Inclusive ethnographies
Beyond the binaries of observer and observed in linguistic landscape studies

Tamás Péter Szabó and Robert A. Troyer
University of Jyväskylä / Western Oregon University

In ethnographically oriented linguistic landscape studies, social spaces are studied in co-operation with research participants, many times through mobile encounters such as walking. Talking, walking, photographing and video recording as well as writing the fieldwork diary are activities that result in the accumulation of heterogeneous, multimodal corpora. We analyze data from a Hungarian school ethnography project to reconstruct fieldwork encounters and analyze embodiment, the handling of devices (e.g. the photo camera) and verbal interaction in exploratory, participant-led walking tours. Our analysis shows that situated practices of embodied conduct and verbal interaction blur the boundaries between observation and observers, and thus LL research is not only about space- and place-making and sense-making routines, but the fieldwork encounters are also transformative and contribute to space- and place-making themselves. Our findings provide insight for ethnographic researchers and enrich the already robust qualitative and quantitative strategies employed in the field.

Keywords: videography, photography, methodologies, participatory research, qualitative research, ethnography

1. Introduction: LL studies and inclusive ethnographies

The study of inhabitant’s perspectives on the language(s) of their surroundings was integral to the coining of the term ‘Linguistic Landscape.’ The data generated by Landry and Bourhis (1997) was gathered from over 2000 questionnaires and that of Barker and Giles (2002) from 389 telephone surveys. Aiestaran, Cenoz and Gorter (2010) relied on five-to-ten-minute interviews with just over 300 passers-by. Using video recordings of classroom interaction, Dagenais et al. (2009) studied children’s growing sense of language awareness while other studies
have emphasized local agency by interviewing store owners and shop-keepers (Malinowski, 2009, Troyer, Cáceda & Giménez-Eguibar, 2015). Garvin’s (2010) work relied on ten in-depth ‘walking tours’ in which inhabitants answered questions while navigating familiar spaces. As this short review of the literature already shows, investigating local inhabitants’ emic understanding of the LL has been essential to the field since its inception.

Likewise, LL studies have grown to embrace multimodality as researchers have approached the public language of the internet (e.g. Malinowski, 2010; Troyer, 2012), skinscapes (Peck & Stroud, 2015), and smellscapes (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015) as objects of study. Kitis and Milani (2015) and Stroud (2016) included bodies as interactive agents in the LL, and Guilat (2016) connected event websites to the LL of the events. Pappenhagen, Scarvaglieri and Redder (2016) analyzed audio recordings in public spaces, also integrating various types of data and modalities.

As we have followed this field and conducted our own LL studies, we have become more aware of the perennial gulf between the object and the outcomes of academic research, between the environments to which we devote so much time documenting and writing about and the people who give life and language to these places – people who are unlikely to read or be directly affected by our work. Keeping in mind the brief background sketched above, we suggest in this article that LL studies are well poised to expand methodologically into more ethnographic data generation and analysis that unites participants and researchers to affect local awareness-raising. Incorporating the investigation of LL into linguistic ethnography has become more and more common (e.g. Stroud & Mpendukana, 2009; Blommaert, 2013; Lou, 2016). We argue that this expansion of LL studies is not merely one of research ideology, but is directly connected to the methods of field research employed. However, such methods are not as widely known as one would assume. For example, at the LL7 Workshop in Berkeley (2015), during the afternoon ‘Reflections on Practice’ sessions, several attendees expressed their interest in, but little familiarity with, more qualitative and ethnographic research methods.

Our goal in this paper is to provide a description of one form of participant-led research that combines audio, video, photographs and texts and results in co-created encounters in the setting being studied. This particular project afforded a meta-analysis of data generation that provides insight into how researcher – participant interaction shapes both data generation and analysis. While this degree of analysis need not be incorporated in all LL studies of this nature, the findings will help prepare LL scholars for ethnographic fieldwork and the triangulation of field data. Furthermore, we believe these findings demonstrate the embodied nature of LLs, which are not merely spaces, but actively created discourses in place (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) that can be sensitive to and affected by the presence of people.
Inclusive research, as Nind (2014) defines it, covers participatory, emancipatory, user-led, and partnership research in which non-academics are involved in the design, the implementation and/or the analysis phases of the research to various extents. The emancipatory and the democratizing ambitions of inclusive research re-position participants from being ‘informants’ that solely serve the information needs of researchers to being co-creators of new insights. Setting up these roles, inclusive agendas transform mechanisms of knowledge production (e.g. Facer & Enright, 2016), enhancing intensive interaction between academic and non-academic institutions and individuals. The multi-layeredness of interaction is influential at various points of the research process, from initial negotiations of co-operation through data generation to analysis and dissemination.

