12 Multilingual Lausanne: Linguistic landscape as a pedagogical resource for critical multilingual awareness in higher education

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12.1 Introduction

This chapter explores a collaborative linguistic landscape (LL) project as a pedagogical tool in higher education that is increasingly attracting attention in the academic literature (see section 2.3). This project, «Multilingual Lausanne», was carried out by two cohorts of undergraduate students in English at the University of Lausanne (UNIL), as part of an introductory course on multilingualism in society in 2018. The main goal of this course was to understand current linguistic policies and practices in our globalised world, with special emphasis on our own social environments. «Multilingual Lausanne» sought to develop a social justice agenda in a linguistics curriculum. From a pedagogical perspective, LL was used as a tool to develop critical awareness of the role of language in social transformations and to learn how to do research in sociolinguistics. It is important to note that the project did not seek to teach an additional language to students (e.g. Malinowski et al., 2020) or to conduct a systematic quantitative analysis of the city's LL (cf. Camilleri Grima, 2020; Hancock, 2012). The final student reflections on this learning experience point towards a new perspective on taken-for-granted phenomena and familiar places, questioning social stereotypes and assumptions about language, together with a heightened awareness of the social and spatial distribution of languages in this officially Francophone city in Switzerland. In line with the tenets of citizen sociolinguistics (Svendsen, 2018), student-researchers shared their data, i.e., photographs with their geolocation and analytical categories, on a public Google map and later posted about their findings on a public blog (Multilingual Lausanne, 2018). This chapter will discuss the importance of critical multilingual awareness in a diverse student body and its limitations in effecting social change.

According to the 1999 Constitution, the Swiss Confederation has three official languages, German, French and Italian, with some provisions for communication in Romansh as a national language (Articles 4 and 70.1). In 2019, according to the Federal Statistics Office, 62.1 % of permanent residents spoke German as a main language, followed by French (22.8 %), Italian (8 %) and Romansh (0.5 %). In addition, 22.7 % declared another language as one of their habitual languages, with English (5.7 %) and Portuguese (3.5 %) as the most widely spoken non-national languages. Accordingly, «[t]he Cantons shall

decide on their official languages» (Article 70.2) in accordance with their traditional distribution. As a result of this territoriality principle, the national languages are official in their own geografically and politically delimited territories, with a majority of monolingual cantons and three bilingual cantons (Fribourg, Bern, Valais) as well as one trilingual canton (Grisons). In addition, English as a lingua franca is used not only by tourists, but also among people resident in different linguistic regions (Ronan, 2016, p. 20).

Lausanne is the capital of the officially Francophone Vaud canton. The main languages indicated by residents – up to three – in a structural survey carried out in 2018 were French, English, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian (Ville de Lausanne, 2019). In 2018, the canton had a total of 145,488 inhabitants, 42 % of which were foreign nationals[151] (Ville de Lausanne, 2020). The main foreign nationalities in the city were, in order of importance, French, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Kosovan and German (as of 2018, Ville de Lausanne, 2020). The city and its surroundings have attracted many foreigners, partly because they are home to the headquarters of major multinationals such as Nestlé, Tetra Pak and Philip Morris, in addition to those of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). Lausanne has two international transportation hubs: the Ouchy lake port, from which regular boats depart for France, and the railway station with direct connections with France and Italy. To date, there have only been two studies on the LL of Lausanne: Castillo Lluch's (2019) study of the history of Spanish language signs in the city (see section 2.2) and the student project «Anthropole Multilingue» (2017) focused on one of the buildings of the University of Lausanne (see section 3.1).

This chapter will be organised as follows. The second section will briefly present the field of linguistic landscape (LL) and then consider LL as a pedagogical resource to develop critical sociolinguistic awareness among higher education students. The third section will discuss the «Multilingual Lausanne» project. After an overview of the teaching context and multilingual student body, this section will provide a pedagogical discussion of the project goals and implementation followed by some student reflections on this learning experience. The concluding remarks will suggest future directions for LL pedagogical projects and discuss the limitations of «raising awareness» in effecting social transformation.

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151 I will use «foreigners» or «foreign nationality» with reference to official statistics. Switzerland applies the principle of *ius sanguinis* for the acquisition of Swiss citizenship, i.e., through paternal or maternal descent, so Swiss-born people to parents of a foreign nationality acquire their parents' nationality. Therefore, we find first, second and even third generations of «foreign» nationals in Switzerland.

12.2   Theoretical framework

12.2.1   Overview of linguistic landscape research

LL is a relatively young field that took off from the seminal article by Landry and Bourhis (1997), offering a much-quoted definition of LL as «the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings» (p. 25). Early studies followed a descriptivist approach to written signs in spaces in order to mainly investigate language vitality and multilingualism, with many studies on the role of English and minority languages (see Gorter, 2013, and Malinowski, 2018, for an overview of early studies). Methodologically, this first wave typically relied on the quantitative sampling of photographs to account for the distribution of languages and different patterns of multilingualism (e.g. Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Huebner, 2006; Muth, 2012). Recent studies in this quantitative-distributive tradition make increasing use of digital mapping and geografic information system (GIS) technologies (see discussion in Gorter, 2013). Ontologically, the early studies may be considered as positivist since they did not consider the role of social actors and interactions in shaping the space.

