Exploring Multimodal Literacies through the Linguistic Landscape in the L2 Classroom

De-familiarize the familiar

CERCLL Webinar 3/2/2021

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Carnegie Mellon University
“catalyzing the development of anticipatory dispositions that enable complex, nuanced, recipient-aware, nimble and improvisational communicative capacities”

(Thorne, 2011)
Why multimodal literacies?

What is multimodality?

Why do we need multimodal literacies?

Multimodality describes approaches that understand communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend to the full range of communicational forms people use — image, gesture, gaze, posture, and so on — and the relationships between them.

Jewitt, 2009, p. 14
Modes and Modalities

5+ Modes
- Textual
- Visual
- Audio
- Spatial
- Gestural

Three functions (Halliday)
- interpersonal ➔ speaks to an audience
- ideational ➔ expresses ideas, values, beliefs, emotions, etc.
- textual ➔ materiality of the text open for interpretation and meaning making

“Mode is a socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for making meaning. Image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack, 3D objects are examples of modes used in representation and communication.”

(Kress, 2010, p. 79)
MULTImodality

We cannot pretend that people communicate today the same way as they did 10, 15, 20 years ago.

“The world of communication has changed and is changing still; and the reasons for that lies in a vast web of intertwined social, economic, cultural and technological changes.”

(Kress, 2010, p. 5)

Modes are interconnected and work together interactively → move to the notion of semiotic resources

Assemblage

Semiotic bricolage

Meaning design (vs. competence)
Implications

Non-linear reading path

Attention needed to all modalities present in a sign

Adapted from Chen, 2016
Multimodality can be efficient
But not always enough... the case of Richard Ankrom
Angers Pianist
Angers Pianist
Let’s talk about the Linguistic Landscape
Toward a definition?

Linguistic landscape is...
Linguistic Landscapes definitions

“The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government building combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region or urban agglomeration”

Landry & Bourhis (1997)
Linguistic Landscapes definitions

“The field of Linguistic Landscape (LL) attempts to understand the motives, uses, ideologies, language varieties and contestations of multiple forms of ‘languages’ as they are displayed in public spaces.”

Examples of LL features

From Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, & Trumper-Hecht (2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type of item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top-down</td>
<td>1. Public institutions: religious, governmental, municipal – cultural and educational, medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Public signs of general interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Public announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Signs of street names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom-up</td>
<td>1. Shop signs: e.g. clothing, food, jewellery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Private business signs: offices, factories, agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Private announcements: ‘wanted’ ads, sale or rentals of flats or cars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On travaille pour votre qualité de vie

Aménagement du cimetière

Municipalité de Périobonka

Affaires municipales, Sport et Loisir
Québec
Overview

We are talking about the visibility of language

Early interest in multilingualism

Shift from distribution of signs (e.g., mapping) \(\rightarrow\) quantitative to a more qualitative approach
(geo-semiotics = “signs in place” = aggregates of discourse – Scollon & Scollon, 2003)

- Authorship
- Readership
- Function
- Materiality
- Emplacement

Extension of modalities (soundscapes, schoolscapes, smellscapes, etc.)
Nexus analysis (Geo-semiotics)

• Based on the work of Scollon & Scollon (2005)
• Complex relations between discourse and action
• Inspired by Bourdieu \rightarrow issues of power, ideology, history, and practice
• Inspired by Goffman
• Action is mediated by mediational means, i.e., cultural or semiotic tools ranging from language to material objects used by social actors.
• Even small action can be nested in larger social discourse
  \rightarrow geo-semiotics: examine where signs are placed, by whom, to do what, and examine how these signs mean (i.e., how to they signify in the space they are)
Nexus analysis (Geo-semiotics)

• The starting point of a Nexus analysis is to identify a crucial social action, and then to map the cycles of the people, places, discourses, objects, and concepts which circulate through the moment when the social action takes place (Scollon & Scollon 2004, p. 159).

• A main concern of nexus analysis is to address issues such as how social realities are constituted across time and spaces.

• In other word, social action exists at the confluence of three key factors: the historical body of the protagonists (memories, experiences), the interaction order (pragmatics), and discourse in place.
Henri Lefebvre’s *The production of space* (1991)

Space is something that is...
- conceived
- perceived
- lived
we know and produce spaces that are...

