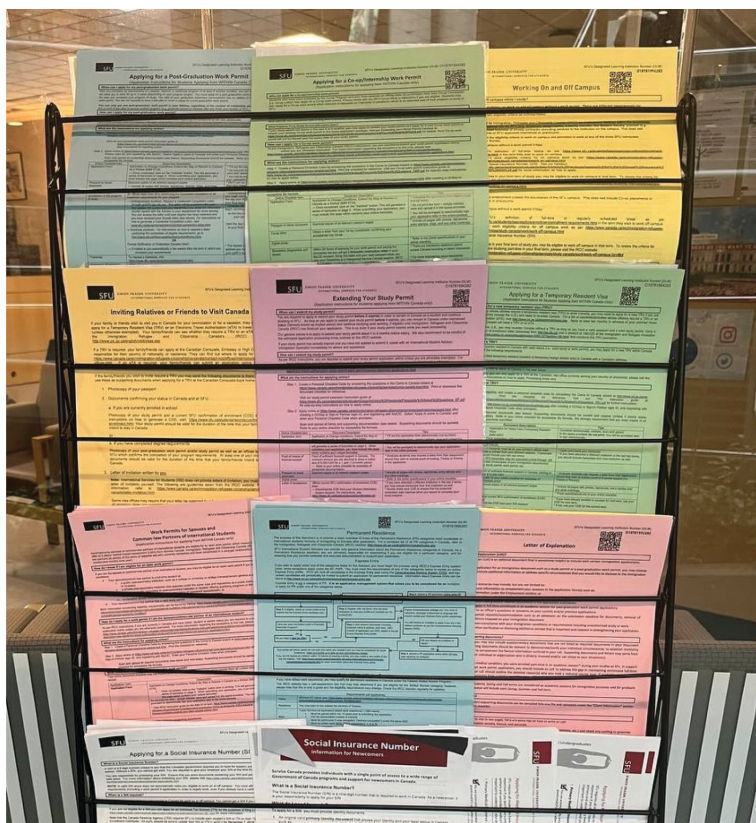


Figure 7.5 Student support sheets



Figure 7.6 Safety information



Figure 7.7 Multilingual Week



Figure 7.8 Office for Aboriginal Peoples

Figures 7.4 to 7.8 above illustrate the predominance of monolingual English top-down signs on the campus. Figure 7.4 comprises various posters and signs offering academic support to students, while Figure 7.5 was taken outside the Student Services Centre, showing the information sheets provided to help students with issues such as obtaining a social insurance number or a work permit. Figure 7.6 asks people to wear masks as they enter a building; Figure 7.7 announces a week of events celebrating the multilingual nature of the university; and Figure 7.8 is a sign above the entrance to the university's Office for Aboriginal Peoples. In terms of the employees and students at the university interacting with the information in these images, it can be assumed that they understand the meaning of the signs, thus negating the need for multilingual signs to ensure that important information is conveyed and understood. That said, not everyone on campus may understand the signs: for example, students may bring family members to the campus, and some staff employed in certain fields may lack competence in written English. For this reason, perhaps, signs may include colour and images that clearly reinforce their intended purpose.

Figure 7.9, below, a poster on a student noticeboard, is an example of a bottom-up poster that was monolingual in English.



Figure 7.9 Bottom-up monolingual poster

Figure 7.9 is of particular interest in that it is a bottom-up poster on a student noticeboard that uses English exclusively to promote online Korean classes. Of additional interest is the connection between the language classes and Bible study as a community-building strategy; for more on the interplays between migration, multilingualism and Christian churches in the Greater Vancouver area, see Han's ethnographic research (2011, 2014). Below, Authors 3 and 2 reflect on the monolingual English signs in their retrospective field notes.

Reflection 2 [Author 3]

Looking at the top-down signs I started thinking about people who do not know English, what if I bring my family and friends or their children to the campus? They might get hurt if they do not understand the safety signs. The multimodal signs can help them understand a bit, but those multimodal signs are so limited.

Despite the increased concern for decolonization and decolonizing education, the use of other languages across the campus is still not obvious, and English continues to dominate.

Before doing this activity I, in general, did not walk along the university halls with the idea of finding something in my first language; however, this does not mean that I was unaware of the language and all the signage surrounding me.

I was completely aware that at this university all the texts and signs in public spaces do not include different languages, and are in English.

Passing room 1200 at Maggie Benston Centre, I saw international services for students – international students advising. I was sure that I could see some of the leaflets in other languages if that office is to help international students but surprisingly all the leaflets at the door of that office are in English.

Reflection 3 (Author 2)

In accordance with the university language policy, English is prominent and frequently used in the signage all around the campus. Figure 7.7 is in line with the university's initiative to celebrate its linguistic and cultural diversity. However, I think the use of an English-only sign to promote such an initiative contradicts the very nature of it. It gives me the impression that conceptualization of multilingualism is based upon the presence of English alongside other languages.

Reflections 2 and 3 highlight important issues for higher education institutions to consider as they move forward to welcome diversity and promote equity in their LLs. As stated, one option is to increase the multimodality of English signs, providing additional meaning-making images to support those who may not understand English. As mentioned by Author 3, such multimodal signs were found to be limited in number during the activity and English remained dominant, even when it came to advising multilingual students in need of academic support. Author 2 recognizes that policy stipulates that English is the language of the university; accordingly, English is at the top of the language hierarchy, even when it comes to promoting Multilingual Week. During the same activity, students took images of a poster promoting the same Multilingual Week written in Chinese (Figure 7.10 below).

This group of images is of interest on a number of levels. First, the following questions can be asked: How many languages should such information be presented in, and where should the line be drawn? What about the other large groups of speakers of languages other than English on campus? And second, the dual monolingual approach to providing such information reflects somewhat traditional views that bilingualism involves alternating in separate, discrete codes – not mixing them – which dates back many years to Weinreich's (1953) definition of bilingualism as alternation between two or more languages – that is, separate languages used monolingually. However, there is general acceptance today that bi-/multi-/plurilingualism can involve mixing languages in hybrid and creative ways

(see Marshall, 2021, for a discussion of the terminological similarities and differences between the terms “bilingual”, “multilingual”, and “plurilingual”). The English language sign at the entrance to the university’s Office for Aboriginal Peoples also raises important issues for discussion. First, in terms of equity, diversity and inclusion, and initiatives to decolonise and indigenise institutionally, and at the level of curriculum, the university is facing the challenge of how best to address the under-representation of Indigenous peoples at all levels of the university. And in terms of language, additional challenges would arise with regard to making the sign above the entrance bilingual or multilingual. First, there are many different Indigenous languages and dialects in British Columbia, all in danger of extinction, as well as initiatives aimed at language revitalisation. In effect, acknowledgement of the Indigenous communities, whose unceded lands the campus is located on, will involve including numerous different Indigenous languages “and dialects as well as respectful collaboration with local First Nations.”

4.3 Non-English monolingual signs

Figures 7.10 and 7.11 below are the only examples that we found on the day of the class activity of top-down monolingual signs in languages other than English. The first is the Chinese version of the sign promoting the university’s Multilingual Week, and the second an illuminated sign written in the Kwak’wala Indigenous language along the academic quadrangle from the university’s Office for Aboriginal Peoples.

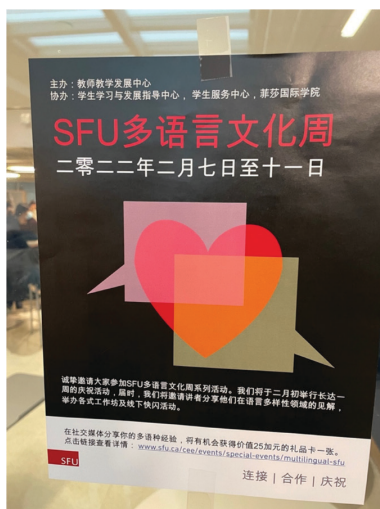


Figure 7.10 Multilingual Week



Figure 7.11 Recognising Indigenous languages

Authors 2 and 3 reflect on these Figures as follows:

Reflection 4 (Author 2)

The only sign (Figure 7.11) I found that recognizes Indigenous languages is located in one of the hallways despite the university's proclaimed efforts to address its commitments for reconciliation. The one official poster that celebrates multilingualism without including English is written in Chinese probably because of the significant number of international Chinese students studying at SFU. When I saw this poster, it provoked a feeling of exclusion as it disregards other languages, including mine: Arabic. Moreover, I view the utilization of the Chinese language as a marketing strategy to attract Chinese students and to convey a message that the university is a welcoming space for them.

Reflection 5 (Author 3)

The words in red neon light read "Wa' lasan xwalsa kan ne'nakwe". I searched for its meaning and the translation I found is "How I long for home". I wonder why I knew nothing about the Indigenous people of Canada before I came here as an international student. I now know that Canada is committed to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the glow of these neon lights is a sign that shows efforts to include them; however, this also shows the white-settler dominance over Indigenous groups because this is the only sign I found on campus in an Indigenous language.

An additional point of interest regarding linguistic landscaping in terms of Figures 7.10 and 7.11 relates to the (in)comprehensibility of languages. With a large number of students able to understand Chinese script, Figure 7.10 would have a much larger number of people able to understand it than Figure 7.11. However, it is Figure 7.11 that carries far more cultural impact in terms of decolonisation and equity. Both Figures raise an important question regarding the use of monolingual signs/posters in non-English languages in settings where English is the dominant language: To what extent should language planners consider lack of comprehensibility as an obstacle when forming such signs? To answer, first, the signs have considerable impact in terms of status planning, which refers to the promotion of a language's status in settings where it is not dominant (in terms of number of speakers and/or social prestige), its use in a range of spaces, and improving attitudes towards the language (Mar-Molinero, 2000). In this sense, people walking by and seeing/interacting with such signs play an important role in increasing awareness and institutional acceptance. In fact, the lack of comprehensibility could perhaps even serve to increase the impact of such status-planning initiatives. Moreover, in terms of conceptualisations of multilingualism, or plurilingualism, the signs relate to

an evolution in understanding how the use of multiple languages relates to comprehensibility. If we go back to one of Haugen's (1953) defining features of bilingualism – that utterances should be complete and meaningful – the suggestion is that for an interaction to be considered bilingual and valid, the language should be meaningful, not incomprehensible to all involved in the interaction. In contrast, such signs fit in with recent understandings of multi/plurilingualism, in particular the idea of plurilingual competence, in that not everyone involved in an interaction needs to understand all the languages being used.

4.4 Multilingual signs

In contrast to the above signs and images, our fourth subsection looks at multilingual signs (Figure 7.12 to 7.16). Figure 7.12 to 7.15 can be classified as bottom-up signs, in other words, signs, posters and information sheets that are placed strategically around the university but not produced by the university, while Figure 7.16 could be classified as top down.



Figure 7.12 Multilingual noticeboard



Figure 7.13 Noticeboard closeup



Figure 7.14 Noticeboard closeup

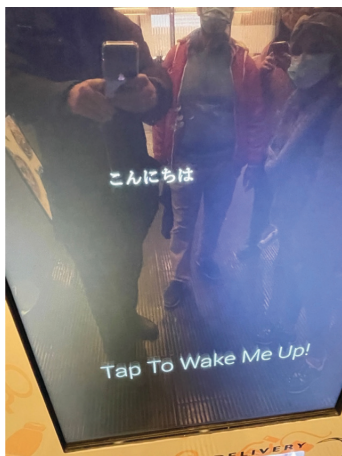


Figure 7.15 Multilingual vending machine



Figure 7.16 Official bilingualism?

Without doubt, the student noticeboards, as illustrated in Figures 7.12 to 7.14 above, provided the most dynamic examples of on-campus multilingualism with an array of multimodal posters and information sheets written in creative ways that combine languages, scripts, striking images,

and colours. Only the top-down signs for the university's Multilingual Week (Figures 7.7 and 7.10 above) managed to capture our attention with the same dynamic multimodality, albeit without the creative mixing of languages and scripts. These noticeboards stood in stark contrast to the formal noticeboards for university information such as Figure 7.4 above, which provided information in English for student support services, protected behind glass. Figure 7.12 shows one of the on-campus noticeboards, which go through regular change as students and interest groups compete for space and attention, posting notices on top of others. Figure 7.13 offers tax information in Chinese with some information in small letters in English, while Figure 7.14 similarly offers support for writing essays, in Chinese and English, but with more striking colours. Figure 7.15 shows a multilingual vending machine with multiple language options (in the photo, English and Japanese) on a touchscreen. And finally, Figure 7.16 shows an English-French bilingual sticker added to a hand sanitizer, the only example of such bilingualism that we found on the day, and this in bilingual Canada, where English and French are the two official languages. Authors 3 and 2 show their written reflections on these images below.

Reflection 6 (Author 3)

As we were getting closer to the noticeboards to look at the bottom-up pictures and posters, I saw most of them were in other languages mostly in Chinese (or Japanese?) characters. The noticeboard perfectly reflects the diversity and the cultural background of the students that I see at SFU every day. However, I could not find a poster in my language. I think seeing my language and culture reflected in the pictures could help me feel more welcomed because I believe in the power of language and its role in inclusion.

I hear many students speaking in Persian, even by looking at students around the campus I can tell many are Persian but the only word I saw after walking around the campus for almost 2 hours was on a vending machine located near the students union building which said Hi to me in my first language. Honestly, I would never think that seeing one word in my first language at our campus could make me so excited. The vending machine, Sally the Salad Robot, is located in the Academic Quadrangle and has a welcome page displayed in English and a couple of other languages including Persian that reads: سلام (hi). I see that Hi as a speech act. According to cultural norms in my country Iran, replying to the Hello is necessary. There is a saying which reads جواب سلام واجب (replying to a greeting is obligatory) and to me as a Persian speaker who has been living in Iran most of

her life, there was a natural tendency to reply to that greeting. That Hi in different languages is aimed at people passing by as a hint to buy a salad from the machine.

Reflection 7 (Author 2)

The bottom-up signs on notice boards form a response, looking for space, to the overwhelming official usage of English in signage. The posters on boards do not follow the official language policy and, therefore, more multilingual posters and fliers are noticeable, such as Figure 7.14 and Figure 7.15. I could interpret these practices as attempts to create a global space through validating different linguistic and cultural identities. However, these signs, similar to the top-down multilingual ones, do not represent the linguistic diversity found on campus as they include certain languages, such as Chinese and Japanese not sure.

Authors 2 and 3 highlight important issues relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in their written reflections on this set of images. Both reflect on the noticeboard in terms of the extent to which it reflects diversity on campus. For Author 3, it reflects the diversity and cultural backgrounds of the students she sees every day at the university; Author 2, however, states that the images do not represent the linguistic diversity he sees on campus, the reason being the dominance of Chinese. Interestingly, both Authors 2 and 3 are unsure whether the Chinese script that they see on the board is Chinese or Japanese. Undoubtedly, a key goal of equity initiatives should be that universities should at the very least reflect the make-up of the communities in which they are located, of the students studying at the institution in terms of all diversities, and at all levels on the higher education hierarchical ladder. In our data collection exercise, we only saw such a level of diversity in an informal student space: the noticeboard that we show above. According to Authors 2 and 3, spaces such as the noticeboard above have the potential to create a sense of belonging and a feeling of being welcome when students see their languages represented. In this regard, Author 3 describes the sense of excitement when she finally found an example of her language on campus, while Author 2 refers to the related validation of different linguistic and cultural identities. We wonder if, and how, a similar sense of belonging and feeling of being welcome could be translated to top-down signs. Moreover, these noticeboards also represent students' agency in contributing to multilingualism on campus in the form of the agentive placement of bottom-up signs and posters in a predominately monolingual campus environment.

4.5 Grassroots activism: Making Indigenous languages visible in 2017

To close this section, we present a set of photographs taken on campus in 2017, prior to the current study, by Author 1, which have been selected as they could be described as small-scale decolonising grassroots activism during a period prior to the project. Figures 7.18 to 7.19 are examples of non-permanent bilingual grassroots artefacts, written in chalk on the concrete pillars of academia, offering friendly greetings in different Indigenous languages – *hə́nqəmíhəní* and *nêhiyawak* – in different scripts, with translations below in English.

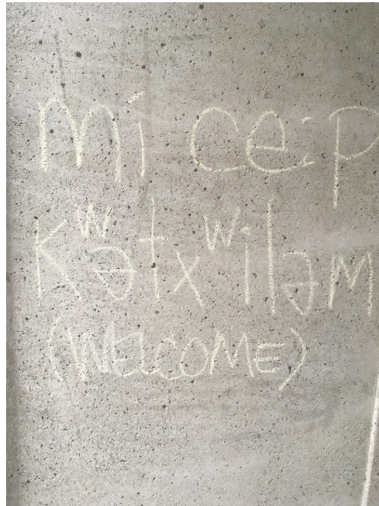


Figure 7.17 Making Indigenous languages visible (*hə́nqəmíhəní*)



Figure 7.18 Making Indigenous languages visible (hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓)



Figure 7.19 Making Indigenous languages visible (nêhiyawak)

In his study of linguistic landscaping during the Covid-19 pandemic, Marshall (2023) illustrates the addition of grassroots artefacts in LLs, as described by Blommaert and Maly (2014), that individuals add informally to their local landscapes to create a sense of solidarity and care through public pedagogy. Similarly, Figures 7.17 to 7.19 above are grassroots literacy artefacts that have been added to the Eurocentric, English-dominant campus to raise awareness of Indigenous languages. The positioning of the bilingual texts is of interest: on concrete pillars in a campus designed

by modernist Canadian architect Arthur Erickson in the 1960s at the top of a small mountain in the city surrounded by beautiful nature and visited occasionally by bears and cougars among other wildlife. The impact on Author 1 as a passerby was strong, not only in the sense of this juxtaposition between modernist concrete and nature, but also in how this very juxtaposition can be mirrored in the binaries between Western university knowledge and Indigenous land-based epistemologies, and between the formal top-down permanence of names and signs and the impermanence of these grassroots artefacts written in chalk, and long washed away by the rain when we did our class activity several years later.

5. Discussion and conclusion

We have described a linguistic landscaping activity that a group of students did as part of a Masters of Education programme at a university in western Canada that is going through the process of promoting equity, diversity and inclusion and of recognising Indigeneity. The goals of the activity were to assess the extent to which the LL of the university matched this process in terms of representing the diversity of languages and cultures that make up the university and the city in which it is located. What we found in the images gathered by two of these students and the course instructor was a university that would appear to be playing catch-up – we say this due to the predominance of English monolingualism and Eurocentric imagery and the naming practices that we found. As stated above, the site that we found to represent the dynamic linguistic and cultural diversity of the student body and city was a student noticeboard. The noticeboard was full of vibrant posters and information sheets, using multiple languages and multimodality to catch the attention of the passersby. This agentic insertion of non-dominant languages and cultures was also evident in the images collected by Author 1, several years before the current study, a few metres away from the noticeboard above. Overall, these examples illustrate a clear contrast between top-down, Eurocentric, monolingual signs, images and information in English, and dynamic multilingual signs, posters and grassroots artefacts that reflected the diversity of the student body, the Greater Vancouver area and the Province of British Columbia.

It has been suggested that linguistic landscaping as a field should move beyond studies that merely show, count and describe languages on signs. This evolution could involve interviewing the makers of signs to understand their processes and intentions, or including the views of the people who interact with the signs as they walk past them and take on board (or not) their ideologies and regulatory aspects. While it was not feasible (nor a goal of the study) to connect with the creators of the signs and images we have presented, the inclusion of written reflections of two of the students who took part in the activity and their reflective contributions as authors in this chapter does go some way to adding depth, critically, to the field of linguistic landscaping.

In terms of the central themes of this collection of works – educational agency and activism – we see higher education LLs as sites with great potential for activism and agency, which in turn may play a role in countering the hegemonic discourses of institutions. In the case of the entrenched Eurocentric, colonial discourses that pervade in many North American higher education settings, individual and collective agency can have impacts. While higher education LLs such as the one we have studied may indeed reflect the reproduction of dominant institutional discourses (Archer, 2003), students and educators have a role to play in agentively engendering change in the structures and discourses of their institutions (Giddens, 1984). Moreover, by using linguistic landscaping as a tool for engaging deeply with higher education LLs in graduate studies, and by presenting and publishing our findings, we aim to play our part in this process.

Of course, the study is limited in its scope and in its potential to make generalised statements and recommendations. In the linguistic landscaping activity, we only engaged with a limited, momentary, localised cross section on one of the university's three campuses. What we captured and analysed cannot be generalised to the university as a whole or to other institutions where equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives are taking place. What we can conclude, nonetheless, is that, as stated by Blommaert and Maly (2014), LLs reflect issues of control, belonging, power relations and regulation that organise social dynamics. By doing linguistic landscaping activities on campuses, with an aim to engage critically with (lack of) linguistic and cultural representation, we aimed in a very small way to

explore how the mindsets of students (bearing in mind their positions in university hierarchies of power) can shift from passive acceptance of what surrounds them on campus to critical and meaningful engagement. Such small steps can play potentially larger roles in the slow processes of effecting institutional change in higher education.

With institutions such as SFU now setting up naming committees to address decolonisation and indigenisation on campuses, questions arise regarding possible ways forward :

- Do the existing names of places and spaces reflect an ongoing acceptance of Eurocentric colonial cultural hegemony, or do they represent the diverse make-up of our institutions, cities and provinces/states?
- Should institutions named after “colonial pioneers” be renamed, given multiple names that represent the Indigenous history of countries such as Canada and its current multiculturalism, or given more neutral names that do not perpetuate White Eurocentric cultural hegemony?
- And how can the names of places be changed to give greater representation to all diversities?

Finding answers to questions such as these is very complex and requires much work and dialogue. We close with reflections from Authors 3 and 2 in which they raise issues and ideas around which we have concluded, thus providing food for thought:

Reflection 8 (Author 3)

Although speaking Persian is a big part of my identity as an international student, I know that I do not have the right to receive courses in my first language. I had to take an English test (IELTS – The International English Language Testing System) and I was completely aware that language requirements to enter this Canadian university are rather stringent, with both an overall score and per-section prerequisites. Before applying to this university, I read on its website that the language of instruction is English, and all applicants, regardless of their country of origin or citizenship status, are required to demonstrate competence in that language prior to admission. For the linguistic landscaping activity, I was asked to look around the campus from a different perspective. Going around the campus I realized how much English and monolingualism is there everywhere. I never noticed how important knowing the language is even outside of the classroom.

The buildings and halls at the Burnaby campus are dominated by images and names that reflect British/European Whiteness, colonialism, and monolingualism. However, as I was about to leave the campus through the Bluson Hall door, I noticed one courtyard is named after an Iranian philanthropist, Dr. Djavad

Mowafaghian, who was born in Iran and devoted all his resources to establishing the Djavad Mowafaghian Foundation. This foundation has left a lasting impact on SFU and its communities and the courtyard is named in memory of him. The truth is that you should either be white or a millionaire and then you will have the honor of having a building, courtyard, or lecture hall named after you.

Reflection 9 (Author 2)

One of the themes that caught my attention when I received the syllabus for the Second Language Learning and Education course was linguistic landscaping. I became curious to delve into this field and know more about how linguistic landscape not only refers to language display and visualization, but also how it is tied to wider hegemonic discourses and policies that enforce language hierarchies and ideologies (Shohamy, 2006). Reading about linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) and the relationship between the English language and colonial discourses (Pennycook, 2002) throughout the program, and the perpetuation of colonial oppression through linguistic landscape (Sterzuk, 2020) in preparation for classroom discussions and the linguistic landscaping activity, I became aware of the taken-for-granted posters and signs on campus.

Being a multilingual speaker who speaks Arabic as a mother tongue, I felt excluded due to the overwhelming presence of English signage that does not represent my multilingual identity. Although multilingual student-designed posters were available on bulletin boards and other non-official spaces, none of them included Arabic. The main non-English languages were East Asian languages (e.g. Chinese and Japanese), so the feeling of exclusion was a result of both institutional- and student-level practices. However, I view the non-official multilingual student signs, despite their scarcity, as a form resistance and a discursive defiance to the hegemonic English-only institutional and administrative policy of signage which leaves other languages battling for visibility. The implied aim of those multilingual signs is to give value to other languages and, hence, other linguistic and cultural identities.