Later research moved away from the focus on written language with proposals for *semiotic landscapes* (Jaworksi & Thurlow, 2010), «in the most general sense, any (public) space with visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning-making» (p. 2), and *linguistic soundscapes* (Scarvaglieri et al., 2013), i. e. the acoustic environment formed by language through different media. Some studies also moved from static signs to *shifting landscapes* such as demonstration banners or writing on clothing (e. g. Martín-Rojo, 2016). This second wave of LL studies advocated for attention to social processes and the perception of LL by a wide array of social actors shaping the space. These studies look into the linguistic, social and political histories in the construction of public spaces and situate local signs within histories of migration and mobility (e.g. Blommaert, 2012; Castillo Lluch, 2019, Leeman & Modan, 2009; Tavares, 2018). In fact, they pay attention to the ephemerality and cumulation of signs from a diachronic perspective as an entry point into histories of migration and moving bodies circulating across spaces. In terms of methods, these studies examined social perceptions and interactions through interviews with social actors (e.g. Castillo-Lluch, 2019; Papen, 2012), including «walking tour interviews» (Garvin, 2010), and ethnografic fieldwork with producers and consumers of signs (Tavares, 2018). Concerning the latter, Tavares (2018) proposes «following people, their objects, ideas throughout the landscape which are linguistically and materially marked» (p. 67).

The prominence of English in the linguistic landscape of global cities such as Madrid (Alonso & Martín-Rojo, 2021) and middle-sized cities such as Oaxaca (Sayer, 2010) and Lleida (Sabaté-Dalmau, 2019) points towards touristification, gentrification and globalisation processes (Observatorio del discurso, 2018). In non-Anglophone contexts, English signs might be intended to convey information to foreign visitors (Sayer, 2010, p. 145) or expatriates working for

multinationals (Lüdi et al., 2010). According to Sayer (2010), English-language signs can also have a symbolic function in brands, logos and slogans to index certain social meanings (fashion, coolness, sophistication, sex and subversion) in «innovative» bilingual signs targeting non-English-speaking locals. In addition to English, these «innovative» signs also feature another (local) language, thus fulfilling a communicative function.

The history of migration and the socioeconomic activities in which different social groups engage have an impact on the (in)visibility of certain migrant languages. Several studies show that multilingualism and heritage/migrant languages are more prominent in private signs than in official ones (Krompák & Meyer, 2018; Li & Marshall, 2020, p. 934), notably in «immigrant-friendly places» such as ethnic businesses or community centres (Blommaert et al., 2005). Therefore, the LL of a city is continuously transformed by migration, especially as newer arrivals become legitimate social actors who form part of the social and economic fabric of the city and leave written traces in physical and social spaces (Blommaert, 2012). According to Blommaert:

> *The public presence and visibility of signs not only suggest the presence of both producers and Potenzial audiences in the neighborhood, but also forms of legitimacy of presence and of activities. They thus also signify voice (2012, p. 71).*

12.2.2   The linguistic landscape of Lausanne

The linguistic landscape of Lausanne is dominated by French in top-down infrastructural and informational signs in public spaces such as transportation hubs, museums and universities. One of the main findings of «Multilingual Lausanne» was that German, the most widely spoken language in the Swiss Confederation, was not very visible in Lausanne. It featured as a secondary language in roughly 10 % of signs on our map, including dedicated sections in a library, museum displays, multilingual commercial signs, books in a «boîte → livres», as well as official signs at the train station, lake port and post services. Italian is more present in Lausanne because of commercial signs, especially in the myriad of Italian restaurants in the corpus. Like German, it is also present in some infrastructural signs as well as informational ones. The lesser presence of the other official languages in written signs located in Lausanne is partly due to the principle of territoriality in Switzerland, with clearly delineated monolingual regions, and contrasts with the visibility of English in this city.

As mentioned above, English is a prominent language in Lausanne linked to processes of touristification, gentrification and globalisation, targeting both local populations and tourists. Castillo Lluch (2019, p. 63) reports that English is present alongside French as the working language in international organisations (notably the IOC), as well as in transportation hubs, such as the main station, the lake ports and even the underground stations, in public transit vehicles, on ticket machines, in announcements and at customs. In the centre of Lausanne, comprising Flon and La Riponne, this collective project has documented the prominent use of English in commercial signs, especially in brands and slogans. Many monolingual English signs and most French–English bilingual signs display English in bigger font as a «trendy»

language to attract customers and French as a secondary language fulfilling a communicative function (e.g. opening hours or services offered). On the UNIL and EPFL (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne in English) campus in Western Lausanne, bilingual advertisements showed a similar pattern in which English had a symbolic function and was highly visible in brands and slogans to construct an image of modernity, urbanity and internationality, whereas French was used to convey practical information. In Ouchy, one of the most touristic areas of Lausanne, there were «innovative» bilingual signs (complementary multilingualism), most with a commercial function, while some informational and infrastructural signs were examples of duplicated multilingualism with translations in English and French (and sometimes German) for tourists.