Adapted from Dr. David Malinowski

visible
documentable
observed
audible
smellable
categorised
planned
enforced
legislated
associated
imagined
experienced
felt
lived
conceived
perceived
Henri Lefebvre’s *The production of space* (1991)

Trumper-Hecht (2010) analysis of Arab and Jewish walkers’ perceptions of Arabic & Hebrew in Upper Nazareth

1) Investigation of official policy
2) Documentation of LL as visible to the researcher, and reading 1) in light of 2)
3) Surveys and interviews with everyday residents, reading 1) and 2) in light of 3)
Through juxtaposition of *conceived*, *perceived*, and *lived spaces*, “[add] a third dimension to linguistic landscape studies” (Trumper-Hecht, 2010, p. 236).
Examine the ‘commercial nature of the public sphere’

“LL should be understood in terms of the symbolic functions of language that allow people to use language to index identity and present a certain image of self, that support actors’ rational self-interests in attracting clients, and that are borne out of power relations among different groups” (p. 336)

Two waves

Relationship between language, commodification, and identity?

Conclusion: “the use of Chinese in the current landscape promotes an exotified landscape that appeals to an outsider’s perspective” (p. 358)?
Summary

Interpretation of signs as grounded in and shaped by local contexts

Synchronic vs. diachronic approach to LL

LL as descriptive vs. analytical tool

“a diagnostic of social, cultural and political structures inscribed in the linguistic landscape” (Blommaert, 2013, p. 3)

“signs in place” become embedded, historicized artifacts at the crossroads of materiality and action = “aggregates of discourse” (Scollon & Scollon, 2003)

signs become almost by definition rich and dense research material that we can explore to capture the interplay between linguistic and societal processes.
Let’s unpack some examples
Mapping the LL

Dr. Adam van Compernolle
Montréal project site:
https://sites.google.com/site/linguisticlandscapeofmontreal/
## LL of Montreal, QC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rue</th>
<th>Français seulement</th>
<th>Anglais seulement</th>
<th>Français et anglais</th>
<th>Autre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Av du Mont-Royal</td>
<td>77 (74,0%)</td>
<td>6 (5,8%)</td>
<td>19 (18,3%)</td>
<td>2 (1,9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boul St.-Laurent</td>
<td>22 (40,0%)</td>
<td>8 (14,6%)</td>
<td>16 (29,1%)</td>
<td>9 (16,3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rue St.-Denis</td>
<td>24 (82,8%)</td>
<td>2 (6,9%)</td>
<td>3 (10,3%)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rue Sherbrooke</td>
<td>9 (47,4%)</td>
<td>8 (42,1%)</td>
<td>2 (10,5%)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rue Ste.-Catherine</td>
<td>3 (27,3%)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>8 (72,7%)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>135 (62,0%)</td>
<td>24 (11,0%)</td>
<td>48 (22,0%)</td>
<td>11 (5,0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LL of Montreal, QC

Focus on bottom up LL, specifically temporary or impromptu private business and personal signs
Multilingual signs – the case of Brittany
STATIONNEMENT UNILATÉRAL PERMANENT SUR 190 MÈTRES
PARKAÑ UNTU DALC´HMAT WAR-HEDE 190 METR

RUE du CHÂTEAU STRAED ar C´HASTELL
RUE HOLLO STRAED ar C´HOLO
The LL as a site of contestation
The LL as a site of multiple identities
The LL as contested space

Photo by Rick Kern (UC Berkeley)
Efficient Passenger Project

Orienting MTA passengers in NYC with additional signs

“I myself think the signs are a dumb idea. Regular commuters should be smart enough to figure this stuff out for themselves, and as for the tourists riding the subway for the first time, are they really in a rush? They’re not, judging by the way they slowly traipse down sidewalks and platforms four abreast, blocking the passage of people who actually have some place to go.” (~Ryan Noe, 2014)
Digital graffiti gallery (diachronic LL)

from Julie Sykes

In Albuquerque, NM

ARIS game
Digital graffiti gallery

from Julie Sykes

This is our first permanent exhibit. The art was inspired by a children's book called Harold and the Purple Crayon. In the book Harold creates his own world with his purple crayon. The world came to life with the power of Harold's magic crayon.
Digital graffiti gallery
from Julie Sykes
Vocabulary

BZH = Breizh
Breizh = Brittany (in Breton)
Ravitaillement = (re)-supplying
Phare Ouest = Far West
(→ Le Phare = the Lighthouse)
Débarquer = to land (i.e., le débarquement de Normandie – Normandy landing = D-Day)
The LL of hyperlocalized political signage in the 2020 presidential election cycle
LL & spatial context: Parkour or the city as palimpsest
David Belle – Cyrille Raffaelli // Innsbruck
Multimodal LL and accessibility: The Blind

Graffiti art for blind and seeing impaired people

"I impose accessibility the way billboards impose advertisements"

Necessary collaboration
Do not touch

“They scream”
What does it mean for L2 learning?

