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Lookalike professional English

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1 Teaching Case

2 Lookalike Professional English

3 —TOM VAN HOUT AND ELLEN VAN PRAET

4 **Abstract—Background:** Our teaching case reports on a fieldwork assignment designed to have master of arts students
 5 experience first-hand how entrepreneurs write for the globalized marketplace by examining public displays of language,
 6 such as billboards, shop windows, and posters. **Research questions:** How do entrepreneurs use English to “style”
 7 themselves? What is the status of English in public displays? Which relationship with customers is cultivated by using
 8 English (among other languages)? How does English, or lookalike versions thereof, create a more innovative business?
 9 **Situating the case:** We use linguistic landscaping as a pedagogical resource, drawing on similar cases in a local
 10 English as a foreign language (EFL) community in Oaxaca, Mexico; EFL programs in Chiba-shi, Japan; francophone and
 11 immersion French programs in Montreal, QC, Canada and Vancouver, BC, Canada; and a study of the entrepreneurial
 12 landscape in Observatory’s business corridor of Lower Main Road in Cape Town, South Africa. **How this case was**
 13 **studied:** We interviewed 36 students about their learning process in one-to-one post hoc interviews. Recurrent themes
 14 were increased self-monitoring, improved professional communication literacy, and expanded real-world
 15 understanding. **About the case:** The teaching case follows a three-pronged approach. First, we have students decide
 16 on a survey area, determine their empirical focus, establish analytical units, decide how to collect data, collect
 17 (sociodemographic) information about their survey area, and determine the degree of researcher engagement. Next,
 18 students conduct fieldwork, documenting the linguistic landscape in small teams of three to four students. In the third
 19 phase, students have returned from the field and discuss their initial findings, ideas, and observations during a data
 20 session with the instructors. Students decide whether they still stand by the decisions they made before they entered
 21 the field and are then asked to qualify how language is used in public space. **Results:** The main takeaway of the
 22 assignment is that students were more aware of the degree of linguistic innovation, rhetorical creativity, and
 23 ethnocultural stereotyping of entrepreneurial communication in their cities. **Conclusion:** As a pedagogical tool, LL offers
 24 possibilities for exploring entrepreneurial communication in all of its breadth and variety, providing access to perhaps
 25 the most visible and creative materialities of entrepreneurs and service providers: shop windows and signs.

Index Terms—Entrepreneurship communication, linguistic landscape, lookalike English, professional communication.

26 Managing a business inevitably involves the
 27 rhetorical activity of creating value through writing
 28 [1], both online [2] and offline [3]. This teaching
 29 cases addresses the creation of economic value
 30 from the perspective of writing for the globalized
 31 marketplace. We send students on a semiotic safari
 32 in urban environments, where they encounter
 33 professional communication in multilingual *couleur*
 34 *locale*. We have them document the bits of English
 35 used by professional communicators on billboards,
 36 in shop windows, posters, graffiti, and other
 37 inscriptions. The rationale is that such displays of
 38 entrepreneurial communication offer a convenient

and socioculturally rich space for studying
 rhetorical action in situ [4].

OVERVIEW OF THE CASE

Innovation and entrepreneurship are studied in
 many disciplines, including economics, sociology,
 psychology, linguistics, and anthropology. In the
 traditional Schumpeterian view, the
 innovation-management process is considered
 linear and continuous. In this teaching case,
 however, we adopt an approach to
 entrepreneurship that complements
 Schumpeterian innovation dynamics [5] with
 Appadurian scalar dynamics [6], and recognize that
 change in a globalized market is, by definition,
 chaotic, nonlinear, and unpredictable.

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Color versions of one or more of the figures in this paper are
 available online at <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org>.

In his work on the cultural dimensions of
 globalization, anthropologist Arjun Appadurai
 famously argued that the global economy needs to
 be “understood as a complex, overlapping,
 disjunctive order” [6], composed of cultural flows
 between people, media, technologies, capital, and
 ideologies. Disturbing the even flow of production
 and creating new ways of doing, the Schumpeterian

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62 entrepreneur will instigate innovative language
63 practices and, hence, unforeseen, artful, or
64 otherwise “new combinations” of entrepreneurial
65 communication. In other words, disjuncture also
66 triggers rhetorical innovation.

67 Following this rationale, our teaching case
68 addresses the following research questions:

69 **RQ1.** What are the effects of globalization on
70 entrepreneurial communication?

71 **RQ2.** How do entrepreneurs use English to
72 “style” themselves?

73 **RQ3.** Which relationship with customers is
74 cultivated by using English (among other
75 languages)?

76 **RQ4.** How does English, or *lookalike* versions
77 thereof, create more innovative business signage?

78 In what follows, we report on how we coached and
79 monitored students as they collected data in the
80 field to answer these research questions. We
81 explain the underlying rationale for developing the
82 assignment and discuss implications for teachers
83 and students of professional communication.

84 In line with other researchers of professional
85 communication in Europe [7], [8], we draw on
86 linguistics to understand how rhetorical action is
87 accomplished. Specifically, we focus on public
88 signage as a technological space for rhetorical
89 action [9]. Rather than the outcome of a formal
90 research project, this teaching case results from (1)
91 our experience as instructors of professional
92 communication, and (2) our backgrounds in
93 sociolinguistics and linguistic ethnography. An
94 umbrella term for ethnographic approaches to
95 language and communication. Linguistic
96 ethnography holds that “the contexts of
97 communication should be investigated rather than
98 assumed [and that] analysis of the internal
99 organisation of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic)
100 data is essential to understanding its significance
101 and position in the world” [10].

102 In what follows, Situating the Case outlines the key
103 studies and theories that guided the design of the
104 assignment. How the Case was Studied explains
105 why we relied on experiential learning as a
106 pedagogical approach and why the assignment
107 took on a clearer focus on entrepreneurial
108 communication over time. About the Teaching Case
109 describes how students were briefed, how they
110 performed during data sessions with the
111 instructors, and how they analyzed their data.

Conclusions, Limitations, and Suggestions for
Future Research spells out implications for
teaching practice, the limitations of this case, and
avenues for future research.

SITUATING THE CASE

This section identifies the literature that informed
the teaching case. We start with the three source
texts that inspired and provided the main scaffold
for the case in How Literature Was Selected,
followed by a discussion of similar cases.

How Literature Was Selected Our teaching case
draws on recent debates in two fields:
sociolinguistics and foreign language pedagogy.
First and foremost, we were triggered by the
concept of *lookalike* language [11]. Proliferating in
urban spaces around the world, the bits of English
used by professional communicators on billboards,
in shop windows, posters, graffiti, and other
inscriptions often appear “in forms and formats
that challenge our understanding of language” [11].
They come with accents, typos, dialects,
unintended meanings. They “sufficiently look like
English, even if the English they display makes no
sense at all linguistically. Their function is not to
express coherent linguistic meanings through the
system of English. It is, rather, to *show* and *display*
an awareness of the potential social capital
contained in forms and shapes connected to
English” [11].

Rather than simply dismiss *lookalike* language as
bad or non-native English, the concept compelled
us to study occurrences of *lookalike* English as
indicators of social change. (See also [12].) If
students are to become successful in the modern
globalized corporate world, they have to come to
terms with the diversity, and “the unpredictability,
which comes along with highly mobile,
technological and multicultural citizens” [4]. Since
no classroom experience can provide such
knowledge first-hand, we turned to the sights and
sounds of the city.

