

Topic	Linguistic Landscapes: Language in Public Spaces	Duration	90 – 120 minutes
Type	Lesson Plan		
CEFR level	B2+		

GOALS/PURPOSE/AIMS

- Understand the concept of the linguistic landscape.
- Develop observational and analytical skills by documenting language use in public spaces.
- Reflect on language visibility, diversity, and power in the community.
- Create a visual exhibition showcasing findings and analyses.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES USED

- Smartphones or digital cameras
- Access to computer
- Padlet (optional)
- Printer (optional)

PROCEDURES (STRUCTURE)

1. Introduction to Linguistic Landscapes

Introduce and familiarise students with the concept of the linguistic landscape: the visible display of languages in public spaces, such as signs, advertisements, and graffiti. Discuss its significance in reflecting societal multilingualism and language hierarchies. This enhances awareness of language presence and diversity in everyday environments.

Reflection Questions: *What languages do you commonly see in public signs around your neighborhood or school?*

Are there areas where certain languages are more prominent? Why might that be?

2. Group Discussion and Brainstorming

In small groups, students discuss and brainstorm types of public signage they might encounter and the languages used. They consider factors such as location, audience, and purpose of the signs. This prepares students for fieldwork by identifying potential sources of linguistic data. Students anticipate the diversity and functions of language in public spaces.

Reflection Questions: *What types of signs are most common in your area (e.g., street signs, shop signs, advertisements)?*

Who is the intended audience for these signs?

3. Fieldwork Assignment: Photographing the Linguistic Landscape

Students are tasked with photographing examples of public signage in their neighborhood and school, focusing on:

- Language(s) used.
- Placement and prominence.
- Context and purpose.

They should collect 5–10 images, noting:

- Location.
- Languages present.
- Observations or questions raised.

This way they gather real-world data on language use in public spaces. Students engage in active observation, noting linguistic diversity and potential patterns.

4. Sharing and Categorizing Observations

Students upload their photos to a shared Padlet. In groups, they:

- Categorize images by language, location, or type of signage.
- Identify patterns or anomalies.
- Discuss potential reasons behind language choices and visibility.

They collaboratively analyze collected data and identify trends trying to notice and give answers to the following reflective questions:

- *Did you notice any signs where multiple languages are used? What might be the reason for this?*
- *Were there any signs that surprised you in terms of language choice or placement? Which languages are most/least visible in the collected images?*
- *Do certain areas show more linguistic diversity? What might this indicate about the community?*
- *How might the presence or absence of certain languages in public signage affect speakers of those languages?*
- *What messages are conveyed by the linguistic choices in public signs?*

5. Exhibition Creation: Showcasing the Linguistic Landscape

Students create a visual presentation (digital or physical) showcasing their findings. Each exhibit should include:

- Selected photographs.
- Captions explaining context and analysis.
- Reflections on language presence and implications.

OPTIONAL IDEA: Host a gallery walk where students present their exhibits to peers, teachers, or the community.

They synthesize observations and analyses into a creative and informative display. Students articulate their understanding of linguistic landscapes and their significance.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to define and identify elements of the linguistic landscape.
- They will critically analyze language use in public spaces and reflect on the implications of language visibility.
- Students can create a visual exhibition that communicates their findings and insights.

ASSESSMENT/REFLECTION

- Participation in discussions and fieldwork.
- Quality and depth of analysis in presentations.
- Ability to connect observations to broader sociolinguistic concepts.