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Jannis Androutsopoulos and Franziska Kuhlee

8 Sign Ensembles in the Schoolscape

Abstract: Recent research has shed light on the semiotic landscapes within educational spaces, focusing on their semiotic composition, production practices and communicative functions. However, a largely overlooked aspect is the clustering of individual signs into thematic arrangements, which are prevalent throughout school spaces. While these groupings have been observed, they have not been systematically analysed as distinct units in previous studies. To address this gap, this chapter draws on the term “ensembles” as used in linguistic landscape studies and examines sign ensembles and their social functions in the schoolscales of secondary schools in Hamburg, Germany. An analytical framework is proposed, incorporating dimensions such as canvas, arrangement, topical coherence and textual autonomy. Based on the analysis of textual data from schoolscales together with interviews with teachers and pupils, three functions of sign ensembles are identified: knowledge transfer, group identity building and staff cohesion. Additionally, the study draws on the concept of participation formats to examine the complexities of collaborative ensemble production. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the semiotic dynamics within educational spaces and highlights the significance of sign ensembles in shaping school environments and social interactions.

Keywords: schoolscale, sign ensembles, multimodality, mixed-methods research, school signage

1. Introduction

Recent research has significantly broadened our understanding of the semiotic landscapes of educational spaces (“schoolscales”) in terms of their textual composition, production practices, communicative and symbolic functions, and significant differences from other types of semiotic landscape (Brown, 2018; Gorter, 2018; Szabó, 2015). Schoolscales are composed largely of locally produced and handmade signs, which often seem to originate in collaborative practices among teachers and students. Schools comprise a multitude of different spaces – such as entrance halls, corridors, classrooms, special subject rooms, school canteens, libraries – that are

distinct for the members of a school community in terms of their function and, as evidence suggests, their semiotic landscaping (Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee, 2021; Krompák et al., 2022). Schoolscapes are an integral part of the educational and socialisation process at schools (Brown, 2018).

However, an important and still under-researched aspect of schoolscapes is the tendency of individual signs to cluster together and form arrangements with different kinds of thematic structure and multimodal design. The lack of attention to these clusters, which we term “ensembles” in this chapter, is even more striking as they are a predominant visual feature of school spaces. In our fieldwork we documented them on all school premises, with distinctive characteristics in each: glass cases with information on school activities stand beside the entrance, and whiteboards with information on school activities and teacher notes are placed in the corridors of the office area, while classroom walls feature groups of signs created in collaborative work between teachers and students, and posters created by students alone or together with classmates.

It seems unlikely that these groupings have passed unnoticed by schoolscape researchers. However, it may well be the case that they have not been treated as “super-textual” units of analysis as it were, but rather decomposed into single signs, thereby following traditional methodological practice in linguistic landscape (LL) studies. Likewise, previous studies on the multilingual structure and discourse functions of schoolscape signs (Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee, 2021, 2022; Bagna & Bellinonza, 2022; Gorter & Cenoz, 2015) have classified their data by sign rather than clusters of signs. In recent work on translanguaging in schoolscapes, some of the published examples make clear how densely signs are collated to other signs (Karafylli & Maligkoudi, 2023; Seals, 2020), yet do not discuss these conglomerates of signs in their own right. In other cases, ensembles seem well noted and discussed, but without being explicitly considered a distinct textual category with characteristic semiotic properties (cf. Krompák et al., 2020).

Against this background, this chapter examines schoolscapes in terms of their sign ensembles and the social uses of those ensembles. After a brief outline of the research context (section 2), we outline an analytical framework for the description of sign ensembles, developed as part of our ongoing research on schoolscapes in Hamburg, Germany (section 3). Drawing on schoolscape studies, social semiotics and multimodality

research, we develop an analytical grid with four main dimensions: canvas, arrangement, topical coherence and textual autonomy, each broken down into two or more subcategories, which cover different kinds of ensemble as documented empirically in school settings. We then draw on selected examples and interview data with teachers and pupils to examine three functions of ensembles: knowledge transfer, group identity building and staff cohesion (section 4). In the last step, we draw on the concept of participation formats to untangle the complex relationships of authorship and control involved in the collaborative production of ensembles by teachers and students (section 5).

2. Research context

The data for this study were collected as part of a three-year research project on the schoolscape of secondary schools in Hamburg. This project adopted a comparative approach, asking how the schoolscape reflects social inequality in schools, and how teachers and pupils discursively construct the relationship between the schoolscape and the social conditions in their school. In this chapter, our focus is on how teachers and students create sign ensembles that fulfil certain functions in the life of the school community. These practices can be observed in all the schools in our sample, regardless of their social context.

Methodologically, we integrate a quantitative-distributional analysis of elicited signs and a qualitative, ethnographically grounded investigation of the perception and evaluation of the schoolscape by members of the respective school community. The data collection took place from 2021 to 2023 at six secondary schools (pupils aged 11–19) that differ in terms of institutional school type (grammar schools vs. district schools) and social context.¹ The data collected for each school comprised comprehensive photographic documentation, guided tours (Szabó & Troyer, 2017), and semi-structured interviews with teachers and students (Misoch, 2019). The photographic documentation included 600–700 photos per school, covering all accessible

1 Since a comparison of different schools is not relevant for this chapter, we do not provide a detailed description here. For more information on the project, see www.linguasnapp.uni-hamburg.de/schoolscapes

areas: outdoor spaces, entrance hall, corridors, a selection of classrooms focusing on grades 5 and 6 (ages 11–12) and 10–13 (ages 16–19), special subject rooms, toilets, canteen and library. The photographic data were annotated using software developed specifically for the project (*Schulische Schilder*, or SCH², i.e. “school signs”). This software includes several annotation categories with multiple options each (languages, space, discourse type, text type, design, materiality, producers) as well as free-text boxes for the title, the transcription of verbal content and comments. The in-built search and tabulation functions of this software enabled a quantitative-distributional analysis of the collected data, which created a backdrop for the selection of examples for qualitative analysis. The guided tours and interviews were carried out in two separate appointments with one teacher and a maximum of two pupils per school. In the guided tour part, the participants presented and explained the semiotic landscape of their school. The interview part elicited stories about the participants’ collaborative creation of signs and their perception of their schoolscape, as well as invited feedback on examples that were presented to the participants. For this chapter we draw on a subset of the photographic corpus from five schools alongside selected excerpts from guided tours and interviews, in which participants discuss specific sign ensembles in their schoolscape. These data were imported into MaxQDA, qualitative and mixed-methods data analysis software, and coded with inductively developed codes.

3. Defining and categorising sign ensembles

We define a sign ensemble as a set of signs that coexist within shared material boundaries and are mutually related in terms of arrangement, topic and communicative function. Ensembles are placed in various areas of an educational space and their communicative functions are closely related to their emplacement. In terms of production, ensembles are often the outcome of a collaborative process that involves a division of labour among teachers and students, the most important agents in shaping the schoolscape.

Before delving into analysis, a contextualisation within existing research seems useful. To our knowledge, two pre-existing terms in LL scholarship come close to our observations, even though both concern signage in public open-air spaces rather than indoor institutional ones. The first term is “aggregate”, originating in geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) to

describe places where a variety of signs are placed close to one another, such as a street crossing or a busy shopping district. These spatially coexisting signs can materialise one or several discourses such as, for example, when a variety of commercial signs stand in proximity to regulatory and infrastructural signs, an effect Scollon and Scollon (2003, pp. 167–168) call “interdiscursive dialogicity”. An aggregate in the geosemiotc sense, then, consists of several signs that coexist and realise a meeting and intermingling of discourses that potentially influences how passers-by perceive the signs. A second approach, also heavily influenced by geosemiotics, is by Auer (2010, pp. 285–288), who uses the term “ensemble” in reference to “multiple signs/inscriptions/paper slips/stickers that stand in direct vicinity to one another, so that they can be perceived at a glance, and are interrelated content-wise”.² Auer posits a joint perceptual boundary that comprises several elements, which stand in some (semantic or thematic, potentially also aesthetic) relation to one another. This also applies to complex institutional (top-down) signs that collate distinct functional elements by design, such as subway orientation signs that include infrastructural (“this way to Exit A”) and regulatory (“smoking is prohibited”) information. Auer has also applied the term “ensemble” to a series of signs that originate from the same design but are emplaced away from one another, such as rest area signs on a motorway that share a common design (Auer, 2009).

Comparing the two concepts, “aggregates” (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) are defined as conglomerates of discrete signs in semiotically dense (urban) areas where regulation comes together with other discourses, while “ensembles” (Auer 2009, 2010) are defined as conglomerates of signs that are jointly perceived and, in some way, interrelated, and often share a particular design that indexes their function and authority. However, the use of these two concepts in follow-up research has been limited, as indicated by a search in research papers³ and textbook introductions to the field. For example, the recent introduction by Gorter and Cenoz (2023) uses the

2 Original: “mehrere Schilder/Inschriften/Zettel/Aufkleber, die in unmittelbarer Nähe zueinander stehen, also mit einem Blick wahrgenommen werden können, und die sich inhaltlich aufeinander beziehen” (Auer, 2010, p. 286).

3 As a proxy, we searched the Linguistic Landscape Bibliography (www.zotero.org/groups/216092) and the Linguistic Landscape Corpus (<https://wou.edu/linguistic-landscape/linguistic-landscape-corpus/>) for the term “ensemble”.

term “aggregate of signage” (p. 1) as a bracket term for LL in its entirety, and then again in a more specific sense to refer to all signs on a shop window (p. 172: “This façade presents passersby with an aggregate in which each sign contributes to the sum of language features”). They also point out “[a]n ensemble of signs shown together may also tell a different story than a single sign” (p. 132), as a caveat against decontextualising signs, which represents the mainstream practice in LL studies. Other LL researchers who use this term to denote the co-occurrence of individual signs in the semiotic landscape are Ben-Rafael (2009) and Kallen (2010); the latter understands ensembles as “multiple systems within the same visual field and not as a single system” (Kallen, 2010, p. 46), though again with no further elaboration. In German scholarship, Badstübner-Kizik (2022) points out that the entire LL “can be understood as a dynamic ensemble of multimodal language-image texts” (p. 235, our translation), but does not use this term as an analytical category, which is our main aim here. Other sporadic uses of “ensemble(s)” refer to subjects such as music or generally to a collection of objects.

In what follows, we first outline an analytic framework for the study of ensembles in schoolsapes. This comprises four main categories and several subcategories, as outlined in Table 8.1. We discuss and exemplify these in turn, using examples from our data (Figures 8.1 through 8.5). In the next two sections, we then examine the interplay between sign ensembles and their social functions and production processes by taking the viewpoints of teachers into consideration.

Table 8.1 A framework for the analysis of sign ensembles

Dimension	Definition	Values
Canvas	Surface and material boundaries that delimit an ensemble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case • Surface
Arrangement	Layout patterns of distinct elements within an ensemble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series • Centre–margin • Swarm
Topical coherence	Degree of topical coherence among elements of an ensemble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monothematic • Polythematic
Textual autonomy	Degree of textual autonomy of elements within an ensemble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous • Heteronomous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Headlines o Vectors

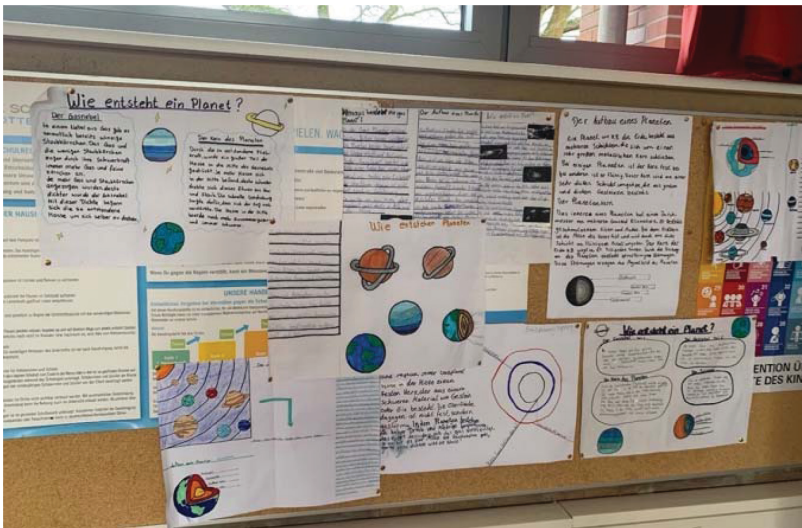


Figure 8.1 Classroom wall with sign ensembles: Total and close up

- 1a) General view of a classroom, sixth grade
- 1b) Corkboard with student posters, sixth grade

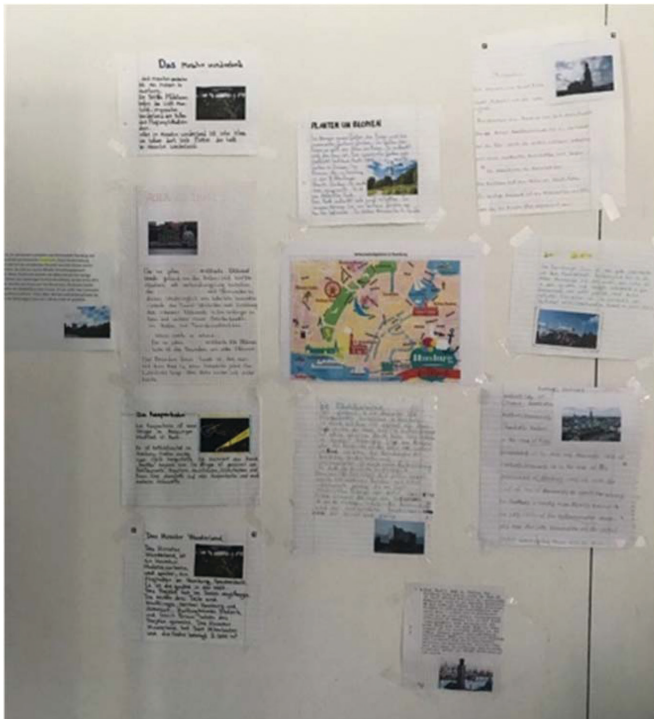
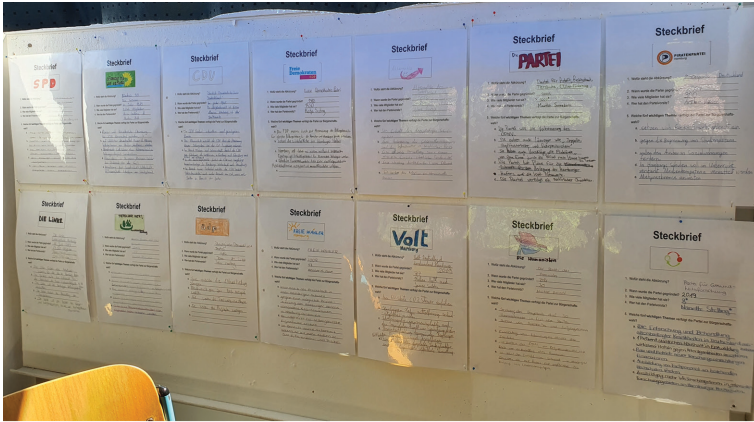


Figure 8.2 Two arrangement types: Serial (top), centre–margin (bottom)

2a) Profile sheets of political parties, tenth grade

2b) “Hamburg Sightseeing”, international preparation class

Canvas

An ensemble has a backdrop, or ground area, that delimits its extension, frames two or more elements as somehow belonging together, and sets them apart from other signs in a segment of physical space. We use the term “canvas” here as defined in multimodality studies (Bateman et al., 2017). In our understanding, the outer boundary of an ensemble is not created solely by the viewer but has some kind of semiotically perceivable materiality such as stone, metal, glass or cork. We distinguish two types of canvas, that is, “case” and “surface”:

- *Case*. The canvas here is an apparatus whose main purpose is the emplacement and display of signs. Subtypes of case include the corkboard or pinboard (onto which signs are pinned), the whiteboard (onto which signs are attached by magnetic strips or pins), a repurposed blackboard, a (lockable) glass-fronted box in which signs are attached or pinned (see Figure 8.1), or a digital screen with news such as the absence of teachers on the right and other information on the left. However, a case can also be as simple as a sheet of cardboard fixed on the wall.
- *(Bounded) surface*. The canvas here is part of the built structure (usually a wall), at times delimited in some way, most often by paint, to resemble a frame that signs are placed within. In yet other cases a built surface is repurposed as a frame for an ensemble, for example when a door is used as the frame for a collection of personal messages (see Figure 8.4) or likewise with a window frame (Figure 8.3).

In schoolsapes, the materiality of the canvas can index different types of authority and authorship and constrains (though not fully determines) the techniques for attaching components to the canvas (e.g. by pinning, taping, gluing). For example, case canvases such as glass cases or pinboards are typically placed near the entrance or in the administrative corridors (much less so in classrooms), contain administrative information or third-party posters and flyers (see Figure 8.5), and are controlled by members of staff. In contrast, surface canvases are typical of collaborative ensembles created by pupils and teachers who repurpose doors and other surfaces

(see Figures 8.3 and 8.4). In most examples discussed below, canvas and ensemble are coextensive, and attention is drawn to the semiotic properties of the ensemble rather than its underlying canvas. However, depending on its size and extension, a canvas can host more than one distinct ensemble. For example, in Figure 8.1 we see a corkboard that covers a large part of a classroom wall and hosts several distinct ensembles (see also Figure 8.5).

Arrangement

Within a canvas, components of an ensemble are arranged in different ways. Drawing on multimodality analyses (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Ledin & Machin, 2020), we distinguish three types of arrangement in our data:

- *Serial*. Distinct components are placed next to one another horizontally or vertically, thereby forming, for example, lines, columns or squares (Figures 8.2a and 8.3).
- *Centre–margin*. In this arrangement, famous from social semiotic approaches to multimodal communication (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996), one element defines a central point and other elements are arranged around it in a more or less concentric or radiating manner, thereby creating a star-like structure (Figure 8.2b).
- *Swarm*. In this pattern we see a loose collection of multiple elements that are very close to or even overlap each other, often in a circular or oval shape, though without a clear centre (Figure 8.4).

These three patterns of arrangement are closely linked to the topic and/or textual function of ensembles. For example, swarm ensembles are typically produced in collaborative projects that display (and construct) group identity (see Example 4), whereas subject-related ensembles that emerge from student work, as in Figures 8.2a and 8.2b, show a serial or centre–margin pattern. Serial arrangements tend to indicate an equal ranking among components, while a centre–margin arrangement creates a relationship of dependency between the centre and the surrounding objects.

Topic

We distinguish between single topic (monothematic) and multiple topic (polythematic) ensembles, depending on the perceived topical coherence among the ensemble constituents:

- *Single-topic ensembles.* Here the components concern (aspects of) the same topic, and their semantic-topical relation to one another can be hierarchical or equal. In Figure 8.2a, a serial arrangement that displays the outcome of a school project on political parties in Hamburg, each party is presented on a sheet of paper, with all sheets sharing the same layout structure. The content differs by party but falls within the same theme, and the components have equal status to one another, as each presents a political party. Figure 8.2b, a centre–margin arrangement, is also a single-topic ensemble, but the central element, a map of Hamburg, provides the common point of reference for all satellite elements.
- *Multiple-topic ensembles.* In some cases, the signs within an ensemble address different topics, perhaps with some common bond at a higher level of abstraction. For example, glass cases at the school entrance or close to teachers' offices can display various notices of school-related information, for example information sheets on continued education programmes, language trips and cultural events, each addressing a different topic yet coherent in the sense that they display information deemed relevant to students and teachers.

Textual autonomy

This final category concerns the textual status of the ensemble components, and in particular their capacity to communicate meaning outside a specific ensemble. Useful here is a permutation test, as deployed in multimodality analysis (cf. Ledin & Machin, 2020) to uncover how a given modality contributes to the overall meaning of a text. In our case, we ask whether an ensemble component would be able to “function” if emplaced in a different context, notably as an independent text. In some cases, elements within an ensemble would “work” equally well if placed somewhere else, such as an information poster (Figure 8.5) or a leaflet showing a map of Hamburg (Figure 8.2b); these we term *autonomous* (independent)

components. By contrast, *heteronomous* (dependent) elements contribute to an overall ensemble while not being able to function on their own, such as for example the single sheets with spelling rules in Figure 8.3 and pupil balloons in Figure 8.4. Within the group of non-autonomous components, two distinct types are headlines and vectors. From a social semiotics viewpoint, they have a textual metafunction; that is, they contribute to the overall coherence of an ensemble by creating (visual) linkages among (often autonomous) components, thus strengthening its cohesion (Ledin & Machin, 2020). Vectors may materialise as arrows, connecting lines or even connecting threads (see Figure 8.3). Headlines, meanwhile, help group and organise other elements; tellingly, headlines sometimes remain on a canvas even when autonomous elements are being replaced (or during replacement time).

4. Using sign ensembles: Knowledge transfer, group identity, staff cohesion

Recent schoolscape research makes amply clear that teachers and students appropriate the semiotic landscape of schools as a resource for pedagogical work in the broadest sense, including knowledge transfer and community building. This is repeatedly confirmed and exemplified in our data. For example, one teacher we interviewed described how, during lesson planning, she would think carefully about what lesson content was worth putting up on the wall. Another teacher discussed the “survival time” of artworks on school walls, pointing out that some of these artworks in the corridors were created by pupils who had already left the school. The design of the classrooms also plays an important role for the pupils in terms of identifying themselves with the room, demonstrating “ownership” of their classroom, and displaying their own learning outcomes such as artworks and posters.⁴

In our observations, these practices of appropriation of school space often take place through the (sometimes collaborative) creation of ensembles. In this section, we present three individual cases, each in a

4 In most secondary schools in Germany, pupils up to grade 10 have their own classroom for the entire school year.

combination of photographic elicitation and teacher and/or pupil interview, as qualitative evidence of how sign ensembles “work”. Some sign ensembles were created collaboratively by teachers and pupils to share subject-specific knowledge. Others promote symbolic identification with the classroom, while at the same time decorating the educational space. Yet others help build relationships between the teachers and convey information. In this process, ensembles can take on both informative and symbolic functions (Gorter & Cenoz, 2015).

Example 1: Knowledge transfer: Spelling rules on a pane

The first example occurred in a seventh grade classroom. It was created collaboratively by a teacher we interviewed, Ms. A, and pupils from the German language support course, and visualises the rules for upper- and lower-case spelling in German. It is a single-topic ensemble, as all elements are part of the main topic, spelling rules. Its canvas is a windowpane that separates the classroom from an adjacent meeting room. The white wooden frame of the pane delimits the canvas for the ensemble. The ensemble consists of several colourful pieces of handwritten paper that are arranged in a serial pattern. The white sign at the top left reads *Regeln der Groß- und Kleinschreibung* [capitalization rules], and its function as a headline is visually indexed by its top-left position (as the natural reading flow in German starts there) and the use of white paper (unlike all other elements that deploy coloured paper). There follow five unevenly shaped, brightly coloured pieces of paper, placed directly under (and in one case, next to) the headline, each containing grammatical terms: *Satzanfang* [beginning of sentence], *Doppelpunkt* [colon], *Nomen* [noun(s)], *Bestimmte Endungen* [certain endings], and *nominalisierte Verben* [nominalised verbs]. The top-most category, which somewhat disrupts the visual symmetry of the serial pattern, was probably placed next to the heading for reasons of space. The entire ensemble could have been placed slightly higher up on the glass pane, but then the elements would probably have been higher than the viewing height of the pupils, who are the intended recipients here. To its right each grammatical term is explained. These explanations are given on yellow, evenly shaped pieces of paper on the right of each category, and

the connection between the category and the explanation is indicated by red paper arrows, which mediate between the grammatical category and a mnemonic rhyme or sentence for each grammatical term. These are the three middle explanations, appearing on two lines each in Figure 8.3:

- *Am Satzanfang, fang immer groß an.* [Always start sentences with a capital letter.]
- *Nach dem Doppelpunkt schreibst du groß, wenn ein ganzer Satz steht.* [Capitalise after the colon when a complete sentence follows.]
- *Sei schlau und merk dir bloß: Nomen schreibt man immer groß!* [Be smart and remember, nouns are always capitalised!]

This visual link indicates the reading direction within the ensemble: readers should first read the sign on the left, then follow the arrow and read the sign on the right. We see a hierarchical relationship between the individual elements of this ensemble. The signs on the left come before those on the right, and the top-left sign on white paper is ranked higher than all the other elements. As a result, the individual elements do not function independently of each other. Each row consists of a coloured note + arrow + yellow note.