We used a linguistic landscape (LL) approach, a
young and vibrant area of sociolinguistics that
studies how written language constructs public
places. LL research examines billboards, road
signs, shop windows, graffiti, and other inscriptions
in urban environments. Our second source of
inspiration was an LL research assignment,
developed by sociolinguist Jannis Androutopoulos
[13]. He discerns six stages in the research process:

162	(1) Selection of a site	ethnographic lens at the entrepreneurial landscape	215
163	(2) Photographic documentation	in Observatory's business corridor of Lower Main	216
164	(3) Selection of and contact with participants	Road in Cape Town, South Africa [4]. Their paper	217
165	(4) Conducting individual "walking tour" interviews	explores the development of an "African Corner"	218
166	on the selected site	within Lower Main Road, and documents	219
167	(5) Transcription and analysis of interviews and	sociocultural change in ways that a population	220
168	field notes	census could never uncover. In particular, their	221
169	(6) Reflection	analysis shows how some Asian and African	222
170	Skipping Androutsopoulos' stages 3, 4, and 5, we	entrepreneurs openly celebrate Africanness and	223
171	structured our assignment around three phases.	use it as an innovative marketing strategy, while	224
172	First, we let students decide on a survey area,	others shy away from the overt use of signage, art,	225
173	determine their empirical focus, establish	and texts that might foreground their Africanness.	226
174	analytical units, decide how to collect data, collect		
175	(sociodemographic) information about their survey	HOW THIS CASE WAS STUDIED	227
176	area, and determine the degree of researcher	In what follows we explain why we opted for	228
177	engagement. In the second phase, they conduct	autonomous, experiential learning as a pedagogical	229
178	fieldwork, taking pictures, and documenting the	approach and why the assignment took on a	230
179	linguistic landscape in small teams. In the third,	clearer focus on entrepreneurial communication.	231
180	reflective phase, students have returned from the		
181	field and discuss their initial findings, ideas, and	Advocating experiential learning in education is by	232
182	observations during a data session with the	no means new. Back in the early 19 th century,	233
183	instructor. Students decide whether they still stand	John Dewey argued for incorporating as much of	234
184	by the decisions that they had made before they	current society into the educational process as	235
185	entered the field and are asked to qualify how	possible to facilitate learning, which would then	236
186	language is used in public space. In this phase,	enhance society as a whole [18]. More recent	237
187	students interpret the social actions accomplished	studies show that experiential learning in business	238
188	by the signs and present their findings to their	and accounting programs has become increasingly	239
189	peers in a student research conference.	important. It has now become a taken-for-granted	240
190	A third source of inspiration was found in	assumption among business and management	241
191	Malinowski's [14] creative adoption of Henri	educators and CEOs that universities must provide	242
192	Lefebvre's triple notion of <i>conceived</i> , <i>perceived</i> , and	experiential learning programs, such as	243
193	<i>lived</i> spaces for language learning. Applying the	internships, real-life marketing cases, crisis	244
194	triadic model to second language pedagogy,	communication, advertising, and the like. Business	245
195	Malinowski argues for a study of at least two	education—like the firms and students they	246
196	dimensions in the LL. In terms of language	serve—is in a continuous process of evolving to	247
197	learning, then, this approach means that students	meet a shifting global and local environment.	248
198	do not just visit areas with signs in the target	Fast-changing corporate settings, along with	249
199	language (English); or take pictures and sample	students' ever-increasing access to mobile	250
200	lookalike language (<i>perceived spaces</i>); or conduct	technology and mediated content, force business	251
201	interviews with local entrepreneurs to probe for	programs to rethink how student learning can be	252
202	experiences, memories, and feelings (<i>lived spaces</i>).	facilitated to make class time and activities as	253
203	Ideally, students do all of these, alongside textual	relevant and valuable as possible.	254
204	analysis of language policy documents, newspaper		
205	articles, and other media representations	Following this rationale, Author 1 piloted the	255
206	(<i>conceived spaces</i>).	assignment in 2014 at the University of Antwerp,	256
207	Similar Cases In designing the teaching case, we	where he teaches professional communication in	257
208	were guided by a recent interest in using the LL as	English to about 70 students in the Master of	258
209	a pedagogical resource in second and foreign	Multilingual Professional Communication program.	259
210	language learning in Mexico [15], Japan [16], and	One year later, a slightly altered version of the	260
211	Canada [17]. Along the way, we discovered that	assignment was launched by Author 2 at Ghent	261
212	using the LL as a site for business English learning	University for about 60 students of the Master of	262
213	seemed to be a largely unexplored territory. We were	Multilingual Communication program. Both	263
214	also inspired by Peck and Banda, who point an	master's programs train students in multilingual	264
		communication skills for business, government,	265
		and nonprofit organizations. The master's program	266

267 is typically—but not exclusively—populated by
 268 students with a background in (applied) linguistics.
 269 The courses in which the assignments were taught
 270 are required for all students registering for the two
 271 programs. Sessions with students were held on a
 272 once-a-week basis. A typical semester in Belgium
 273 starts at the end of September and lasts 12 weeks.
 274 At the University of Antwerp, six weeks were
 275 reserved for the assignment. At Ghent University,
 276 time for completing the assignment was limited to
 277 three weeks.

278 Since experiential learning is a complex construct
 279 and, therefore, difficult to measure, we tested our
 280 approach by interviewing 36 students about what
 281 they had learned in the course. In these one-to-one
 282 exit interviews, recurrent themes were increased
 283 self-monitoring, improved professional
 284 communication literacy, and expanded real-world
 285 understanding, but also a failure to see a link with
 286 professional communication in a foreign language.
 287 In fact, at the beginning, in Year 1, the assignment
 288 did not focus on entrepreneurial communication
 289 per se. Its scope was more general, focusing on
 290 aspects of language use in a globalized city. To
 291 better serve student needs, we adjusted the pilot
 292 version of the assignment in Year 2, addressing
 293 what students had identified as its strengths (lived
 294 experience) and shortcomings (lack of focus). This
 295 revised version of the assignment is the basis for
 296 the teaching case presented in this paper.

297 ABOUT THE TEACHING CASE

298 This section describes the trigger for developing the
 299 case, the design of the assignment, the changes we
 300 made to each version of the assignment, and the
 301 results of our efforts, grounded in reflections and
 302 feedback from students.

303 **Problem** The LL assignment addresses three
 304 broad but related issues we encountered as
 305 instructors of professional communication in a
 306 foreign language.

