

Spatializing language teaching: A 3-part framework for teaching design

A set of guiding questions for language teachers interested in incorporating the linguistic landscape into their lessons and materials. Teachers are encouraged to consider how questions and topics raised in each of the three domains of *Spacing*, *Placing*, and *Dislocating* can be developed and highlighted in their teaching designs.

Adapted from the Introduction to the volume *Spatializing language studies: Pedagogical approaches in the Linguistic Landscape* (2023), by David Malinowski (San José State University), Hiram Maxim (Emory University), and Sébastien Dubreil (Carnegie Mellon University). Book available Open Access: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-39578-9>

1. Spacing

The configuration of learners, instructors, extra-institutional participants (e.g., community members), physical and virtual environments, technologies, and interactional purposes into various alignments with expected affordances and constraints for language learning and use

Guiding questions

1. What are the affordances and limitations of the classroom as a space from/within which to engage in learning activities?
2. What considerations and support should teachers bring to students' use of written texts, video, and other multimedia representations of L2 contexts of use?
3. What opportunities does the physical school beyond the classroom offer for observation, learning, and reflection?
4. What learning affordances can be activated within physical communities beyond the classroom—learners' home environments, neighborhoods, work/social/commercial/other spaces?
5. To what degree and under what conditions is physical travel (such as in study abroad) helpful or even necessary to maximize L2 learning outcomes?
6. What are the opportunities and limitations of telecollaboration (internet exchanges) and other virtual engagements with target languages and communities?

2. Placing

Highlights the agentive role that instructors play in making intentional pedagogical use of the particular geographic, historical, political, material, and virtual settings in which language learning activities occur

Guiding questions

1. How can cities, neighborhoods, and other historically rich places be interpreted and performed as living texts?
2. How can teachers support language learners—with their developing language abilities and unique symbolic awarenesses (e.g., Kramsch, 2009)—to contextualize the diverse histories, complex social relations, and translingual voices in the places they study, and those they study about?
3. What techniques of observation, documentation, and analysis are helpful for language learners to develop awareness and understanding of real-world L2 discourses? Which of these quasi-research techniques can language teachers reasonably be expected to teach or otherwise support in their classes?
4. What opportunities and responsibilities do language teachers and learners have toward local communities, as they pursue learning activities in place? Why and how should teachers contribute to the development of ethical, reciprocal partnerships with members of the community outside the institutional context of the language classroom?
5. What opportunities do language learning projects in the LL present for students to address issues of equity, social justice, and representation in real-world places, and thereby participate in larger social, cultural, or political dialogues?

3. Dislocating

Pursues the goal of unsettling language students from familiar habits of action and belief. Teachers guide learners through encounters with difference, unfamiliarity, and even discomfort, as necessary steps toward novel meanings and new identities

Guiding questions

1. How do language learners incorporate others' perspectives and not just their own into their reading and writing of place?
2. How can students use their learning of language as an invitation to a deeper apprenticeship in indigenous and minoritized "conceptual cartographies" of place?
3. How can the linguistic landscape serve as a ground from which to develop trans-disciplinary learning goals and activities (for instance, bridging language learning and other subject area goals?)
4. What opportunities exist to incorporate multiple situated perspectives into the design of learning projects – i.e. multiple linguistic and historical locales, neighborhoods, or cities being studied comparatively; students with varied linguistic backgrounds and skills bringing their different perspectives to the same learning activities; multiple representational and expressive modalities being used to read or write the same landscapes.
5. How does engaging language learners as *authors* in/of L2 texts in the world open up possibilities for learning, investment, and responsibility beyond their role as *readers*?
6. What unique learning opportunities, understandings, and investments may be afforded by juxtaposing different modes of students' embodiment and presence in the material and social worlds of the L2?