

## Linguistic Landscape Activity: Noticing your surroundings

**“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)**

Learning Objectives: First, let's read the learning objectives for this activity: 1) Recognize and document your surroundings in order to interpret linguistic, cultural and social meanings of the signs and text around you; 2) Explain the meanings behind the text that you observe.

Learning Outcome: By the end of the activity, participants will be able to interpret meanings associated with each text.

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Sometimes we focus on the big picture rather than the small details. This activity is designed to help you to notice the details of surroundings and to help you reflect on and discover what you see and the meanings behind these things. Together, we will be examining the linguistic landscape in Minneapolis, Minnesota. With your group, you will participate in a Linguistic Landscape walk with images (using the Padlet tool).

Instructions:

- Discuss and assign group roles: note taker, photographer, padlet writer, observer
- Your group will go outside and take a short walk around the campus and look for various signs (for example, restaurants, street signs, menus, billboards, etc.).
- One of you will take a picture of the sign and upload it to the padlet map (see link above), using the geolocation tool. Pro tip: click on the + in the padlet to add a post.
- Observe your surroundings and while on site, consider the questions below. Share your observations and take notes as a group. You will need your notes when you come back to the workshop room for the final step.
- As you walk around, your group should add at least 5 images to the padlet and include the specific location, following the same steps for each image.
- Return to the workshop room.
- For each image, discuss the questions below and collaboratively edit your posts to add an annotation about the location, people, and text below each image on the map. Please make sure that your annotations are focused so that the questions are addressed.
- Be prepared to present your findings (5 min max) to the group using the Padlet and designate a group presenter.
- While your group is presenting, other participants will make comments to the posts and ask a couple of questions.

	<b>Descriptive Analysis</b>	<b>Critical Analysis</b>
<b>Location</b>	What city/country are you in?	What do you notice about this city/country?
	Describe the neighborhood/street/area?	What can you discern about the people who live here?
	What languages do you see (signs, markers, graffiti, etc.) in the area or neighborhood you're in?	Why might these languages be used?
	Do you notice any changes in language as you explore the area?	What conclusions can you draw about this area, based on this information? What differences do you see in the way language is used? Do you notice the use of language for certain types of buildings or businesses?
<b>People</b>	What indicators of legitimacy/illegitimacy, power and representation do you see? (take pictures, notes, etc.)	Who does the text target? Who is not targeted?
	Who would feel more welcomed/comfortable than others in this place?	Which groups of people are represented? Which are not?
	Do signs exclude or include those around? Why? How?	What cultures are visible in this area and how are they represented?
	Do the signs speak to everyone or certain people? (think both from a positive and negative impact)	Other observations?
<b>The Text</b>	What type of text are you looking at? (i.e., advertisement, government sign, graffiti, store name, etc.)	What is the purpose of this text?
	What type of media is used? (billboard, flyer, window display, etc.)	What possible reasons do you think the author(s) had in choosing this media?
	What are the socio-cultural, political, economic or historical issues that are portrayed by this text?	What messages about the socio-cultural, political, economic or historical issues that are portrayed by this text?
	What is the tone conveyed by the text? How does it make you feel?	Other observations?
	How do you personally feel in this space?	