307 (1) **Managing student expectations:** Students
 308 entered the course with the expectation that
 309 they would learn about professional
 310 communication from the perspective of native
 311 speakers in monolingually English corporate
 312 environments. But real-world
 313 communication—what with its creative
 314 language practices, and oddly peculiar local
 315 meanings—tends to have a disruptive effect on
 316 such ideals. In fact, we wanted students to
 317 engage with English as sociolinguists would: as

an instrument of mobility, dislodged from 318
 resident, stable communities of speakers and 319
 freely moving across the globe in unpredictable 320
 flows [19]. 321

(2) **Engaging with multilingual resources:** A 322
 learner's trajectory in English as a second or 323
 foreign language is commonly described in 324
 terms of acquiring monolingual fluency in the 325
 target language. For instance, the *Common* 326
European Framework of Reference for 327
Languages plots language proficiency on a scale 328
 from “basic user” over “independent user” to 329
 “proficient user.” Such scales not only skate 330
 over the range of language resources that 331
 people use to make meaning (speech styles, 332
 jargon, genres, register) but also neglect the 333
 smatterings of other languages that speakers 334
 rely on to get meaning across. Observing and 335
 documenting LLs draws students' attention to 336
 the “multilayered, and often bitterly 337
 contentious processes by which sign-mediated, 338
 social meanings are produced in place” [14]. 339

(3) **Banking on lived experience:** Whereas in 340
 more traditional ways of teaching professional 341
 communication skills, first exposure occurs via 342
 lectures, role plays, or simulations in class, we 343
 wanted students to examine first-hand contexts 344
 of entrepreneurial communication. Observing 345
 business communication in urban 346
 environments and interpreting it in the 347
 company of peers and instructors afterwards 348
 makes professional communication training in 349
 a foreign language not only more authentic, 350
 meaningful, and motivating but also produces 351
 richer in-class discussions of the social 352
 meanings of entrepreneurship communication, 353
 ultimately leading to a level of metacognition 354
 and reflection associated with deep learning. 355

Students were given three to six weeks to read up 356
 on LL research, conduct fieldwork, interpret their 357
 data, and present their findings in class. In 358
 addition to this time constraint, academic 359
 heterogeneity was a complicating factor. Both 360
 master's programs bring together students with 361
 backgrounds in (primarily) applied linguistics, 362
 communication, and applied economics. While we 363
 see this diversity as a strength rather than a 364
 weakness, it does require an effort to find common 365
 ground to describe and interpret the social 366
 meanings of entrepreneurial communication. 367
 Inevitably, some students will be familiar with the 368
 technical vocabularies of linguistics, while others 369
 will need to make an extra effort. To cope with the 370
 heterogeneity, and address students' diverse 371
 competency levels in sociolinguistics, we made sure 372

empirical focus	linguistic innovation, semiotic creativity, ethnocultural stereotyping, usage and status of English, unexpected language combinations, <i>lookalike</i> language use, target audience, social status
analytical unit	individual sign, shop window, specific chunk of space, which material aspects, moving or static signs, mobile signs
data collection	camera, smartphone, time of day, storage
research area	demographic or census data, location (Google Maps), historical development, urban development plans and the like
degree of researcher engagement	snapshot observation and documentation (no engagement with “the locals”) or interacting with research sites and participants; decisions about when, how and who to interview

Fig. 1. Pre-fieldwork decisions.

373 that they were equipped with reading materials and
 374 background knowledge of the methodology used. In
 375 Antwerp, students were instructed to read and
 376 discuss an academic article about LL research
 377 during class. In Ghent, a guest lecture on LL
 378 provided a point of departure, along with a
 379 classroom discussion on an LL research paper they
 380 were instructed to read.

381 **Solution** The purpose of the linguistic landscape
 382 assignment was to have master’s students examine
 383 first-hand how entrepreneurs, such as business
 384 owners and service providers, make use of
 385 commercial space in urban environments by
 386 studying public displays of language in
 387 marketplace examples, such as billboards, shop
 388 windows, and posters. We circulated sign-up
 389 sheets with selected survey areas in Antwerp and
 390 Ghent. Students signed up in teams of 3 to 4. To
 391 narrow their empirical focus, they answered the
 392 following questions:

- 393 (1) How are you going to organise your research
 394 team? Who is responsible for what?
- 395 (2) What data are you going to collect and why?
 396 Photos? Audio? Video? Field notes?
- 397 (3) What is the unit of analysis?
- 398 (4) What are the potential pitfalls of
 399 (a) Carrying out fieldwork?
 400 (b) Analysing the resulting data?

- 401 (5) How will you categorise your data?
- 402 (6) When choosing the data for presentation, what
 403 do you need to take into account?
- 404 (7) What additional information do you have/do
 405 you need about your street/square? Where can
 406 you find it?

In designing these questions, we relied on
 407 Androutsopoulos’ listing of pre-fieldwork decisions
 408 [13]. (See Fig. 1.)
 409

After thinking about and talking through the
 410 prefieldwork questions, students spread out all
 411 over the city to map the linguistic repertoire (which
 412 language[s]? what linguistic “bits”?) and language
 413 ranking (a top 10 of languages encountered) for
 414 their designated square or street. They collected
 415 photographs (see the example in Fig. 2), and live
 416 tweeted the research process using the designated
 417 course hashtags #LLMPC15 and #A4MC1516.
 418 While they were out in the field, we relied on the
 419 Twitter livestream to interact with them.
 420

Process for Developing the Solution Having
 421 returned from the field with a bag full of
 422 observations, notes, and photographs, students
 423 were given feedback on how to analyze their data
 424 and make sense of their—at first glance—banal
 425 impressions. They were given the opportunity to
 426 discuss their preliminary findings during a data
 427



Fig. 2. Lookalike English: Angel's Hairpalace.

428 session. These sessions were run as peer-reviewed
 429 research consultations: two teams per 25-minute
 430 slot, 12 minutes per team. The goal of a data
 431 session was to try out “arguments on equally
 432 observant others ... and construct more insightful
 433 and persuasive analyses” [20].

434 During the sessions, we gave students advice on
 435 how to turn their dataset into an organized dataset
 436 from which they could draw significant trends or
 437 representative qualities. More specifically, we
 438 challenged students to look for clues about *how*
 439 entrepreneurial language is used and offered
 440 reading tips. In other words, we challenged them to
 441 determine relevant context (a crucial skill for
 442 budding professional communicators). Here is an
 443 excerpt from the data session briefing:

444 *You will have observed a variety of business*
 445 *Englishes: carefully designed, expensive signs in*
 446 *perfect English as well as odd, elastic varieties of*
 447 *English so to speak. Some will have an “accent”*
 448 *(“love prices” instead of “lovely prices”). Now, you*
 449 *can dismiss those varieties as ungrammatical or*
 450 *substandard out of hand, but it gets far more*
 451 *interesting if you dig deeper.*

Digging deeper means trying to determine which 452
aspects of context are made relevant. The given 453
context is what the sign communicates directly 454
(“denotes”). Literal meanings. Product x or y is on 455
sale. Categorize those meanings into functions. 456
What is this sign doing here? Informing, 457
persuading, promoting, you name it. 458

Signs (or “semiotic resources”—the tools we have 459
at our disposal to make meaning) can also suggest 460
or point to more subtle, indirect meanings. Signs 461
often presuppose (“index”) relevant context. For 462
instance, English or French words in store names 463
to signal prestige. 464

If you try to interpret how and why English is 465
used, you’ll find that public space is regimented 466
(or governed by expectations of normative 467
conduct): in order to attract rich clients, high end 468
clothing shops will style themselves in particular 469
ways. You will not for instance, expect to find 470
hand-written signs in a Chanel store. You will 471
however find such signs in a night shop. 472

There are no hard and fast rules for determining 473
relevant context. What you can do is go over your 474
data thoroughly and repeatedly and formulate 475
ideas and interpretations of how you think English 476
is being used in the marketplace. 477