Unlike English, «the presence of languages connected with migration in the urban space, however, is related to the settlement process of foreign populations and their insertion in the economic fabric in the host society» (Observatorio del discurso, 2018, n.p., my translation). In «Multilingual Lausanne», written signs in migrant languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, Thai, Chinese, Albanian and Turkish often target settled migrant populations to advertise a travel agency, available jobs, services such as massages or money transfer, cultural (or religious) events and the availability of certain food items. The documented signs construct socialisation spaces and facilitate the distribution of resources among different communities (see Tavares, 2018). On the other hand, translations into French (and sometimes English) target the broader population in a lingua franca to inform them about the opening times, products and services. In some establishments, especially Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese and Italian restaurants in the corpus, the use of non-official languages and scripts in shop fronts is probably aimed at indexing authenticity (see Hancock, 2012, p. 10). In this case, the intended audience was not (imagined to be) bilingual in these languages and French fulfilled a communicative purpose, similarly to the commercial signs in which English was used for branding and slogans. In addition, other migrant languages (e. g. Saigonese Vietnamese, Arabic) are visible in Renens, Western Lausanne, as well as Northern Lausanne, which are traditionally working-class areas with affordable accommodation on the outskirts.

Castillo Lluch's (2019) historicising study of Spanish in the LL of Lausanne reveals the different production and installation times of coexisting signs linked to different waves of Spanish-speaking migration, initially from Spain and lately from Latin America. This project also revealed the visibility of Spanish and Portuguese as languages linked to long-term migrant communities in this mid-sized city. As an illuminative domain, the various languages and scripts used in different religious sites provide an indication of the histories of migration and how these religious centres accommodate speakers of non-national languages (Blommaert, 2012). In their study of Lausanne, Symons and Gormley (2018) documented Hebrew alongside French in the synagogue, whereas the Greek Orthodox Church displayed information almost entirely in Greek and the Scots Kirk only offered services in English. The Catholic Notre Dame church offered some services in Spanish and Portuguese for long-settled communities, which is also true of other Catholic churches in the canton of Vaud at the time of writing (summer 2021).

12.2.3   Linguistic landscape as a pedagogical resource

Several publications on LL pedagogical interventions focus on teaching English as a foreign language (Sayer, 2010) or teaching younger learners (Burwell & Lenters, 2015; Dagenais et al., 2009; Prego Vázquez & Zas Varela, 2018). These studies show that LL as a pedagogical resource is designed to connect school and community languages and literacies through «public pedagogies» involving the study of language in a local context impacted by global transformations in culture, finance, technology and so on. Concerning English as a foreign language, Sayer (2010) claims that LL is a socially-sensitive pedagogical resource that recognises the different ways in which English as an international language is used in multilingual communities and the specific purposes it fulfils for citizens and students. This lens focuses on the local appropriation of this global resource in novel ways locally (Sabaté-Dalmau, 2019; Sayer, 2010) rather than simply assuming linguistic imperialism.

There is a growing number of publications on LL projects in higher education curricula (see Alonso & Martín-Rojo, 2021; Camilleri Grima, 2020; Chestnut et al., 2013; Hancock, 2012; Li & Marshall, 2020; Prego Vázquez, 2020). Li and Marshall (2020) report on an LL project to learn about multilingualism in a graduate course on ethnografic research methods. They claim that «text-to-world connections» were made due to three main factors: engagement with local practices, researcher agency and physical immersion at the intersection between theory and lived practice. These connections are anchored in socio-constructivist learning, namely, concrete experiential learning based on inductive exploration through students' active research and critical engagement with meaning-making in space (Li & Marshall, 2020, p. 938). Within this socio-constructivist approach, García (2016) claims that explicit instruction about the system of a language (e.g. a linguistics course) must be combined with authentic situated practice and its analysis (p. 394). In linguistics curricula, Li and Marshall observe that little is known about the processes through which students of education and applied linguistics (fields in which LLs are studied) may become transformed and equipped with better critical literacy and language awareness through participating as student-researchers in LL activities and the perspectives they bring to this learning process (2020, p. 926).

As a pedagogical tool for student-researchers, LL is conceived of as a critical sociolinguistic resource that forces learners to interrogate multilingual texts and their own reactions in terms of power and privilege. These projects enhance *critical multilingual language awareness* (García, 2016) in order to develop awareness of language as a social practice, sensitivity to linguistic diversity and analysis of multilingual practices. According to Bucholtz et al. (2014), «the valorization of linguistic variability in introductory classes can be profoundly transformative for politically subordinated language users as well as for speakers of dominant varieties» (p. 146). Hancock (2012) claims that as a result of the LL project, awareness also encompassed university students engaging in a process of reflexivity about their own sociolinguistic values and beliefs. In addition to documenting the physical location of language, the student-researchers connect language to broader political contexts and issues of inequality at the core of LL research: Which languages are visible in public space and which ones are not? Who has the power to determine what languag-

es appear in texts? What are the interests of the producers and the (intended) readers of texts? (Adapted from Dagenais et al., 2009.) These questions address and enable sociolinguistic justice, that is, «pursuing self-determination for linguistically subordinated individuals and groups in sociopolitical struggles over language» (Bucholtz et al., 2014, p. 145).

