

“Affective border crossings in the linguistic landscape”

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Handout

- **Websites**

- Clarkston, Georgia: <https://www.clarkstonga.gov>
- Plaza Fiesta: <https://plazafiesta.net>
- Languages Across Metro Atlanta: <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/lama/>

- **Class procedures**

- Readings
 - Zabrodskaia & Milani (2014)
 - Backhaus (2006)
 - Lou (2012)
 - Malinowski (2015)
 - Peck & Stroud (2015)
- Assignments / prompts
 - i. Campus walk: One of the goals of this course is to activate your observational skills regarding your immediate surroundings. As a first step in thinking about places that you frequent, take a walk from the quad in front of the Carlos Museum to the Student Center and take note of the sights, sounds, smells, feelings, tastes that you experience. Which phenomena stand out to you? What is meaningful to you? Once you complete the walk, write a short synopsis of your experiences, looking to describe at least 5 different phenomena along the way (150-200 words)
 - ii. Census work:
 1. Research race, ethnicity, and languages spoken in specific census tracts in Dekalb and Gwinnett counties
 2. Research foreign-born populations in specific census tracts in Dekalb and Gwinnett counties
 3. Explore these census tracts with Google Street View and post screenshots of multilingualism
 - iii. Google street view (adapted from Malinowski, 2020):
 1. Your task is to make observations about the linguistic and cultural identity of Atlanta through its LL, starting with questions like those asked by Backhaus (2006):
 - a. Who wrote the signs in the Atlanta LL?
 - b. Who are the signs in the LL here written for?
 - c. What does the LL reveal about the linguistic identities, diversities, and cultural changes underway in the city?
 2. Instructions:
 - a. Either individually or in groups, refer to the Google Street View results from last class for the neighborhood assigned

- to you (Brookhaven, Clarkston, Chamblee, Doraville, or Norcross)
 - b. Document up to 5 multilingual items you find on the Google doc in “Collaborations” on Canvas
 - c. Discuss & be prepared to share an observation from your findings
 - 3. Questions for consideration during the activity:
 - a. How do you determine what counts and what doesn’t count as “a sign”?
 - b. What difficulties, if any, do you have in determining the languages that appear on signs you see?
 - c. How representative of linguistic diversity in the neighborhood do you think your sample is?
 - 4. Questions for consideration after the activity:
 - a. What aspects of cultural change, diversity and identity are invisible altogether in the LL?
 - b. What are the challenges and limitations to doing observational surveys such as these?
- iv. Qualitative analysis:
 - 1. Find a piece of LL data that you think illustrates an important aspect of identity, diversity, or cultural change from your hometown or a place which you consider home or Atlanta. Post an image of your data to the Google Doc "Qualitative LL Analysis" under Collaborations.
- v. Affect and imagination (adapted from Malinowski, 2020):
 - 1. Opening thought exercise:
 - a. What impressions or feelings do you have about this room we’re in right now (MLB 201)?
 - b. What memories & experiences do you have in this room?
 - c. What associations do you have with rooms like this one?
 - d. What do you think typically happens in this room? Who do you think uses it? Who feels welcome here? Who controls it? Who avoids it? What evidence do you see or feel?
 - 2. Homework activity:
 - a. By yourself or with a partner, choose or make/write a sign that you would like to place somewhere in this room
 - b. Discuss where you’d like to put the sign
 - c. Next week, put the sign there!
 - d. We will walk around and pay attention to what other people are posting. How do you read their signs’ meaning?
 - e. As you’re walking around, discuss your interpretations with others

3. Post-activity exercise:

- a. As a reader: what signs interest you the most? What signs do you have the strongest reaction to? Why?
- b. As a 'writer':
 - i. Why did you chose the sign(s) you chose?
 - ii. Did you deliberately NOT choose any signs? Why?
 - iii. How did you choose where and how to put your sign?
 - iv. Are there any places you would absolutely NOT have put your sign?
- c. What responses or 'vibe' did you sense from others while doing this activity? How did it make you feel?
- d. What application does your first-hand experience of "landscaping" this room today have to the way you think about your research questions and methods?

vi. Four 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 tool kit for critically encountering and engaging with multilingualism in public space. As we prepare for our first class outing to the Clarkston neighborhood, 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
 - Which new perspectives have you gained for engaging with language use in the public realm?
 - 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?
 - Which aspects of public meaning-making are particularly interesting to you (e.g., signs, monuments, clothing, sounds, tattoos, graffiti)?
 - What are you particularly looking forward to exploring out in the city?
 - What concerns do you have about engaging with multilingualism in the city?
- Second reflection prompt:

- **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., LL 1.0, LL2.0, LL3.0, lived / perceived / conceived spaces).
- **Third reflection prompt:**
 - 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.
 - 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., LL 1.0, LL2.0, LL3.0, lived / perceived / conceived spaces).
- **Fourth reflection prompt:** Within the constraints of a one-credit course, we have been exploring this semester 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 characterize 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 3-credit course, what else would you have liked to have done, studied, visited?

- **LL analysis toolkit.** Questions and issues to consider when investigating how meaning is being made in a particular space
 - How signs represent the social world
 - Color & Brightness
 - Font / script
 - Representation (how realistic the participants are represented)
 - Materials
 - Composition
 - How the languages of a sign are positioned
 - Which language(s) is “preferred”
 - Which language(s) is salient
 - Which language(s) is informational
 - Which language(s) is symbolic
 - Which functions each language has
 - How signs represent particular ideologies and discourses
 - Who authored the signs
 - Who the intended audience is
 - Which function(s) the signs have
 - Which message(s) the signs convey
 - Which symbolism is evident in the signs
 - Which signs are missing
 - Which emotions and affect the signs / landscape elicit
 - How a place is conceived, perceived, and lived
 - How the place is designed, legislated, enforced – political dimension (top-down)
 - What is visible, audible, smellable, observable – physical dimension
 - How the place is experienced, imagined, felt – experiential dimension (bottom-up)
 - How specific artifacts in a place represent particular ideologies and discourses
 - Monuments
 - Clothing
 - Hairstyles
 - Tattoos
 - Billboards
 - Products for sale
 - Food & drink
 - Other: _____
 - How hierarchies manifest themselves in the public sphere
 - Which languages are present or absent
 - Which vernaculars are used
 - Which groups are addressed or excluded
 - Which histories are present or absent
 - Which languages are heard but not seen

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