Reviewing numerous recent projects, Nind (2014: 86) states that

Participatory methods are less well developed and reported for data analysis compared with data collection. There may be most potential for participatory data analysis when the boundaries between data collection and analysis are blurred and the process is organic

We interpret this statement as an invitation to carefully examine research methods in which data generation and analysis are not necessarily separate processes. It is only through detailed exploration of research practices that we can ensure that what we study – the experience of people as they navigate, interact with, and create their LL – is accurately documented during data generation. As Laihonen (2008) demonstrated, the interactional features of research interviews shape the data that can be generated in the field. While Laihonen worked with voice recorded interviews and thus concentrated on verbal features of interaction, ethnographically orientated LL researchers generate multimodal data in the field and thus need to consider a complex interaction among modalities and data types in their analyses. Although it may seem obvious that how we frame and conduct fieldwork influences our research participants, our understanding of the mechanisms of researcher – participant interaction relies on investigation of these encounters as contained in this article.

In this article, we focus on mobile approaches to co-operative, participant-involved data generation in which photography and/or videography, walking, and talking are performed simultaneously. We claim that the complexity of these co-exploration activities re-creates and transforms social spaces. These analyzed situated practices blur the boundaries between observation and observers; thus, LL research is not only about space-, place, and sense-making routines (de Certeau, 1984), but the fieldwork encounters are also transformative and thus contribute to space-, place, and sense-making themselves. That is, talking about the LL and co-
exploring it constitute an interpretive action in which participants and researchers co-operate.

Following a literature review (Section 2) and a case study of a walking tour in a Hungarian school (Sections 3–4), our discussion (Section 5) establishes connections between inclusive research agendas, walking-based methods in LL studies, and the challenges of visual representation in LL studies (Troyer & Szabó, 2017). The conclusion (Section 6) emphasizes the transformative and performative character of these fieldwork activities.

2. Walking and LL studies

In this section, we aim at demonstrating how other scholarly fields like anthropology and ethnography can fertilize the study of LL, directing our attention more and more towards the persons who explore and co-explore their inhabited environment. In the last decades, reports on several walking-based methods have emphasized that walking as an action and as a sensory experience transforms interaction and re-positions both the researcher and the research participants in the fieldwork setting. All the studies we review here were based on a setting in which the researcher and the research participant(s) walked together while talking.

Ethnographic walking-based methods, such as the go-along (Kusenbach, 2003) have been developed to overcome some of the limitations of research interviews and participant observations. While research interviews position the researcher as the directive agent in the conversation, participant observation keeps the researcher quite detached from the ongoing situation. Kusenbach’s (2003) paper shows how her go-along method combined the two researcher positions, bringing her to interaction with participants who were doing their mundane activities (e.g. walking to the workplace, commuting on trains, etc.).

Evans and Jones (2011) discuss the interactional characteristics of walking interviews in comparison to sedentary interviews. Their systematic comparison leads them to the conclusion that “the data generated through walking interviews are profoundly informed by the landscapes in which they take place, emphasizing the importance of environmental features in shaping discussions” (p. 849). As a consequence, they recommend walking interviews for researchers whose research questions are “framed by a ‘place’ that can be walked” (p. 849).

With reference to the peripatetic tradition of ancient times, Anderson (2004) emphasizes the role bodily tactics play in making connections between people, place and time. He argues that talking while walking has created a new form of collaboration between him and his participants, resulting in “an unstructured dialogue where all actors participate in a conversational, geographical and
informational pathway creation” (Anderson, 2004: 260). In a similar manner, Brown and Durrheim (2009: 915) have established that moving in the space itself as well as reactions to the environment have played a similar directive role to interviewer’s questions in their mobile interviewing method.

