The Use of the Linguistic Landscape: Transforming English Language Teaching

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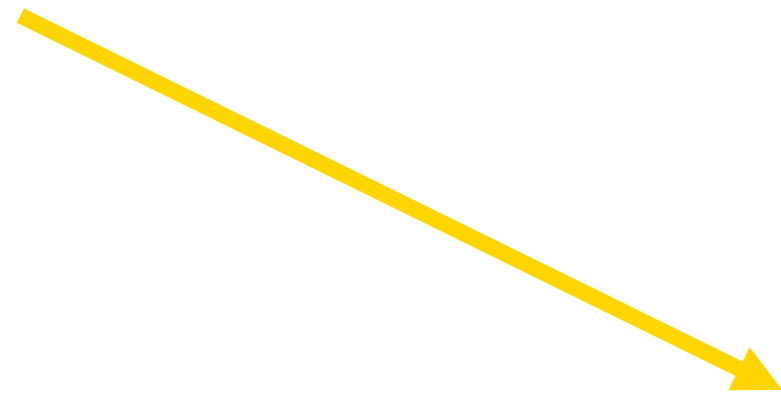# Outline

- Background
- Linguistic Landscape (LL)
- Methodology
- Results Survey
- Task Design Example
- Practical Suggestions

Background

○ *LEAP Interface* – research project

○ MALPRS university course in the ELT program at Graz University
(focus: teacher language awareness, teaching Global English)

○ One of the topics: Linguistic Landscape

The Influence of Global English on the Contemporary ELT Classroom:
The Case of the Linguistic Landscape

Analyzing the Linguistic Landscape

LL: an ELT perspective

"English has now spread so widely beyond is inner circle context that it is often literally visible as part of the language environments of most [...] learners of English, a (potential) visibility captured in the term ‚linguistic landscape."

"LLs are often bilingual and multilingual [...] English often features prominently among the languages that are publicly displayed, particularly in urban environments."

"a growing interest in identifying their potential as a resource for additional language learning"

Roos, J., & Nicholas, H. (2019). Using young learners' language environments for EFL learning: Ways of working with linguistic landscapes. *AILA Review, 32*(1), 91-111.
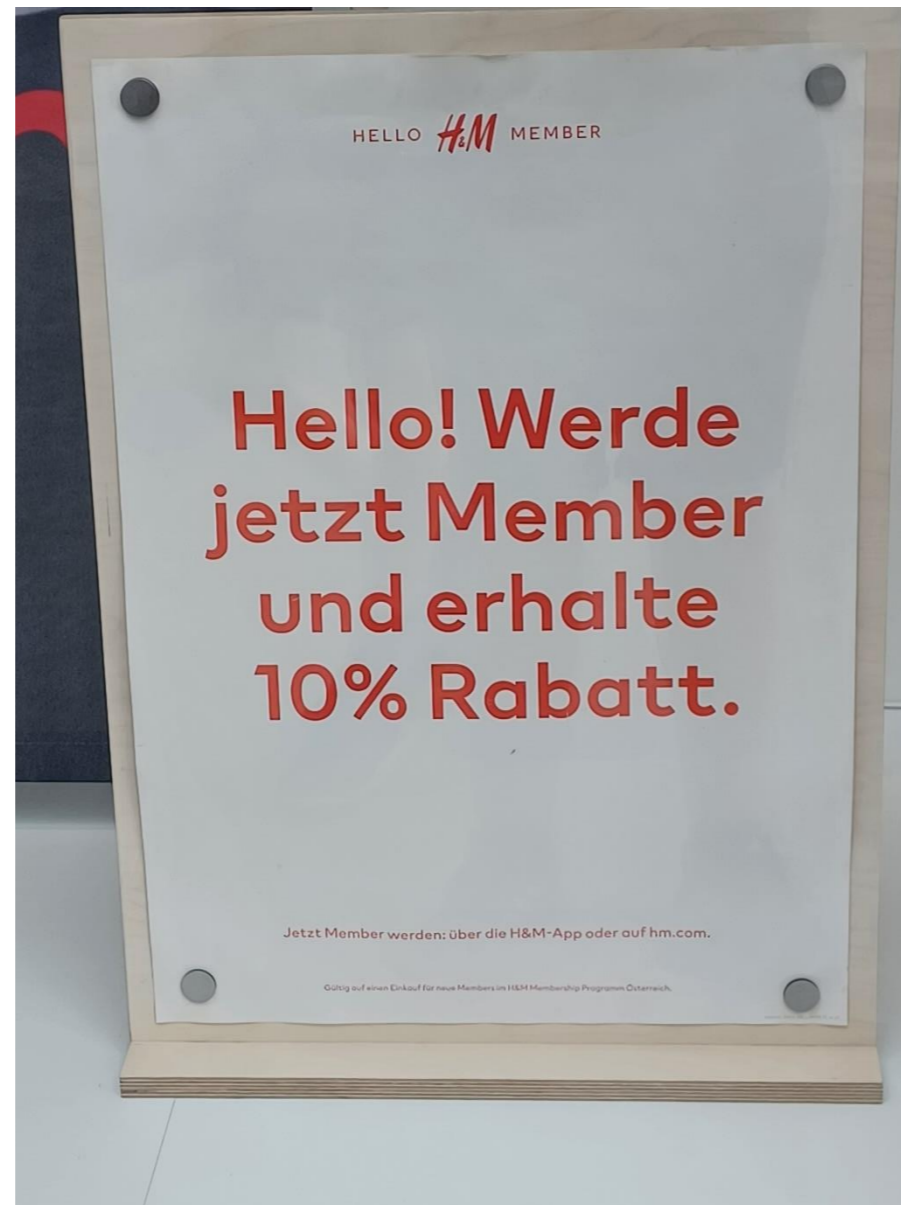
Analyzing the Linguistic Landscape