> *As part of the EDiSo (Studies in Discourse and Society) association's Social Justice Committee, «Multilingual Lausanne» is one of several LL projects in higher education contributing to the EDiSo «Observatory of discourse» which aims to «pay attention to forms of everyday domination that, for many, go totally unnoticed» (Observatorio del discurso, 2018, n.p., my translation). In fact, multilingualism in the public space may be overlooked by university students who are either too familiar with their environment or who are totally new to it, as in the case of exchange students. This observatory pays such attention through participatory research into lesser-studied power relations, mainly microaggressions and LLs of diversity, carried out by student-researchers and citizens on their Facebook page, as well as university students in different countries (see Alonso & Martín-Rojo, 2021; Prego Vázquez, 2020; Sabaté-Dalmau, 2019). This project is based on the premise that «whenever we observe our perception changes and our situated knowledge changes along with it» (Observatorio del discurso, 2018, n. p., my translation). Concerning the collective study of LLs of diversity, which is the focus of the project reported on here,*

the management of diversity in urban space allows us to know the type of relationships between the different ethnic groups in the city: thus, the presence or the absence of languages, the fact that messages are crossed out or have been translated, or that different languages coexist or silence each other … allows us to reveal social assimilation, segregation, marginalisation or integration patterns (Observatorio del discurso, 2018, n. p., my translation).

> *Crucially, this new paradigm alters our epistemological assumptions about what counts as knowledge and decentres the role of the academic researcher. The underlying assumption in «Multilingual Lausanne» is that these young university students being trained in linguistics are competent observers of social reality and, in particular, linguistic practices and written signs that are accessible to them in their everyday lives (Camilleri Grima, 2020; Scarvaglieri, 2017). As a facilitator and co-learner (Camilleri Grima, 2020), I «enabl[ed] their active participation and partnership in the production of scholarly knowledge, from the formulation of research questions to collecting and analyzing data to sharing the results» (Bucholtz et al., 2014, p. 149). The polyphonic and collective approach based on student-researchers' situated sociopolitical positioning and knowledge illuminates multiple aspects of social reality that a single researcher would not have been able to grasp. In other words, the choice and interpretation of written signs and sociolinguistic issues is a matter of student negotiation and debate (Bucholtz et al., 2014). According to Dagenais et al. (2009), individuals make sense of their LL depending on their social positioning and they strategically affiliate with certain representations according to their experiences and*

> *interests. Therefore, texts in cities are not equally accessible to all and each text*
> *allows for various interpretations according to the perspectives of the observers*
> *(Dagenais et al., 2009, p. 255).*

12.3   Multilingual Lausanne

12.3.1   Higher education teaching context

This project, which investigated multilingualism, was carried out in an English-speaking course in a school housing several modern language departments. «Multilingual Lausanne» was designed as part of a second-year BA course, «Introduction to Multilingualism in Society», offered by the English department at the University of Lausanne (UNIL). It was taught entirely in English as part of a modern language department in the *Faculté des Lettres* (School of Arts), constituting an exception to the overall policy that states that French is the official language of this university (Directive de la Direction 3.4., Article 2). The *Faculté des Lettres* is highly multilingual with several modern language departments (German, English, Spanish, French, Slavic and South Asian languages). To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Anthropole building that houses the *Faculté des Lettres*, an interdisciplinary BA–MA course named «Anthropole Multilingue» (2017) documented the linguistic landscape and soundscape using quantitative and qualitative methods. Concerning LL, as the official language of UNIL French was the dominant language, but most modern language departments (Italian, English and German, but not Spanish) tended to have most written signs in the foreign language in which they teach with only official information (e.g. timetables or exam information) displayed in French.

The students participating in this collective project were highly multilingual, many with family histories of migration and/or personal student mobility, and their experiences and repertoires were used to interpret the written texts documented in various urban spaces (Camilleri Grima, 2020, p. 207). Concerning the multilingual profiles of my students, university statistics on «mother tongue» (institutional category) reveal that 46.5 % were L1 French speakers in spring 2018, while 61.5 % declared French to be their «mother tongue» in autumn 2018 (source: Système d'information et statistiques UNIL, internal data). In both semesters, there was a sizeable percentage of students who had other first languages, notably Italian (an official language in Switzerland) and Portuguese (a major migrant language in Vaud), followed by a handful of L1 speakers of Albanian, German, Spanish and English among others. Despite the limitations inherent to the «mother tongue» question in institutional statistics which erase multilingual repertoires (see Duchêne & Humbert, 2018), these university statistics show the varied linguistic profiles of students in the English department. As UNIL offers a double-honours system, it is safe to assume that Swiss students master French to take courses in other departments and, in some cases, other modern languages offered at UNIL. The optional

course attracted multilingual students enrolled in the English department, as well as many international students looking for courses in English. In spring 2018, this course comprised 46 % mobile students (source: Système d'information et statistiques UNIL, internal data), including a group of Canadian students. Some of these exchange students did not speak French (well). In the autumn, the group had only one mobile student but the student body was still multilingual.