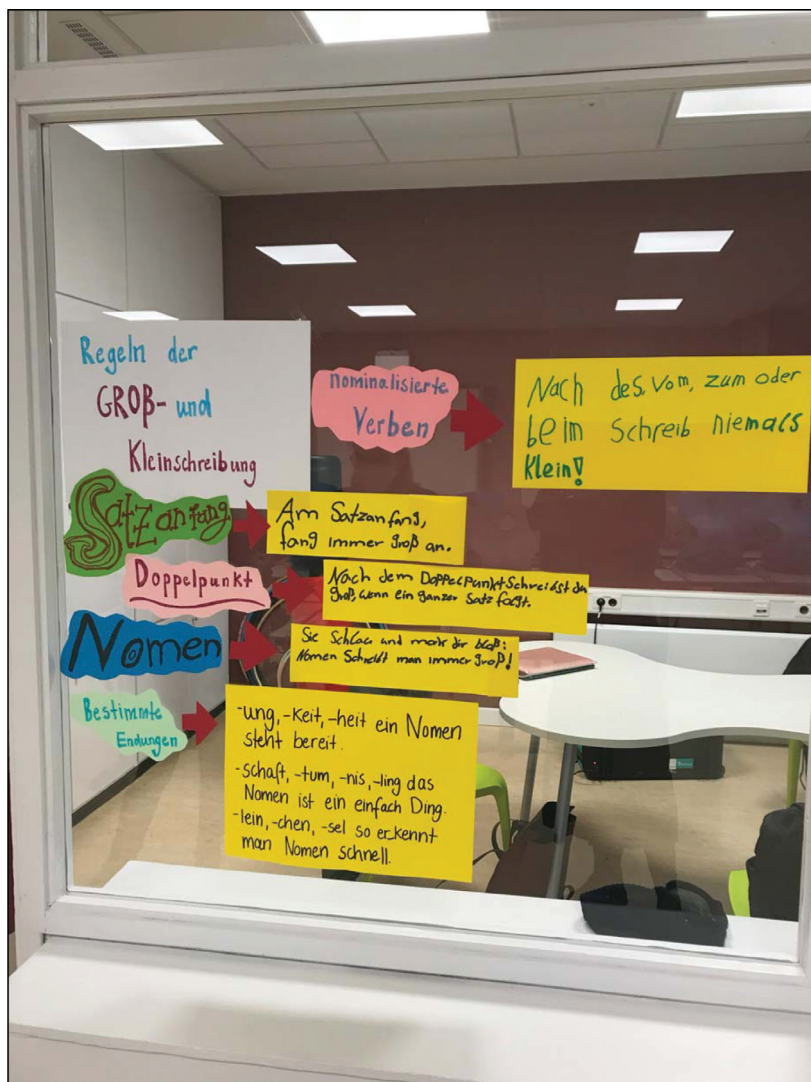


Figure 8.3: Spelling rules on a windowpane, seventh grade

In the interview, the teacher, Ms. A, explained the process of creating the ensemble together with her students.

- 047 A: one pupil had – I think it was at [supermarket] - it was at the beginning of the school year, there were mugs and I think also bed linen with spelling rules on sale
- 048 INT: yes (.)
- 049 A: he had brought a photo with him (.) and that was, for example, this um (.) ‘be smart and just remember nouns are always capitalized’ (.) then we knew ‘ok that’s it’ and then, for example, I gave them – so it’s a seventh grade – terms I’ll call it a gift (.) so nominalized verbs (.) of course they knew that as a nominalization (.) or also with certain endings (.) and that is now the beginning that we have found categories on the one hand and then on the other hand (.) memo sentences or rules, yes
- [...]
- 055 A: and the next goal is now, once we finish the topic we have right now, ballads, in (.) two weeks, we actually have the topic of capitalization (.) that the students who (.) are normally a bit weaker in German lessons or maybe [need] a bit longer as well
- 056 INT: [yes]
- 057 A: or in any case aren’t so good at spelling, that the teachers then introduce the class to these rules and we then gradually expand them with worksheets or texts to see what other rules there are.

Excerpt 1: Interview with Ms. A

Ms. A then discussed her aim in creating this ensemble (lines 055, 057). This was meant to help lower-achieving pupils in the language support class revisit the spelling rules and was also actively used in her German classes. The otherwise somewhat lower-performing pupils in the support class were supposed to act as “mentors” and present the spelling rules to the rest of the class. By collaboratively creating the ensemble, the pupils in the support course were given a head start over their classmates. In this way, Ms. A sought to counterbalance the performance order of her German language class and help her less well-performing students develop a sense of achievement by enabling them to explain the spelling rules to others with the help of the ensemble on the pane. Later in the interview Ms. A explained that she considered it important that “the pupils also see their writing hanging here”. She therefore deliberately used handwritten texts on the pieces of paper so that the pupils could identify with the content. Ms. A also narrated how, during a break, she observed students from the course going to the ensemble

and showing their classmates which parts of it they themselves had written, concluding from this that the collaborative creation of this ensemble led the students to identify with the language-related content.

Example 2: Group-identity building: A balloon swarm on the classroom door

Our second example shows an ensemble that represents the symbolic identification of pupils with the class and their ownership of their classroom space. The balloon swarm in Figure 8.4 was documented on the outside of a sixth grade classroom door in a district school. Through its placement, this ensemble takes on an infrastructural function in geosemiotic terms; that is, it labels the class that uses this room and at the same time indexes its social territory. Like the previous example, this ensemble also appropriates a part of the built structure as its canvas. The ensemble consists of 18 laminated pieces of paper in the shape of balloons that have been glued directly onto the classroom door. Its lower part features a laminated trapezoid-shaped sheet of paper with the inscription *6B Gemeinsam hoch hinaus!* [6B Flying high together!]. The upper left area features a yellow, irregularly shaped piece of paper with the inscription *Forscherklasse* [Explorer class]. In between the head and subline, the balloon swarm makes up the largest and most salient part of the ensemble due to the colourful design of the balloons that stand out from the dark yellow door. The balloons appear to be rising from the trapezoid shape with the class motto, spreading across the door surface.

A closer examination of the verbal content of the balloons suggests that they are scripted individually, most likely by the class members who wrote down their wishes for their joint time in class. Contentwise, the inscriptions are fairly similar. The phrase repeated most often is *viel Spaß* [lots of fun], followed by inscriptions such as the following (translated here into English):

- Have fun, good marks
- Laugh and have fun together
- Happiness, good marks, lots of fun
- Have fun, be positive, be nice
- Lots of fun, a nice class trip, a good start, good friends for everyone



Figure 8.4: Explorer class, sixth grade

Taking this verbal content into consideration, a single-topic ensemble is suggested, as all the balloons contribute to the same aim. Its components are non-independent (heteronomous), as a single balloon would not make much sense on its own.

The swarm pattern and the equal size of all the balloons create a sense of equality between them. At the same time, the individualised colours and designs of the balloons and the handwritten text invite each balloon to be read as the representation of an individual pupil. The combined effect of the swarm arrangement and the inscription corresponds to the community-building function of this ensemble. All the balloons together form the class community and no balloon (i.e. no pupil) is more important than the others; a serial arrangement might have created the effect of ranking or hierarchy. Also note how the balloons touch each other; just as the balloons act as an index for the pupils, their mutual proximity can be read as the social proximity of the class members. The signature *6B Gemeinsam hoch hinaus!* [6B Flying high together] visually and linguistically further underscores the idea of community. The phrase “flying high” indexes the ability of balloons to fly and again underscores the metonymic relation of balloons to pupils who are also encouraged to “fly high”, that is, perform well at school and have a good time with their friends.

Swarm-patterned ensembles are quite common in the schools we investigated when it comes to community building and symbolic identification. We also find them in the collections of photographs of class members in different situations, for example on school trips and excursions or during leisure activities. Often, these ensembles are mounted on pinboards in classrooms, and the photos show the pupils in an exuberant mood, for example laughing, looking directly into the camera or posing in front of an institution they visited during an excursion. As with the balloon ensembles, the arrangement of these photo collections shows no symmetrical order or sequence, but rather an arrangement of loosely combined photos.⁵

5 Note that this is our perception as non-involved observers. An eye-tracking analysis of the actors involved in the production of this ensemble, or of other members of the school community, could perhaps provide an alternative viewpoint, but is beyond the aims of this project.

These community-building ensembles are created in a collaborative effort between the pupils and the class teacher. Each individual element is customised by a student according to their taste and teachers create superordinate elements such as headings.

Example 3: *Staff cohesion: A whiteboard by and for teachers*

The third example (Figure 8.5) shows an ensemble created by and for teaching staff for the purpose of information display and relationship management. Its location in a corridor between the staff room and the other offices indexes teachers as the primary intended recipients. Teachers pass through this area frequently, pupils only rarely. The canvas is a magnetic board, and individual components are attached to it with magnets.

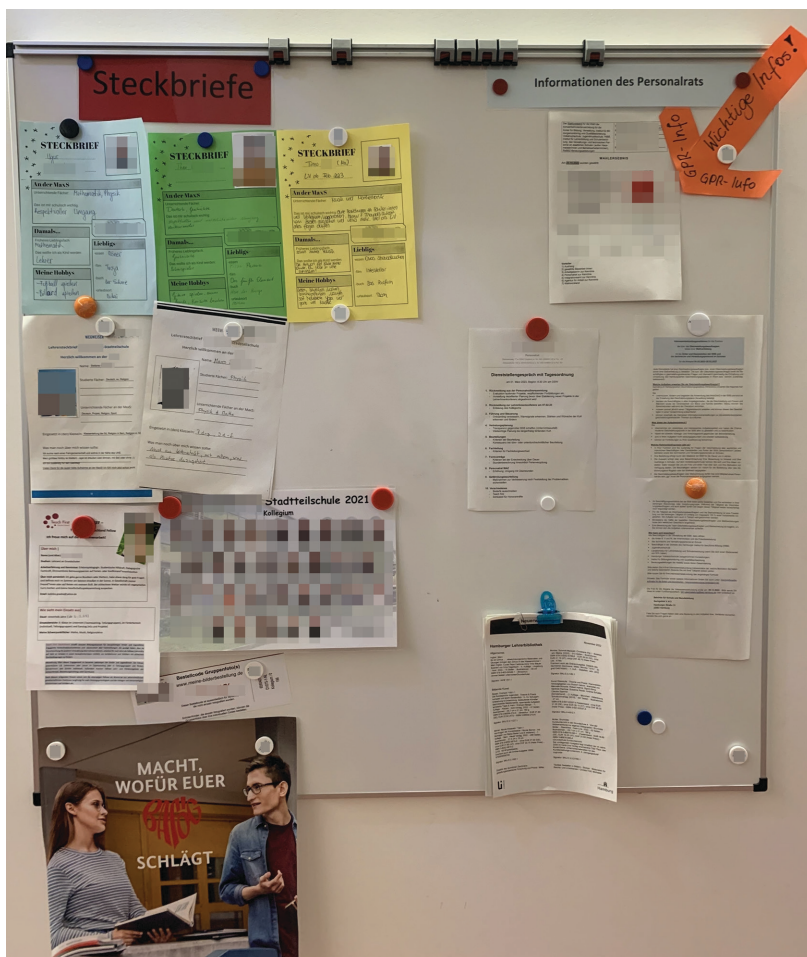


Figure 8.5: A sign ensemble with teacher profiles and staff council information

This canvas hosts two thematically distinct clusters, each with its own headline, separated by a blank space. The left-hand cluster is headlined *Steckbriefe* [profiles] in large black sans-serif letters on red laminated paper. It features three rows of teacher profiles, some on coloured and others on white sheets of paper, and arranged in a 3-2-1 series. These are personal profiles by new members of the teaching staff, including a headshot

photo. The six profiles use three different templates. The top-row template was designed by our interviewee herself who did not like the school's template, which is the one used in the second row, while the profile in the third row uses a template designed by the organisation, with its logo "Teach First" in the upper left corner. Next to this last profile is a collage of headshots of the teaching staff. The poster at the bottom left was produced by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and provides information on the German student funding scheme (*Bafög*). This last poster does not fit thematically with the rest and was apparently attached to this board owing to a lack of available space elsewhere. If considered part of this ensemble, it makes it a multiple-topic one, while all other sheets have the same topic, that is, the presentation of members of the teaching staff.

The right-hand cluster, meanwhile, is headed *Information des Personalrats* [Information from the staff council] and consists of a few sheets of paper arranged in a loose serial pattern. The sheets in the top row display the results of the recent council election, the second and third rows show the agenda for the next staff council meeting and information about the school equal opportunities officer. The two pieces of paper on the far right are pages of the same document, and their overlapping placement visually frames them as belonging together. The bottom row features a flyer with information about the Hamburg Teachers' Library, and its relative distance from the other four sheets can be read as indexing its thematic divergence from the information above it. The large orange arrow in the top right-hand section, made of paper and written with a black pen, reads *Wichtige Infos!* [Important information] on the stem and *GPR-Info* [Information from the staff council] on the tip. The size and placement of the arrow highlight the relevance of the information it points to. A salient difference in the design of these two clusters (which, as we argue, are two distinct ensembles hosted on the same canvas) is the multimodal make-up of the cluster on the left, which features colourful sheets of paper, individual profile photos, a poster with staff headshots, and handwriting. The outcome is a more personal and engaging set of information about individual colleagues rather than institutional workings.

The teacher we interviewed, Ms. B, focused on the left-hand ensemble, and explained its production process and the motivation behind it. Ms. B and a colleague mentor trainee teachers and new teachers at this

school. In Ms. B's view, the staff is growing and becoming more anonymous, and teachers no longer know each other at all, which she finds "totally unpleasant". She therefore decided to design a profile template for her new colleagues, with sections that elicit information of potential interest to other colleagues such as "The subjects I teach", "My favourite subject as a pupil", "What I wanted to become as a child", "My hobbies", "My favourite food/movie/book/holiday destination". According to Ms. B, her colleagues like the fact that these profiles are now displayed on this whiteboard, and she likes to read through the content herself to "get a better picture" of new members of staff. The collage of headshots of the teaching staff was taken by a professional photographer and was probably placed there by a member of the teaching staff, as it fits in well thematically with the introduction of the new colleagues. Here, then, the motivation is a mix of information flow and community-building among teaching staff. The right-hand cluster, on the other hand, was probably compiled by a member of the school management or the administration, as it has purely informative value for (at least some) teachers, indexed by its "sober" and functional design.

5. Producing and reproducing sign ensembles

It should be clear from the examples that ensembles are spread across different school premises, and that various agents in the school community can be part of ensemble production: teachers and pupils, as well as administrative staff and even third-party agents external to the school. The collaborative creation of the examples discussed in the previous section (Figures 8.3 and 8.4) confirms findings from earlier schoolscape research (Gorter & Cenoz, 2015; Karafylli & Maligkoudi, 2023). We also argue that ensembles vividly illustrate a property of schoolscape in general, that is, their fast pace of change. Course-related sign ensembles come and go as the learning in a class progresses; community-building ensembles change at least once a year when a new class enters the classroom space; glass cases and pinboards provide the canvas for the constant exchange and changing of inserted materials – new flyers, posters, fact sheets, information sheets for new members of staff and so on.

This insight is closely linked to the issue of the agency and authorship of an ensemble. LL scholarship has of course created classifications of authorship to deal with individual signs, which go as far back as the distinction between “top-down” and “bottom-up” signs (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006). Gorter and Cenoz (2023) use “agency” and “authorship” as synonyms in relation to the basic research question, “Who puts up the signs, when and where?” (Gorter & Cenoz, 2024, p. 106). Other researchers construe agency as a bracket category that comprises the author, issuer (i.e. the person responsible for the public display), and addressee of the sign (Bagna & Bellinzona, 2022; Biró, 2016; Savela, 2018). This triadic distinction is useful for addressing the complex agency structures behind sign ensembles, as illustrated by the examples in the previous section. The templates for the staff profiles (Figure 8.5) were designed by a teacher at the school and then filled in by hand by the new colleagues. The author of the profile template is therefore the teacher, whereas the new colleagues act as authors of one completed copy each; the issuer is the teacher who places these copies on the board; and all teachers are potential addressees. In the case of the spelling rules (Figure 8.3), both the pupils and the teacher act as authors with respect to certain components of the windowpane ensemble. The teacher additionally acts as issuer, because she arranged these components on the canvas, and all class members are potential addressees.

In addition, an analysis of sign ensembles in terms of their production process needs to take into consideration how access to an ensemble is regulated (with typically one teacher or administrative staff member assigned to removing and renewing components) and how decisions on creating and replacing sign ensembles are distributed in the school community. If we ask who decides what appears in the schoolscape, the person in charge of fitting signs on a canvas is arguably as important as those who actually author the individual components of the ensemble(s) on this canvas. Sign ensembles are indeed the outcome of collaborative authorship, but it would be naive to assume that the division of labour in this process is equal and symmetrical.

In our own research we draw on Goffman’s notion of participation formats, a framework originally developed to overcome the simplistic distinction between speaker/hearer (or sender/recipient), and subsequently adopted in media discourse studies (Goffman, 1981; Schwitalla, 2001;

Tekin, 2023). Goffman's approach decomposes the "speaker" into the formats of an "author" (the actor who authors a message), a "principal" (the actor who is responsible for a message), and an "animator" (the actor who enunciates or enacts the message). Depending on the speech event and the organisational structure, these formats can be distributed across individual participants or enacted by the same participant. Applied to schoolscape and their ensembles, these participation categories aim to complement the institutional roles of teacher, pupil and administrative staff. Pupils, for example, may be animators, authors or principals with regard to different ensembles or even parts of a single ensemble. Understanding this entanglement of institutional role and participation format is a task for the ethnographic component of our project.

Against this backdrop, we focus on the collaborative production practices among teachers and students. It is important to point out that the motivation for creating ensembles and the conditions for taking on a participation role in the ensemble production vary depending on the institutional role. Teachers, in particular, aim to create an appropriate space for living and learning in the school, and to realise the school's educational mission. Depending on the subject matter and the objectives of a lesson, teachers decide whether to use the walls of the learning space to store and visualise a particular piece of knowledge. In addition to their educational mandate, schools also have a mandate that includes learning social skills and socially recognised values (cf. Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, 2022). Part of this mandate includes efforts to create and foster a sense of community and social cohesion in the school and this, too, can be visualised through ensembles, for example those that consist of personal messages or photos of pupils (cf. Figure 8.4).

When teachers design (i.e. conceive of, cf. Kress, 2010) a project that involves the collaborative creation of ensembles to meet these aims, they act as principals towards this ensemble even if they do not add a single thing to it. They outline the process, coordinate the compilation and monitor its accuracy. Teachers can also act as authors in this process when they, in addition to designing and coordinating, create specific pieces of the ensemble, such as the grammatical terms that form part of the spelling ensemble (cf. Example 3) or the subline of the balloon swarm (Figure 8.4). Students, in turn, participate as animators when they create bits of an

ensemble based on instructions or templates provided by a teacher, or when they emplace parts of an ensemble that were authored by a teacher. However, this asymmetry should not diminish the fact that the creation of both subject-specific and community-building ensembles requires, and depends on, active participation by both teachers and pupils.

This analysis of participation roles seems useful for Figure 8.5 as well, albeit with a different twist. Here, we may think of the person who is responsible for the placement of materials on the canvas as the principal, and this may be either an administrative staff member or a teacher. This format is, then, distinct from the actual authorship of the documents displayed on this canvas. Some of the displayed sheets could be authored by administrative staff, while others come from third-party sources and are selected by administrative staff for display on the canvas. Here, the principal controls the display and the flow of information in this part of the schoolscape.

6. Conclusion

This chapter outlined a framework for the analysis of ensembles and an ethnographically supported examination of their production and use in a school community. In the first part of the chapter, a classification scheme was developed and illustrated with examples from secondary schools in Hamburg. In the second part, a qualitative analysis of three examples showcased the diverse contexts in which ensembles are collaboratively produced and their institutional purposes. Ensembles on whiteboards and pinboards in the corridor areas tend to provide information such as school mission statements, internal school procedures/processes and personnel management. Ensembles in the classrooms make an important contribution to promoting learning and classroom management; they also represent a “safe place” for the pupils by identifying with the room through symbolic signs such as birthday calendars and photo collections. In the third part we showed that central to the production of all ensembles is the individual commitment of one or more school actors to compose signs on a canvas. As our analysis has made clear, most ensembles are the product of a complex interaction of individual agencies, which we decomposed into the production formats of author, principal and animator. One person

in the school community can fulfil several formats simultaneously and thereby is responsible for a sign ensemble over a certain period of time, or they encounter this ensemble in different formats, for example first as a maker and later as a viewer.

A task for future research will be to examine how a sign ensemble can become part of an *assemblage*, that is, a configuration of semiotic resources, people and places that comes together to produce meaning (Lamb, 2020; Pennycook, 2017, 2019). For example, a knowledge-bearing ensemble in the schoolscape (e.g. Figure 8.1) becomes part of an assemblage when it receives the focal attention of class members in a process of teaching or exercising spelling rules. Another task for future research will be to examine the production conditions of an ensemble in terms of the pace of completion and renewal. While certain ensembles seem to emerge “at once” as an outcome of coordinated collaborative action, others rather emerge gradually such as filling up a glass case with informative signs; still others appear to persist over time, for example a glass case with school sports team memorabilia, while others are renewed more frequently. These impressions, which wait to be fleshed out by ethnographic fieldwork, illustrate the relevance of time as a descriptive dimension of ensembles in the life of a school community.

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9 Linguistics or Logistics? Actively Changing a Harmful Narrative through Collaborative Autoethnography on TikTok

Abstract: This study draws attention to the ongoing challenges faced by Linguistics students at the University of the Western Cape, who are confronted with the harmful narrative that students within the humanities are failing to contribute to society meaningfully.

Applying the linguistic landscape toolkit to the virtual landscape of TikTok, the authors, provide a multimodal analysis of the department's de facto social media page: Inspired Linguistics, of which all student authors are founders and regular contributors. Drawing on collaborative autoethnography the authors challenge this longstanding belief by analyzing their viral videos, which depict life as a Linguistics student.

Within the virtual sphere, the authors examine ways in which formal academic studies become relevant on social media, particularly through the construction of academic inclusion online. Bringing together multimodality, resemiotization and semiotic assemblage, this study reveals the alluring potential of creating a novel space for academia to flourish on TikTok.

Keywords: collaborative autoethnography, linguistics, TikTok, activism, multimodality, social media

1. Introduction

This chapter contributes to the field of the Virtual Linguistic Landscape (VLL) through an analysis of multimodal posts on a student-led social media page called [@inspiredlinguistics_uwc](#) or simply Inspired Linguistics (IL). This page, created by senior postgraduates in the Department of Linguistics, falls under the Arts and Humanities (A & H) Faculty at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), with which all the authors of this chapter are affiliated. Rallying around harmful realities that arts students regularly face, this chapter adopts a narrative style that responds

to habitual detractors regarding minimal employment perspectives, and pursuing an “inadequate” degree that is no longer relevant in the changing technological world.

In this chapter, the authors show how the virtual social media space of TikTok is reimagined as a meaningful place in which to create academic citizenship with aspiring, ongoing and returning A & H students and UWC alumni. Section 1 is an autoethnographic reflection by each author, beginning with the first author who has positioned autoethnography in her work in Linguistic Landscape (LL) studies (Peck, 2021; Peck, 2024; Toyer & Peck, forthcoming; Tufi & Peck, forthcoming), and continuing with the remaining five authors and founders of IL. Section 2 provides a review of the terrain of the virtual landscape of TikTok and situates it within the wider theoretical frame of VLL (Ivkovic & Lotherington, 2009). Here, a theoretical toolkit is discussed, notably semiotic assemblages, multimodality, salience, remediation, resemiotisation, intertextuality and recontextualisation. In section 3, the authors provide an overview of the choice of adopting a collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) approach (Chang et al., 2016). Section 4 clarifies the methodological considerations taken in this chapter and flows into three data sets (sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3). Section 5 provides a discussion of the theoretical framework and concludes with a reflection on student-led activism and academic citizenship online.

1.1 The beginnings...

I, Amiena, was laughing hysterically at a joke that someone had made – “Do you also get this? What are you studying, Linguistics ... what Logistics?!”. I was at a writing retreat with Linguistics students from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and we were all busy working away; students were writing up their theses, there were occasional visits from postdocs and me, supervising my students and listening to my colleagues and students discuss their work. This was a writing retreat with a difference as these were not just my own students, but also a medley of students who had requested to be there. It was around the end of the Covid-19 pandemic and it was clear that students needed to reconnect and become “academic” again – so I organised the retreat. A critical look at the joke that initially had me in stitches reveals the harsh reality that Linguistics students in the

Arts and Humanities faculty at UWC face; their degrees are often misunderstood by their family, fellow students and even potential employers. What is this “linguistic” thing we study so passionately?