Defamiliarizing the familiar
Adverbs
Schoolscapes – the case of an A’oga Amata

Project by Dr. Corinne Seals
Virtual schoolscapes

Internationalization and Interdisciplinary Collaboration on Campus

Dr. Gillian Lord, University of Florida
The problem

Information provided on campus and during campus tours is not equally accessible to all visitors, students, faculty and staff.

→ Speakers of other languages

→ Those with language processing impairments
The solution

• Work with various campus partners to develop a smartphone app that:
  
  works with beacon location technology
  
  to
  
  provide information in multiple languages and modalities
What are beacons?

- Small devices that transmit data via Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) to a corresponding smartphone app.
- Bluetooth enabled devices with the appropriate app receive the beacon signal when it gets in range.
- App then displays the information corresponding to that beacon location.
Collaboration

- Project leads
  - Representatives from languages and libraries
- Campus information
  - Student tour group (Cicerones)
- Translators
  - Language students and faculty
- Proof of concept prototype
  - Computer Science and Engineering students
- Campus support
  - President’s and Provost’s offices
  - Facility Services
  - Instructional Technology
(Re-)building the city (Angers)
(Re-)building the city (Angers)
(Re-)building the city (Angers)

- Place du Ralliement (main city center shopping hub)
- Gare SNCF (train station)
(Re-)building the city (Angers)

Place du Ralliement (main city center shopping hub)

Gare SNCF (train station)

Marché Monplaisir (located in the eponymous multicultural, working-class neighborhood)

2 miles
La Gare
La Place Du Ralliement

La billetterie du Grand-Théâtre est ouverte du mardi au samedi de 12h à 18h30.

Récouverture de la billetterie le mardi 1er Septembre à 12h.

Le Duplex Bar Brasserie

LES FORMULES

Du lundi au vendredi sauf les 1er et 3ème mercredis du mois

Phrases qui peuvent aider à comprendre ou à utiliser le texte:

JUSQU’À -50% sur une sélection d'articles.

La grande braderie.

Samedi 1er juillet 2015 - 14h - 19h.

Échanges, troc et vente.

Bonnes adresses: 23, 25, 27

Tél.: 01 42 53 09 09

Rue Saint-Jean

Traiteur Boulangers Pâtissier Glaciers

Rue St Marc

Vues du tramway, façades de bâtiments, tables de bistros et panneaux affichant des informations.
Marché Monplaisir
Google Earth VR

Students in pairs

One traveler, one note taker/guardian
Saint-Émilion, France

Good Student
La Culture du Vin

Saint-Emilion
Rue Gaudet

Le Clos du Roy
une marque de cuisine et finesse dans la ville

Circles des Oenophiles
un magasin pour le vin

Vinobles Galhaud
les caves, dégustations, et visites
Les citoyens de Saint Émilion expriment leur valeurs en maintenant leur langage à travers la ville

Les Valeurs:

- Le vin
- L’authenticité
- L’exclusivité
- Les traditions

Comment-ils les protègent:

- Choix des noms
- Choix de la langue
- Les prix des vins et de la cuisine
La Théorie de L’Espace
Conçu

- “Roy”
- “Manoir”
- “Circle”
- “Oenophiles”
- “Clos”
La Théorie de l’Espace
Perçu

- Les espaces fermés/privés
- l’Arche
- Tous les signes sont en français
  - en public
La Théorie de l’Espace
Vécu

- Les caves
- Les vignobles
- Les prix
Concluding remarks

Anchored in current communication practices and multimodal realities

Defamiliarize the familiar

Awareness of the public space (even in the school) as a product of histories, cultures, ideologies, and power differentials.

Turned toward action
Merci

Questions

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