12.3.2   Pedagogical goals and sequence

«Multilingual Lausanne» had two main pedagogical objectives. The first learning objective was to raise critical awareness about language in contact in Lausanne, the role of language in contemporary mobilities (e. g. tourism, migration, international study) and transformations in the linguistic market, with a focus on English as a global language. The guiding research questions given to the students for this course project, inspired by the EDiSo Observatory that it is part of, articulate the construction of multilingualism, urban space and social discourses.

- In what linguistic varieties are messages presented? Is it top-down or bottom-up multilingualism? Which values are associated to these linguistic varieties (e. g. prestige, economic gain, internationalisation, protest)?

- How are the languages distributed in space? Which languages are central and which are peripheral? In what ways are written inscriptions deictic?

- Which social transformations (e. g. arrival of refugees, gentrification, provision of services to migrants, internationalisation) and larger discourses do these signs index?

On the whole, these questions aimed to investigate the power dynamics and ideologies underlying the relations between social groups/individuals through linguistic and semiotic representations in the urban space of Lausanne. Within the English linguistics curriculum, the second goal was to learn how to conduct research in (socio)linguistics by reading original research articles, formulating a research question, collecting data through observation, analysing individual written signs and the social values attached to them and finally writing a short research paper for the wider public.

The teaching sequence (see Table 1 below) progressed from an introduction to Swiss multilingualism and LL to student-led data collection, the formulation of a research question on the basis of formative feedback, optional ethnografic data collection and sociolinguistic analysis, followed by reporting on the results. After an introduction to multilingualism in society and a group summary of an article about multilingualism in Switzerland (Assignment 1), the students were introduced to urban sociolinguistics and LL. They were then given their second assignment consisting in LL data collection, selection and categorisation. This bottom-up approach to the data was the first step

in qualitative content analysis, in which students described the data set and identified connections and patterns across the data (see Sayer, 2010). I asked the students to observe, locate and photograph written signs in public spaces in pairs. They were free to explore different neighbourhoods, types of establishment and transit areas for this project, without predefined areas or topics being given to them (cf. Scarvaglieri, 2017). On the basis of these observations, each pair of students selected a corpus of at least eight pictures and posted them on our collective Google map with a classification system taken from a similar project in Madrid that Prof. Luisa Martín-Rojo (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) kindly shared with us. As you can see in Figure 1 below, the categories include main language(s), secondary language(s), support (e.g. t-shirt, paper), production (top-down/bottom-up), activity domain (linked to different icons), type of sign (regulatory, infrastructural, commercial or transgressive, taken from Mooney & Evans, 2015), neighbourhood/institution and open-ended observation/analysis.
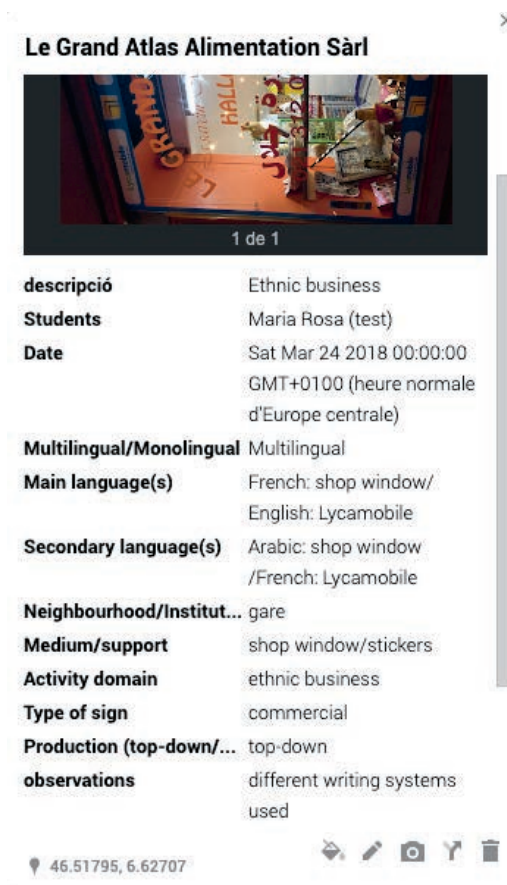

Figure 12.1: Sign classification categories on Google map entry (Multilingual Lausanne: Collective map)

This second assignment was the basis for students to formulate a research question that they would analyse in their final papers. I gave the students feedback about their data categorisation and thematic coherence, as well as

the scientific relevance of the corpus. The reflective categorisation of multi-lingual signs was the first step of analysis. The main comments that I offered concerned the different values and uses of English (see section 2.2), the use of non-official languages to index authenticity, the treatment of different scripts and transliterations, as well as language identification (e. g. mistaking Spanish for Portuguese). As for the last aspect mentioned, I had to problematise the commonplace equation of one named language with one nation-state. For instance, «Ghanaian» and «Indian» were proposed as languages for establishments with links to Ghana and India, which are multilingual countries. In addition, students were faced with emic categorisations such as «Latin@» or «African» which have no direct correspondence with a language.