One takeaway from the data sessions was that 478
 students found the fieldwork exciting but hard. 479
 Many students struggled to make sense of the 480
 unexpected linguistic practices they had observed, 481
 while others felt that their fieldwork was a failure 482
 because they found little or no diversity in the more 483
 commercial areas of town. Students also inquired 484
 about our expectations for the final deliverable. We 485
 replied by repeating what was on the assignment 486
 sheet: “Present an empirically and theoretically 487
 grounded interpretation of your fieldwork. Justify 488
 your data collection, reduction, and analysis, and 489
 interpret your findings. Show pictures. Reflect on 490
 what you have learned about the use of English in 491
 the marketplace but avoid linear, descriptive 492
 accounts of your research (“Here we see this and 493
 there that”—cue Ralph Wiggum: “Boring!”). We like 494
 a good story as much as you do.” 495

Results Conducting research is an exercise in 496
 transparency, so we requested that students share 497
 their presentations and disclose their raw data 498
 (pictures) using a file-sharing service. The student 499
 presentations were a mixed bag of theoretically 500
 informed and empirically grounded accounts on 501
 the one hand, and overly descriptive and arid 502
 summaries on the other. Structure and delivery 503

Name: Linguistic Landscape assignment	
<p>Description: Rather than a descriptive account of your designated street, or worse, merely quantifying typos or languages, the goal is to reach deeper and (i) contextualize your data (4 minutes): briefly introduce your designated street and then justify your data collection procedures. Where did you go? What did you make pictures of? Why? What did you expect to find? How did you organize and code your dataset? (ii) qualify your data (8 minutes): present an empirically and theoretically grounded interpretation of your fieldwork. Obviously, you will not be able to present 25 pictures, so make sure your selected pictures (no fewer than 5, no more than 8) illustrate the analytical point(s) you're trying to make. Both criteria will be used to assess your work, along with delivery and Q&A handling.</p>	
Exit	
<p>Grid View List View</p>	
	Proficient
context	data context: speakers informed the audience how they collected data
data analysis	speakers presented a thoughtful and empirically grounded analysis of their LL. Described trends and patterns rather than occurrences
delivery	Delivery: fluency, range of expressions used in context. Q&A: careful, polite answers to questions from the audience
<p>Raw Total: 0.00 (of 20.0)</p>	
<p>Name: Linguistic Landscape assignment</p> <p>Description: Rather than a descriptive account of your designated street, or worse, merely quantifying typos or languages, the goal is to reach deeper and (i) contextualize your data (4 minutes): briefly introduce your designated street and then justify your data collection procedures. Where did you go? What did you make pictures of? Why? What did you expect to find? How did you organize and code your dataset? (ii) qualify your data (8 minutes): present an empirically and theoretically grounded interpretation of your fieldwork. Obviously, you will not be able to present 25 pictures, so make sure your selected pictures (no fewer than 5, no more than 8) illustrate the analytical point(s) you're trying to make. Both criteria will be used to assess your work, along with delivery and Q&A handling.</p>	
Exit	

Fig. 3. Grading rubric Linguistic Landscape assignment.

504 were decent to outstanding. While the courses we
 505 teach are not methodology courses, we did insist
 506 on analytical transparency and required that
 507 students (1) inform the audience how they collected
 508 their data; (2) present a thoughtful and empirically
 509 grounded analysis of their survey area and describe
 510 trends and patterns rather than occurrences,
 511 informed by relevant research literature. In
 512 addition, we evaluated their (3) delivery and
 513 handling of questions from the audience. We
 514 designed a grading rubric, explicitly listing our
 515 performance expectations for the assignment. (See
 516 Fig. 3.)

517 Overall, we were happy to see that even without
 518 formal training in LL fieldwork, and without
 519 repeated visits to the field, students were able to
 520 conduct a “rapid” linguistic ethnography of
 521 entrepreneurial communication. We attribute this
 522 success to the appropriately narrow empirical focus
 523 (one street/one square), the team effort and
 524 commitment, and the peer pressure involved—the
 525 majority of the research teams conducted their
 526 fieldwork on the same day.

The main takeaway of the assignment is that
 students became aware of “the degree of linguistic
 innovation, semiotic creativity, or ethnocultural
 stereotyping that can be expected in certain
 business sectors” [13]. While they initially struggled
 to see the link with professional communication
 (see How this Case Was Studied, above), changing
 the focus to entrepreneurial communication proved
 productive, promoting a rhetorical understanding
 of entrepreneurship communication outside the
 narrow confines of the organization and outside of
 the comfort zone of the lecture room. For instance,
 students reported that (1) on the high street,
 English serves as a cost-effective marketing code
 (i.e., one campaign/slogan/ad to be used in
 different countries); (2) in multilingual countries
 such as Belgium, English serves as a neutral (i.e.,
 sociolinguistically unmarked) lingua franca; and (3)
 English is often used for its creative potential in
 bilingual word play (“Flemish stew is good for you”).

After their presentations, student research teams
 were given a grade, and in addition to the grading
 rubric, we supplied a written evaluation. Here are

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550 two examples of written evaluation (the first was for
551 a strong effort, the second was for an average one):

- 552 (1) All boxes ticked. Empirically grounded and
553 theoretically informed, coherent and easy to
554 follow presentation, delivered with flair and
555 proficiency (jargon used in context,
556 presentation was informed by relevant
557 research, delivery was fluent and accurate). The
558 audience was able to see how you arrived at
559 your findings & conclusions (e.g., the tension
560 between local and global discourse practices,
561 with a hint of “Flamisch”). Honest, fair
562 responses during the Q&A sequence. A mature
563 effort. Congratulations.
- 564 (2) Well prepared and easy-to-follow presentation,
565 despite the bullet-point-heavy slides. Telling the
566 audience that you “found some interesting
567 articles” is one thing; showing how the
568 literature informed your analysis is quite
569 another (disclose your sources!). Clever move to
570 talk about five functions, even though I wasn’t
571 able to tell them apart. How, for instance, does
572 one distinguish between signs invoking
573 “international allure” (function number 4) and
574 brand communication (function number 3)?
575 Your observations were visually illustrated and
576 you made an effort to contextualize and narrate
577 your findings. Delivery: some minor issues
578 (“English is used monolingual**ly**”), but none
579 that interfered with comprehension.

580 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS 581 FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

582 This teaching case picks up on a long-running but
583 nonetheless current debate on the challenges of
584 globalization for professional communication
585 programs. “Because globalization involves
586 increasing interactivity and integration—processes
587 that involve the blurring, shifting, and crossing of
588 boundaries as well as the hybridizing and
589 pluralizing of individual identities and
590 societies—professional communicators must
591 increasingly be able to navigate, negotiate, and
592 cross these boundaries” [16]. Our aim in developing
593 a LL assignment for master’s students of
594 professional communication was to teach them to
595 navigate these hurdles. We challenged them to
596 examine the “communication-related challenges,
597 abilities and barriers” [14] from the perspectives of
598 entrepreneurs writing for a globalized marketplace.