But why does the physical-semiotic environment play such a significant role in interaction? Stroud and Jegels (2014) argue that built environments and public signage are the results of human action, and they influence the individuals’ action potentials. Scollon and Scollon’s (2003) conception of geosemiotics places all social action at the nexus of not just the ‘interaction order’ (culturally encoded sense of time, space, distance, and personal presentation), but also visual and spatial semiotics. Buchholz and Hall (2016: 173) begin, “Bodies and embodiment are central to the production, perception, and social interpretation of language”; their chapter titled “Embodied Sociolinguistics” emphasizes the general lack of research that acknowledges how meaning is contextualized through bodily engagement. Although the study of embodiment in interaction has long been present in certain fields of linguistics (e.g. Multimodal Conversation Analysis; Mondada, 2013), we find that in LL analysis little consideration has been given to the role of the researcher during fieldwork and their effect on the generation and interpretation of data from the LL or from research participants. Thus, we advocate for an increased awareness of the ways in which walking-in-the-LL methodologies constitute embodied, emplaced and multisensory acts (Pink et al. 2010) that help people make connections between themselves, previous human actions, and present action potentials in the given space as a social construct.

While walking interviews are not optimal for all kinds of research projects, they are an ideal strategy for LL research given the field’s embeddedness in the spatial and semiotic construction of linguistic meaning. Thus, it can be considered a natural development that LL studies have already discovered walking methods (e.g. walking tour methodology: Garvin, 2010; narrated walking: Stroud & Jegels, 2014). In the next sections, we report some findings of a school ethnography project in which tourist guide technique, a special walking-based LL method, has been used. As the examples will demonstrate, talking whilst walking proved to be an efficient facilitator of gaining school community members’ emic perspectives, and it was in line with inclusive agendas of ethnographic research since the research participants as local guides played a central role in carrying out fieldwork.
3. A schoolscape ethnography project

3.1 Agency and schoolscape in focus

Schoolscape, a central concept in this research, is used to cover school-based material environments including speech, written text, images, artifacts, and spatial-temporal relations among these (cf. Brown, 2012; Laihonen & Szabó, 2017). The case reported here comes from the lead author’s project which focused on language practices in Hungarian schools with the purpose of documenting school community members’ agency, that is, their discursively co-constructed and negotiated “power to act, to affect matters, to make decisions and choices, and take stances” (Vähäsan antanen, 2015: 1). Issues of agency are pressing global concerns as governments worldwide exert more control over schools, at the same time as schools become more diverse culturally and linguistically (e.g. Jaspers & Verschueren, 2011). In this project, different institutional and individual perspectives were generated about “treatments of space” (de Certeau, 1984: 122) in four schools. In other words, the project asked how the schoolscape has, does, and will potentially affect the human actions that occur there. Given the central focus on agency in such an institutionally, spatially, and interactionally defined setting, ethnographic methods were employed in order to seek an emic understanding. Thus, the school spaces were co-explored by the researcher and local community members with a special regard to institutional practices and local organizational cultures.

3.2 The wider societal context

Although the increased control of state administration over schools can be witnessed globally, rapid changes in Hungarian education policies have resulted in oppression and the rise of opposition movements that promote local initiatives and personal agency (cf. Sannino, 2010). Since 2010, numerous top-down regulatory processes have been implemented due to a conservative turn from the formerly (1985–2010) decentralizing and liberalizing tendencies (Szabó, 2015). Among other changes, the re-nationalization of thousands of schools (Act 190 (2011)), the re-launch of school inspection (decree 20/2012 [VIII.31.] of the Ministry of Human Resources), the centralization of textbook dissemination and the nationalization of major publishers (Act 232 (2013)) as well as the prescriptive new National Core Curriculum (2012) restrict teachers’, students’ and parents’ choices from the viewpoints of administration and content management. As a reaction to claims that professional autonomy has decreased in mainstream state schools, private foundation-run schools are often branded as shelters for those who want ‘children-centered’ or ‘personality-centered’ education which considers individual
needs and group heterogeneity to a maximum extent (Gál, 2014). Such schools invest a lot in disseminating their pedagogical principles, and the spatial-visual design of their premises is often consciously created to make a difference in an ever-increasing competition among schools (cf. Szabó, 2015). Since these schools collect tuition fees, it is crucial to them to attract a high number of parents and students to secure funding for their operations.

3.3 On the fieldwork setting

To study differences between discourses on agency, the lead author visited four schools in Hungary that could be distinguished along their administrative position in the education system: (1) two state schools (grades 1–8 and 9–13, students aged 6–15 and 15–19, respectively); (2) a church-run school (grades 1–13) and (3) a private foundation-run school (grades 1–13). Four one-week visits took place in spring 2015. The schedule, the topic and the focus of the visits were negotiated with the school administration that then recruited the research participants on a voluntary basis. To include the perspectives of community members with different organizational statuses, students, parents and teachers were equally invited to participate. The project has applied an ethnographic approach, not defining *ethnography* as a research method but rather as an “ontological commitment to the people with whom we work, providing a framework which enables voices to be made audible” (Bradley, 2016: 5). In this regard, the project has aimed at increasing the perceived agency of research participants, and creating a co-learning atmosphere between them and the researcher, rather than strengthening a distinction between the observer and the observed.