As for thematic coherence, students had to propose a coherent corpus of pictures featuring similar linguistic phenomena, gathered in a given geografical location (e. g. a neighbourhood or a square) or institution (such as UNIL) and/or documenting a typology of signs (focusing on commercial or transgressive signs, for example). Faced with heterogeneous datasets, I asked questions like «What does a Roman artefact in Latin have in common with a cap with ‹Brazil› written on it or ACAB (=All Cops are Bastards) graffiti?» In relation to a heterogeneous corpus in la Cité district, I proposed looking into the different types of signs (infrastructural, commercial and transgressive) coexisting in the area, comparing the social values of languages, locations and supports between top-down and bottom-up signs. The students working on this corpus subsequently formulated a research question about the contested construction of space between capitalist and anti-capitalist discourses through multilingual, multimodal signs.

Concerning scientific relevance, I drew on the course topics to suggest and discuss possible foci with the students, for example contrasting capitalist and commercial signs with anti-capitalist and activist signs downtown, how cultural institutions cater for residents and tourists linguistically or the creative use of English and French on posters at UNIL. Some pairs would compare types of establishment (e. g. pharmacies, ethnic businesses or Asian restaurants) and I encouraged students to speak to owners about their creation and ownership, intended clientele and production of signs, in addition to documenting more signs. For example, I asked a pair of students working on different types of restaurant in the same area to document signs indoors, timetables and menus in order to better grasp the contrast between communicative and symbolic uses as well as the degree of visibility. Therefore, some groups decided to collect more pictures and others subsequently informally interviewed individuals in those spaces (see also Burwell & Lenters, 2015, p. 214; Camilleri Grima, 2020, p. 206; Li & Marshall 2020, p. 931), such as shopkeepers, in order to further understand the production and situated meaning of the documented signs. In the words of Tavares (2018):

To better capture and understand the meaning of the linguistic and visual signs «in place and context,» we need to interact with the people who navigate those spaces (owners, producers, clients, etc.). This makes the interview a complementary tool in understanding the meaning of signs (especially not official ones) and observing interactions ‹in place› helps us to understand the meaning making of spaces (p. 68).

Given the fact that this was the students' first project in linguistics after a general introduction in their first year, this ethnografic data collection was not required. Nonetheless, students were asked to historically and socially contextualise their spaces and the signs, mainly through the use of official documents and statistics. Concerning ethics, the interviewees were informed about the study and asked if they wanted to participate. Their names have been kept confidential but the locations and written signs are found on our collective Google map.

The final assignment was a blog entry of around 3000 words, clearly framing, contextualising, presenting and discussing the findings of the students' small-scale linguistic landscape project in the city of Lausanne. In accordance with the English linguistics learning objectives, the entries followed the structure of an academic article comprising (1) an introduction with a research question, (2) a theoretical framework for a broader audience, (3) historical, socioeconomic and demografic contextualisation of the neighbourhood or institution, (4) methodology including a reflection on the learning experience, (5) a quantitative and qualitative analysis of written signs, (6) discussion and (7) conclusions. Students were asked to disseminate their results in a clear, organised and jargon-free manner, including the use of graphs, images and external links in their individual entries. The analysis was both quantitative and qualitative. Their quantitative analysis comprised the distributional patterns of languages in the corpus and the taxonomy of signs. The analysis was mainly qualitative as the projects were primarily concerned with the social value of linguistic and literacy resources in signs. They looked into the hierarchical relationships between languages in contact, the role of English in different sign types, the relationship between a specific language and informational or symbolic functions and the conditions of production under certain linguistic policies and sociolinguistic norms. Prior to publication, students participated in a writing workshop in class and sent the lecturer a final draft on which I provided formative feedback for the public entry and which was graded for course evaluation. The published version was based on the lecturer's feedback.

Phase	Student tasks	Outcomes	Feedback
Theoretical and methodological framework	Reading scientific articles, engaging in seminars	Article summary	Formative feedback from lecturer on article summary
Data collection	Observing, photografing and geolocating written signs in pairs	Corpus of pictures	
Data selection and classification	Selection of 8–10 pictures which are thematically related. Posting and classifying them on a Google map	Google map entries	Formative feedback from lecturer
Further data collection (optional)	Collecting more photographs for their project. Interviewing people inhabiting the social spaces	Corpus of pictures (and interviews)	
Analysis and writing up	Formulating overall research question Analysing the data quantitatively and qualitatively Drafting a research paper	3000-word draft of blog entry	Peer feedback Writing workshop with tutors and lecturer
Publication of blog entries	Submission of final draft for evaluation Correcting and revising entries for online publication	Published entry on "Multilingual Lausanne" blog	Formative and summative feedback on draft from lecturer