599 We pointed students at the value of *lookalike*
600 language as a linguistic resource: rather than
601 dismiss it as bad or deeply non-native English,

lookalike English communicates socially relevant 602
information about entrepreneurs and service 603
providers in globalized cities around the world. In 604
this way, we wanted to show them that the new 605
breed of entrepreneur must think and speak 606
globally, discover and conceptualize problems, and 607
then solve those problems with innovative 608
solutions [17]. While entrepreneurs must be able to 609
identify opportunities, gather resources, and strike 610
deals, they must also possess soft skills, like “*social* 611
perception (the ability to perceive others 612
accurately), *expressiveness* (the ability to express 613
feelings and reactions clearly and openly), 614
impression management (skill in making favorable 615
first impressions on others), and *social adaptability* 616
(proficiency in adapting one’s actions to current 617
social contexts)” [21]. 618

Post-hoc interviews with students demonstrate that 619
documenting and sharing lived experiences with 620
peers and instructors encourages self-monitoring, 621
and inspires them to view existing 622
knowledge/practices in different contexts and give 623
different meanings to that knowledge or those 624
practices. As a pedagogical tool, then, the LL is an 625
underused methodology rife with possibilities for 626
exploring entrepreneurial communication in all of 627
its breadth and variety, providing access to 628
perhaps the most visible and creative materialities 629
of entrepreneurs and service providers: shop 630
windows and signs. 631

Suggestions for Further Research As Dewey 632
reminded us, “We never educate directly, but 633
indirectly by means of the environment” [22]. 634
Disrupting the familiarity of a lecture room 635
challenges students to consider alternative 636
perspectives and reflect on attitudes previously 637
thought of as common sense. It makes evident 638
things into puzzles, and provokes fresh perceptions 639
and a more reflective approach to the 640
taken-for-granted. Immersion in the field presents 641
the language skills to be acquired not as lessons to 642
be learned but rather as something to be taken up 643
into their own experience, in order to maintain an 644
intimate connection between knowing and doing. 645

To stretch experiential learning even further, 646
follow-up research could investigate the effects of 647
enabling business practitioners to actively engage 648
with and participate in the in-class discussions. 649
Another avenue of research worth exploring is the 650
potential of using LL research for listing key 651
themes professional communication teachers and 652
program developers might attend to as they design 653
or revise courses and programs. A final suggestion 654

would be to extend the scope of the assignment to include not only *perceived spaces*, but also *conceived spaces*: using newspaper articles, websites covering nearby events, and local census data, as well as maps and other documents, would undoubtedly increase students' awareness of the tension between convention and creativity in entrepreneurial communication.

Limitations Needless to say, the students' learning experience was inherently ill structured. The outcomes varied based on the social setting and the scene. Learning in this way requires an approach that is highly constructivist and typically team-based or social. In this process of experiential learning, the lecturer is not so much a teacher but a coach, facilitating the negotiation of meaning and reflection about the learning process. On top of that, teachers need to be good at answering students' questions on the spot, even when their

misconceptions are unclear because they are still processing the information.

Counterbalancing this limitation (or challenge), however, is the evidence listed in the post-hoc interviews which shows that the assignment helped business students develop a key quality of high-achieving professional communicators: "Adaptive to complexity in the workplace; can interpret what they need to know on the fly" [23]. If students are to become successful in the modern corporate world, they must gain many diverse experiences that they can use to transform and adapt themselves to fast-changing circumstances throughout their lives. Being global may not be a pursuit for the fainthearted, but a linguistic landscaping exposure to real life, careful coaching along the way, and in-class discussion about these messy fieldwork experiences may help attain that goal.

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1 Teaching Case

2 Lookalike Professional English

3 —TOM VAN HOUT AND ELLEN VAN PRAET

4 **Abstract—Background:** Our teaching case reports on a fieldwork assignment designed to have master of arts students
 5 experience first-hand how entrepreneurs write for the globalized marketplace by examining public displays of language,
 6 such as billboards, shop windows, and posters. **Research questions:** How do entrepreneurs use English to “style”
 7 themselves? What is the status of English in public displays? Which relationship with customers is cultivated by using
 8 English (among other languages)? How does English, or lookalike versions thereof, create a more innovative business?
 9 **Situating the case:** We use linguistic landscaping as a pedagogical resource, drawing on similar cases in a local
 10 English as a foreign language (EFL) community in Oaxaca, Mexico; EFL programs in Chiba-shi, Japan; francophone and
 11 immersion French programs in Montreal, QC, Canada and Vancouver, BC, Canada; and a study of the entrepreneurial
 12 landscape in Observatory’s business corridor of Lower Main Road in Cape Town, South Africa. **How this case was**
 13 **studied:** We interviewed 36 students about their learning process in one-to-one post hoc interviews. Recurrent themes
 14 were increased self-monitoring, improved professional communication literacy, and expanded real-world
 15 understanding. **About the case:** The teaching case follows a three-pronged approach. First, we have students decide
 16 on a survey area, determine their empirical focus, establish analytical units, decide how to collect data, collect
 17 (sociodemographic) information about their survey area, and determine the degree of researcher engagement. Next,
 18 students conduct fieldwork, documenting the linguistic landscape in small teams of three to four students. In the third
 19 phase, students have returned from the field and discuss their initial findings, ideas, and observations during a data
 20 session with the instructors. Students decide whether they still stand by the decisions they made before they entered
 21 the field and are then asked to qualify how language is used in public space. **Results:** The main takeaway of the
 22 assignment is that students were more aware of the degree of linguistic innovation, rhetorical creativity, and
 23 ethnocultural stereotyping of entrepreneurial communication in their cities. **Conclusion:** As a pedagogical tool, LL offers
 24 possibilities for exploring entrepreneurial communication in all of its breadth and variety, providing access to perhaps
 25 the most visible and creative materialities of entrepreneurs and service providers: shop windows and signs.

Index Terms—Entrepreneurship communication, linguistic landscape, lookalike English, professional communication.

26 Managing a business inevitably involves the
 27 rhetorical activity of creating value through writing
 28 [1], both online [2] and offline [3]. This teaching
 29 cases addresses the creation of economic value
 30 from the perspective of writing for the globalized
 31 marketplace. We send students on a semiotic safari
 32 in urban environments, where they encounter
 33 professional communication in multilingual *couleur*
 34 *locale*. We have them document the bits of English
 35 used by professional communicators on billboards,
 36 in shop windows, posters, graffiti, and other
 37 inscriptions. The rationale is that such displays of
 38 entrepreneurial communication offer a convenient

and socioculturally rich space for studying
 rhetorical action in situ [4].

OVERVIEW OF THE CASE

Innovation and entrepreneurship are studied in
 many disciplines, including economics, sociology,
 psychology, linguistics, and anthropology. In the
 traditional Schumpeterian view, the
 innovation-management process is considered
 linear and continuous. In this teaching case,
 however, we adopt an approach to
 entrepreneurship that complements
 Schumpeterian innovation dynamics [5] with
 Appadurian scalar dynamics [6], and recognize that
 change in a globalized market is, by definition,
 chaotic, nonlinear, and unpredictable.

In his work on the cultural dimensions of
 globalization, anthropologist Arjun Appadurai
 famously argued that the global economy needs to
 be “understood as a complex, overlapping,
 disjunctive order” [6], composed of cultural flows
 between people, media, technologies, capital, and
 ideologies. Disturbing the even flow of production
 and creating new ways of doing, the Schumpeterian

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 available online at <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org>.