Turning to Jacina, who was sitting comfortably on a brightly lit couch at the serene wine estate of Zevenwacht, Cape Town, I heard her animatedly declare, “I wish people could see how much fun we [are] having and how hard we work!”

The fact that these young scholars are faced with the same discrimination that I faced nearly 15 years ago was unfortunate but unsurprising; however, the difference between the Amiena of 2002, a first year at UWC, and the Amiena of 2022, a senior member of the Linguistics department was that we have social media.

As a regular contributor to the field of LL, I have watched – and been a part of – the shift towards engaging with signs in the online space. The VLL has been attributed to all types of online research such as emails, web pages, websites and so forth. In this chapter we discuss social media as an intentional, life-changing space in which young graduates undertake the mammoth task of changing a narrative – held globally I may add – about what it means to be a Linguistics graduate. What had begun as a joke about the constant misrepresentation of our chosen discipline of Linguistics became fuel for creating a space for Linguistics students to correct this view using tools well honed in their undergraduate and post-graduate studies. What we discuss here is viral, creative and multimodal ways in which activism emerges in the selected posts analysed here.

In this chapter, we discuss the constitution of a community of practice which was created to give hope to prospective, returning and uncertain Linguistics students as a form of activism. In a very real sense we saw social media as a place to “self-mediate” (Cammaerts, 2015) our position as linguists through what Gillian et al. (2008, p. 151) call “the intersection between social context, political purpose and technological possibility”. In LL speak, researching signs in place “can be used as an instructive and constructive tool for developing awareness, understanding and social activism in current societies” (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009, p. 327).

Our story of activism begins from a point of frustration and struggle. Despite holding many of the qualities outlined by the World Economic Forum (2020) Top 10 Job Skills, such as creativity, originality, critical

thinking and problem solving, Arts students are often mocked as having a “useless” degree. Institutionally, while there is evidence that Arts graduates are more than equipped to succeed (cf. Dramat, 2022), there still remain many misconceptions to uphold the prevailing narrative that A & H and Linguistics students simply do not have “real” employment opportunities. Our unanimous agreement that Linguistics had a bad reputation which we needed to mobilise against became as important as our investment in our own studies and careers. Actively working against this derogatory belief (read: discipline discrimination!) became our “why”. True to form – and indicative of a collaborative autoethnography – all six of us sat in my office and wrote our version of how Inspired Linguistics (IL) came to be. This was an important first step as it allowed us to experience the origins of IL through each other’s eyes. Five of us met at a writing retreat and the sixth person was added later due to her enthusiasm and shared ideological views. What follows are short vignettes from each of the postgraduate founding members of IL which provide a mosaic of individual entry points into the start of academic citizenship online.

ZOE: *At a writing retreat, towards the end of the 2022 year, I found myself amongst a group of aspiring young linguists. While we all shared a common goal in mind, which was to finalise our theses at the time, we were brewing some food for thought. We reflected on our experiences and journeys as postgraduate students in Linguistics. We found that we have shared experiences all relating to the discrediting of our success thus far within the field. It was at this very writing retreat that we decided we were going to do our best to educate people on the field of Linguistics. This is where and how the start of Inspired Linguistics (IL) came to be.*

KURT: *IL was born during a writing retreat at Zevenwacht wine estate in the beginning of November 2022. Amongst fellow academics and like-minded individuals, it was discerned that a virtual presence was to be established for the Linguistics department of UWC. That writing retreat will always hold a special place in my heart because it made me*

realise everything I love about the Linguistics department at UWC. It made me proud and I want to call it my department. Furthermore, establishing the department's presence in the virtual sphere was a task where we expressed our identities as academics, blending personal life with work life. It was through this that we collectively agreed upon a soft approach to help students transition back into face-to-face learning. We further used this platform as a way to connect with like-minded people as well.

JACINA: *At the time of the retreat, it was just post the Covid-19 pandemic. I was filled with anxiety due to social isolation and having not been around my colleagues for a few years. The retreat was very therapeutic and the start of something great. From strangers to forming a strong academic bond. I remembered sitting with my fellow colleagues discussing the idea of a social media page for the Linguistics department. We felt as though it was time to change the narrative or stereotypes commonly associated with an A & H degree, especially furthering our studies in Linguistics. The aim of the page was to highlight the Linguistics department at UWC and to show the world what linguistics was and could do.*

KĀMILAH: *Catalysed by the Linguistics or Logistics joke, we spent those four days reflecting, working, bonding and, as with all great things, what had started out as a collective peeve gave birth to Inspired Linguistics. It was here that I realised that there are like-minded individuals who suffered through the same song and dance like myself and we were constantly validating ourselves and our degrees and essentially our career options. This needed to change and we started on the path of becoming the change agents that we needed.*

AMMAARAH: *I was approached by Kāmilah to join the IL team and became their fifth and final member. Their mission, to change the narrative of A & H students, was one I could get behind. From that moment, all content produced*

was de facto collaborative in nature. Our earliest content looked at creating awareness of the linguistics field. Undergraduate students were asked their thoughts on the study of Linguistics as well as what they would do with their degrees. What we do with our IL content across platforms enables us to bridge the gap with students and gain far better traction than an official institutional platform could. Today, IL continues to grow whether we jump on trends or even create our own original content.

Finding a name that encapsulated the purpose and vision for the page was not easy and as linguists everyone wanted it to resonate with our core vision. What follows is how Inspired Linguistics, or IL, came to be.

1.2 “It’s not my baby, but I named it”

AMIENA: *I remember waiting until the group had thrown a few names in the hat – and thrown them out – before I made my own suggestion. I was wary of suggesting a name close to my own social media handle – @amienainspired on YouTube, Instagram and Facebook – and also the name of my business – Amiena Inspired Coaching and Training. However, clearly, faced with inspired young linguists, I had to put it to them anyway: “I have a suggestion, but you don’t have to take it!” I cringed inwardly hoping that I wouldn’t come off as an academic narcissist, but put it to them, “how about Inspired Linguistics?” – I wasn’t shot down. Kurt liked it and the others seemed okay to go along. Kāmilah added “@uwc” because “we need to show where we are from” – the geosemiotics of the new page was key. Being inspired was not enough, we needed to be proud of where we came from – and so @inspiredlinguistics uwc was born or “IL” as referred to for short.*

But IL did more than just become another university page, it had heart and this was captured by the phrase “I am because we are”, a simple African translation of *Ubuntu*. This “us”, “we”, “our” became clear as we began

to find our way through the academic hierarchies, duties and functions and life as a member of academia.

2. The virtual space

The VLL draws much of its toolkit from traditional LL research. In particular, this study employs aspects of semiotic assemblages, multimodal discourse analysis and resemiotisation/semiotic remediation, as well as intertextuality, in its analytical framework. While multimodality focuses on the meaning established by certain modes (Pennycook, 2017), semiotic assemblages enable us to analyse the “temporary arrangements of many kinds of [...] dynamic ‘dividuals’ in an endless, nonhierarchical array of shifting associations of varying degrees of durability” (Appadurai, 2015, p. 221 cited in Pennycook, 2017, p. 278).

Drawing on Appadurai (2015), Pennycook (2017) demonstrates how semiotics easily becomes recontextualised. Through a virtual ethnography and the assessment of online communities, it is evident how quickly the resemiotisation and recontextualisation of certain semiotics can occur.

2.1 Semiotic assemblages and intertextuality

Semiotic assemblages allow the viewer’s own interpretation as opposed to the assigned meaning certain modes possess in multimodality. As explained by Pennycook (2017),

[t]he notion of assemblages allows for an understanding of how different trajectories of people, semiotic resources and objects meet at particular moments and places, and thus helps us to see the importance of things, the consequences of the body, and the significance of place alongside the meanings of linguistic resources. (p. 269)

This means that a single event can act as a catalyst in which the multimodal aspects are then resemiotised and recontextualised in different contexts creating new meanings with potentially new trajectories. These new pathways are often quite exciting when we see how texts borrow from other texts to create something with a potentially completely different affective outcome, from fearful to funny or exciting. Intertextuality looks at how different types of discourses create meaning and establish a relationship with the reader (Bullo, 2017). In online communities such as

TikTok, trending videos are the first pieces of content users imitate, reproduce and repurpose to fit certain contexts (Bresnick, 2019). Wilson and Peterson (2002) say that online communities emerged from internet-based information and communication technologies in which user-generated content is produced and thus distributed (Preece et al., 2003). On a platform such as TikTok, these online communities take the form of one's followers, as well as accounts that produce similar styled content for viewer consumption. This chapter puts users and the online TikTok community, in particular, into perspective in terms of the IL content produced for marketing and educational purposes. The elements that can be found in a scene or semiotic assemblage of sorts are often informed by multimodality (especially in the virtual space), as well as salience, resemiotisation and recontextualisation.

2.2 Multimodality and salience

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) define multimodality as the use of two or more modes such as text, sound, image, video and gesture in a sign to create meaning, and have developed a multimodal discourse analysis tool which is based on Halliday's (1978) social semiotic approach to language. For this study, we applied Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) compositional meaning, in particular the compositional element of salience. Salience is seen as the most critical part of an image as it points to the most striking features in a sign which function as a way to "attract the viewer's attention" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). Salience looks particularly at the placement in the background, contrasts in tonal value (colour), and difference in sharpness and relative size, as explained by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 177). Lastly, framing analyses the coherence in the relationship between the visual and verbal signs that are used to separate or connect ideas in an image (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In essence, this system focuses on the collaboration between visual and verbal signs in an image or images.

2.3 Remediation, resemiotisation and recontextualisation

Previous studies on semiotic remediation focused on the influence new media has on culture with regard to already existing media. Adding to this,

Banda and Jimaima (2015) proposed that semiotic remediation can be seen as repurposing. Thus resemiotisation, which then captures new ways in which messages are packaged for a new audience, is also important when analysing signs in the virtual space. Iedema (2001) says that through resemiotisation, the meaning of one semiotic mode transfers into another that is different. This means that these modes will possess similar aspects and “each semiotic element has its own specific (systemic) constraints and affordances” (Iedema, 2001, p. 33) which present this sense of repetition in modes. In terms of the IL content analysed in this chapter, the original TikTok video was of multi-award winning singer Rihanna’s Super Bowl performance, which was shared on the TikTok platform by one of her fans and has since been repurposed in many ways with diverse images and meanings within the online community space (Iedema, 2003). The repurposed content has now been shaped into a new meaning through the resemiotisation of the original mode.

Recontextualisation can be seen to be a result of the resemiotisation of a mode. Iedema and Wodak (1999, p. 13) state that recontextualisation simultaneously construes an increase in “social discursive relevance” and “material presence” which is at the centre of organisational power. The main concern of recontextualisation is for organisational discourse analysis to take responsibility for the linguistic and semiotic productions (Iedema & Wodak, 1999). Furthermore, multimodal logic is viewed as the “underpinning structuration in organisations” (Iedema & Wodak, 1999, p. 13). This means that in order for recontextualisation to occur, we need to analyse the original content created and investigate how it has now been resemiotised in the IL space.

In online spaces, the semiotic meaning becomes resemiotised at a rapid pace. From the data that will be analysed, it is evident that instances of resemiotisation and recontextualisation have taken place on the TikTok platform.

3. Collaborative autoethnography

Chang et al. (2016) explicitly position their book, entitled *Collaborative Autoethnography*, as a handbook for collaborative autoethnography (CAE) research, making the challenges, benefits and methods of CAE

quite clear from the very beginning. Working through their handbook, we agreed on the following principles and guidelines prior to embarking on our research:

- (1) Authorship: Chang et al. (2016) point out that in extremely personal story-sharing the final decision on the order of authorship needs to be decided beforehand, as well as what would happen to the data if one person should decide to withdraw from the project. Amiena typically co-authors two papers with each of her postgrads and they are automatically the first authors. In the case of this chapter and with five new co-authors, Amiena is positioned as the first author as she took the bulk of the responsibility for shaping the chapter. Thereafter we alphabetised the order, using the authors' first names.
- (2) Interdependency of researchers: Amiena is a supervisor to three of the five students and "advisor" to the other three. There are therefore differences in power differentials, but constant communication, contact outside the university and a general respect for each other's roles were part of our *modus operandi*, which supported a balanced approach to differences in seniority.
- (3) Vulnerability and trust: CAE involves a fair bit of personal sharing, and high trust is needed for this type of engagement. Over the years, the IL team has watched Amiena's growth just as much as she has watched theirs and we have come to a place of high trust and sharing. There is a lot of sharing and support and, without that, researchers may feel short-changed or misrepresented. Our advice: do not even consider embarking on CAE with someone you would not grab a coffee with!
- (4) Ethics and confidentiality: Chang et al. (2016) explain that there is no ready consensus on whether official ethics clearance from an institutional review board (IRB) or research ethics committee (RECs, as they are known in South Africa) is needed for autoethnography (AE) or CAE research. As Amiena is the chairperson of the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at UWC, this matter quickly became a point of keen interest for her. After consulting the literature, we agreed that AE and CAE, with its focus on the Self, did not require formal ethics clearance *per se*. However, following

Ellis (2007), we discuss the “relational ethics” of non-researchers who have become interwoven in our stories. For data in the public domain, we have excluded all extraneous persons and applied pseudonymisation throughout. And finally, confidentiality was maintained by the researchers through our own redactions of the transcribed data and a simple promise to keep selected self-disclosures made in jest or distress private.

3.1 Data types, analysis and process

Chang et al. (2016) identifies six data types for CAE, namely, personal memory, archival material, self-observation, self-reflection, self-analysis and interview.

Of these six typologies of data types, we analyse archival material and self-analysis. The first data set was posted by one of the many users on TikTok, while data sets 2 and 3 were created by IL. While interviews are a typical unit of analysis, the virtual space is often approached from an etic view with little engagement with content creators. By collaboratively analysing self-generated posts by IL, we aimed to achieve three outcomes: to unapologetically foreground CAE as an important methodological tool in humanising the study of VLL, to create a space in which vulnerability, tension and self-expression could be prized above academic prose, and to engage with the notion of activism and community of practice as seen on IL's Instagram and TikTok pages.

CAE is not without its detractors, with some finding it self-indulgent (Freeman, 2011), in need of scientific rigour (Le Roux, 2017), or simply too narrowly focused on the self (Atkinson, 2006). We agree that all of these factors may indeed apply in CAE, and this is why we situate this chapter within our greater research interest of LL, place-making and identity work (Peck, 2021), and virtual semiotics (Toyer & Peck, 2023).

While we believe that CAE has immense value as a tool that legitimises subjective realities (cf. Tufi & Peck, forthcoming), we nevertheless wanted to allow a large part of the data to come directly from engagement with the online community. So what follows is an analysis of three data sets that enjoyed semi-viral and viral success online. This data selection is similar to Amiena's first foray into AE, where YouTube analytics produced the

most viewed and liked video, thereby ensuring no cherry-picking (cf. Peck, 2021). Only the third data set was chosen purposively as it was created by IL and used as an assessment in the first-year Linguistics programme.

4. Rihanna: The original scene

The first data set composes the multimodal foundation of the scene in which data sets 2 and 3 are intertextually referenced, resemiotised and repurposed. Data set 2 is a remake of Rihanna's trending Super Bowl performance featuring Zoe and Jacina. The third data set builds on the IL remake of data set 1 and is used as a pedagogical resource to teach intertextuality in Kāmilah's first-year guest lecture.

4.1 Data set 1: "Tempting isn't it?"

Rihanna performed on February 12, 2023, during the halftime show of the Super Bowl. The Super Bowl is an annual game that determines the champion of the National Football League (NFL) in the United States. It is a major event with millions of Americans tuning in to watch it live. The Super Bowl performance holds a prestige position as it is a big accomplishment for an artist to be invited to perform there. The artist is not paid but they do reach a larger audience, which is evident in the views previous acts have received. According to McIntosh (2023), Super Bowl performances with collaborating artists such as Shakira and Jennifer Lopez, who performed in 2020, accumulated 296 million views on YouTube, previously the Weeknd garnered 63 million views, and Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Eminem, Mary J. Blige, Kendrick Lamar & 50 Cent with 240 million views. Rihanna's 2023 performance was no exception as, after 16 months (July 2024), the original video stood at 235 million views and had gained 3.6 million likes. Rihanna's performance trended on various social media sites such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, especially the scene in Figures 9.1 and 9.2.



Figure 9.1 Rihanna video Part 1



Figure 9.2 Rihanna video Part 2

A 10-second clip of Rihanna's famous Super Bowl performance was posted on TikTok on February 13, 2023, the day after the live Super Bowl performance. This video catalysed approximately 56,400 video remakes, wherein users around the globe used the original soundtrack to create humorous videos of their own, such as Figure 9.1 where the user claims, "my dog whenever he sees me with a plate of food". In this video the backup dancer clad in white has been resemiotised as a dog and Rihanna as the plate of food. Therefore, Rihanna is seen as the desirable "treat" that everyone wants. This is important as it speaks to the goal of the remake.

In the original video, Rihanna is seen dressed completely in red, with a red jumpsuit, red belt, red undershirt and red shoes. Her backup dancers, also seen in the video, are wearing white outfits. This helps her to stand out from the crowd of backup dancers. At one point in the show, one of the dancers separates from the group and is seen crawling after Rihanna while she proceeds to walk away unfazed. As seen in Figure 9.2, he eventually rises from this position and Rihanna turns around in time with the music and the dancer lifts up his jacket to show the movement and motion of his hips, also in time with the music, displaying that they are in sync. At that moment, Rihanna faces him directly, showing that she is acknowledging him, but then she turns around again and walks away still singing. This is how the 10-second clip of her performance ends. Rihanna's scant attention to the enamoured dancer trailing behind her indicates that she is in charge and reveals her as the temptress, symbolised fittingly in red.



Figure 9.3 Rihanna Remake part 1



Figure 9.4 Rihanna Remake part 2

The IL remake video was conceptualised as a promotional video to appeal to prospective Linguistics students considering furthering their postgraduate studies. In South Africa there are very few students with Bachelors in hand who proceed to Honours, even fewer to Masters, with a small proportion completing their PhD. The IL remake of the Rihanna trend surpassed 51,900 views (as of July 2024) on TikTok, and we argue that the popularity of this postgraduate marketing video shows signs of discursively and multimodally creating an academic community online.



Figure 9.5 Rihanna remake



Figure 9.6 Original Rihanna clip

Staying close to the original video, Zoe, portraying Rihanna, wears a red pair of pants, a red belt and a red jacket. The difference in terms of clothing are the red sunglasses which have been added to the red ensemble, the white shoes and her hair, which is not styled in the same manner as Rihanna's was during her performance. The microphone in this context is a board duster which has been repurposed to portray a microphone. This board duster also fits the academic setting and the academic context that the video is aiming to create by alluding to postgraduate studies. To further identify more instances of remediation, Jacina, as the dancer, wears white shoes, a white jacket with a hood and black sunglasses. However, while the original backup dancer wore long pants, Jacina wears white shorts. Despite these minor discrepancies, the semiotic assemblage of approximate attire, music and choreography made this remake popular online.

In Figure 9.5, the meaning changes from a fun popular music event to an academic setting. The message is no longer about Rihanna's performance

but the recontextualisation of student struggles as they seriously consider enrolling for postgraduate studies.

Multimodality refers to two or more modes that are used in a communicative event (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This can include verbal and non-verbal communication that work together to form meaning from written or spoken text to facial expressions, gestures and the like. Additionally, Machin (2013, p. 348) declares that “in multimodal communication, the different modes had become more integrated and visual elements were being used to communicate complex ideas and attitudes”. This is evident in the symbolism of the colour and actions displayed in both videos.

Semiotic remediation is the act of reusing information and content from different mediums of instruction; in addition, it refers to the “ways that activity is (re)mediated – not mediated anew in each act – through taking up the materials at hand, putting them to present use, and thereby producing altered conditions for future action” (Prior & Hengst, 2010, p. 1). Furthermore, the original meaning of good versus evil shifts to the dancer lurking in the background, tempting Rihanna to do bad things through the animalistic motion of crawling. However, Figure 9.4 shifts the meaning again to a more positive temptation, as doing a postgraduate degree may be difficult, but it is essentially not an unfulfilling path to undertake.



Figure 9.7 Rihanna remake dancer contact



Figure 9.8 Original Rihanna–dancer contact

In Figures 9.5 and 9.6, we see Zoe (and Rihanna) turn around to tacitly acknowledge the dancer, Jacina, in white and plausibly regain power. They step forward, not afraid to challenge the dancer. This leaves the ending undecided, as in Figure 9.7 no one knows if Zoe decided to agree with the one in white, Jacina, and choose a postgraduate degree.

This shows another act of semiotic remediation, as text media is reused and shaped into something new because in this new form it can replicate the appealing nature of old media (Bolter & Grusin, 2000). The goal of this video was to “tempt” students to consider pursuing their postgraduate degrees in Linguistics and construct this route as an appealing, nearly indisputable, next step.

I'm doing second year n I cant stop thinking about it cz I wanna do Applied Linguistics 🤔



2023-2-24 Reply



UWC Inspired Linguistics · Friends

Go for it 😊

2023-2-24 Reply



Figure 9.9 “I can’t stop thinking about it” comment

The linguistics department really seems the most fun 🤔🤔

2023-2-24 Reply



UWC Inspired Linguistics · Friends

But it is 🤔

2023-2-24 Reply



Figure 9.10 “most fun” comment

Indicative of the success of the remake video is the reception from users online. Two comments as well as a reply from the official page will be analysed. In Figures 9.9 and 9.10, both users are interested in the Linguistics department and are considering postgraduate studies both explicitly and implicitly. Figure 9.9 says, “I can’t stop thinking about it”, whereas in Figure 9.10 such studies are not directly addressed but, by saying “the linguistics department really seems the most fun”, this can be decoded to mean that studying a postgraduate degree looks really fun. Figure 9.9 uses informal language which is generally the accepted form used on social media. It shows that even though they are academics, they adapt the communication they use to fit the space or setting. Even university students

who write academic essays use informal language and non-standard grammar when communicating online because the space requires it. Figure 9.9 says *I'm doing second year n I can't stop thinking about it cz I wanna do applied linguistics (laughing emoji face x2)*. In this way, the spontaneous user's responses allude to the question from IL, which specifically asks whether postgraduate studies could be deemed to be tempting.

4.2 Data set 3: "I hope they get it"

The second IL video also intertextually references Rihanna's initial Super Bowl performance, albeit indirectly. While the previous IL video pointed to the allure of postgraduate studies, this second video is situated even further into the academic domain as it captures Kāmilah presenting the Linguistics first-year programme in the offline physical space of a lecture venue. In her video, we see Kāmilah introducing the IL remake data set 1 with Zoe and Jacina in the background on a huge 3 x 3 metre screen. The angle of the camera is aimed at Kāmilah, who is all too well versed in the ethics of anonymity, thus ensuring that none of the students can be seen and therefore no privacy is breached. The aim of the lecture was to teach intertextuality. Kāmilah chose the Rihanna remake video for her guest lecture as she intuited that this trending video would be relatable and fun for many students who were potentially also fans of the singer. Kāmilah reflects:

This was a way for me to connect with the students. I may be a student myself but standing at that podium with lecture slides as my backdrop, I was the furthest thing from being a student in that moment, I was their lecturer. I was so worried that they wouldn't understand the reference, I remember thinking "I hope they get it". I was so afraid that I would "mess-up" my first time being a guest lecturer as well as botch the students' introduction to Linguistic Landscapes and more importantly the concept of intertextuality. I remember drawing on oft-cited work by Kristeva (1969) thereafter I turned to my visual representation of intertextuality in use, the IL's remake video and then the original Super Bowl video of Rihanna's performance. What I did not expect was that I would go viral.