Table 12.1: Teaching sequence in "Multilingual Lausanne"

In the spirit of citizen sociolinguistics, the resulting collective Google map and the blog with the students' entries aimed to generate and share public knowledge about multilingualism through 2.0 webs of participation. This public sharing of data, methods and results aims to inspire future LL pedagogic projects in secondary and higher education. In May 2021, this project was presented as part of two talks on «English in Switzerland» to high school students in Vaud, who then conducted a linguistic landscaping project (Anita Auer, personal communication). This project also provided technological and pedagogic support for «Localising English in Lleida» (Sabaté-Dalmau, 2019). The two editions of this project (spring and autumn 2018) have generated 300 tokens in our collective Google map. In addition to the introduction to the project, the blog has 31 entries divided into three main categories: «neighbourhoods» like Tunnel, Sous-gare and Bourdonnette, «institutions» such as UNIL, ethnic businesses and restaurants, and «transit areas», namely, the main station and the Ouchy port zone. The vast majority of groups worked in central Lausanne to document touristification, gentrification and social resistance. Some groups worked on campus and in nearby neighbourhoods with a large foreign population (see footnote 1).

12.3.3   Student reflections

The final reflections on this learning experience, which over half of the pairs wrote as part of their final posts, reveal three interrelated pedagogical outcomes: transformed stance towards the complexity of language and urban space, enhanced critical multilingual awareness and questioning one's language beliefs, expectations and ideologies. The student-researchers experientially engaged with multilingualism in the city, as opposed to carrying out a final assignment restricted to a literature review of existing studies, thus becoming active producers of knowledge. According to Li and Marshall, «the LL as a pedagogic tool transformed the role of the student-researcher from being a passive receiver of expert knowledge to one of the key agents of research and meaning-making through the research itself» (2020, p. 939). The question is in what ways the students enhanced their critical multilingual language awareness and made new connections between theory and practice. Although no patterns common to all students can be discerned, some student reflections on «Multilingual Lausanne» point towards a new perspective on taken-for-granted phenomena and familiar places that visibilises the hierarchisation of languages and questions social stereotypes and assumptions about language.

Several pairs mentioned a transformed stance through observing multilingualism in mundane, everyday spaces. In Excerpt 1 below, two students published a short reflection on the project in which they refer to a practice of «learning how to look» at languages from a social perspective (Alonso & Martín-Rojo, 2021, p. 16). This meant «looking at familiar places with fresh eyes»(see Excerpt 1 below) in ways that deepened their comprehension of a central square, la Riponne, in which gentrification and touristification processes clash with social resistance (Kruithof, 2018) in the LL.

Excerpt 1. Student reflection: «Fresh eyes»

Even though we both knew the Riponne area from our own experiences, this research was an interesting process as we started paying attention to signs we had never seen before and looking at familiar places with fresh eyes... The research raised our awareness about the complex «profile» of this neighbourhood due to the confluence, over just a few thousand square meters, of people from many social and cultural backgrounds and their written signs evoking different ideologies.

Another pair of students working in the same area concluded that «it was interesting to observe differently the space, namely as an interaction of signs as well as a construction of these [language] contacts». For another group, this project meant a «rediscovery of Lausanne», given that «whilst strolling around the streets, our eyes were looking at each and every details [sic] and a new image of Lausanne popped up in front of us. We realised that many places were often left unseen.» Other groups also mentioned this transformed perception of the city and a heightened awareness of the languages used. Teacher-researchers in Scarvaglieri's project also mentioned walking «with open eyes» (2017, p. 333) around their workplaces.

As the outcome of this hands-on project, some students reported problematising their own initial expectations of the use of certain languages (notably, English and Asian languages) and questioning their ideologies of language, for example equating a nationality with a given language. In Excerpt 2 below, the students explain how their corpus analysis helped them realise that there were more «Swiss restaurants» than they recalled from observations. In fact, they recalled «ethnic restaurants» more easily owing to their difference in décor and cuisine. This realisation challenged their initial perception of a «lack of our own culture» in restaurants and an over-emphasis on «ethnic restaurants».

Excerpt 2. Student reflection: Visibilising the taken-for-granted

We assumed while we were searching for restaurants that we would find more «Swiss restaurants» than we actually observed. However, after the analysis, we discovered that local restaurants and local cuisine are all around us, but given the fact that they do not appear too extravagant (their décor is the one we are used to, their food is the one we regularly eat …) we do not pay too much attention to them, while we are usually more attracted to and remember more ethnic restaurants. What we thought was a lack of «our own culture» in the city of Lausanne was simply an accommodation of our habits that made local restaurants almost invisible to us, while ethnic restaurants attracted our attention.

This transformed vision of their city echoes the reflection by two students in Madrid: «It has allowed me to problematise a mundane, not an exotic, environment and to put on hold our own categories» (Alonso & Martín-Rojo, 2021, p. 17, my translation).