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62	entrepreneur will instigate innovative language	Conclusions, Limitations, and Suggestions for	112
63	practices and, hence, unforeseen, artful, or	Future Research spells out implications for	113
64	otherwise “new combinations” of entrepreneurial	teaching practice, the limitations of this case, and	114
65	communication. In other words, disjuncture also	avenues for future research.	115
66	triggers rhetorical innovation.		
67	Following this rationale, our teaching case	SITUATING THE CASE	116
68	addresses the following research questions:	This section identifies the literature that informed	117
69	RQ1. What are the effects of globalization on	the teaching case. We start with the three source	118
70	entrepreneurial communication?	texts that inspired and provided the main scaffold	119
71	RQ2. How do entrepreneurs use English to	for the case in How Literature Was Selected,	120
72	“style” themselves?	followed by a discussion of similar cases.	121
73	RQ3. Which relationship with customers is	How Literature Was Selected Our teaching case	122
74	cultivated by using English (among other	draws on recent debates in two fields:	123
75	languages)?	sociolinguistics and foreign language pedagogy.	124
76	RQ4. How does English, or <i>lookalike</i> versions	First and foremost, we were triggered by the	125
77	thereof, create more innovative business signage?	concept of <i>lookalike</i> language [11]. Proliferating in	126
78	In what follows, we report on how we coached and	urban spaces around the world, the bits of English	127
79	monitored students as they collected data in the	used by professional communicators on billboards,	128
80	field to answer these research questions. We	in shop windows, posters, graffiti, and other	129
81	explain the underlying rationale for developing the	inscriptions often appear “in forms and formats	130
82	assignment and discuss implications for teachers	that challenge our understanding of language” [11].	131
83	and students of professional communication.	They come with accents, typos, dialects,	132
84	In line with other researchers of professional	unintended meanings. They “sufficiently look like	133
85	communication in Europe [7], [8], we draw on	English, even if the English they display makes no	134
86	linguistics to understand how rhetorical action is	sense at all linguistically. Their function is not to	135
87	accomplished. Specifically, we focus on public	express coherent linguistic meanings through the	136
88	signage as a technological space for rhetorical	system of English. It is, rather, to <i>show</i> and <i>display</i>	137
89	action [9]. Rather than the outcome of a formal	an awareness of the potential social capital	138
90	research project, this teaching case results from (1)	contained in forms and shapes connected to	139
91	our experience as instructors of professional	English” [11].	140
92	communication, and (2) our backgrounds in	Rather than simply dismiss <i>lookalike</i> language as	141
93	sociolinguistics and linguistic ethnography. An	bad or non-native English, the concept compelled	142
94	umbrella term for ethnographic approaches to	us to study occurrences of <i>lookalike</i> English as	143
95	language and communication. Linguistic	indicators of social change. (See also [12].) If	144
96	ethnography holds that “the contexts of	students are to become successful in the modern	145
97	communication should be investigated rather than	globalized corporate world, they have to come to	146
98	assumed [and that] analysis of the internal	terms with the diversity, and “the unpredictability,	147
99	organisation of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic)	which comes along with highly mobile,	148
100	data is essential to understanding its significance	technological and multicultural citizens” [4]. Since	149
101	and position in the world” [10].	no classroom experience can provide such	150
102	In what follows, Situating the Case outlines the key	knowledge first-hand, we turned to the sights and	151
103	studies and theories that guided the design of the	sounds of the city.	152
104	assignment. How the Case was Studied explains	We used a linguistic landscape (LL) approach, a	153
105	why we relied on experiential learning as a	young and vibrant area of sociolinguistics that	154
106	pedagogical approach and why the assignment	studies how written language constructs public	155
107	took on a clearer focus on entrepreneurial	places. LL research examines billboards, road	156
108	communication over time. About the Teaching Case	signs, shop windows, graffiti, and other inscriptions	157
109	describes how students were briefed, how they	in urban environments. Our second source of	158
110	performed during data sessions with the	inspiration was an LL research assignment,	159
111	instructors, and how they analyzed their data.	developed by sociolinguist Jannis Androutopoulos	160
		[13]. He discerns six stages in the research process:	161

162	(1) Selection of a site	ethnographic lens at the entrepreneurial landscape	215
163	(2) Photographic documentation	in Observatory's business corridor of Lower Main	216
164	(3) Selection of and contact with participants	Road in Cape Town, South Africa [4]. Their paper	217
165	(4) Conducting individual "walking tour" interviews	explores the development of an "African Corner"	218
166	on the selected site	within Lower Main Road, and documents	219
167	(5) Transcription and analysis of interviews and	sociocultural change in ways that a population	220
168	field notes	census could never uncover. In particular, their	221
169	(6) Reflection	analysis shows how some Asian and African	222
170	Skipping Androutsopoulos' stages 3, 4, and 5, we	entrepreneurs openly celebrate Africanness and	223
171	structured our assignment around three phases.	use it as an innovative marketing strategy, while	224
172	First, we let students decide on a survey area,	others shy away from the overt use of signage, art,	225
173	determine their empirical focus, establish	and texts that might foreground their Africanness.	226
174	analytical units, decide how to collect data, collect		
175	(sociodemographic) information about their survey	HOW THIS CASE WAS STUDIED	227
176	area, and determine the degree of researcher	In what follows we explain why we opted for	228
177	engagement. In the second phase, they conduct	autonomous, experiential learning as a pedagogical	229
178	fieldwork, taking pictures, and documenting the	approach and why the assignment took on a	230
179	linguistic landscape in small teams. In the third,	clearer focus on entrepreneurial communication.	231
180	reflective phase, students have returned from the		
181	field and discuss their initial findings, ideas, and	Advocating experiential learning in education is by	232
182	observations during a data session with the	no means new. Back in the early 19 th century,	233
183	instructor. Students decide whether they still stand	John Dewey argued for incorporating as much of	234
184	by the decisions that they had made before they	current society into the educational process as	235
185	entered the field and are asked to qualify how	possible to facilitate learning, which would then	236
186	language is used in public space. In this phase,	enhance society as a whole [18]. More recent	237
187	students interpret the social actions accomplished	studies show that experiential learning in business	238
188	by the signs and present their findings to their	and accounting programs has become increasingly	239
189	peers in a student research conference.	important. It has now become a taken-for-granted	240
190	A third source of inspiration was found in	assumption among business and management	241
191	Malinowski's [14] creative adoption of Henri	educators and CEOs that universities must provide	242
192	Lefebvre's triple notion of <i>conceived</i> , <i>perceived</i> , and	experiential learning programs, such as	243
193	<i>lived</i> spaces for language learning. Applying the	internships, real-life marketing cases, crisis	244
194	triadic model to second language pedagogy,	communication, advertising, and the like. Business	245
195	Malinowski argues for a study of at least two	education—like the firms and students they	246
196	dimensions in the LL. In terms of language	serve—is in a continuous process of evolving to	247
197	learning, then, this approach means that students	meet a shifting global and local environment.	248
198	do not just visit areas with signs in the target	Fast-changing corporate settings, along with	249
199	language (English); or take pictures and sample	students' ever-increasing access to mobile	250
200	lookalike language (<i>perceived spaces</i>); or conduct	technology and mediated content, force business	251
201	interviews with local entrepreneurs to probe for	programs to rethink how student learning can be	252
202	experiences, memories, and feelings (<i>lived spaces</i>).	facilitated to make class time and activities as	253
203	Ideally, students do all of these, alongside textual	relevant and valuable as possible.	254
204	analysis of language policy documents, newspaper		
205	articles, and other media representations	Following this rationale, Author 1 piloted the	255
206	(<i>conceived spaces</i>).	assignment in 2014 at the University of Antwerp,	256
207	Similar Cases In designing the teaching case, we	where he teaches professional communication in	257
208	were guided by a recent interest in using the LL as	English to about 70 students in the Master of	258
209	a pedagogical resource in second and foreign	Multilingual Professional Communication program.	259
210	language learning in Mexico [15], Japan [16], and	One year later, a slightly altered version of the	260
211	Canada [17]. Along the way, we discovered that	assignment was launched by Author 2 at Ghent	261
212	using the LL as a site for business English learning	University for about 60 students of the Master of	262
213	seemed in largely unexplored territory. We were	Multilingual Communication program. Both	263
214	also inspired by Peck and Banda, who point an	master's programs train students in multilingual	264
		communication skills for business, government,	265
		and nonprofit organizations. The master's program	266

267 is typically—but not exclusively—populated by
 268 students with a background in (applied) linguistics.
 269 The courses in which the assignments were taught
 270 are required for all students registering for the two
 271 programs. Sessions with students were held on a
 272 once-a-week basis. A typical semester in Belgium
 273 starts at the end of September and lasts 12 weeks.
 274 At the University of Antwerp, six weeks were
 275 reserved for the assignment. At Ghent University,
 276 time for completing the assignment was limited to
 277 three weeks.

