LL and the language classroom: Opportunities for critical engagement with society, technology, and place

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LL in public space is different than language in classroom
Language ecology as applied to language learning is being defined as a "nonlinear, relational human activity, co-constructed between humans and their environment, contingent upon their position in space and history, and a site of struggle for the control of social power and cultural memory". (Kramsch 2002:5).
Two approaches for using LL in schools and classrooms
1. Language Teaching/learning
LL in public spaces serves as ‘learning input’, i.e., as a means for authentic language learning, different than the classroom: "the city is like a textbooks".

1. Columbia (Yiddish, Spanish, etc.);
2. Sayers (2011): Students examine the spaces and gain knowledge about the uses of English in public spaces – different than in classrooms)
- Columbia Univ. (Yiddish, Spanish, etc.);
- Awareness of multilingualism, translanguaging
2. LL as a tool for social justice, equality, inclusion, ‘talking back’
Using LL in education implies the need for students to become aware, collect data, conceptualize, concretize and begin to observe the multiple layers of meanings displayed in via LL. (criticality?? how to teach it?)
Carrying out research on LL in education implies the need to conceptualize, concretize and collect data on ways students and adults become aware, begin to observe and notice the multiple layers of meanings displayed in LL in public spaces.
"עצוב אל הצבותה 잔ג מובילות רבים לתלייה hep נא החפשמה לא יתכלל ישוק בקע הרוק. חוכ השעב ראוב רבד: רוסי החד המקומם בותיקות וaurants התא, נואר הצבמל שרדנה מובילות ואידמה. "ה LogManager הזה סוף הרצמה העיניים המ אבותו מייקילי סיפותיי" דמויות המ וריאיב מוספת מביתכת 신היה שקובה שירבדה ורודהה. התמא."
הצבמה מביתכת 신היה שקובה.
 الثنائية אמהו בנו

רידה וינון היכרה

בת מ.ease י"ל

הולדת מ. רבקה

נפ', בראש עת

וח שבח תשל"ם

1961 - 2015

ת

וכל חז MAKE WPN

1961

נפר דיında 2016
LL in the public space is a mirror of societies and hence is used as a tool for learner to become aware of social, economic and political issues: equality, discrimination, inclusion - exclusion, in deep cultural levels, leading to activism and transformation.
The tip of the iceberg:
Through LL one can interpret and understand deeper, often controversial, issues of society.

A hint or suggestion of a much larger or more complex issue or problem
Look at me! I'm a tree!
Refugees and asylum seekers - scapes
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Graffiti: reminders of past history over centennial posters

“Here, in this very place, there used to be a Palestinian village that was destroyed”
Remapping the city
Documenting the public space can trigger language learners to learn about societies’, realities, diversity, controversies, ideologies, justice and pose ample critical questions.

Which languages are overt or covert or deleted, who are the people behind these languages? Who participates and why? What are the main issues of the societies?
Who owns the public space?

Is the public space arena of imposition, colonialization, contestation discrimination, marginalization?

and....
Who has the **right to write**
in the public space?

**on multiple levels:**

*Cities, neighborhoods, streets, schools, bus stations, homes, stores, markets, advertisements?? Can unjust realities be resisted? protested?*
If LL in public space is ‘un-just’, and violates social justice, can LL be used to change and transform societies, cities, neighborhoods?

Who makes policy decisions about public spaces?
Research

Developing critical awareness through engagement with LL

Ricki Havazki-Goldestien
11\textsuperscript{th} grade students, Jews and Arabs were given a task to document 20 signs in their neighborhoods in Jaffa, analyze the signs and reach conclusions about the situation in Jaffa.

In the pre-test they claimed that Arabic was a dominant language in Jaffa; after the documentation they realized that the language in fact has very low number of LL signs in the public space.
This awareness made them angry and turned them into activists, wanting to change/transform their neighborhood to a more ‘equal’ space.

Similarly, working with school principals made them change the school LL to a better reflection of society.
“If Hebrew and English appear on the sign, at least they should add Arabic for the Arab inhabitants so they will understand the point of respect”

(Bayan) Arab participant
“I don’t have any comments because look, from all of the signs I analyzed, this was (the only) restaurant sign which included Arabic”
(Fardus) Arab participant
“This research reminds me of a research which was conducted in the U.S.A. on black and white dolls for little children, where the black girls chose the white dolls because even in their thoughts and hearts they thought white was more beautiful than black and that this was a symbol for beauty”.

(Houda) Arab participant
This is a private sign that a person from Jaffa put, without any involvement of the state. This means that even Arabs slowly began to think that Hebrew was more beautiful and better and sometimes they were ashamed of Arabic…”

(Houda) Arab participants
“Most of the stores-owners in Jaffa are Arabs, so why don’t you put Arabic on the sign of your store? Indeed, we are proud to be Arabs so why don’t you show all the world that you are a proud Arab?”
(Fardus) Arab participant
“This research showed me that people didn’t care about their mother tongue. and they didn’t have a problem to speak or to turn to others in Hebrew so they could look more “commercials”. The sales persons weren’t patriots and they preferred to promote their business”.

(Sundus) Arab participant
Engagement with languages in the public space - documenting, analyzing, reaching conclusions is a successful way leading to the development of critical perspectives can lead to transformation and change.

It is like adding an eye!
In that way, each building, each site, each sound, a billboard, an outdoor moving screen, a mall, a homeless person sitting in the corner of the street, IS actually an LL text that has to be critically “read”. In other words, all those visible “texts” need to be processed as “tips of icebergs” for a deeper and more complex meanings which are embedded in histories, cultural relations, politics and humanistic inter-relations.
Caution: Recently, there is a new trend in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, to add Arabic to tourist signs. The motivation? For tourism to present the city as multicultural. Yet, while the language is present, the people are missing....