Since the project defined *agency* as a relational concept emerging and continuously negotiated in interaction (e.g. Aro, 2012), different forms of interaction were studied. Classroom interaction was documented to analyze how the schoolscape influences naturally occurring institutional communication (video recorded participant observation), and walking interviews were conducted to approach school community members’ emic understandings of how the schoolscape influences interaction. Further, field notes were written to provide background information about both types of data recording sessions (see Table 1). In this paper, we focus on the walking interviews. This type of data seems to be the most informative to LL researchers because it shows how people simultaneously navigate and interpret the schoolscape. From the point of view of agency, such data also help to understand how methods of inclusive ethnography support research participants to affect matters and make decisions in interaction with the researcher.

For closer analysis, we chose a case from the private foundation-run school that we call by the pseudonym Hill School. Reviewing materials from the four
fieldwork visits, we found that the visit to Hill School was the closest to inclusive research agendas. For example, it was a parent’s initiative to video record the walking interview session that we analyze in Section 4 from his perspective. The one-week visit in Hill School resulted in the generation of various types of material. Focused data (1–3 in Table 1) relate directly to the research questions of the project, while background data (4–5 in Table 1) mainly support the analysis of the wider research context. As Table 1 shows, the fieldwork materials are

Table 1. Links between research questions and research materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions motivating data generation</th>
<th>RQ1 How does the schoolscape influence school community members’ agency in naturally occurring institutional communication?</th>
<th>RQ2 How do school community members interpret the influence of schoolscape on institutional communication in interaction with the researcher?</th>
<th>RQ2/a How does the fieldwork setting influence researcher – research participant interaction and agency relations among them?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research materials</td>
<td>Video recordings of 2 walking interviews (tourist guide technique, see Section 3.4). One camera used. Total length of videos: 1.25 hours.</td>
<td>Video recordings of 2 walking interviews (tourist guide technique, see Section 3.4). One camera used. Total length of videos: 1.25 hours.</td>
<td>Video recordings of 2 walking interviews (tourist guide technique, see Section 3.4). One camera used. Total length of videos: 1.25 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Video</td>
<td>21 lessons (grades 1–5, 7, 10–12) and extracurricular events observed. 1–3 cameras from different angles. Length of observed events: 22.3 hours. Total length of videos combined: 42.75 hours.</td>
<td>Audio recordings of the observed lessons and extracurricular events. 2–4 external voice recorders used. Total length of audio combined: 42.5 hours.</td>
<td>Audio recordings of 2 walking interviews. One voice recorder used. Length: 1.25 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Audio</td>
<td>Audio recordings of the observed lessons and extracurricular events. 2–4 external voice recorders used. Total length of audio combined: 42.5 hours.</td>
<td>Audio recordings of the observed lessons and extracurricular events. 2–4 external voice recorders used. Total length of audio combined: 42.5 hours.</td>
<td>Audio recording of one seated interview. One voice recorder used. Length: 0.75 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Photography</td>
<td>295 photographs about the observed lessons and extracurricular events. Two cameras used.</td>
<td>504 photographs taken during the walking interviews. One camera used.</td>
<td>504 photographs taken during the walking interviews. One camera used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Written field notes</td>
<td>Researcher’s notes on technical details of the recording sessions, on-site notes on the events observed, and notes on unrecorded events. C. 70 handwritten pages.</td>
<td>Handouts, brochures and a book collected on-site. C. 200 printed pages.</td>
<td>Handouts, brochures and a book collected on-site. C. 200 printed pages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
heterogeneous regarding their purpose of recording, modality and temporality as well as their potential use in analysis. Such a diversity of data is typical in ethnographic projects, which are considered eclectic in their methodological solutions (Cloke et al., 2004). The school community members’ (i.e., teachers, parents’ and students’) co-operation with the researcher made it possible to elaborate on the educational principles and practices that shaped their schoolscape.

In the following sections, we concentrate on researcher – research participant interaction and agency relations in fieldwork (RQ 2/a in Table 1).