278 Since experiential learning is a complex construct
 279 and, therefore, difficult to measure, we tested our
 280 approach by interviewing 36 students about what
 281 they had learned in the course. In these one-to-one
 282 exit interviews, recurrent themes were increased
 283 self-monitoring, improved professional
 284 communication literacy, and expanded real-world
 285 understanding, but also a failure to see a link with
 286 professional communication in a foreign language.
 287 In fact, at the beginning, in Year 1, the assignment
 288 did not focus on entrepreneurial communication
 289 per se. Its scope was more general, focusing on
 290 aspects of language use in a globalized city. To
 291 better serve student needs, we adjusted the pilot
 292 version of the assignment in Year 2, addressing
 293 what students had identified as its strengths (lived
 294 experience) and shortcomings (lack of focus). This
 295 revised version of the assignment is the basis for
 296 the teaching case presented in this paper.

297 ABOUT THE TEACHING CASE

298 This section describes the trigger for developing the
 299 case, the design of the assignment, the changes we
 300 made to each version of the assignment, and the
 301 results of our efforts, grounded in reflections and
 302 feedback from students.

303 **Problem** The LL assignment addresses three
 304 broad but related issues we encountered as
 305 instructors of professional communication in a
 306 foreign language.

307 (1) **Managing student expectations:** Students
 308 entered the course with the expectation that
 309 they would learn about professional
 310 communication from the perspective of native
 311 speakers in monolingually English corporate
 312 environments. But real-world
 313 communication—what with its creative
 314 language practices, and oddly peculiar local
 315 meanings—tends to have a disruptive effect on
 316 such ideals. In fact, we wanted students to
 317 engage with English as sociolinguists would: as

an instrument of mobility, dislodged from 318
 resident, stable communities of speakers and 319
 freely moving across the globe in unpredictable 320
 flows [19]. 321

(2) **Engaging with multilingual resources:** A 322
 learner's trajectory in English as a second or 323
 foreign language is commonly described in 324
 terms of acquiring monolingual fluency in the 325
 target language. For instance, the *Common* 326
European Framework of Reference for 327
Languages plots language proficiency on a scale 328
 from “basic user” over “independent user” to 329
 “proficient user.” Such scales not only skate 330
 over the range of language resources that 331
 people use to make meaning (speech styles, 332
 jargon, genres, register) but also neglect the 333
 smatterings of other languages that speakers 334
 rely on to get meaning across. Observing and 335
 documenting LLs draws students' attention to 336
 the “multilayered, and often bitterly 337
 contentious processes by which sign-mediated, 338
 social meanings are produced in place” [14]. 339

(3) **Banking on lived experience:** Whereas in 340
 more traditional ways of teaching professional 341
 communication skills, first exposure occurs via 342
 lectures, role plays, or simulations in class, we 343
 wanted students to examine first-hand contexts 344
 of entrepreneurial communication. Observing 345
 business communication in urban 346
 environments and interpreting it in the 347
 company of peers and instructors afterwards 348
 makes professional communication training in 349
 a foreign language not only more authentic, 350
 meaningful, and motivating but also produces 351
 richer in-class discussions of the social 352
 meanings of entrepreneurship communication, 353
 ultimately leading to a level of metacognition 354
 and reflection associated with deep learning. 355

Students were given three to six weeks to read up 356
 on LL research, conduct fieldwork, interpret their 357
 data, and present their findings in class. In 358
 addition to this time constraint, academic 359
 heterogeneity was a complicating factor. Both 360
 master's programs bring together students with 361
 backgrounds in (primarily) applied linguistics, 362
 communication, and applied economics. While we 363
 see this diversity as a strength rather than a 364
 weakness, it does require an effort to find common 365
 ground to describe and interpret the social 366
 meanings of entrepreneurial communication. 367
 Inevitably, some students will be familiar with the 368
 technical vocabularies of linguistics, while others 369
 will need to make an extra effort. To cope with the 370
 heterogeneity, and address students' diverse 371
 competency levels in sociolinguistics, we made sure 372

empirical focus	linguistic innovation, semiotic creativity, ethnocultural stereotyping, usage and status of English, unexpected language combinations, <i>lookalike</i> language use, target audience, social status
analytical unit	individual sign, shop window, specific chunk of space, which material aspects, moving or static signs, mobile signs
data collection	camera, smartphone, time of day, storage
research area	demographic or census data, location (Google Maps), historical development, urban development plans and the like
degree of researcher engagement	snapshot observation and documentation (no engagement with “the locals”) or interacting with research sites and participants; decisions about when, how and who to interview

Fig. 1. Pre-fieldwork decisions.

373 that they were equipped with reading materials and
 374 background knowledge of the methodology used. In
 375 Antwerp, students were instructed to read and
 376 discuss an academic article about LL research
 377 during class. In Ghent, a guest lecture on LL
 378 provided a point of departure, along with a
 379 classroom discussion on an LL research paper they
 380 were instructed to read.

381 **Solution** The purpose of the linguistic landscape
 382 assignment was to have master’s students examine
 383 first-hand how entrepreneurs, such as business
 384 owners and service providers, make use of
 385 commercial space in urban environments by
 386 studying public displays of language in
 387 marketplace examples, such as billboards, shop
 388 windows, and posters. We circulated sign-up
 389 sheets with selected survey areas in Antwerp and
 390 Ghent. Students signed up in teams of 3 to 4. To
 391 narrow their empirical focus, they answered the
 392 following questions:

- 393 (1) How are you going to organise your research
 394 team? Who is responsible for what?
- 395 (2) What data are you going to collect and why?
 396 Photos? Audio? Video? Field notes?
- 397 (3) What is the unit of analysis?
- 398 (4) What are the potential pitfalls of
 399 (a) Carrying out fieldwork?
 400 (b) Analysing the resulting data?

- 401 (5) How will you categorise your data?
- 402 (6) When choosing the data for presentation, what
 403 do you need to take into account?
- 404 (7) What additional information do you have/do
 405 you need about your street/square? Where can
 406 you find it?