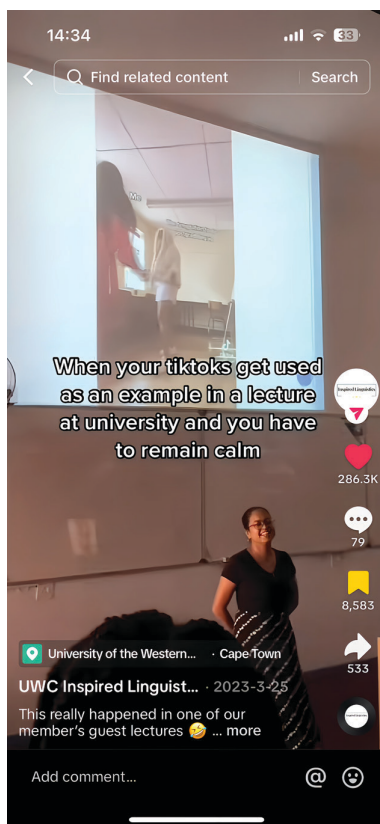


Figure 9.11: “When you have to remain calm”

In the above video, Kāmilah emphasises intertextuality by drawing on the initial Rihanna video which inspired the Rihanna remake. In using it in the lecture, we see that it was recontextualised in the lecture venue and repurposed as a pedagogical resource.

The TikTok video was cushioned within the wider framing of VLL, which was the focus of the major report essay in the first-year programme. Kāmilah can be seen walking away from the podium towards the students, smiling, because the moment she played the IL video, they laughed and applauded, and when she played the video of Rihanna, there was recognition in their eyes. Understandably, the students’ enthusiasm may have

been less tied to the concept of intertextuality and more in appreciation of Rihanna herself. Kāmilah then played the IL video again and this is when the students appeared to “get” the intertextual references. Moreover, her stepping away from the podium, with a smile on her face may be considered a non-verbal sign that open dialogue was possible. It is her hope that, beyond seeing her as a lecturer, the students would also connect with her outside of the traditional student–teacher roles.

In particular, the step away from the podium and towards the students may also be seen as her wanting to invite them into her space, the academic and learning space. In doing this, she is not only encouraging the action of dialogue about the video but also the act of teaching in a new way, with the use of social media as a teaching aid.

As of February 2024, the video had reached viral status with over 3 million views and 292,500 likes. Furthermore, the video has reached people outside of South Africa, outside of Africa. It has reached people (and hopefully inspired people) on a global level.

Comments found under Kāmilah’s viral video consist of users asking about the Rihanna remake video, and others asking about the example in the lecture and its intended purpose. Millennial and Gen Z speak could also be found in statements such as “you ate that tho”, meaning that Zoe and Jacina did a good job at the dance or the recreation of it. Another user mentions Kāmilah’s laugh (non-verbal modes of communication) in the comments section. This is significant because, again, it takes away from the stereotypical ideas of what a lecturer should be. The smile/laugh makes her approachable, and this comment validates the entire premise of what she was trying to achieve. The comments also illustrate people’s willingness and eagerness not only to study Linguistics but also interact with it on another level, in an online domain. Moreover, another user commented that this video should be sent to the U.S. Congress owing to its academic nature, a geopolitical poke at the controversial laws that may come into effect in the United States.

The reason this comment is important is because of its geopolitical thrust at TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew, who appeared before Congress to talk about the platform’s (TikTok) validity and how the data it “collects” is safe/is not safe from “unauthorised foreign access”. Note that this is only for the 150 million U.S. TikTok users. Furthermore, it can

be speculated that this inquiry took place in light of the fact that TikTok is a Chinese-owned video-sharing app, and since China and the United States have a tumultuous relationship, considering all the sanctions placed upon the country by the U.S. government, an inquiry of this nature is not unheard of. This further highlights the fact that this video has a global reach and can be recontextualised to mean many things for many people.

Many comments are emojis – the laughing emoji, purple heart emoji, the rosy cheeks emoji and the rosy cheeks emoji with hearts (smiling face with hearts) – or are simply tagging other users of the platform to view the video.

It is in this that we see the different forms of social activism embodied, whether it is using TikTok videos in a lecture or “standing up” for the little guy and asking about credit. Furthermore, this lecture and its subsequent video have bridged the gap between teacher and student and have made learning fun.

4.3 “You are not the target market”

The niche online academic community that IL had been creating from its very first post became clear to Amiena during a discussion about the video in her Honours class a few days later. Addressing her Honours class, largely made up of 20-year-olds, Amiena blithely confessed that she had not really “gotten” the joke at first as she was not on TikTok, nor did she watch the Rihanna dance, so she did not have a point of reference. It was at this moment that the bespoke constitution of the online academic community came to the fore: “You are not the target market, Prof” piped up one of her regulars. While the class laughed at the keen observation, she had to admit – she was *not* the target market. This affirmed IL’s primary goal of reaching young people who are already active members on the popular TikTok app and are creating an academic community within their social media home.

A target market is described as “highly situational” (Favaro et al., 2012) and defined as “a group of people that have been identified as the most likely potential customers for a product because of their shared characteristics, such as age, income, and lifestyle”. Recalling the vision of IL and its desire to create a space for new and aspiring Linguistics students,

it was clear that its ability to capitalise on trends (data set 2) and go viral (data set 3) proves that multimodality, repurposing and making the right intertextual references has the ability to win over its target market.

IL was created to make a space for the new, up-and-coming Linguistics students and to change the narrative of what it means to study the discipline. With Kāmilah “trying to keep calm” as she gave her first “guest lecture”, she showed that there is growth in the discipline and that while it can be quite daunting, it also revealed an academic avenue that students might miss otherwise.

5. From Rihanna to Rihanna remake to viral pedagogy

Reflecting on the 10-second clip which spurred thousands of Rihanna dance and music compilations to fit genres and contexts vastly different from the original entertainment-focused clip shows the ingenuity of users online. But perhaps more importantly, it reveals the elasticity of the virtual space and the potentialities it brings to the idea of intentionally transforming a superfluous space into an academic one. The popularity of the Rihanna remake (data set 2) needs to be seen in its non-traditional space of postgraduate academic “marketing”. This remake, set in the offline space of the Linguistics Masters Lab, set in motion a new trajectory for interested users online. While remaining true to the salient features of colour (red for the main character, and white for the dancer), this Rihanna remake also succeeded because of the more obvious repurposing of the duster (as a mic) and the recontextualisation of the scene exemplified by the phrase “the temptation to do a postgraduate degree”, thus reframing the original Rihanna scene from an entertainment video to a marketing one. The third data set suggests a move away from traditional academic prose when informing young first-year Linguistics students about more exciting, unexpected and creative formats. We see that the viral lecturer video is capable of capitalising on students’ predilection for social media apps like TikTok and thereby creating an academic/learning space for Linguistics students.

The different moments created in each data set highlight the importance of the combination of elements and its knock-on effects. Deleuze and Guatarri (1987) talk about semiotic assemblages as having both stability and change. This tension is exemplified in the Rihanna remake as students

who find themselves in academic limbo are now given a forward-facing look at a life where new challenges exist – a future that requires them to change.

The viral lecturer video also holds the elements of stability and change when Kāmilah retains the stability of including long-standing theories such as intertextuality through the new, current visual aid of the Rihanna remake. It “works” because it allows learners to learn through their virtual, visual, multimodal and creative minds.

Offline spaces such as the Masters Lab and lecture hall provided links to the academic space which appears to resonate with (new and returning) Linguistics students, with bits of the physical online academic space now finding a permanent home in the trending and viral videos created by IL.

Operationalising the VLL toolkit (resemiotisation, remediation and intertextuality) allows us to answer the question undergirding much of the frustration which we signalled at the outset of this manuscript, specifically “what is this Linguistics thing?”

To answer this question, we needed to see language as it is interwoven with other modes that are revered in the virtual space such as images, music, dance, comedy and creativity. What we hope to have shown here is how the virtual space taps into the multimodal repertoires of the new academic online citizenship. For Finnegan (2015, p. 18), this move away from language per se is further enhanced by the inclusion of “the gestural, pictorial, sculptural, sonic, tactile, bodily, affective and artefactual dimensions of human life”.

So what is Linguistics and why should the negative rep be changed? We argue that the virtual space and its millions of users show their cognition and willingness to access this academic citizenship through their engagement with data sets 2 and 3 which allowed the video to go viral. This ability to engage with online users moves beyond views and likes to include statements that depict belonging when users express their desire to join the Linguistics department and tentatively signal they too may wish to study further.

5.1 What's next?

Actively striving to self-mediate the perception of our discipline of Linguistics has, thus far, been an exciting, creative and challenging pursuit. In order to promote a more favourable view of both the discipline of Linguistics and our faculty, we were required to be seen and heard in the wide open expanse of social media.

Through the creation of IL, we began to think more critically about the question we are asked most often, “What is Linguistics?” We began by connecting the linguistic dots for our peers, prospective and returning students and ourselves. Linguistics is about communication and, as Hymes (1972) rightfully argued, semiotics has an important role to play in our understanding of the world.

Drawing on theories in the traditional LL toolkit, we see basic elements such as multimodality, salience, recontextualisation, repurposing, materiality and intertextuality of signs are all significant in the virtual space. Our own learning through this process was that changing a harmful narrative was an inside job and that no faculty or institution was going to make those narrative changes for us.

Our narrative provides reassurance of relevance for not only current Linguistics students, but also for those who would like to study in the field. It may also act as reassurance for parents and family members of Linguistics students who may have fallen victim to this negative belief associated with the field of study. IL is hopefully changing the harmful narrative associated with the field and the somewhat shared belief that we will not be able to have a sustainable career with our Linguistics degree(s). As our videos on social media have reached viral status numerous times, we are surely chipping away at this harmful narrative.

It was through IL that we finally realised that we belonged, that we had found our tribe and that we are now able to hold that door open to new and interested students. Finally, this collaborative autoethnographic contribution to the field of LL and VLL serves as a further mechanism to challenge narrow views of what it means to be a Linguistics student and researcher.

The goal of this chapter – and the IL group – became clearer as the trending, viral nature of the two IL posts showed signs of creating

real connections across diverse linguistic and cultural groups. What is Linguistics and is it worthy of study? We would argue that the tension between stability and change (cf. Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) is what holds Linguistics in high demand and makes it worthy of pursuit. The ability to draw the attention of existing virtual users to think twice about the use-function of their social media apps like TikTok indicates that there is room to transform the virtual space into a meaningful academic place online.

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Stephan Meyer and Edina Krompák

10 Semiotic Agency, Alternative Multilingualisms and Health Educationscapes in a Poster Campaign to Restore Trust in a Hospital Medical Emergency Department

Abstract: In health communication, multilingual linguistic landscapes can contribute to positive health outcomes. This study explored the rare use in the public sphere of constellations of non-official languages (alternative multilingualisms), namely in an official, multilingual, multimodal poster campaign to regain trust in an accident and emergency department of a public hospital in Switzerland. The analyses focussed on semiotic agency – that is the mutually constitutive relationships between signs and agency. Three questions from different phases in the networks of translanguaging were addressed: How was agency in the production of the multilingual poster campaign presented?; How was agency encoded in the ensemble of multilingual posters?; and How was agency perceived in interpreting the posters? Our interpretations of the data, firstly, shed light on how organisations mobilise the linguistic capital of multilingual employees to shape a linguistic landscape aimed at educating and nudging potential users of health services. They, secondly, showed how the interdependencies between the enhanced semiotic agency of individual patients and a public institution were encoded in a health educationscape. And they, thirdly, illuminated awareness of the multiple dimensions of semiotic and health agency in a recipient population. Overall, the study broadens the empirical base to refine theories about the relationships between agency and transsemiotization as well as the relationships between social and linguistic justice in linguistic landscapes with an educational effect.

Keywords: healthcare communication, health educationscapes, social semiotics, alternative multilingualisms and semiotic agency

1. Agency in multilingual healthcare communication

That successful communication is crucial to effective health outcomes is widely argued across settings (Brown et al., 2016). This includes diagnostics and treatment plans in clinician–patient consultations (Land et al.,

2017), dialogues between hospitals and communities about programmes and services (Rutebemberwa et al., 2009) and global public health campaigns to enhance the uptake of and adherence to treatment in populations (McClaughlin et al., 2023).

One of the many aspects that might contribute to the success or failure of healthcare communication is the languages used, although the extent and nature of this connection is neither simple nor clearly understood (Hsueh et al., 2021). Language accessibility, language choice and language concordance are particularly pertinent, given the multilingual nature of most communities and the specific multilingual constellations of each setting, thereby connecting just healthcare with linguistic justice (Al Shamsi et al., 2020; Sobane et al., 2020; Van Hest et al., 2023). Accordingly, in some jurisdictions, this connection between just healthcare and linguistic justice has moved lawmakers to legally oblige healthcare providers to ensure appropriate linguistic access (Youdelman, 2008). Beyond that, whether they are marketing products, nudging populations or informing patients, healthcare providers have been encouraged to communicate in languages that are well understood so as to enhance health outcomes and mitigate health inequalities (Berkowitz, 2021). This includes health messaging in outdoor linguistic landscapes (Stranger, 2021), as well as the institutionally shaped indoor linguistic landscapes of hospitals that aim to channel, warn, inform and educate patients (Mdukula, 2018; Vilar, 2019).

The aspirations and guidance mentioned notwithstanding, the prevalence and efficacy of multilingual linguistic landscapes that address health often remain wanting (Schuster et al., 2017). The reasons for this may involve combinations of limited attitudes, competences and resources on individual, institutional and ideological levels (Gu, 2023; Hopkyns & Van den Hoven, 2022; Troyer, 2023). Against this background of constraints and underperformance, it is helpful to better understand agency associated with bringing about multilingual linguistic landscapes that advance just healthcare, thereby shedding light on the “ethical responsibility” of agents to “seize control of the mediating conditions under which they create themselves” (Kockelman, 2007, p. 375). The present study aimed to enhance our understanding of these issues by examining agency in a multilingual information campaign conducted by a public hospital, focusing specifically on posters in the urban linguistic landscape.

A common starting point in accounts of human agency is that social interaction and the discourses with which they are interconnected are rule governed or patterned and that these rules/patterns facilitate action, interaction and understanding. But, as a species with agency, as their creators, humans have the potential and thus the responsibility to alter these mediating conditions or enabling patterns. In its briefest form, agency in general has thus been defined as the potential to change the rules/patterns which make it possible for us to act, interact and understand. For an inquiry such as the present one into how agency contributes to sign-making and how sign-making contributes to agency, semiotic agency is central. In line with the brief account of social agency in general, semiotic agency, understood as agency exercised in the domain of signs, may be defined as the potential to shape the signs that contribute to shaping us (Ahearn, 2001; Duranti, 2004; Giddens, 1984; Kress, 2011).

An extended account of semiotic agency, however, goes further in that it couples agency exercised in the semiotic domain with a semiotic account of agency. A semiotic account of agency holds that semiosis – that is, the making and using of signs – contributes crucially to language animals' agency as such (Kockelman, 2007; Mendoza-Collazos & Zlatev, 2022; Taylor, 1985). In its strong version, which informed our study, this extended account of semiotic agency furthermore adds that there is a mutually reinforcing relationship between agency facilitated by semiosis and agency exercised in the semiotic domain. In other words, there is a mutually reinforcing relationship between agency as such, which is facilitated by the capacity to create and use signs, and agency exercised in relation to signs, that is, the potential of sign makers and users to shape the signs that contribute to shaping them. Unsurprisingly, the use of nudging in behavioural public administration has rekindled debates about the extent to which the agency described here does actually exist and how it can be mobilised in pursuit of the public good (Michaelsen et al., 2021)

Some of the features of agency are that it is social, distributed, graded and multidimensional (Kockelman, 2007). Agency is both facilitated and constrained by human practices and institutions. Distributed unevenly across agents, agency can be exercised both individually and collectively. Entwined with power, agency is graded; that is, subjects generally exercise neither absolute nor no agency at all, but degrees of it. In addition, agency is

differentiated into multiple interdependent dimensions or fields: for example, semiotic, health, educational and political agency are interrelated.

What applies to agency in general, also applies to semiotic agency, namely that it is social, distributed, graded and multidimensional. The components of semiotic agency are interrelated and can be distinguished by the questions familiar to social semiotic analyses: (i) *who is involved* (the individual and institutional agents such as senders, addressees and respondents); (ii) *where are messages located* (their place in the public sphere and linguistic landscape); (iii) *what can be communicated* (i.e. content); and (iv) *how are messages conveyed* – which includes the modality (such as images and figures as well as spoken and written language to make validity claims or entertain fictions), the style (such as registers of in/formality), and the medium (in the case of language, a choice of natural and artificial languages).

The main point of the above account of agency can be illustrated with a simplified familiar example from some modern polities. To begin with, the regular use of a specific set of signs (such as a specific language) in a territory establishes a hegemonic pattern or habitus. This pattern is then enshrined by policy and/or law to function as the official signs or language, and is inculcated by official institutions such as schools. However, at the margins of such official situations, other signs or languages continue or start to be used as well. Under certain conditions, individuals and collectives exercise their semiotic and political agency and alter policy and/or law so that these additional signs or languages also become official and thereby part of the hegemonic constellation, which means that they are also inculcated by institutions and regular use.

This study engages with agency at the intersection of public healthcare institutions and multilingual educationscapes. The latter can be defined as the mutually constitutive material and social spaces in which linguistic and semiotic resources are mobilised with educational effect (cf. Krompák et al., 2022). Focusing on this intersection reflects a broader awareness that linguistic landscapes do not exist in neutral public spheres. Instead, linguistic landscapes shape and are shaped by both agents and institutions.

The specific institution of interest in the present study is a public hospital, specifically its emergency department (ED), and understanding the role of this institution in society is central to understanding its relationship

to the linguistic landscape. Access to and appropriate use of EDs are crucial, albeit challenging, aspects of efficient and just healthcare systems. The decline in the number of EDs exacerbates these challenges (Sartini et al., 2022), thereby increasing the need for effective communication about their services. To begin with, knowing that there are readily accessible EDs and what to expect when presenting there is part of trust in institutions in general and in the health system in particular. Furthermore, in an emergency situation, accessing the nearest possible ED can contribute to the health outcomes of individuals and populations. Finally, for hospitals themselves, EDs are an important access point for treatment and hospitalisation.

Against this backdrop, the present study examined a multilingual information campaign by a public hospital, focusing specifically on posters in the urban linguistic landscape. Building on previous examinations of educationscapes beyond the material confines of educational settings (Krompák et al., 2022), we approached the hospital's multilingual poster campaign on the city streets as an educationscape in two ways. Firstly, the campaign imparted knowledge about where and how to access health services; that is, it educated observers about health pathways. Following approaches to the linguistic landscape that integrate symbols, social institutions, agents and material space, we understand health pathways as an integration of the social management processes or pathways in medical treatment (Schrijvers et al., 2012) with the navigation of material space by agents like hospital patients (Schuster et al., 2017). Secondly, the multilingual campaign educated observers about languages. It raised their awareness of the existence of non-official languages in the community and signalled the importance that a public service provider like a hospital attaches to language accessibility.

Our analysis of agency related to a hospital's poster campaign aimed at regaining patients whose trust in an ED was undermined by threats of closure, combined a social semiotic account of agency with social semiotic analyses of the campaign (Kress, 2011; Van Leeuwen, 2005). It linked the mobilisation of in-house resources by a small marketing and communications team to nudge patients back to the hospital ED, to the ensemble of four multilingual posters and to the interpretations of respondents of the posters. Accordingly, our study addressed three questions:

Q1: How was agency in the production of the multilingual poster campaign presented?

Q2: How was agency encoded in the ensemble of multilingual posters?

Q3: How was agency perceived in interpreting the posters?

2. Context of a multilingual marketing campaign to revive an ailing emergency department

An important feature of the linguistic context addressed by our study is the power relations among multiple multilingual constellations (Gorter & Cenoz, 2022). To reflect these power relations within the overall framework of multiple multilingual constellations, we distinguish between hegemonic multilingualisms (what is sometimes referred to as hegemonic language constellations (Bianco & Aronin, 2020)) and alternative multilingualisms, with alternative multilingualisms signalling a critical relationship to their hegemonic counterparts. (This distinction reflects similar approaches in comparable domains: for alternative modernities, see Gaonkar, 2001; for alternative masculinities, see Carabí & Armengol, 2014).

Hegemonic multilingualisms are typically officially entrenched through law in *de jure* multilingual countries (e.g. Canada) and through habitual use in *de facto* multilingual ones (e.g. Namibia). In Switzerland, hegemonic multilingualism comprising German, French and Italian was legally enshrined in the federal constitution of 1848, with Romansch incrementally included over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This hegemonic multilingualism is made up on the federal level by the addition of devolved official monolingualisms in the cantons, with cantonal law typically enshrining one of the official federal languages for a specific area of the country. In the two neighbouring cantons in which our study was located, namely Basel-Stadt and Basel-Landschaft, this one official language is German.

However, under conditions of superdiversity, in everyday practice other, non-official languages combine with German in numerous alternative multilingual constellations (for main languages of speakers in the area, see Table 10.1). Such situational alternative multilingualisms emerge as a factor in the interconnections between individual plurilingualisms

(speakers' specific repertoires) and societal multilingualisms (languages used by the interactants involved) in specific situations. In Basel-Stadt, for example, around a fifth of the population uses two or more main languages. (The percentage has fluctuated between 19% and 21% since 2010 (Präsidialdepartement des Kantons Basel-Stadt Statistisches Amt, 2023).) When additional languages beyond speakers' main ones are added, the percentage of plurilinguals can be assumed to be considerably higher. Given this multitude of main and additional languages and the repertoires of the plurilinguals involved, a diversity of alternative multilingualisms can be expected. Indeed, the linguistic landscape of Basel, created by what is sometimes called bottom-up agents (e.g. private businesses, organisations and individuals), reflects a range of alternative multilingualisms in which combinations with Swiss German, Spanish or Turkish are particularly prominent (Fernández-Mallat, 2020).

Table 10.1 Main languages by percentage of speakers 15 years and older in the overall population of Basel-Landschaft and Basel-Stadt for the year 2019^a

Basel-Landschaft		Basel-Stadt	
German	87.1 ^{b, c}	German	76.8
English	6.1	English	12.1
Italian	5.3	French	6.1
French	3.4	Italian	5.0
Turkish	2.4	Turkish	3.7
Albanian	2.2	Albanian	3.5
Serbian/Croatian	2.2	Serbian/Croatian	3.0
Arabic	0.3	Arabic	Not specified

a) The year 2019 is the most recent for which comparable data for both cantons is available.

b) The totals do not add up to 100%, firstly, because we only show languages relevant to our study and, secondly, because persons may use more than one main language.

c) The top four main languages evident in the broader population were mirrored in the repertoires of the participants in the focus groups (see section 3.1. below).

Sources: Kantonale Bevölkerungsstatistik, Amt für Daten und Statistik Basel-Landschaft (n.d.); Präsidialdepartement des Kantons Basel-Stadt Statistisches Amt (n.d.)

Our study of alternative multilingualisms in the linguistic landscape was anchored in the field of public service institutions, specifically healthcare.

It examined a campaign advertising the ED of a public hospital, namely the Bruderholzspital (hereafter referred to as the Hospital), one of three sites of the Kantonsspital Baselland. As elsewhere, healthcare in this region has waxed and waned under the impact of shifts in disease burdens and patterns, political contestation and economic pressures involving public and private providers (Bader & Ott, 2018). Located on the cantonal border in this densely served region, the ED of the hospital is particularly exposed to ongoing discussions in the public sphere regarding conflicting needs for local provision, on the one hand, and cost-saving through regional consolidation and closures, on the other. Public discussions like these carry particular significance in a direct democracy such as Switzerland, in which the electorate are regularly asked to exercise their agency in popular votes about issues that concern them.

Against this backdrop, when a 2016 report announced that the ED in the Hospital would be closing (albeit only within a decade), this jeopardised certainty in the community. This uncertainty about if and when the ED would be closing contributed to a decline in confidence and in visits. This raised concerns in the Hospital, firstly, because its mandate to provide reliable healthcare was at stake and, secondly, because more than half of its admissions followed the pathway through the ED (57% in 2018; Kantonsspital Baselland, 2019), which is considerably higher than comparable countries (namely 21% in the United Kingdom (Cowling et al, 2014) and 14.2% in the United States (Cairns & Kang 2022)).

To counter misconceptions in the public sphere, the erosion of trust, and the associated decline in ED visits, the Hospital's small in-house marketing department launched a comprehensive multilingual, multilayered multimedia campaign. The overall campaign included languages which the Hospital described as “the most important languages of the most common nations attending the ED” (Kantonsspital Baselland, n.d., p. 14). Rather than relying on data for the region in general to determine what these languages were (see Table 10.1), the Hospital used data tailored specifically to the community using this specific health pathway.