3.4 Tourist guide technique: A type of walking interviews

In the following paragraphs we analyze some characteristics of the tourist guide technique (henceforth TGT; Szabó, 2015) which is the combination of mobile photography and (audio)visual recording in the frame of a guided tour. The method enhances LL-related interaction between the researcher and the participants.

At the beginning of the tour, the researcher proposes the situation that she/he is a tourist/visitor and the research participant is a tourist guide who guides her/him through the school premises, commenting on the design of the foyers, classrooms and other community spaces, in relation to daily activities that take place there. The distribution of labor is similar to a standard guided tour of a holiday destination; the research participant introduces the researcher into the life of the school, holding the voice recorder, which implicates that she/he is in control of the verbal interaction, and the researcher is equipped with a photo camera, taking pictures and sometimes asking questions. As a consequence, research participants are positioned as the experts of the given school communities and therefore their decisions on the route of the tour and the artifacts/stories selected for attention provide the basis for the research encounter, and finally that of the published research narrative as well. However, the parallel with ‘real’ tourist guides in this setting is only partial since the research participants are not professional tourist guides, therefore they do not have an established agenda that would be decisive in their way of mediating the LL to the researcher (cf. Waksman & Shohamy, 2016).

Following international standards and the ethical principles of the university where the project has been carried out, we anonymize the persons who were involved in research. However, we are aware that the persons with whom fieldwork has been conducted are the experts of their local communities and their contribution to shared knowledge production could also be acknowledged by publishing their names (e.g. Facer & Enright, 2016). In this study, participants’ identities are concealed in accordance with the agreement signed with them at the beginning of the project which guarantees anonymity.
For the purposes of the present paper, which is to provide LL scholars with a detailed view of how ethnographic fieldwork is conducted, we reconstruct one case (Section 4) with the help of various materials. We use photographs taken on-site by the researcher, original video footage recorded by a voluntary assistant, and the audio file of the external voice recorder handled by the local guide. However, for the purposes of presentation in this paper and its Online Appendices, we show only the still photographs in their original form. To secure anonymity, we applied a special visual effect on video captures to make participants unrecognizable. Further, we distorted the image of the video we attach as Online Appendix 1 for the same reason. In the same video, we used the voice recorded by the external recorder since there was a discontinuity in the original footage; this is why some seconds are blind in the video. Even further, we distorted the voice stream for securing anonymity, and masked all proper names mentioned. We also transcribed and translated the original audio from Hungarian to English (Online Appendix 2), and added the translation of the transcript to the video in the form of superimposed captions. Finally, we added a description of the observed guided tour (Online Appendix 3) which includes photos, descriptive text and some quotes from the transcript. As this detailed reporting of editing processes indicates, our paper builds on the combination of several types of raw materials and added effects to enhance analysis and at the same time guarantee anonymity.

4. Analysis

Because the intent of this paper is to illuminate a research methodology, the following section is more akin to a meta-analysis of data generation and triangulation rather than an analysis of the LL studied. The term tourist guide technique captures the researchers’ foregrounding of the participants in the project. An alternative label would be co-conducted walking tour since, as video and voice recordings prove, often there is negotiation between the researcher and the participant(s) concerning the trajectory and the length of the tour as well as the selection of artifacts for attention. The co-exploration is a result of a set of interpersonal negotiations, and as will become clear, videography helps us understand how such negotiations are performed.

Two of the walking tours in Hill School were video recorded in full length from the perspective of a third person (a voluntary assistant). We selected one of the walking tours to demonstrate the combined use of video, photographs, voice recordings and fieldwork notes. This walking includes the longest co-exploration of a single classroom in the corpus. In this case, the guide was a mother and the assistant was her husband. While most of the materials were created from the
perspective of one of the interactants (i.e., photographs and texts are from the researcher while the audio was recorded by the mother), the video can be treated as a form of participant observation because the husband was not involved in the tour as a research participant. Thus, the video can be handled according to the principles of multimodal interaction analysis (e.g. Norris, 2004).

It is important to emphasize that although TGT is based on a default setting of roles including a tourist guide and a tourist, the roles can be adjusted to the participants’ preferences to reach a mutually comfortable situation, for example:

“I suggested to make as if I were a tourist, but it didn’t really work because it’s a popular tourist destination, there are many tourists. ‘OK, but what are you interested in, what kind of tourist are you? Or are you a teacher from another school?’ ‘Let’s say that.’ ‘Then you would need another teacher. … Or are you another parent?’ Finally we have agreed on this.”