Focus	Possible Themes
Heightened Awareness of English in the Linguistic Landscape	English in relation to German and other languages
The Form of English in the Linguistic Landscape	Why is English used (rather than a different language)? What is the intended effect?
The Intended Audience of English in the Linguistic Landscape	Locals, visitors, shoppers…
Linguistic Features of English in the Linguistic Landscape	Single words vs. text; loan words, German/English hybrids, false friends…

adapted from: Barrs, K. (2020). Learning from the Linguistic Landscape: A Project-Based Learning Approach to Investigating English in Japan. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, *17*(1).
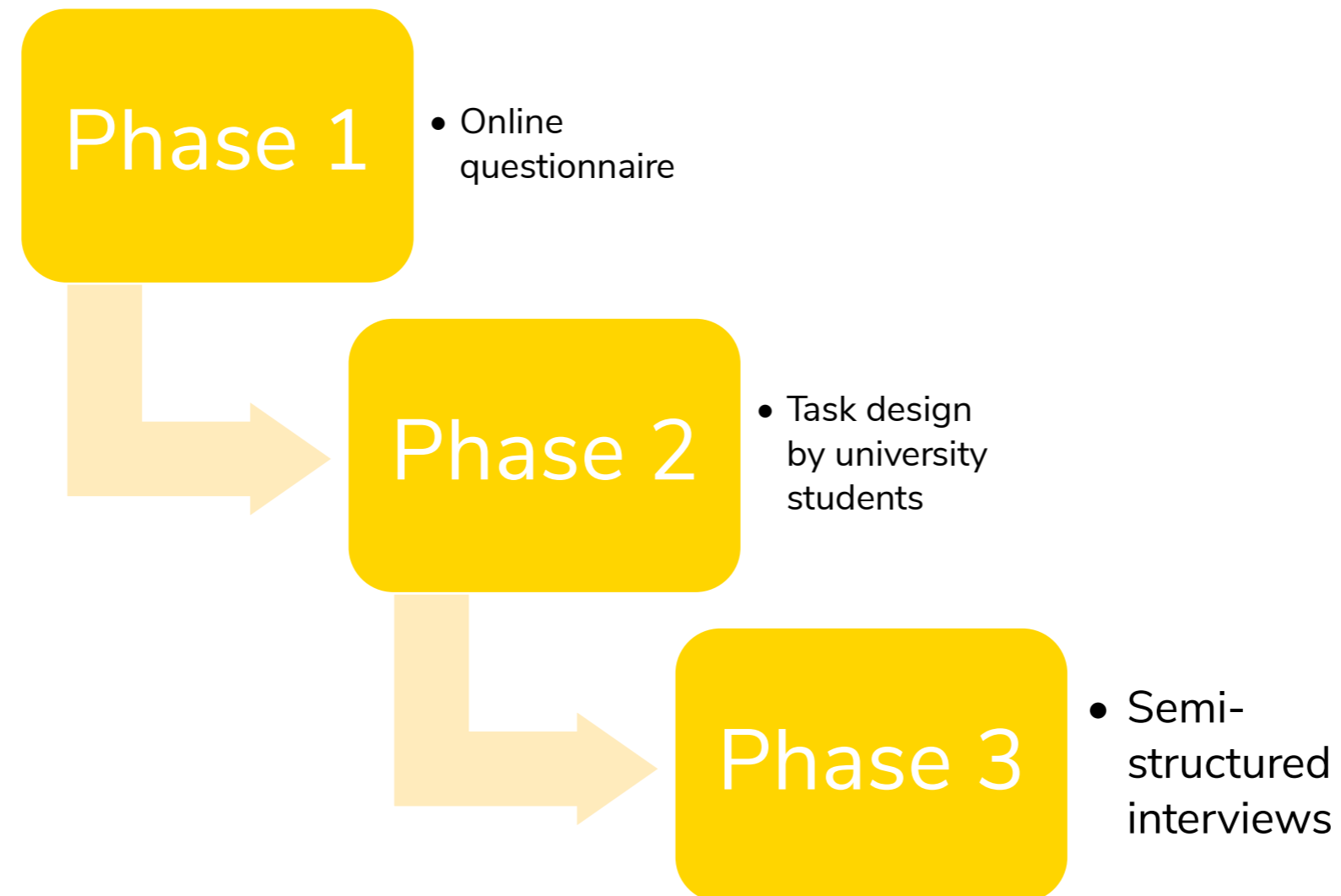
Examples:

Methodology

RQ: What are student teachers' attitudes towards English in the environment (LL)?

How can the linguistic landscape be integrated into speaking or writing tasks to support language learning?

Phase 1
- Online questionnaire

Phase 2
- Task design by university students

Phase 3
- Semi-structured interviews

Results Survey

Student teachers' beliefs

○ Students increasingly pick up English outside the classroom
○ English in the environment has a big influence on learners' English today
○ Recognize the growing importance of English outside the classroom (intrinsic motivation)
○ Integration of Global English into their classroom (non-native speaker interactions, raising language awareness)

Linguistic Landscape Tasks

○ Input in the MALPRS course
○ Task design
○ Practical implementation in the classroom

Task Design Instructions

- Level
- Language focus
- Language goals
- Procedure

ELT and the Linguistic Landscape: sample activity

T-Shirts with a message

Level: B1 and above

Language focus: storytelling / creative writing

Language goals: vocabulary for describing people's personalities (revision), past tense for storytelling (revision)

Procedure:

Preparation:

Ask the learners if they own t-shirts with funny / cute sayings in English printed on them. Invite them to wear these t-shirts to class for their next English lesson or bring a photograph of such a t-shirt.

In class:

1. Talk about the messages on the learners' t-shirts/photographs and clarify vocabulary as needed. Then show the learners this photograph:

SORRY I'M NOT LISTENING

Linguistic Foodscape

ELT and the Linguistic Landscape: sample activity

Linguistic Foodscape

Level: A2+
Language focus: writing a short recipe
Language goals: vocabulary to talk about food items (revision) and one's favourite dish

Procedure:

Preparation:

Ask the learners how often they go grocery shopping and if they've ever looked at the package of various ready meals or other groceries because they are highly likely to find English descriptions on it. Invite them to take photos of said packages and bring them to the next English lesson.