The Hospital's dual intention – to regain ED patients and to educate them about suitable health pathways and treatments – was differently distributed across the three layers of the campaign. The overarching aim

of the first layer was to inform the public that the Hospital continued to offer a reliable emergency service – that is, that it was fully operative and that patients continued to receive quality emergency treatment. This message was conveyed in print via posters on advertising columns, on mini posters on public transport, and on postcards distributed in the hospital. It was also conveyed via radio advertisements and video on the hospital home page. To avoid a possible unwanted effect, namely overcrowding of the ED with cases that could be sufficiently treated by general practitioners and self-medication, a second layer of nuanced messaging was conveyed via the hospital internet page and in the hospital itself with leaflets. This second layer not only informed but also aimed to educate addressees about the difference between true emergencies and other cases (such as sunburn), and how to deal with the latter. The third layer elaborated on what patients needed so as to be admitted and the procedures in the ED. Given the limitations of space and the focus of this book, this contribution concentrates on one element of the first level of the overall campaign, namely, semiotic agency in the posters in the urban linguistic educationsscape.

As a rare example of signage by an official institution that consciously employs alternative multilingualism, this poster campaign stood out in the urban linguistic landscape. As a longitudinal linguistic ethnography of the multilingual landscape in superdiverse Kleinbasel (a suburb of the area we examined) pointed out, multilingual signage hardly ever originates with official institutions (Krompák, 2016, 2019). This is even less the case when alternative multilingualisms are used. By valorising alternative multilingualisms associated with recent migrants in a campaign informing about and building trust in public services, these posters posed an unmistakable alternative to a xenophobic poster campaign that had previously been prominent in the linguistic landscape (Scarvaglieri & Luginbühl, 2023). Thus, examining this instance of an alternative multilingual linguistic landscape – especially from the perspective of the agency involved – had the potential to enhance our understanding of the conditions that facilitate the official use of non-official multilingual signage that reflects the everyday practice of a substantial part of the population.

3. Methods: Social semiotics of a health educationscape

3.1 Data collection

This study of semiotic agency, alternative multilingualisms and health educationscapes formed part of a longitudinal linguistic ethnography of the multilingual linguistic landscape in Kleinbasel conducted between 2015 and 2018 (Krompák, 2016, 2019). From a database comprising 294 photographs, we examined photos of four posters on an advertising column on a Kleinbasel street, informing the public about the ongoing operation of the Hospital's ED.

To connect our understanding of the posters with agency in their production, we interviewed an expert involved, namely the head of marketing and public relations at the Kantonsspital Baselland, who was one of the people who were instrumental in the production of the signs (duration of interview: 67 minutes).

To connect the posters and their production with agency in the responses to the campaign, we conducted two focus group discussions using photographs to elicit comments on the posters. The first focus group sought to represent the responses of multilingual members of the general populace. This group consisted of three multilingual students from the University of Basel who self-selected as volunteers for the study. This discussion lasted 63 minutes. The second focus group represented the responses of experts on multilingualism and consisted of three multilingual lecturers from the Language Centre of the University of Basel with experience in enhancing students' multilingual competences (duration: 43 minutes). Participants in both focus groups all understood and could speak the official cantonal language, namely German, although half of them had other official Swiss languages as their main or additional main languages. As a group, they had various levels of competence in further languages, which included the official Swiss languages and English, thereby resembling hegemonic rather than alternative multilingualisms in the broader population.

3.2 Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and qualitative content analyses were conducted (Mayring, 2014). The interviews and posters were analysed, drawing on the analytic methods associated with social semiotics.

After separately analysing the interviews and the posters, we synthesised the results, focusing on agency in the multilingual health education landscape.

Matching our social semiotic account of agency above, we interpreted the data according to social semiotic analyses that “re-sociologise concepts such as ‘rule’ and ‘code’, to put agency back in them” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 133). These social semiotic methods complement the classic semiotics of linguistic signs with cultural and social theory, with cultural, social and political history, and with ethnographic methods (Van Leeuwen, 2023). Thus, social semiotics goes beyond merely analysing signs and texts themselves to also examine the rules/patterns/texts “that regulate or influence their production and reception, and the agents and agencies who produce these texts” (Aiello & Van Leeuwen, 2023, p. 40). By further adding a multilingual dimension and by connecting analyses of the production of multilingual texts, the multilingual texts themselves and their reception by multilingual audiences (Collins & Slembrouck, 2007), multilingual social semiotics can shed light on what can be called networks of translanguaging (Krompák & Meyer, 2018).

We report here on selected features of the four dimensions of social semiotic analysis distinguished by Van Leeuwen (2005), namely, discourse, genre, style and modality. We approached *discourse* as the “socially constructed knowledges of some aspect of reality” (Van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 94). In analysing the *discourse* of the campaign, we prioritised the genealogy of the social semiotic practices mobilised to construct knowledge about emergency health. *Genre* was approached as templates of communicative acts that “realize culturally and historically specific power relations” (Van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 128). In analysing the genre of the campaign, we highlighted pragmatics (how the posters combined assertions, directives and commissives) and form (the sequence of stages that make up the communicative act), as well as the social practices in which the campaign was embedded, practices that involve actors, times and places (Van Leeuwen, 2005). We approached *style* as the way in which agents mobilise semiotic resources to express their identities, feelings and attitudes, as well as how this is constrained by social patterns. In analysing the style, we focused on the use of hybrid forms of direct address, poetic devices common in edutainment and a mix of registers such as playful transgression, conversational style and adherence to the serious distinctive style of the institution.

Modality was approached as the use of semiotic resources to express the degree of validity ascribed to a claim; that is, “*as how true or as how real* a given representation should be taken” (Van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 281, emphasis in original). In analysing modality, we emphasised iteration and corporate identity to signal the seriousness and trustworthiness of both the message and the institution.

4. Interpretation and discussion

4.1 Agency in the production of the multilingual campaign

In the expert interview, the Hospital’s PR manager gave an account of the knowledge the campaign sought to convey and of agency within the institution in the genealogy of the campaign.

Aims of the campaign

In Excerpt 1, the PR manager contextualises the campaign in relation to discussions in the public sphere about the threat of closure of a public service institution. She addresses the economic goals of the campaign as well as its additional aim, namely, to convey knowledge about appropriate health behaviours.

Excerpt 1

“If a hospital stops with the emergency area, it feels like, then okay it’s dead.//yes, yes// Because it’s quite like the heart of it.//yes// (00.07.24–00.07.34)

[...]

It was for [...] the emergency, to do really something to bring back to the clients// yes//, to say in the more economic way//yes//, to bring back the clients. And also to tell or to give them something more as well”. (Expert interview in English with German and Swiss German fragments translated by authors, 19.06.2017, 00.09.09–00.09.27)

The multiple intentions of the campaign contribute to its ambiguities. The primary intention was to stem the flow of patients away from the ED. This had been triggered by discussions in the public sphere about health savings and speculation about the closure of the ED – “It was for [...] the emergency”. In taking this institutional perspective in which health economics plays a role, the PR manager reflects the operational sensitivity of the hospital to a decline in its largest pathway of patient admissions. It is within

this “more economic” frame that patients are also seen as clients, hence the description of the aim of the campaign to “bring back the clients”, a matter of urgency underlined by the repetition of this phrase. In addition to addressing these patients in this “more economic way”, the further intention was “to tell or give them something”. As both patients and clients, the campaign nudged their health behaviours along certain health pathways. As interactants who were given something and as interlocutors who were told something, the online campaign to which observers of the posters were directed by a QR code gave them information and educated them to allow both self-triage and self-treatment for non-emergency cases such as sunburn.

Multilingual approach

In Excerpt 2, the PR manager further elaborates on the language choice for the multilingual campaign.

Excerpt 2

“So we went through the nationalities [...] coming to the emergency.//hmm// So [...] what are the **top** nationalities//hmm// [...] coming to the, to the ED (00.09.26–00.09.42)

[...]

and address specifically **those** nationalities first, at first sight//yes//” (Expert interview in English with German and Swiss German fragments translated by authors, 19.06.2017, 00.10.07–00.10.13)

Excerpt 2 sheds light on how the Hospital proceeded to match the aim, the message and the audience. To begin with, the Hospital narrowed its target demographic to a past and existing patient base – “we went through the nationalities coming to the emergency”. Within that population it then opted to address the most common nationalities attending the ED (rather than targeting, for example, age or gender). Hospital statistics showed that, besides Swiss, the most commonly presenting nationalities were Bosnian, Croatian, Turkish and Serbian. Taking nationality as an indicator of language, the in-house marketing team then opted to communicate in the medium associated with these specific demographics. Rather than communicating only in German, which was probably widely understood by most patients, they deliberately opted for an alternative multilingual campaign in which German existed alongside non-official languages in the

region. By choosing to convey its public message about appropriate health pathways in the medium of both official and non-official languages, the marketing and communications team conveyed an additional message, namely, that the Hospital recognised the linguistic identity of patients and, connected with that, the Hospital responded to the need to actively engage with inclusion/exclusion at the intersections of language and health.

In Excerpt 3, the PR manager explains why the multilingual campaign also included Arabic, even though it was not associated with any of the target nationalities.

Excerpt 3

“Arabic was an exception, ehmm, because, of course, we would have had some more languages. The time was quite short [...] we would have had some more languages just like Portuguese, and Spain, Spanish //ok, yes// And I said ok, I’d like to have **one** ehmm, one, because it’s just **nice** in the [...] different script//((laughter)) it’s just nice [...] I said that’s just, that’s a publicity thing about this campaign//yes//. For me. It was that’s the publicity thing, because you look at it and either you like it or **not** //yes// but it **catches** the eye //ye, ok//. So that was //all right//on the emergency list it was not the nationality that is first” (Expert interview in English with German and Swiss German fragments translated by authors, 19.06.2017, 00.16.12–00.16.46)

Although the choice of Arabic was justified by the attention-grabbing value of the graphic aesthetics of the script, this choice of script also conveyed a message. Like the choice of language, it extended the range of writing systems in the linguistic landscape beyond the Latin script. In this way the marketing team further signalled in the public sphere the recognition by a public service provider of what counts as local languages when addressing the connections between just healthcare and linguistic justice.

Mobilising the staff

In Excerpt 4, the interviewee explains how the agency of the Hospital staff contributed to the campaign.

Excerpt 4

“And we [...] we **could** organize it with our own employees //wow//yes//((laughter))//yes, nice// [...] Yes, I think, that is a lovely part about it.//yes// So the person who normally does patient transportation, [...] he gave the language, he gave the voice for the Arabic.//yes// **One** in human resource was a Bosnisch. One of the doctors, here at Bruderholz, he was the English voice and the Italian voice as

well//ok// So, also the ideas of, you asked the question about how we translated it//hmm//yes// [...] ehmm, we couldn't, so first we thought about it what makes sense in the German way//yes// *wenn du wirklich mal vom Hocker fällst* ((laughter)) (00.18.02–00.19.03)

[...]

because we wanted to try take Inlingua//ehmm// and just to translate it (00.19.13–00.19.20)

[...]

And with the Arabic we also cont- [.] contacted our own net-, our own business net//yes// [.] so that was one of the UNICEF from Palestine //yes// who corrected it at the end.//ok//” (Expert interview, Standard German and English, 19.06.2017, 00.19.42–00.20.00).

The idea to centre on figures of speech as attention-grabbers emerged with the first poster, namely the one in German. Rather than translate the German idioms directly or stick to the same saying in different languages, the marketing team opted for comparable figures of speech authentic to each of the chosen languages. Instead of commissioning an external translation company (Inlingua) to provide these sayings, they involved their internal employees and professional networks as linguistic agents in the campaign, thereby mobilising the lay competences of staff in professional institutional communication.

Overall, one of the participant experts involved in the generation of the signs, namely the PR manager, presented the Hospital and the marketing team as active agents who mobilised other agents and semiotic resources to construct knowledge about the reliability of emergency healthcare to the community. This agency is not absolute and isolated, but entwined with the uncertainty and the threatening discourses in the public sphere to which it responded, to the economic constraints that frame healthcare and to the symbolic capital available in the institution.

4.2 Agency in the coding of the multilingual poster ensemble

To answer the question regarding the encoding of agency in the ensemble of multilingual posters, we analysed the posters (Figure 10.1) using social semiotics, focusing on discourse, genre, style and modality.



10.1a Turkish and German

10.1b Bosnian/Croatian/Slovene and German

10.1c German

10.1d Arabic and German

Figure 10.1 Ensemble of four posters in the campaign of the Kantonsspital Baselland to attract patients to the emergency department

© Photo: Edina Krompák (2016) (Location: Riehenring, Basel)

Discourse

Central to the discourse of the campaign was how alternative multilingualisms emerged from a specific use of space in the linguistic landscape. The four print posters were displayed as a 360-degree ensemble on an advertising column owned by a company that emphasises the importance of outside marketing and visibility (Allgemeine Plakatgesellschaft, n.d.). Facilitated by a commercially managed official public sphere, and positioned on highly frequented pavements, posters like these are fixtures in the linguistic landscape of many Swiss cities. During this campaign, similar ensembles were placed at multiple locations in the service area of the Hospital, each ensemble consisting of one poster in the official and most widespread main language, German, accompanied by two or three other posters in different languages, mostly non-official ones associated with migrant communities. The fact that they were positioned as ensembles – that is, as a group of signs which were related in theme and design, placed near each other and perceivable within one glance (see also Auer, 2010 and Androutsopoulos and Kuhlee in this book) – contributed to their constituting multilingual constellations. Thus, although each poster could be considered separately as monolingual (German) or bilingual (e.g. Arabic and German), their adjacent positioning, their similar discursive structure and their identical corporate design (e.g. the use of the three corporate colours and the wordmark logo of the Kantonsspital Baselland) created an intertextual ensemble of alternative multilingualisms.

Genre and style

Combining with the spatial arrangement, similarity in genre and style reinforced the establishment of the ensemble. The poster genre constitutes an iterative template within whose boundaries the specific communicative act unfolds. The form, that is, the sequence in which the act unfolds, is the same across all posters. This sequence combines hybrid styles, mixing poetic devices into playfully transgressive and trustworthy institutional registers.

All posters start with a speech bubble, a style feature associated with pop art and informal popular culture genres such as the comic. The bubble and its content evoke the conversational voice of the Hospital, as if orally and directly addressing the reader. The sayings in the various languages are given the most prominence through their position (at the top), font size (the largest font in the poster), and surface (taking the most space). The sayings in the bubbles (variations on the formula: “Should you experience/be troubled by ...”) evoke a hypothetical ailment or accident formulated in the colloquial style of ordinary figurative language readily recognisable by patients, rather than the clinical jargon used by health professionals. Typical of the style of such figurative speech and idioms of distress related to health, the sayings play on loose associations between physical events or symptoms, and bodily and/or mental malaise (Fatehi et al., 2022).

Grammatically, these figurative sayings are the antecedent in a sentence in the conditional mood, thereby creating anticipation of an ensuing consequent that delivers a solution. Thus, the Turkish saying (Figure 10.1a) “Bir gün gerçekten boğazınız düğümlenirse” (which can be rendered as “If one day you really feel anxiety/tightness/get a lump in your throat”) can be used to nudge someone suffering physiological problems related to breathing or swallowing, or mental unease to seek support. The Bosnian/Croatian/Slovene saying (Figure 10.1b) differs slightly across these languages. While the Slovene “Ako ste zaista pali sa stolice” has a literal meaning: “If you really fell from your chair,” the Croatian rendering “pasti sa stolice” has a figurative meaning, namely, “When you hear something really surprising/incredible” or “When you feel like dying from laughter”. The German (Figure 1c) “Wenn Ihnen wirklich etwas auf dem Magen liegt” (which literally means “If something is really lying on your

stomach”) can be rendered as “If you have a pit in your stomach”. And the Arabic (Figure 10.1d) اذا ضاق نفسك عندنا راحتك. (translated literally as “If you are tight/short of breath, we have your comfort”) can be rendered as “If you are out of breath, we are there for you”. Although “breath” here clearly refers to physical symptoms, the saying is akin to the grammatically distinct soul, thus evoking the meaning of “If everything gets on your nerves/too much”. This antecedent saying in the bubble is completed by the consequent in the matching language outside the bubble – and in the languages in Latin script – in block capitals: “IN EMERGENCIES THE/ YOUR BRUDERHOLZ HOSPITAL IS ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU”. This consequent switches from the playfully figurative style of the speech bubble to the trustworthy literal language that completes the commissive speech act of indirectly offering help and committing the institution to service.

The final section sees a shift to a uniform code across all posters: “IMMER IN IHRER NÄHE LIESTAL, BRUDERHOLZ UND LAUFEN” [ALWAYS IN YOUR VICINITY LIESTAL, BRUDERHOLZ AND LAUFEN] appears in the same font in one language, namely the official German. This is followed by the official wordmark logo of the hospital and includes a reiteration of the phrase “ganz nah” (really close, in the sense of close by and personally connected). This section also directs readers to the hospital’s ED home page (www.ksbl.ch/notfall/notfall). The bottom of the home page (which is in German) features national flags (e.g. the flag of France) adjacent to a question in a corresponding language (“Que faire en cas d’urgence?”), clicking on which opens pages in English, French, Italian, Turkish and Bosnian/Croatian/Slovene. Each of these pages starts with the sayings in speech bubbles corresponding to the posters, followed by details such as when (not) to attend the ED and what to bring along.

Modality

The modality of the poster ensemble – that is, the use of signs to signal the degree of validity claimed for the communicative act – is evident in both genre and style. Regarding genre, the sequences steadily move towards greater formality and through iteration emphasise the proximate as well

as the uninterrupted and enduring availability of emergency services. Regarding overall style, the trustworthiness of the communicative act is enhanced by its abstract modality (i.e. the absence of decorative images) and by the recognisable iterated corporate design that evokes the institutional identity of a largely stable public entity.

Semiotic agency is encoded in the posters on the sides of both the Hospital and the addressees. The Hospital presents itself as an active and reliable agent in providing healthcare for the community through the accumulation of phrases that convey what is crucial to an ED, namely proximity and permanent availability for patients, in what is a mixture of assertive and commissive speech acts in the active mood: “we are here for you”, “in emergencies your Bruderholz Hospital is always there for you” and “always in your vicinity”. By initiating these communicative interactions, that is, by addressing readers as interlocutors, the Hospital also recognises these interlocutors as linguistic agents. By extension, the Hospital recognises and empowers the interlocutors as agents capable of interpreting the message in ways that impact on their behaviours – that is, in ways that affect “their own and others’ ways of being” (Duranti, 2004, p. 455). This recognition of the interlocutor’s agency is grammatically encoded in the various direct forms of address, such as the multiple repetitions of the second-person pronoun *you* across the languages and across the posters: “Wenn *Ihnen* wirklich etwas auf dem Magen liegt”, “*your* Bruderholz Hospital is always there for *you*”, “always in *your* vicinity”. Importantly, with its alternative multilingualism, the hospital signals recognition of the agency of linguistically diverse members of society to participate as responsible users of public services.

Overall, degrees of semiotic agency are encoded and evoked within the boundaries of this intertextual ensemble of alternative multilingualisms deliberately placed in the linguistic landscape. By communicating that the ED is both nearby and open, and by evoking a care setting tailored to multiple linguistic identities, the posters encouraged the community to be active agents who can respond appropriately to available health pathway offers. By directing them to the website, the posters also led addressees to a digital environment where they could be active agents in their own health education. Yet ultimately, it is in the nature of unidirectional signs like posters that the semiotic agency of the sign-makers overshadows that

of the respondents. At this stage, the Hospital's recognition of addressees' agency is promissory. The extent to which addressees themselves are able to exercise their combination of semiotic and health agency will become tested, not in a marketing campaign in the linguistic landscape but in actual interactions in the ED itself.

4.3 Agency in observers' reflections on the posters

To address our third question – about agency in observers' interpretation of the posters – we analysed the observations of two multilingual groups. Although this sample is not representative of potential respondents in the public sphere, the participants' reflections on connections between the context of the campaign, language choice and the quality of care are suggestive of discussions the posters might prompt in the public sphere.

Language politics and health politics

In Excerpt 5, the observers discuss two issues: why is the Hospital advertising at all and why did it opt for these specific languages in its campaign?

Excerpt 5

Student 1: ...I wouldn't have thought now that the Kantonsspital Baselland makes advertising in Turkish

((laughter))

Student 3: is it Turkish?

Student 1: it is Turkish

[//absolutely certain//]

Student 3: ehm it is (.) so it is somehow I have the feeling it is somehow because of the referendum maybe (.) to somehow everyone

[...]

The hospitals are of course in a competitive struggle against each other

Student 1: I have not once seen German advertising for the Kantonsspital.

(Focus group 1: multilingual students; original in Swiss German, 29.05.2017, 00:24:16–00:25:05)

Adding to the connections between linguistic and health agency discussed so far, these observers connect the Hospital's entry into the linguistic landscape with the social and political agency of the community. Their observations about linguistic inequality/equality, invisibility/visibility and inclusion/exclusion suggest ways in which the campaign may nudge others to join discussions in the public sphere about the connections between

the medium (language politics) and the message (health politics), that is, the relationships between linguistic justice and just health. Furthermore, they interpret this presence of the Hospital in the linguistic landscape of a neighbouring canton as part of ongoing political and economic campaigns about hospital amalgamation in the region. From this perspective, the posters nudge voters to exercise their political agency in voting about the future of a viable public health service (“it is somehow because of the referendum maybe (.) to somehow everyone [...] The hospitals are of course in a competitive struggle against each other”).

Language concordance, language competence and quality of care

In Excerpts 6 and 7, the observers connect the languages in the linguistic landscape to language use in the Hospital and to the quality of care.

Excerpt 6

Student 1: I have the feeling that it says that they also speak Swiss German and Turkish or something, or that I think you want to show that you know Turkish, that people can get competent advice from you in Turkish, or I don't know, otherwise it doesn't make sense to me that an advertisement is now being made in Turkish. (Focus group 1: multilingual students; original in Swiss German, 29.05.2017)

Excerpt 7

Lecturer 1: This means that in the hospital these languages are also spok-, so you are confronted with these languages and probably also need translators to communicate with the people [...]

Lecturer 2: Especially people who speak no German can go to this hospital without any problem

Lecturer 1: [...] it means, we speak your language. [...] You are addressed as pedestrian in your language. That means “we speak your language”.

(Focus group 2: multilingual language lecturers; original in standard German, 21.06.2017)

Guided by the metonymic device of synecdoche, the observers draw inferences from the few sentences the Hospital placed in the linguistic landscape, regarding multilingualism in this public institution in general. They infer that patients can be treated in the languages used in the campaign (“You are addressed as pedestrian in your language. That means ‘we speak your language’”; “it says that they also speak Swiss German and

Turkish”). More strongly, they point out that this public institution takes special measures to ensure patients’ linguistic agency (“Especially people who speak no German can go to this hospital without any problem”), and that such enhanced linguistic agency is part of enhancing health agency (“you want to show that you know Turkish, that people can get *competent* advice from you in Turkish”).

Evidence of the contribution of semiosis to agency can be found in how one of the lecturers interprets the poster and what her colleague observes about the latter. Her response – warning that it would be fallacious to infer from a smattering of single sentences that the hospital offers competent healthcare in multiple languages – shows how she actualises her agency in interpretation and how her interpretation actualises her agency. In cautioning that the synecdoche may facilitate the logical fallacy of unwarranted extrapolation, she draws on one semiotic domain (the inferential rules of logic) to contest another semiotic domain (the associative relations of rhetoric). Using signs to argue in favour of different relations among signs, she resists being nudged towards hermeneutic closure. Instead, actualising her semiotic agency, she adds the nuance that the linguistic agency of the patients may be mediated through lay translation by members of staff other than the treating professionals (“you [...] probably also need translators to communicate with the people”). In that sense, the alternative multilingual interaction in the ED may entail the involvement of various members of the institution in the same way as the creation of the poster campaign did, which is not evident from just contemplating the posters themselves.

Rather than proposing graded notions of linguistic and health agency and the connections between them, the interviewees are seduced into a dichotomous logic when they infer from a few sentences to language competence more broadly, and from there to competent medical care. Whereas the dichotomous interpretation to which they succumb is satisfied that one utterance in the linguistic landscape signals satisfactory communicative competence in a demanding field such as interacting with patients, a graded version of agency would acknowledge that there are degrees of linguistic agency and that this is connected to degrees of health agency, health delivery and patient satisfaction. That the interviewees’ interpretations of

the signs are at times wanting, is evidence for the conclusion that their own agency is indeed graded rather than absolute.