(Fieldwork diary, volume 1, page 23)

After agreeing on the roles, the guide switched on the voice recorder. Before her husband switched on the video camera, it was negotiated how to record the tour, as it is audible on the voice recording:

Assistant: Úgy szeretnéd, hogy mind a ketten benne vagyok?
Researcher: Igen, hogy mind a ketten benne vagyunk, igen

A: Would you like it so that both of you are in?
R: Yes, that both of us are in, yes

As the excerpt shows, the researcher provided only a vague instruction on request, asking the assistant to capture the two co-explorers of the site. This instruction reflects the researcher’s intentions to analyze embodied conduct in the tour encounter. The whole video recording is 36 min 45 sec long, and 81 photos were taken during the TGT tour. In the first 5 min 39 sec, the parent guided the researcher through the yard and the main foyer. Our presentation in Online Appendices 1–3 begins with the moment when they enter the classroom on the guide’s initiative (“we can even go inside”). Many photos of the tour (21 images) were taken in this classroom.

Without analyzing all details, below we present some major resources in setting the walking trajectory and selecting LL items for attention (i.e., both photographing and commenting on them). Commenting on specific elements in the LL
is essential and influential since certain elements will be emphasized while others may be ignored. This is a sharp contrast to quantitative LL studies in which nearly all tokens are given equal weight in the analysis. The qualitative, ethnographic approach here need not replace a more thorough documentation of the LL, but allows researchers to account for the relative salience of certain LL items to the people who inhabit the research sites as part of their normal lives. Our meta-analysis of the video footage revealed three major resources that researchers who use participant-led methods should be conscious of before conducting their fieldwork and their analysis, namely: *embodiment*, the handling of devices (e.g. the photo camera) and verbal interaction.

In the following paragraphs, we show examples for each of these components. In the examples, G stands for Guide and R for the Researcher who was, in this case, the lead author. We show the video time counting from the moment when we entered the room (this makes it possible to search for the relevant spots in the video recording in Online Appendix 1). Further, we provide the relevant context by referring to lines in the transcript (Hungarian original and English translation in parallel; Online Appendix 2) and locating the episode in the sequential organization of the whole video excerpt (caption IDs in Online Appendix 3). In the Figures 1–2, the photo on the left side is the one the researcher took in the video captured moment or soon after.

*Embodiment* in this paper refers to the bodily movement and gestures of the persons interacting with each other (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2016). Walking in certain directions, stopping at certain points, directing gaze to objects or keeping eye contact with the other person, pointing to certain directions or to artifacts as well as grabbing, moving and manipulating objects are all manifestations of embodiment. Our first example, Figure 1, shows how pointing, directing gaze and walking are combined in selecting an object for attention. In the chosen excerpt, following a discussion of exercise books and sport equipment as important elements in the classroom and in the pedagogical program of the school, G initiated discussion about the “storytelling armchair” which she also labeled “important.”

The example shows that walking in a direction is negotiated: pointing to a direction may initiate walking, but the trajectory of walking can be interrupted by stops and pauses as well. We argue that by continuing to walk, R accepted G’s initiation of walking closer to the armchair; that is, they decided jointly on the selection of the next object for attention.

As the above example shows the handling of devices (in this case, the photographic camera) functions as a signal that informs participants (both the researcher and the guide) about the negotiation process of choosing objects for attention. Since the guides were not professional tourist guides, they did not have an established agenda of how to conduct the tour so they were constantly monitoring the
researcher, making assumptions about the researcher’s potential interests. Such assumptions could be based on the position of the researcher’s camera and its clicking sound, which informed them about the completion of taking a photograph. Based on such information, the guides often started talking about artifacts that were, according to their perception, being photographed. This constant tracking and monitoring shows a co-operative rather than a leading stance on behalf of the guides; that is, they were co-conducting fieldwork in co-operation with the researcher.

During the tour, most of the photos (72 of 81) were taken in landscape format, so turning the camera 90 degrees clockwise to compose a portrait format picture informed G that some vertical object will be photo documented. In the first case when R composed a portrait format photo, G commented on the photography process, shown in Figure 2.