In class:

1. Talk about students' findings and clarify any vocabulary issues that might have arisen. In a next step, show the learners the following photograph:

Tell them to work in pairs, or if desired, in groups of 3 and answer the following questions:

a.) Would you buy and eat this product? Why (not)?
b.) Have you got any idea what TGI might stand for?
c.) How often do you eat junk/fast food? Do you think this kind of food is good for your body? Why (not)?

Share the answers with the whole group. Revise vocabulary to describe tastes and textures of food as you go along and write it on the board. Also make sure to highlight new words such as *coated, seasoned* or *cook thoroughly.*

In order to write a recipe, do the following preparatory exercises provided on the worksheet.

Worksheet:

1. In pairs: Match the following words in the box to the pictures below!

flour   basil   garlic clove   dry yeast   marinara   tablespoon   olive oil   teaspoon   baking sheet

Practical Suggestions

○ If you want to use LL tasks in your teaching, start by collecting samples yourself.

○ Analyze one of your pictures and create a sample task that you can show colleagues for feedback.

○ While designing your task, keep your language focus and goal(s) in mind.

○ Don't fret! Growing your (teacher) language awareness doesn't happen overnight… and thus deciding on the right language focus for your desired language goal(s) requires practice!

References

Barrs, K. (2020). Learning from the Linguistic Landscape: A Project-Based Learning Approach to Investigating English in Japan. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 17(1).*

Roos, J., & Nicholas, H. (2019). Using young learners' language environments for EFL learning: Ways of working with linguistic landscapes. *AILA Review, 32(1)*, 91-111.
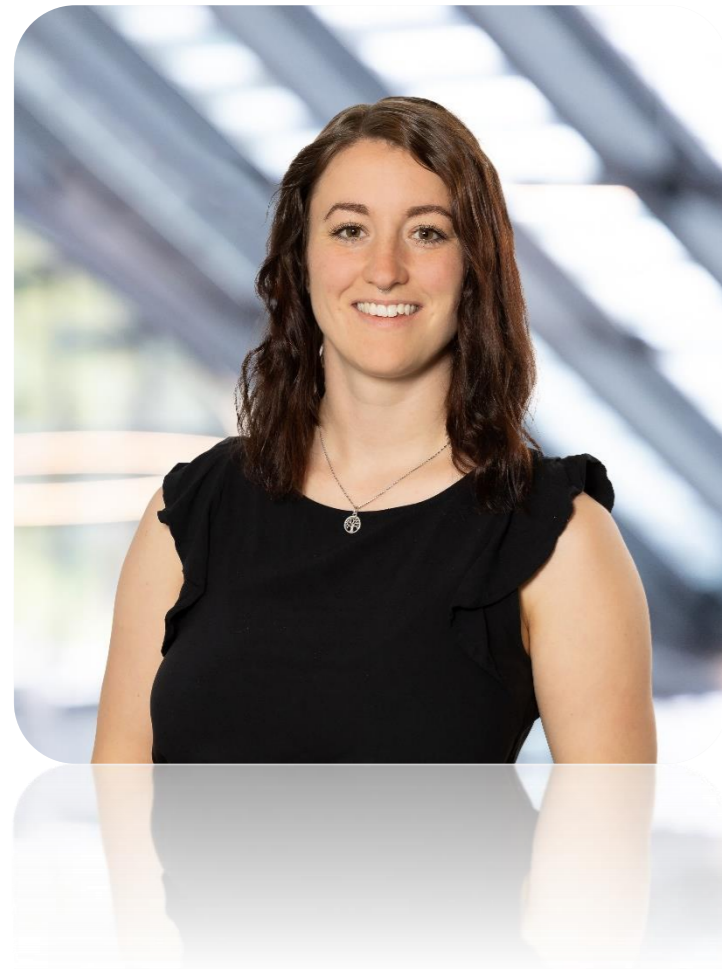
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