Overall, the respondents, as representatives of discussants in the public sphere, interpreted the campaign as addressing both patients as users of public services and themselves as political agents within a social decision-making process. While they all interpreted the multilingual posters as a commitment to competent care, some mobilised their semiotic agency to add nuance to these interpretations. Finally, their interpretations reflected an awareness of the inequalities among multilingualisms and how changing the rules, for example when official institutions reconfigure the unequal relations among multilingualisms, may kindle debate and even resistance.

5. Conclusion: Shaping the multilingual linguistic landscapes that shape us

This study examined the use of the linguistic landscape by a public institution to restore trust in its service. It showed how, by opting for alternative multilingualisms, the Hospital contributed to linguistic and social justice (Piller, 2016) and implicitly to socially responsible language education in the public space. It thereby sought to add to existing understandings (e.g. Hopkyns & Van den Hoven, 2022; Stranger, 2021) of factors that facilitate and hinder semiotic agency and multilingual health communication. By focusing on these instances of agency, this study furthermore complements existing knowledge on semiotic agency and integrates it with what we know regarding agency in other fields, most importantly health. In addition, regarding the relations between theory and methodology, the study added to illustrations of the value of integrating social semiotic analyses with social semiotic accounts of agency (Kockelman 2007; Van Leeuwen, 2005).

The chapter foregrounded three issues and the connections among them: health educationscapes, alternative multilingualisms and agency. Elaborating on the notion of educationscapes, the study sought to shed light on how institutions (such as public healthcare providers) can use the linguistic landscape beyond their own spatial confines for educational effect. Connecting this to the notion of multiple multilingualisms, the study moreover argued for the value of distinguishing between hegemonic and alternative multilingualisms, thereby reflecting the ways in which power

relations among various multilingual constellations configure the overall field of multilingual communication.

Furthermore, the study aimed to offer empirical analyses to substantiate a strong extended theory of semiotic agency that couples a social semiotic account of agency with an account of agency in the semiotic domain. It sought to show how semiosis contributes to agency and how this agency is exercised in reconfiguring the rules/patterns that make action, interaction and understanding possible. Concerning its features, the study sought to illustrate ways in which agency is social, distributed, graded and multidimensional. Additionally, regarding its components, the study sought to shed light on how semiotic agency is exercised across four interrelated components: namely, what is communicated, how the message is conveyed, who is involved and where it is placed.

Our analyses of agency in the genealogy of the campaign (Q1) focused on an interview with one of the producers of the signs. They shed light on the facilitating conditions that made it possible for a public service to introduce alternative multilingualisms, thereby contributing to the transformation of the rules that regulate which media institutions use in the public sphere. Our analyses also showed how the institution empowered staff to engage in the campaign, how it amplified their voices in the multilingual linguistic landscape, and how staff and the Hospital thereby contributed to the transformation of the rules governing who speaks for public institutions in the linguistic landscape. In doing so, the analysis added to the existing knowledge of how organisations mobilise the linguistic capital of multilingual employees (Duchêne, 2011) and how the agency of individual and collective producers shapes the linguistic landscape (Malinowski, 2008; Troyer, 2023; Androutsopoulos & Kuhlee in this collection).

Our analyses of the semiotic encoding of agency in the posters (Q2) focused on the spatial arrangement of the ensemble and the signs themselves. These analyses examined how the signs sought to expand the semiotic and health agency of both the Hospital and its addressees. Accordingly, these analyses shed light on the graded, social, distributed and multidimensional nature of semiotic agency. Not only did the posters constitute an expansion of the Hospital's collective semiotic agency and signal that the Hospital welcomes the potential corresponding expansion of the agency of individual patients. More importantly, the posters

expressed the Hospital's acknowledgement that the institution's agency expands in concert with the patients'. In this way, our analyses sought to add evidence to empirical findings in support of the view that agency and sign-making are reciprocally constitutive (Ahearn, 2001; Duranti, 2004; Mendoza-Collazos & Zlatev, 2022; Taylor, 1985).

Our analyses of how agency featured in the interpretation of the posters (Q3) centred on the responses of focus groups to photographs of the signs. These analyses showed that respondents were alert to how agency operates as an amalgam across components – the display in the linguistic landscape (place) by a public institution, addressing passers-by (agents) in an alternative multilingual ensemble (medium) to regain trust in the public service (content) – that raises complex social challenges regarding semiotic and health agency. In distinguishing these components analytically and then also showing how an adequate interpretation of signs depends on connecting them, these analyses aimed to add to existing research on attitudes and ideologies related to multiple multilingualisms in a recipient population (Fernández-Mallat, 2020).

Future investigations can go beyond the limitations of our study. The data to be examined can be expanded in numerous ways. To begin with, greater detail about additional agents involved in the genealogy of such campaigns would further our understanding of collaboratively produced multilingual linguistic landscapes. Furthermore, analyses of ensembles from different combinations of languages would allow a more comprehensive understanding of the relations among various multilingual constellations. And finally, reflections by a wider range of respondents on location within the linguistic landscape would allow a better understanding of the interpretations of such signs. Beyond this, the effect of such campaigns deserves attention, firstly in terms of rebuilding trust and their impact on patient behaviours; secondly, in terms of enduring public awareness of the connections between language and health; and thirdly, in terms of growing commitment by public institutions to mobilise alternative multilingualisms in linguistic landscapes.

Such further investigations into the relations among semiotic agency, multilingualisms and educationscapes may thereby contribute to explicating the conditions under which we create ourselves. Greater knowledge of these conditions can enhance the capacity of policymakers, practitioners

and civil society to actualise their agency in shaping the linguistic landscapes that shape us in ways that are attentive to the intersections of just healthcare and linguistic justice.

Transcription Notation

(.), (..), (...)	pauses (1, 2, 3 seconds)
((laughter))	para- or nonverbal act
bold	stressed, emphasised
[...]	supressed text
atten-	abortion of utterance

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Åse Mette Johansen and Hilde Sollid

11 Learning to Reconcile: Entextualisation of a Multilingual Municipality Sign in Educationscapes of Sápmi

Abstract: The sign of the trilingual municipality Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono is one of the most discussed items in the linguistic landscapes of Sápmi and Norway. In 1992, the municipality was included in the Administrative Area for Sámi Language, and monolingual Norwegian road signs were replaced with bilingual ones that also included the North Sámi name. Shortly afterwards, the bilingual signs were repeatedly painted over, removed, or even shot at, and the vandalism gained enormous media attention. Meanwhile, vandalised versions of the road sign found their way into both national and local museums. Since 2002, the signs have been left untouched, and in 2016, the Kven name of the municipality was included without any conflict. Based on material ethnography, this chapter analyses the replacement of the sign as processes of entextualisation and as acts of reconciliation aimed at both learning about injustice in the colonial past and building justice for the future.

Keywords: Sámi, Kven, road signs, toponymic colonisation, entextualisation, acts of reconciliation

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 1990s, Kåfjord kommune, a municipality in northern Norway, was included in the newly established Administrative Area for Sámi Language in Norway. In this process, the municipality was given a bilingual name, Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune, and monolingual Norwegian municipality signs were replaced with bilingual ones that included the North Sámi name. Shortly afterwards, the bilingual signs were repeatedly vandalised: removed, painted over and even shot at. The polarised and essentialised conflict between “Sámi” and “Norwegians” gained enormous media attention and interest from researchers (see for instance Puzey, 2012). Meanwhile, vandalised versions of the municipality signs found their way into two museums. Since the early 2000s, the signs

have been left untouched, and in 2016, the Kven name of the municipality was included without any conflict. Today the official name of the municipality is Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune – Kaivuonon komuuni (hereafter Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono).

This chapter is an analysis of this municipality sign as a multilayered semiotic and discursive artefact. Through the analysis, we aim to uncover traces of situated sociopolitical discourses in history and for an anticipated future. We take a broad perspective on the concept of linguistic education (cf. Krompák et al., 2022) by analysing how this specific multilingual municipality sign in northern Norway has been mobilised for educational purposes about language reclamation and reconciliation after long-term colonialism in Sápmi. In the Norwegian context, colonialism refers to an internal process where the nation state aimed at gaining control over the Sámi people, their land and their practices through measures like the regulation of land, religion, language and education (cf. Olsen & Sollid, 2022). It reached its most intense phase with the Norwegianisation policy, which was conducted by Norwegian authorities for more than a hundred years, from 1850 up to the second half of the twentieth century (cf. Minde, 2003). Decolonisation, then, is the critical deconstruction of these hierarchical power relations that minoritised the Sámi people in, for instance, education settings (cf. Olsen & Sollid, 2022). In Norway, the 1980s was a turning point in politics concerning the Sámi people, with a new law regulating Sámi juridical issues (1987), the inclusion of the Sámi paragraph in the Norwegian constitution (1988), and the establishment of the Sámi Parliament (1989). Important here is that the Sámi law states that Sámi and Norwegian are “equal languages” (*likeverdige språk* in Norwegian). What “equal languages” means is further described in chapter 3 on Sámi languages, which was included in the law in 1990. This chapter describes that the extensive rights to use and learn Sámi in official contexts are mainly connected to the Administrative Area for Sámi Language.

The Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono municipality sign has been one of the most thoroughly discussed items in the linguistic landscapes of both Sápmi and Norway over the last couple of decades. The discourses revolving around this sign make it a hotspot for uncovering layers of discourses of social differentiation. The transformation into a multilingual

artefact is the result of a social action of putting up the sign (cf. Pietikäinen et al., 2011; Scollon & Scollon, 2004), which again is the material result of discourses of decolonisation and of revitalising and reclaiming Sámi, and eventually Kven, language and culture. In turn, the sign is situated in a specific historical space that includes the long timescales of the overarching marginalisation of people, multilingual discursive practices, the contemporary processes of changing social orders, and ideas for future relationships. The emplacement of the sign in educationscapes adds new layers of discourse. On the one hand, the municipality sign still does its intended job of identifying and demarcating a given space. On the other hand, the fact that the vandalised versions of it were put on display in two different institutional settings can be seen as processes of realising a new latent meaning and yet another layer of entextualisation (cf. Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Silverstein & Urban, 1996). As these signs are reframed as institutional and educational artefacts with different and multilayered sociopolitical content, this contributes to an accumulation of discourses.

This chapter explores the layers of entextualisation that can be uncovered in the history of the transformation and replacement of this sign. We also discuss how entextualisation of the vandalised versions of the sign can be seen as acts of reconciliation where the goal is to learn about injustice in the colonial past and to build justice for the future.

2. Methodology and data: Material ethnography of a sign

The core data of this chapter is a road sign demarking the borders of Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono along the European route E6 with Kirkenes (Norway) as the northern and Trelleborg (Sweden) as the southern end point. We look at four different versions of the same sign, chosen from the much wider linguistic landscape of the municipality. Within research on educationscapes, this is perhaps a surprisingly limited data set. However, inspired by Stroud and Mpendukana's (2009) material ethnography, we regard following only one item in the linguistic landscape across time and place to trace discursive changes concerning the value of Sámi languages in the municipality and in Norway as important. This material ethnography includes the emplacement of one of the versions of the sign from the roadside to more familiar educationscapes, namely the Arctic

University Museum of Norway (located in Tromsø) and the Center of Northern Peoples (located in Olmmáivággi – Manndalen – Olmavankka in Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono).

An important aspect of our approach to material ethnography is the relationship between a material artefact and space. Blommaert (2013, p. 23) describes space as “a historically configured phenomenon and as an actor” that affects people and practices connected to it. Through history, space becomes a regulating actor, “full of codes, expectations, norms and traditions; and a space of power controlled by, as well as controlling people” (Blommaert, 2013, p. 3). Following this, a material ethnography of a municipality sign is not only about looking into the text in terms of its present form and intended function, but also into textual history; that is, histories of the use, abuse and evaluation of textual material (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Blommaert, 2013), and thus, how the sign is part of the space’s regulating force. This also means that the regulating force might have different consequences for social actors with different historical bodies using the space (cf. Blommaert, 2013, pp. 27–34). We return to the links between sign and space in section 3 below.

Uncovering historical layers of discourse in the municipality sign requires an ethnographic presence and engagement with the sign and space beyond simply observing the text and space synchronically. Relevant here is that both authors come from the area, and we regularly go to or through the municipality to visit family. We have also conducted different types of sociolinguistic research there. Our personal and professional relationship to the space also contributes to detailed knowledge and experience of Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono. This knowledge emerges also from following media coverage, research and art from and about the area, and attendance at cultural events (e.g. theatre, concerts, exhibitions and festivals).

3. Theoretical perspectives

Replacing the monolingual Norwegian with bilingual North Sámi and Norwegian road signs is the result of a chain of social change, political decisions and juridical regulations. Central to this multifaceted chain is language activism, which Haley De Korne sees as

a social project that aims to counter language-related inequalities, and may encompass many different actors, imaginaries, and actions. I view various forms of activism, advocacy, promotion and stance-taking as part of the same larger political project to resist inequalities and/or imagine new avenues towards linguistic equality. (De Korne, 2021, p. 1)

To shed light on the process and the disputes that followed in Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono, we first turn to the concept of entextualisation. Following Bauman and Briggs (1990, p. 73), entextualisation is a “process of rendering discourse extractable”, and of making social, political and juridical discourse or stretches of discourse into a text. Importantly, the municipality sign as text incorporates aspects of situated discourses, making links between discourses and text. Particularly relevant for our analysis is that the text was moved from its original placement at the roadside to two different sites for collecting and sharing knowledge about our past, which emphasises how the text is decontextualised from one space and recontextualised in another. Although the text is still linked to the original space and discourses, this process of replacement also adds new discursive layers. Crucially, as Bauman and Briggs (1990, p. 73) also argue, basic to entextualisation is the reflexive capacity of discourse to comment on or refer to itself, which is highlighted in the decisions to move vandalised versions of the municipality sign to two different educationscapes.

By employing entextualisation to analyse the historical layers in the sign, we also highlight a link between the sign and space as part of the discourse. As indicated above, we follow Blommaert’s (2013) theorising of space as a historical phenomenon. Through the historical layers of discourses and entextualisation, space as an actor contributes to regulating behaviour. In our case, the sign also has a textual history in terms of changes in languages used, as well as in terms of changes in the discourses in place (cf. Scollon & Scollon, 2003) and responses to the sign. This implies that the interrelationship between space and the municipality sign is reflexive in the sense that space gives meaning to the sign, and the sign gives meaning to the space.

In the case of the municipality sign, both the spatial and semantic scopes (cf. Blommaert, 2013, pp. 43–48) are quite wide, as the sign is a nationally standardised demarcation of borders between municipal administrative

units. It tells the audience where they are and where to go for municipal public services. In addition, through the choice of language, the sign also says something about whose space this is and the relationship between the social groups in the area. Significant here is therefore the political content, as the road sign and the different versions are the textual result of struggles over political power. Helander (2014, with reference to Harley, 2001) argues that the silencing of Indigenous Sámi toponymy can be seen as toponymic colonisation, a claim of ownership over land. Likewise, the inclusion of Sámi (first) and Kven (later) can be seen as part of a process of decolonisation. Hence, the semantic scope of the municipality sign is wider in the sense that it is standardised and strictly structured by national regulations, but the scope is simultaneously specific and must be interpreted by considering the historical layers of discourse and entextualisation. The specificity comes from the historical past and the contemporary consequences for people living in the municipality, as well as the targeted audiences beyond the municipality borders. It also points forward to the construction of a decolonised and socially just society.

4. Analysis: One sign, four layers of entextualisation

In this section, we seek to uncover and describe the different entextualised layers of the municipality sign in focus more thoroughly. As pointed out in the introduction, these layers are linked to specific chronological events along the historical timeline which involve the transformations and replacements of the sign at certain points in time. This timeline is also reflected in the structure of the analysis. However, Blommaert (2013) reminds us that space is historical, owing to the connection between space and normative expectations, not least concerning social order, “for the normative expectations we attach to spaces have their feet in the history of social and spatial arrangements in any society” (Blommaert, 2013, p. 33). In other words, each layer of entextualisation for this municipality sign can be analysed as a complex process involving social actors in past, present and future, and social space itself plays a crucial role as one of the main actors in these processes: Each layer includes semiotic changes in social space that call for actions and reactions among users since consequential questions

of being either “in place” or “out of place” are raised (Blommaert, 2013, p. 32).

4.1. Before 1994: The monolingual sign

Originating in the regulatory discourse of the already mentioned period of nation-building and Norwegianisation, the first road sign that demarcated Kåfjord kommune as a geographical, political and social unit was monolingual and in Norwegian. The official Norwegian name and the present borders of the municipality date back to 1929 when Kåfjord was separated from the large municipality of Lyngen. Within this first historical layer of the entextualisation of the sign, the Norwegian name of the fjord was extracted from the dominant political and official discourse and given status and priority by Norwegian authorities. It became a text in social space in which it served to reinforce the ongoing process of establishing a monolingual and monocultural norm both within municipality schools and administration locally, and within the nation more broadly. In other words, the first monolingual sign reflected the naturalised and standardised social order of colonisation and assimilation from which historical, cultural and linguistic complexity has been erased. It communicated Norwegian ownership of the place and a culturally and linguistically monolithic social space.

The monolingual sign also contributed to silencing. As Helander (2016) points out, all place names on signs in Sámi areas in the Nordic countries have until recently – that is, the 1990s – either been in the majority state language or represented with older and incorrect spellings in Sámi. As stated above, this can be seen as a broader and long-lasting policy of silencing the Indigenous toponymy, which also includes the erasure of Sámi and Kven place names from official maps regulated by the state (Helander, 2016, pp. 230–232; cf. also Irvine & Gal, 2000). The introduction of the monolingual signs in Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono coincided with the far-reaching consequences of assimilation that affected individuals and society in the most profound way, not least due to comprehensive language shift processes in the area from Sámi and/or Kven to Norwegian during the twentieth century. Also silenced were Sámi traditional practices

and artefacts, as well as questions of identity and belonging (cf. Johansen & Lane(submitted)).

4.2. 1994: The bilingual sign

The bilingual North Sámi and Norwegian municipality sign, reading *Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune*, was introduced in 1994 when the municipality was included in the newly established Administrative Area for Sámi Language and became officially bilingual together with five other municipalities that had done so two years earlier. (As of this writing, in 2024, this area covers 13 municipalities.) Like the process that occurred behind the first monolingual sign, this significant change in the linguistic landscape was rooted in overarching juridical regulations and political discourse, but this time in favour of the Sámi people's right "to safeguard and develop their language, culture and way of life" as stated in the Sámi Act of 1987.

In other words, the second layer of entextualisation for the sign implied a discursive change that brought Sámi language and identity back "in place" after a long period of having been defined as "out of place" through different forms of silencing and erasure.

As already described in the introduction, this change in the linguistic landscape of the municipality caused severe conflict among people in the fjord. The controversies gained broad attention in local and national media, in which they were presented as ongoing ethnic conflict between "Norwegians" and "Sámi". On the contrary, people who positioned themselves as either for or against implementation of revitalisation measures often shared family history and background, and harsh tensions arose not only between colleagues and friends, but also between family members. According to legal requirements, the North Sámi name was positioned above the Norwegian one (see Figure 11.1), and this was seen as a particularly provocative characteristic of the new municipality sign. In a 2001 documentary about the conflict in *Gáivuotna – Kåfjord*, produced and broadcast by Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK; Jacobsen, 2001), one of the local interviewees expresses his opinion about the new municipality sign: "I think it is provoking. I simply think so. If they only had been wise enough to place the Sámi name below the Norwegian one,

I think it would have been somewhat better”. (Translated from Norwegian dialect: *Eg syns det e provoseranes. Det syns eg. Rett og slett. Hadde dem hadd vett å sette det samiske under det norske, så trur eg nok det ville ha vært litt bedre, ja.*) The quote captures the experienced sociopolitical disorder of revitalisation. The bilingual sign introduces a new social and rights-based normativity that makes Sámi language, identity and history visible. Further, it is clearly consequential as it contributes to shaking up the established social order of long-term colonialism and Norwegianisation. The interviewee in the NRK documentary refers to the bilingual sign as misleading: “To non-locals, there are only Sámi in Kåfjord, and that is so terribly wrong”. (Translated from Norwegian dialect: *For utenforstående så e det bare sama i Kåfjord, og det e så forferdelig feil.*) According to him, the sign provides wrong information about social and ethnic groups and their ownership of their shared space (see Figure 11.1).



Figure 11.1 The bilingual municipality sign in North Sámi and Norwegian (photo by Hilde Sollid, 2009)

Signs designating the names of municipalities in Norway are standardised official items with white letters on a deep blue background. The signs consist of a sign plate installed on three steel poles (see Figure 11.1). As we shall soon see, these different elements of the total materiality of the sign play a significant role in the entextualisation processes involving this bilingual artefact. In addition to the bilingual name, the municipal coat of arms is included, which in this case is a spinning wheel in silver on a red background. Interestingly, the coat of arms of Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono was designed and approved as late as 1988. The spinning wheel reflects the old, local production of yarn from sheep wool, an important resource for *duodji* – North Sámi for traditional Sámi handicraft – in this coastal Sámi area. Despite its roots in coastal Sámi culture, the symbol was not read as transgressive by anyone when it was included in the sign. While the Sámi name on the municipality sign, Gáivuona suohkan, was the target of repeated vandalism for a period of several years, the coat of arms was mainly left in peace. Although the spinning wheel might be seen as a coastal Sámi symbol today, it can also be defined as local. After all, practices related to Sámi handicraft remained vital during the period of Norwegianisation, but during the assimilation period they were reinterpreted and talked about as “local” or “from Kåfjord”, not “Sámi”, in local discourse.

In other words, Sámi language is seen as transgressive in a completely different manner. Sámi language is necessarily Sámi and does not contain the same interpretative flexibility as the coat of arms. Helander (2016, p. 245) argues that in Norway, “Sami settlement names are clearly regarded as symbols of Sámi rights”, not only language rights but Sámi rights in general, including land rights and rights to traditional Sámi livelihoods. In other words, the extreme form of erasure (cf. Irvine & Gal, 2000) that the repeated vandalisation of the municipality sign represented was targeted at the introduction of a new rights-based order in the local community.

4.3. 1994–2001: The vandalised sign(s)

The vandalisation resulted in two different versions of the sign. In the first version, paint and/or bullet holes covered first and foremost the Sámi name of the municipality (cf. Figures 11.4 and 11.5), but on at least one

occasion also the Norwegian name (cf. Figure 11.2). In the second version, the entire sign plate was removed by the Norwegian Public Roads Administration (in Norwegian *Statens vegvesen*) in order to replace it with a new one (Figure 11.3). Replacement was a time-consuming process (Pedersen, 2009, p. 49), not least because producing and erecting new signs is expensive. Thus, this second version of the sign reflected the implementation of Sámi language rights simply through three poles of steel positioned to support the bilingual sign plate. This clearly visible absence of the bilingual name in both North Sámi and Norwegian is similar to what Volvach (2023) calls a “shouting absence”, which makes it explicit that something that should have been present in the landscape and on the sign is no longer there. The absence is utterly underlined by the bilingual sign as a clearly standardised artefact, as described above. It is a material and a symbolic void (Volvach, 2023), expressing ongoing and unresolved conflict concerning the revitalisation of the Sámi and the multilingual place. How to move on from here?



Figure 11.2 A vandalised bilingual municipality sign from Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune (screenshot from Jacobsen, 2001)



Figure 11.3 A sign from Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune with the sign plate removed (screenshot from Jacobsen, 2001)

On February 6, 2000 – the Sámi national day – the Arctic University Museum of Norway (formerly the Tromsø museum) in Tromsø opened a permanent exhibition: *Sápmi – Becoming a Nation* (Norwegian *Sápmi – en nasjon blir til*). The exhibition covered the development of the modern Sámi movement in the post-war decades. Included in the exhibition was a vandalised version of the municipality sign from Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune, with the Sámi name being unreadable as a result of the bullet holes caused by shotguns (see Figure 11.4).



Figure 11.4 A vandalised municipality sign from Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune in the exhibition, Sápmi – Becoming a Nation, at the Arctic University Museum of Norway, Tromsø (photo by Hilde Sollid, 2012)

Some years later, in 2011, the Center of Northern Peoples opened in Olmmáivággi – Manndalen – Olmavankka in Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono. This is a Sámi cultural and Indigenous centre encompassing the High North and Sápmi area. The Center houses different Sámi organisations, including the Riddu Riddu Festival, which is a widely known annual international festival that celebrates the cultural diversity of Indigenous people in general and the Coastal Sámi in particular. Another institution located at the Center is the Museum of Northern Peoples, which includes another vandalised Gáivuotna – Kåfjord sign – this time with both bullet holes and paint (see Figure 11.5). This sign was included in the exhibition on a permanent basis when the museum opened.