Such comments are very rare in the corpus since most of the instances of photographing remained verbally uncommented upon. When there was verbalization in connection with photography, it was much more common that the guides instructed the researcher to take photos about certain artifacts, e.g. “Feel free to take a photo on this”; “You might want to take a photo on this”; etc. (not included in this case). Such instructions were self-initiated turns by the guides that strengthened their role as the experts of the school and the leaders of the tour. As a rare example, G also commented on a need for adjusting the setting as a preparation for photography, claiming a candidate role of a co-photographer for herself: “maybe I should adjust the blanket on that [= the storytelling armchair], but anyway” (Online Appendix 2: line 58).

**Figure 1. Embodiment.** *G points twice towards the opposite wall with left index finger* and comments, “The other important element is the storytelling armchair.” *R directs gaze to direction of G’s index finger, takes a step towards the armchair, takes a photo, and then walks close to the armchair, followed by G.* (Online Appendix 1: 3 min 57 sec. Online Appendix 2: lines 54–58; Online Appendix 3: capture #10)
Verbal interaction, in general, consists of the guide’s comments that can take form as descriptions, evaluations or narratives. For example, after walking to the storytelling armchair, G started her comment on the object as follows:

Storytelling armchair, storytelling is due every day. The teacher sits in that [= the armchair] and the children crouch at her feet and she tells the story that fits especially this age group. She repeats it several times er er a week.

(Online Appendix 2: lines 60–61)

This text excerpt shows a typical way of presenting the schoolscape: first came the identification of the item (“storytelling armchair”) and then G provided an iterative narrative (Baynham, 2010), a description of what happens usually in the school (e.g. “the teacher sits in that”; “the children crouch at her feet”; etc.). Such narratives often include evaluation (e.g. “tells the story that fits especially this age group”). It is important to add that verbal interaction is not always linked tightly to photography. There were instances – see Figure 3 – where G elaborated on a topic for 15–60 seconds or even longer during which G and R maintained eye contact and there was no photography included.

As our examples have demonstrated, the TGT walking tour method of documenting and interpreting the schoolscape results in negotiation processes. Such negotiation is carried out by using a combination of several semiotic resources, including embodiment, the handling of devices and verbal interaction. Both the trajectory of the tour and the scope of objects selected for attention are negotiated.
We believe that the division of labor between semiotic resources as well as the sequential order of walking tours show recurring patterns.

5. Discussion

Building on the previous section, we argue that representational corpora (i.e., collections of representations of the LL contained in audio, video, photographic records and written texts) are generally the results of on-site pre-selection; however, in inclusive fieldwork settings, such pre-selection is continuously negotiated with the participants. Just as Laihonen’s analysis of research interviews showed “how the interviewer and the interviewee together construct statements, accounts and evaluations” (2008: 688), we demonstrated how the researcher and the research participant together create a multimodal corpus for researching the LL. In other words, LL fieldwork can create a joint venture between researcher and participant, and videography as a tool helps us to understand how such joint ventures are organized. We consider the above described mechanisms to be essential in generating data and building corpora that do not treat the LL as a static entity. As Moriarty (2014: 458) points out, one limitation of many LL studies is “how place is taken as fixed and static. Such an approach ignores the reality of space as dynamic, fluid and ever-changing”. One way of overcoming this shortcoming is by including inclusive research methods as exemplified by the TGT approach.

Up to this point we have not addressed the choices that are entailed when a researcher chooses to use videographic methods to create a representation of
the LL based on a walking tour with a participant. As presented in Troyer and Szabó (2017), the choice of representation (e.g., a numerical tally of languages, photographs, audio/video recordings) directly effects the kind of LL data that can be generated. Furthermore, videography, despite its current ubiquity and ease of production, is rife with technical, contextual, and usage choices that researchers should be aware of before beginning production. Figure 4, reprinted from Troyer and Szabó (2017) and based on current methodological work in anthropology and human geography, maps orientations along several parameters that are available to the videographer. To begin with the horizontal axis, the case study described in this paper is a situation in which the video was captured in a setting that the participant was very familiar with. Though not as naturalistic as inconspicuous surveillance of a person navigating their environment, the video record captured the co-created, embodied, and mediated interaction that developed organically between the participant-guide and the researcher-tourist, thus, making the record a relatively naturalistic video. Regarding the vertical axis, the recording as used by the researcher for later analysis contained minimal manipulation of the video which was shot by a briefly instructed volunteer, its beginning and ending coinciding with the guide’s commencement and conclusion of the ‘tour.’ As presented in

Figure 4. Methodological dimensions of videography for LL studies (Troyer & Szabó, 2017: 65; based on Knoblauch et al., 2012)
the Online Appendices, the record has been significantly modified by our choice of which sections to include and the audio and visual filters used to protect participant anonymity.