A crosscutting theme in their reflections is the increased awareness of (in)visible languages in public spaces as a result of hierarchies of languages, and speakers, and their unequal spatial distribution in the city. In Excerpt 3, two international students reported on their surprise at the mismatch between the many migrant languages they heard in a working-class neighbourhood, Bourdonnette, and the visibility of French in public spaces, which stands in stark contrast to the relative invisibility of migrant languages restricted to ethnic businesses and community centres.

Excerpt 3. Student reflection: Mismatch between the linguistic soundscape and landscape

As we walked through the area, we were captivated by the multitude of foreign languages we heard. However, while we did not find as many visual representations of foreign languages as we had hoped, we often came across a rich oral array of foreign languages. We felt that while this was not necessarily part of the project, it was an important topic to discuss. As Bourdonnette is heavily populated with immigrants, it is unsurprising to be confronted with languages other than French.

Therefore, this example points to the need to document the linguistic soundscape in neighbourhoods because the signs in public spaces, especially top-down ones, will insufficiently visibilise certain migrant languages. In fact,

«the texts most visible in a particular environment do not necessarily reflect the local language practices» (Dagenais et al., 2009, p. 57). As a pedagogical tool, linguistic landscaping and soundscaping can draw student-researchers' attention to the non-neutral nature of written communication in the public space, indexing complex relationships of power between different social groups (Dagenais et al., 2009, p. 57, see Excerpt 1).

12.4   Future directions

«Multilingual Lausanne» was a pilot research project that could unfortunately not be repeated with new cohorts of English students because of the public health measures during the Covid-19 pandemic. I concur with Li and Marshall (2020) that more research is needed into the transformed gaze and critical literacy of university students in linguistics and education. Nevertheless, it is difficult to gauge transformed perspectives in an LL project because students' statements to be read by the lecturer are often positive (Scarvaglieri, 2017, p. 333) and there is no way of knowing if this enhanced multilingual awareness or transformed gaze will be sustained over time and ultimately have a tangible impact. The student reflections on their heightened critical sociolinguistic awareness (see section 3.3) could be further explored through learning diaries and final reflections in future editions. In order to incorporate the perspective of social actors, LL pedagogical interventions should also document the production and uptake of signs in various languages through an ethnografic approach including «incidental interviews» (Camilleri Grima, 2020, p. 206) and walking tours (Garvin, 2010). Because of the mismatch between linguistic soundscapes and landscapes, it would also be important to document oral interactions in a given space and compare them to the written signs so as to unveil language hierarchies and tensions inscribed in urban space.

This project has contributed original data on the LL of Lausanne, adding to the few existing studies of LL in Switzerland (see Castillo Lluch, 2019; Krompák & Meyer, 2018; Lüdi et al., 2010), and has made it public for interested scholars and citizens. Given the high rates of non-Swiss residents and migration in Swiss cities, future LL projects should document the diachronic transformation of LLs with a non-commercial platform such as Lingscape or Urban Voices (instead of a Google map) on which future generations of students and interested citizen scientists can geolocate, date and classify their images. LL emerges as not only a resource for knowledge generation in personal learning environments but also an empowerment and participative resource. As for the broader public, this could be furthered through public dissemination strategies such as exhibitions or videos (see Multilingual Madrid: Languages for the City, 2012) and by involving members of the community as co-researchers (Scarvaglieri, 2017). Another Potenzial development of this project is to move beyond the edges of the city to illuminate the relationship between core and periphery in this Alpine country. Prego-Vázquez and Zas Varela (2018) show that this focus unveils diachronic changes in traditional bilingualism and urban developments outside big cities.

In order to foster a social justice agenda in higher education courses in linguistics, I argue that linguistic landscaping projects in education should not simply list and quantify languages in a celebratory discourse of multilingualism, but rather aim to understand and discuss unequal societal and power relations through the student-researchers' ethnografic gaze and critical awareness. «Multilingual Lausanne» rests on the importance of raising students' awareness about multilingualism in society (García, 2016) for prospective English language professionals and teachers who will be able to apply new sociolinguistic knowledge and critical consciousness to their professional decisions. Raising awareness about language as a basis for social injustice is a necessary step towards changing it but this act is insufficient on its own. As Bucholtz (2018) poignantly argues, scholars must shift from social description anchored in scientific objectivity to social critique and transformation, largely based on a more politically engaged, reflexive and collaborative stance. Projects like «Multilingual Lausanne» need to move beyond raising awareness into mobilising student-researchers (and the community) to effect some tangible change, for example replacing a street sign or changing school signs (Scarvaglieri, 2017). Although sociolinguistic interventions are an important terrain for social action, their actual impact in reducing social injustice is necessarily curtailed because racial and class inequalities largely surpass language (Bucholtz et al., 2014, p. 351). As (citizen) sociolinguists, we should strike a balance between a *coherent idealism* to make a modest but relevant change and a *participatory scepticism* about the limitations of linguistic knowledge (Duchêne et al., 2017).

12.5   References

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