Figure 11.5 A vandalised municipality sign from Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune in the exhibition at the Museum of Northern Peoples at the Center of Northern Peoples in Olmmáivággi – Manndalen – Olmavankka (photo by Hilde Sollid, 2017)

We analyse the inclusion of these signs in the respective exhibitions as a third layer of entextualisation. Unlike the two first layers, these entextualisation processes are not related to state-regulated language policy and signage, but instead to the construction of educationscapes in two different knowledge institutions. Within the contexts of the exhibitions, the two vandalised signs have some characteristics in common: their main reflexive

function is to comment on themselves as frozen objects of ethno-political conflict (see Pietikäinen et al., 2011). Although the social spaces that include the signs are dynamic interpretative settings, the signs are not supposed to change. Both signs communicate that this conflict is an important and memorable part of modern Sámi history, in which progress and change for both individuals and communities have come with considerable struggle and costs. This is emphasised through the geosemiotic arrangements of the two signs. At the Arctic University Museum of Norway, the sign was first located above the entrance to the exhibition *Sápmi – Becoming a Nation*. The placement enhances the salience of the sign itself, making this artefact serve as a headline for Sámi nation-building processes. Below, we will return to a more detailed description of the similar heading-like placement of the vandalised sign at the Center of Northern Peoples. More generally, both signs address situated sociopolitical discourses back in time, but they also point towards the future. The signs invite us to remember in order to learn from the past.

Further, both exhibitions in which the signs are included are targeted at broad audiences of local and tourist visitors as well as students at different levels in the education system. At the same time, the scope of the exhibited signs differs within these institutional contexts. The Arctic University Museum of Norway is – as the name communicates – a national institution located at UiT The Arctic University of Norway, which is fully owned by the Norwegian state. The exhibition *Sápmi – Becoming a Nation* exists side by side with other exhibits on topics such as birds and animals in the Northern regions, the Northern lights, Viking burial traditions in the North, and art from churches in northern Norway. The main responsibility of the museum is to present science-based knowledge about different aspects of nature, culture and history in northern Norway more broadly. Within this context, the vandalised sign becomes part of a narrative about the modern history of the Sámi people in Norway and, according to the website of the museum, how “the Sami went from being an oppressed minority to a modern Indigenous people” – a story “about this troublesome journey and the fight the Sami had to put up for their culture and rights”.

In contrast, the Museum of Northern Peoples is located at the Center of Northern Peoples, which can be defined as a local institution. The

Center is, for instance, partly owned by Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono and receives a considerable amount of funding from Sámediggi, the Sámi Parliament. Unlike the Arctic University Museum of Norway, this museum has a more narrow and specific focus on “regional Sami culture and contemporary history in particular, and northern people’s art and cultural expressions in general” (the museum website). The focus on local history and diversity is strengthened by the fact that the current basic exhibition of the museum is called *mii*, which means “us” in North Sámi. It is worth noting that the exhibited vandalised sign is here placed over the main entrance to the museum, which is a staircase leading down to the first floor from the lobby of the Center on the main floor. Consequently, everybody who visits the Center for different purposes will see the sign from the main entrance, no matter whether they plan to visit the museum or not. Important here is the fact that the Center houses many different activities for the local community and these are not necessarily related to the different Sámi institutions. For instance, the Center includes a cafeteria and a large room with a stage that is frequently used for both private and public events, ranging from wedding receptions and memorial services to school events, dinner parties, concerts and theatre productions. In short, the Center functions as an important meeting place for the locals.

To sum up, the two different signs are entextualised in similar and yet different educationscapes that target different audiences in different social spaces and therefore function in different ways. Both signs become “memorials in public space” that “engage with the multilingual realities of the communities that commission, construct and challenge them” (Blackwood & Macalister, 2020, p. 1). While the sign in the university museum functions as a symbol of the struggle for Sámi rights in Sápmi in general, the sign at the Center of Northern Peoples at one level symbols the same, but at another level also deals with the shared memories and struggles of the local community. Because both signs put an ethnopolitical conflict on display, they have the potential to contribute to reconciliation. The sign in the university museum calls for reconciliation between the majority population and the Sámi people, while the sign at the Center of Northern Peoples does the same at one level but can at another level also be read as “the embodiment of shared emotions” (Blackwood & Macalister, 2020, p. 3) based on the history of the local community that is in need of being

reconciled with itself after severe, divisive conflicts. We will return to the concept of reconciliation in the discussion below.

4.4. 2016: The trilingual sign

In 2016, yet another text was inscribed on the linguistic landscape of the municipality when the municipality sign became trilingual and came to include the Kven name: Gáivuona suohkan – Kåfjord kommune – Kaivuonon komuuni (see Figure 11.6).



Figure 11.6 The trilingual municipality sign in North Sámi, Norwegian and Kven (photo by Hilde Sollid, 2017)

This, the fourth and – hitherto – final layer of entextualisation generated no conflict at all among people in the fjord. Already in 2004, a report that analysed the implementation of revitalisation efforts in the municipality was published with the title *Struggle, Crisis, and Reconciliation* (our translation of the Norwegian title *Kamp, krise og forsoning*, Pedersen & Høgmo, 2004). In the report, the researchers concluded that the conflict in the municipality had come to an end and had been replaced with a state of reconciliation (Pedersen & Høgmo, 2004, pp. 161–164). This conclusion is based on local recognition of Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono as a multicultural and multilingual community in which there is room for different individual subject positions in the cultural interface between Sámi, Norwegian and Kven identities and languages (Sollid & Olsen, 2019, with reference to Nakata, 2007). Against this backdrop, the entextualisation processes involving the multilayered municipality sign have contributed to transforming and expanding the social space, and the history of this transformation of social space is also written into the intertextuality of the different layers of the sign.

5. Discussion: From acts of activism to acts of reconciliation

The entextualisation processes analysed above emerge from actions and reactions relating to discourses on decolonisation. These processes are anchored in an overarching process of language activism (De Korne, 2021), and the different versions of the sign can be read as acts of activism. In the discussion in this section, our attention is on the movement of two vandalised municipality signs from the roadside to two institutions dedicated to collecting and sharing knowledge. The two educationscapes have the goal of counteracting epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007; Koskinen & Rolin, 2019) by documenting people's lifeworlds and historical events in the region, including wrongdoings towards the Sámi. Learning about the past is an opportunity for the visitors to develop knowledge for the future.

The replacement of the signs is here analysed as acts of reconciliation. Departing from Isin's (2008, 2009) theorising of "act" in the context of citizenship studies, we see an act of reconciliation as a performative doing that aims to disturb an enduring hierarchical social order between majoritised and minoritised groups. In the hierarchical relationship under

scrutiny in this study, the main responsibility for bearing and adjusting to the colonial legacy in social and political practices is carried by the minoritised Sámi. In Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono, toponymic decolonisation (cf. Helander, 2014) by putting up a bilingual municipality sign surfaced responses of hate and violence against Sámi language and rights. The opponents rejected the project of including the Sámi language and culture in the shared social and political space of the municipality. An act of reconciliation thus has as its goal the changing of these interaction orders (cf. Scollon & Scollon, 2004), and it departs from the observation that the community is not yet at an endpoint of reconciliation, but rather in the process of negotiating a common understanding of historical and present social and political circumstances. Isin (2009, p. 379) describes an act as “an expression for the need to being heard”. Adding to this, reconciliation is relational, and an act of reconciliation can therefore also be the majority’s need to acknowledge the minoritised’s experience of being silenced. Within the context of moving a wrecked municipality sign to educational institutions, we observe two different acts. In the first case the act is performed by a nation-state Norwegian actor, while in the second case the actor first of all represents coastal parts of Sápmi and Northern Indigenous peoples. In both cases the act makes visible the hate and affective responses to the bilingual municipality signs, and the signs tell an unambiguous story of hateful opposition to expanses of discourse on decolonisation and reclamation.

As such, the individual acts are completed once the signs are in place at the Arctic University Museum of Norway and at the Center of Northern Peoples. We nevertheless do not know to what extent these acts in turn accomplished drawing attention to the local conflicts and through that the injustices towards the Sámi people. What at least is achieved is an act that responded to the need to break different forms of long-term structural silencing of Sámi and Kven. Once put on display in the two education-scapes, the signs invite the audiences to reflect on the current and historical situation, as well as aspirations for further reconciliation. In this way, the reflexivity of the municipality sign is written into the educationscapes as materialised discourses that also comment on the historical and present social space in which the signs on the borders of Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono are emplaced.

Seeing this local situation in a broader perspective, it is fair to say that despite important Sámi political and juridical changes over the last decades, Norway is not in a state of reconciliation. The relationships between the minoritised Sámi and Kven and the majoritised Norwegian society are still broken and characterised by a hierarchical social order. This is part of the background to the political decision to put together a *sannhets- og forsoningskommisjon* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC]) in Norway in 2018. The TRC submitted its final report to the *Stortinget* (Norwegian Parliament) in June 2023. The TRC's mandate covers the situations of both the Sámi and the Kven minorities. Additionally, the mandate includes the Forest Finns, a national minority traditionally situated in the south-eastern part of Norway. The TRC's main goal is to lay the foundation for "further reconciliation" (*fortsatt forsoning* in Norwegian) between the three minoritised groups and majoritised society (Sannhets- og forsoningskommisjonen, 2023; see also Johnsen, 2021, pp. 29–30). The foundation for further reconciliation is to establish a shared understanding of the Norwegianisation politics and its consequences. The TRC defines reconciliation as relational efforts to transition from practices of injustice and conflict to a socially just and equitable society. In the TRC report, Gáivuotna – Kåfjord – Kaivuono is referred to as an example of cultural and linguistic reconciliation (Sannhets- og forsoningskommisjonen, 2023, pp. 632–633). Seen as acts of reconciliation, the replacement of the municipality signs in the two educationscapes is part of a series of official and personal acts of reconciliation that might lead to more knowledge and eventually a reconciled society.

6. Final words

In this study, we sought to uncover the entextualisation processes linked to a municipality sign based on material ethnography. By analysing the different layers of the textual history of this sign, we aimed to shed light on the relationship between situated sociopolitical discourses and transformations of the sign. The different versions and emplacements of the sign helped us trace the overarching development from silencing and minoritising Sámi and Kven presence and practices to breaking silence and re-establishing and reconstructing a multilingual and multicultural social

space. We argue that the entextualisation processes also include acts of reconciliation that are based on developing and sharing knowledge in the aftermath of a heated conflict concerning historical background, present social orders and future coexistence in a more just society.

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Sílvia Melo-Pfeifer

12 Afterword: Linguistic Landscapes, Activism and Service Learning

1. Introduction

I am writing this afterword within a context in which the war between Ukraine and Russia has been going on for two years; within which the Middle East has become even more destabilised after Hamas' horrendous attack on Israel and the subsequent retaliation; and within which demonstrations against the extreme right are multiplying in all German cities, particularly against a rising political party in the country. Added to the mix are other explosive ingredients such as global warming, populism and the spread of fake news. In such a global context, (social) activism, mainly visible in the form of public mass demonstrations, is developing, helping to shed light on pressing issues related to the need to fight inequality, address racism and discrimination, and challenge indifference and inaction. These issues have made their way into the linguistic landscapes around the world, mirroring concerns and constructing a sense of (urgent) sharing. It is interesting to note that regardless of the country or city we are in, messages of activism and solidarity, promoted by pan-national and sometimes loosely connected movements, give us a feeling of familiarity, of shared causes (in favour of environmental causes or gender equality, for example).

Although I work in Hamburg and live in Berlin, where the linguistic landscape is at once both extremely dynamic and paradoxically familiar and stable, I took the following photograph (Figure 12.1) in Bremen.



Figure 12.1 Photograph of a stencil found on the University of Bremen campus (January 31, 2024)

The stencil found on the campus of the University of Bremen (Figure 12.1) was photographed against the backdrop of the conflicts mentioned above and a sense of inaction and a lack of clear positioning on the part of European institutions. A student on campus told me that the sign was relatively recent and was probably connected to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. The moment I took that photograph a feeling of multimodal intertextuality (see Johansen and Sollid, this volume, for the concept of “entextualisation”) manifested itself in relation to another I had taken on my street in the centre of Berlin (Figure 12.2) amid the Syrian refugee crisis.

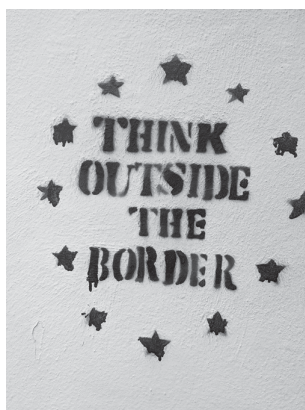


Figure 12.2 Photograph of a stencil found on a street in Berlin

The two images have an obvious interventional character (they could be considered a form of “intervention street art”). They also show multi-modal intertextuality and dialogism, as they were taken in different cities at different times but nevertheless share the same goal of promoting an open Europe that supports refugees and peace. Both images are part of (and construct) a specific narrative about Europe. In the first image, the reference to Europe is textual, in the second it is visualised by the stars that frame the textual message. While the first image presents a negative message, the second calls for activism. Also interesting is the urgent nature of the two texts, which address the potential reader/addressee directly, either through the personal pronoun “you” or through the use of the imperative “think”. In both cases, English is the language chosen to get the message across in German cities. To sum up, we could say that both images reflect agency; in the sense of “complex links between people, their goals and aspirations, their ability to exercise their own will, and the local and broader contexts in which these phenomena unfold” (Glasgow & Bouchard, 2019, p. 2, cited in the introduction to this volume), they reflect transgression and resistance in the field of political activism.

In the following sections, I present my reading of the texts in this volume, including them in discourses of intervention and activism and exploring issues of service learning (Aramburuzabala & Cerrillo, 2023; Felten & Clayton, 2011; Martínez, 2008) that can give educationscapes (Krompák et al., 2022) a new dimension in both school teaching and teacher training.

2. The chapters in this volume

The chapters included in this volume made me reflect on how linguistic landscapes can go beyond a communicative language classroom and the bureaucratic and mass production of teachers, challenging a stance that values the learning and reproduction of chunks of language and speech acts, placing the emphasis on acting and enacting instead. These texts make the point that both the learner and the teacher are social agents, that learning and teaching are meant to be social practices, and that schools and universities are connected to the world and its history. Images such as the ones reproduced in the section above might be a starting point for reflecting on the connections between the social agents that we are, the

language learning and teaching goals we design, and the (socio, political, economic) contexts and agendas framing our actions. Images such as the above can be the resources that trigger a discussion on controversial themes, or they can be the end point of the discussion itself, in which students and teachers become a Banksy in their own right (an allusion to the famous graffiti activist).

In general, we could say that the chapters in this volume revolve around at least one of the poles of observation, reflection and/or intervention (Figure 12.3), involving in-service and pre-service teachers (Antoinette Camilleri Grima; Osman Solmaz), (language) students at different school levels (Dennis Walter Adoko, Medadi Ssentanda and Allen Asimwe; Hiram Maxim; Anikó Hatoss; Steve Marshall, Mohammad Al Hannash and Setareh Masoumi Mayni; Amiena Peck, Ammaarah Seboa, Jacina Januarie, Kāmilah Kalidheen, Kurt Thebus and Zoe Small), and actors in different educationscapes (Jannis Androutsopoulos and Franziska Kuhlee; Stephan Meyer and Edina Krompák; and Åse Mette Johansen and Hilde Sollid).

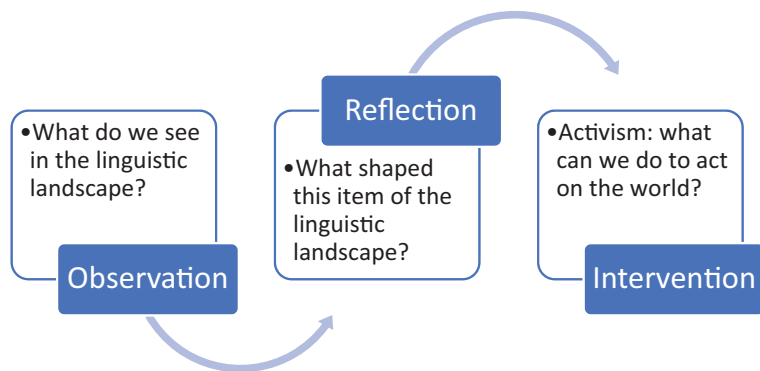


Figure 12.3 Working with LL from an agency and activism perspective (cf. Lourenço & Melo-Pfeifer, 2022, p. 227)

Lourenço and Melo-Pfeifer (2022, p. 227) describe a progression that leads the pedagogical work with linguistic landscapes from observation to intervention. The first stage, observation, tends to be descriptive, focusing on observing the linguistic landscape and becoming aware of the presence of

different languages, cultures, symbols and ideologies at both a macro- and a microlevel (what I consider as the core of Antoinette Camilleri Grima's chapter). The second stage, called reflection, is more interpretative and aims at promoting a critical analysis of the linguistic landscape through activities centred on reflecting on the presence/absence of certain languages in public spaces. This reflective work can be carried out by confronting students and pre-service teachers with situations of linguistic inequality in the linguistic landscapes, with ideologies of colonialism (such in the chapter by Peck et al., and by Steve Marshall, Mohammad Al Hannash and Setareh Masoumi Mayni), or the transgression of symbols and signs. I would be tempted to say that the texts in this volume mainly combine these two strands.

The third stage is more interventionist and focuses on transforming the public discourses and the conditions leading to inequality identified by the students and teachers in the linguistic landscape. Here, more creative activities can emerge that place students and teachers in the role of social agents who are involved in the (re)construction of the linguistic landscape for raising awareness of linguistic, sociopolitical, educational, environmental or political issues (such as in the report by Shohamy & Pennycook, 2021). Even if not placed in the field of formal education (such as primary, secondary and higher education), I would classify the text by Åse Mette Johansen and Hilde Sollid within this strand, as the authors analyse the processes involved in the entextualisation of a specific sign that carries the story of activism for the linguistic rights of the Sámi people.

3. Activism in educationspaces: Why it matters

Activism in education, as put forward in the introduction to this volume, implies taking individual and collective action to disrupt the status quo and enact transformative practices. It is related to agency and to acting as a social agent. This understanding of activism connects to **social activism** (and social action) as a proactive engagement in efforts aimed at reshaping and improving various facets of society. According to Duarte, Lourenço et al., "social activism refers to actions and efforts taken to bring about social, linguistic, political, or environmental change in society. This involves influencing or changing policies, practices, or societal norms to

address issues such as inequality, injustice, discrimination, or environmental degradation” (forthcoming). Common themes in social activism, which are also present in the linguistic landscape, include advocating for racial equality, dismantling gender disparities, pushing for comprehensive immigration reform, championing human rights, fighting for LGBTQ+ rights, and promoting religious freedom. Figures 12.4 and 12.5, which refer to photographs I took on the campus of the University of Bremen, provide us with examples of championing for gender equality and the rights of people with disabilities, respectively.



Figure 12.4 Championing gender equality (January 31, 2024)



Figure 12.5 Championing the rights of people with disabilities (January 31, 2024)

These examples show a kind of spontaneous activism around social issues related to social justice and greater equality and inclusion in public spaces

(in both cases, toilets in public spaces). This is an activism in which the question of the authorship of signs and the transgression of the visible does not seem to matter much in terms of the message transmission (see the chapter by Androutsopoulos and Kuhlee for the concept of “authorship”). The transgression and expected displacement of the receiver in the images occurs through the perceptible superimposition of the new (an asterisk, for example, in Figure 12.5) over a familiar sign, breaking the typical chain of interpretation when one is confronted with the message initially intended. Figure 12.4 also shows that the first transgression of the initial message does not go unanswered: the addition of “toilet for everyone” (in German) is crossed out again (with a new message being superimposed “D-WC” for “Damen toilet”), thus showing different levels and periods of transgression-response, as well as different levels of an ongoing interaction.

Alongside this more spontaneous activism in educationscapes, linguistic landscapes, for example, can be exploited to develop education around different goals of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. In their proposal, Brinkmann et al. (2024) develop a pedagogical activity for the Spanish classroom aimed at discussing and challenging linguistic racism and discrimination in the linguistic landscape, while enacting the goal of building more sustainable communities. Melo-Pfeifer and Tavares (forthcoming) show that both the inclusion and the exclusion of languages in the linguistic landscape can be discriminatory. The authors say that “certain languages and their speakers are systematically represented in some typologies of signs (prohibitions or warnings, for example) that present the potential recipients as criminals or outlaws” (forthcoming). The same authors explain that comprehending this creation of linguistic (in) visibility – that which holds true in the scope of other issues related to the “minorisation” of individuals and groups – holds significance for two main reasons: firstly, it sheds light on how public spaces perpetuate norms and authority, continually presenting viewers with “official” signage that shapes a narrative and influences perceptions of acceptance or rejection towards various languages and their speakers (see also the model of multilingual inequality in public space by Gorter, 2021; Gorter & Cenoz, 2020); secondly, it aims to confront and dismantle the subtle manipulation that often goes unnoticed in public settings. These dual objectives go beyond

mere description of phenomena; they also seek to grasp their ramifications, underscoring an ethical and social imperative for intervention.

In the next section, we close with a framework that can bring intervention to the foreground in linguistic landscapes studies.

4. Ways forward: Service learning as a framework for thinking activism in the educationscape

To address issues of agency and social activism in education in general, and in educationspaces more specifically, I consider that service learning might provide an appropriate framework for action. Service learning, as a specific form of social acting, is an educational approach that merges purposeful community service with academic goals, fostering critical and reflective thinking (Aramburuzabala & Cerrillo, 2023). By emphasising the potential for social transformation, this method engages students (and potentially also teachers) in collaborative efforts with community and non-profit organisations to tackle specific societal needs or challenges. Such an approach helps create opportunities for planned activism. The benefits of service learning are diverse, including improved student learning outcomes, enhanced civic involvement and greater appreciation for linguistic and cultural diversity (Aramburuzabala et al., 2019). Service learning has demonstrated its value in teacher education programmes by bridging the divide between theory and practice (e.g. the gap between analysing and intervening in the linguistic landscape), offering pre-service teachers and students a first-hand encounter with the real-world challenges faced by schools and communities (Martínez, 2008; Resch & Schritteser, 2021). As I make clear in this afterword, linguistic landscapes in educational spaces and beyond mirror some of these challenges and offer opportunities to act upon the reality and address social injustices and inequalities (see also Duarte, Lourenço et al., forthcoming; Shohamy & Pennycook, 2021). It is recognised that integrating service learning into teacher education, for example, can foster teachers' civic engagement and commitment to service initiatives: acting on behalf of more deprived social groups through either spontaneous or planned activism can be a step in this direction. For language instructors in particular, service learning holds significant promise, providing them with direct insights into the community and its languages

and cultures, thus motivating them to foster a more diverse, inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment (Porto, 2023; Rauschert & Byram, 2018).

To put these ideas into practice, the Erasmus Plus BOLD (“Building on Linguistic and Cultural Diversity for social action within and beyond European universities”) project was born. Within the scope of the BOLD project, a framework for including service learning in initial teacher education programmes around Europe has been developed and promoted, which aims at implementing participatory action research (Kubota, 2023) in teacher education programmes, bringing community members, researchers and pre-service teachers together in collaborating for the purpose of transforming local practices and discourses. The project aims further at closing the gap between knowledge production and the social contribution of the research (Kubota, 2023), stopping the “misalignment between multilingual scholars’ knowledge generation and the impact of their research on local practices” (Kubota, 2023, p. 10).

Among the various possible activist initiatives, the BOLD project strongly includes the multilingual and intercultural dimension, placing discussion and activism in favour of more diverse and inclusive linguistic landscapes within the orbit of its concerns (Duarte, Gerritsen et al., 2024). By foregrounding the value of multilingualism, the project seeks to empower pre-service teachers, individuals and communities to celebrate their linguistic repertoires and diversities, which might mean acting upon their linguistic landscapes and educationscapes. Some of the chapters in this volume, especially those that take the concept of literacy and multiliteracies as a theoretical basis, make me think that it may be necessary to develop specific (multi)literacies for activism and service learning.

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