

# The Pedagogical Benefits of a Linguistic Landscape Project in Japan

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## ABSTRACT

This article examines the claims made by various scholars regarding the use of the linguistic landscape as a pedagogical resource within multilingual educational contexts. As an area of increasing interest in sociolinguistic research and with an established pedagogical history in L1 literacy classrooms, the study of publicly displayed texts, such as advertisements and road signs, is now beginning to find favour in L2 classrooms, particularly in ESL contexts. As a point of difference, the current study describes the implementation of an EFL classroom project which required students to collect and analyse photographs of English used on signs in Japan. The students' analyses of their local linguistic landscape are discussed with reference to the claims made in the relevant literature about the benefits of having language learners engage with texts displayed in public. Overall, the study supports the idea that pedagogical linguistic landscape projects can be valuable to EFL students in a variety of ways, particularly in the development of students' symbolic competence (Kramsch 2006, 2009) and literacy skills in a multiliteracies sense (Cope and Kalantzis 2000; New London Group 1996).

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