The need for these two different versions of the audio-visual record is clarified by the third dimension in the lower right-hand corner of Figure 4, namely the data in its unedited form is intended for the researcher while the modified version is suitable for an external audience. Finally, given the nature of the schoolscape study reported here, the data is amenable to qualitative analysis though as the framework demonstrates, videographic techniques could also be used to generate quantitative data.

As new methodologies are incorporated in LL studies, we contend that researchers should be aware of and specify the parameters along which their methods of data generation are oriented. This attention to data generation in the form of multimodal media highlights the role of representation in LL studies (Troyer & Szabó, 2017). Audio-visual records, even co-constructions that seek to capture the dynamics of embodied space, are representations that serve as one perspective that informs our interpretation of a LL.

6. Conclusion

A LL is a dynamic system that is shaped by agents and policies at macro, meso, and micro levels, and some sites evolve more quickly than others. We suggest that schoolscapes are one such site in which the inhabitants play a highly agentive role in transforming and performing the semiotic place – what we refer to earlier as space-, place, and sense-making processes. Some LL research methodologies allow for relatively objective documentation, and we may refer to sites as ‘researched spaces’ in which we have generated synchronic data. However, inclusive ethnographic fieldwork that engages inhabitants of highly dynamic settings has the potential to (1) engender emic perspectives and narratives and (2) transform the LL due to the interaction between researchers and participants. If as Scollon and Scollon (2003) claim, a semiotic landscape is not merely a space, but a discourse in place, a nexus of visual, spatial and interactional meaning, then the encounter between the researcher, the participant, and the place contribute to its ongoing construction. Our analysis has demonstrated that inclusive ethnography can challenge the dichotomy of observer vs. observed and highlights the mediating role that embodiment, devices, and verbal interaction play in shaping the generation of multimodal data and research narratives. These methods, in addition to affording materials (photo, video, audio and text) that can be combined for various audiences, have the potential to raise participants’ critical awareness and social
engagement in ways that other methods (e.g., questionnaires and audio recorded interviews) may not. Interactions between the researcher and participants become woven into the history of the landscape and will alter the participant’s future understanding of the place and possibly their agentive role in its modification. We hope that this article both encourages and emboldens researchers to incorporate inclusive ethnographies when appropriate in order to complement various quantitative and qualitative methods of studying LLs.

Link to the online appendices

http://digitalcommons.wou.edu/english_facpubs/2/

Funding

Szabó’s research has been supported by the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland.

References


Abstract

A nyelvi tájképet vizsgáló etnográfiai kutatásokban a közösségi tereket a kutatásban részt vevő személyekkel együttműködve vizsgálják, gyakran mozgás, például séta közben. A beszéd, a séta, a fényképezés, illetve videózás mint társas tevékenységek eredményeként heterogén, multimodális korpuszok jönnek létre. Tanulmányunkban egy magyarországi iskolai etnográfiai projekt anyagait elemezzük abból a célból, hogy rekonstruáljuk, hogyan befolyásolják a kutatóval tett, de a kutatásban részt vevő személy által vezetett felfedező sétákat a kutatás menetét. Részletesen elemezzük ebből a szempontból az embodiment, a fényképezőgép-kezelés és a verbális interakció szerepét. Amellett érvelünk, hogy a közös felfedező sétákhoz köthető embodiment, fényképezőgép-használat és verbális interakció elmossák a megfigyelő és a megfigyelt közötti határokat, így a nyelvi tájkép kutatása nemcsak tárgyát tekintve szól tér- és helyteremtésről, hanem transzformatív jellege révén a kutatás maga is alakítja e folyamatot. Eredményeink az etnográfiai vizsgálatok egyes jellegzetettségeinek feltárásán túl a nyelvi tájkép kutatására már rendelkezésre álló kvalitatív és kvantitatív módszerek gazdagításához is hozzájárul.

Authors’ addresses

Tamás Péter Szabó  
Department of Teacher Education  
University of Jyväskylä  
PO Box 35  
FI-40014  
Finland  
tamas.p.szabo@jyu.fi

Robert A. Troyer  
Department of English, Writing, and Linguistics  
Western Oregon University  
345 Monmouth Avenue North  
Monmouth, OR 97361  
United States of America  
troyerr@wou.edu