In designing these questions, we relied on
 407 Androutsopoulos’ listing of pre-fieldwork decisions
 408 [13]. (See Fig. 1.)
 409

After thinking about and talking through the
 410 prefieldwork questions, students spread out all
 411 over the city to map the linguistic repertoire (which
 412 language[s]? what linguistic “bits”?) and language
 413 ranking (a top 10 of languages encountered) for
 414 their designated square or street. They collected
 415 photographs (see the example in Fig. 2), and live
 416 tweeted the research process using the designated
 417 course hashtags #LLMPC15 and #A4MC1516.
 418 While they were out in the field, we relied on the
 419 Twitter livestream to interact with them.
 420

Process for Developing the Solution Having
 421 returned from the field with a bag full of
 422 observations, notes, and photographs, students
 423 were given feedback on how to analyze their data
 424 and make sense of their—at first glance—banal
 425 impressions. They were given the opportunity to
 426 discuss their preliminary findings during a data
 427



Fig. 2. Lookalike English: Angel's Hairpalace.

428 session. These sessions were run as peer-reviewed
 429 research consultations: two teams per 25-minute
 430 slot, 12 minutes per team. The goal of a data
 431 session was to try out “arguments on equally
 432 observant others ... and construct more insightful
 433 and persuasive analyses” [20].

434 During the sessions, we gave students advice on
 435 how to turn their dataset into an organized dataset
 436 from which they could draw significant trends or
 437 representative qualities. More specifically, we
 438 challenged students to look for clues about *how*
 439 entrepreneurial language is used and offered
 440 reading tips. In other words, we challenged them to
 441 determine relevant context (a crucial skill for
 442 budding professional communicators). Here is an
 443 excerpt from the data session briefing:

444 *You will have observed a variety of business*
 445 *Englishes: carefully designed, expensive signs in*
 446 *perfect English as well as odd, elastic varieties of*
 447 *English so to speak. Some will have an “accent”*
 448 *(“love prices” instead of “lovely prices”). Now, you*
 449 *can dismiss those varieties as ungrammatical or*
 450 *substandard out of hand, but it gets far more*
 451 *interesting if you dig deeper.*

Digging deeper means trying to determine which 452
aspects of context are made relevant. The given 453
context is what the sign communicates directly 454
(“denotes”). Literal meanings. Product x or y is on 455
sale. Categorize those meanings into functions. 456
What is this sign doing here? Informing, 457
persuading, promoting, you name it. 458

Signs (or “semiotic resources”—the tools we have 459
at our disposal to make meaning) can also suggest 460
or point to more subtle, indirect meanings. Signs 461
often presuppose (“index”) relevant context. For 462
instance, English or French words in store names 463
to signal prestige. 464

If you try to interpret how and why English is 465
used, you’ll find that public space is regimented 466
(or governed by expectations of normative 467
conduct): in order to attract rich clients, high end 468
clothing shops will style themselves in particular 469
ways. You will not for instance, expect to find 470
hand-written signs in a Chanel store. You will 471
however find such signs in a night shop. 472

There are no hard and fast rules for determining 473
relevant context. What you can do is go over your 474
data thoroughly and repeatedly and formulate 475
ideas and interpretations of how you think English 476
is being used in the marketplace. 477

One takeaway from the data sessions was that 478
 students found the fieldwork exciting but hard. 479
 Many students struggled to make sense of the 480
 unexpected linguistic practices they had observed, 481
 while others felt that their fieldwork was a failure 482
 because they found little or no diversity in the more 483
 commercial areas of town. Students also inquired 484
 about our expectations for the final deliverable. We 485
 replied by repeating what was on the assignment 486
 sheet: “Present an empirically and theoretically 487
 grounded interpretation of your fieldwork. Justify 488
 your data collection, reduction, and analysis, and 489
 interpret your findings. Show pictures. Reflect on 490
 what you have learned about the use of English in 491
 the marketplace but avoid linear, descriptive 492
 accounts of your research (“Here we see this and 493
 there that”—cue Ralph Wiggum: “Boring!”). We like 494
 a good story as much as you do.” 495

Results Conducting research is an exercise in 496
 transparency, so we requested that students share 497
 their presentations and disclose their raw data 498
 (pictures) using a file-sharing service. The student 499
 presentations were a mixed bag of theoretically 500
 informed and empirically grounded accounts on 501
 the one hand, and overly descriptive and arid 502
 summaries on the other. Structure and delivery 503

Name: Linguistic Landscape assignment	
<p>Description: Rather than a descriptive account of your designated street, or worse, merely quantifying typos or languages, the goal is to reach deeper and (i) contextualize your data (4 minutes): briefly introduce your designated street and then justify your data collection procedures. Where did you go? What did you make pictures of? Why? What did you expect to find? How did you organize and code your dataset? (ii) qualify your data (8 minutes): present an empirically and theoretically grounded interpretation of your fieldwork. Obviously, you will not be able to present 25 pictures, so make sure your selected pictures (no fewer than 5, no more than 8) illustrate the analytical point(s) you're trying to make. Both criteria will be used to assess your work, along with delivery and Q&A handling.</p>	
Exit	
<p>Grid View List View</p>	
context	Proficient data context: speakers informed the audience how they collected data
data analysis	speakers presented a thoughtful and empirically grounded analysis of their LL. Described trends and patterns rather than occurrences
delivery	Delivery: fluency, range of expressions used in context. Q&A: careful, polite answers to questions from the audience
<p>Raw Total: 0.00 (of 20.0)</p>	
<p>Name: Linguistic Landscape assignment</p> <p>Description: Rather than a descriptive account of your designated street, or worse, merely quantifying typos or languages, the goal is to reach deeper and (i) contextualize your data (4 minutes): briefly introduce your designated street and then justify your data collection procedures. Where did you go? What did you make pictures of? Why? What did you expect to find? How did you organize and code your dataset? (ii) qualify your data (8 minutes): present an empirically and theoretically grounded interpretation of your fieldwork. Obviously, you will not be able to present 25 pictures, so make sure your selected pictures (no fewer than 5, no more than 8) illustrate the analytical point(s) you're trying to make. Both criteria will be used to assess your work, along with delivery and Q&A handling.</p>	
Exit	

Fig. 3. Grading rubric Linguistic Landscape assignment.

504 were decent to outstanding. While the courses we
 505 teach are not methodology courses, we did insist
 506 on analytical transparency and required that
 507 students (1) inform the audience how they collected
 508 their data; (2) present a thoughtful and empirically
 509 grounded analysis of their survey area and describe
 510 trends and patterns rather than occurrences,
 511 informed by relevant research literature. In
 512 addition, we evaluated their (3) delivery and
 513 handling of questions from the audience. We
 514 designed a grading rubric, explicitly listing our
 515 performance expectations for the assignment. (See
 516 Fig. 3.)

517 Overall, we were happy to see that even without
 518 formal training in LL fieldwork, and without
 519 repeated visits to the field, students were able to
 520 conduct a “rapid” linguistic ethnography of
 521 entrepreneurial communication. We attribute this
 522 success to the appropriately narrow empirical focus
 523 (one street/one square), the team effort and
 524 commitment, and the peer pressure involved—the
 525 majority of the research teams conducted their
 526 fieldwork on the same day.

The main takeaway of the assignment is that
 students became aware of “the degree of linguistic
 innovation, semiotic creativity, or ethnocultural
 stereotyping that can be expected in certain
 business sectors” [13]. While they initially struggled
 to see the link with professional communication
 (see How this Case Was Studied, above), changing
 the focus to entrepreneurial communication proved
 productive, promoting a rhetorical understanding
 of entrepreneurship communication outside the
 narrow confines of the organization and outside of
 the comfort zone of the lecture room. For instance,
 students reported that (1) on the high street,
 English serves as a cost-effective marketing code
 (i.e., one campaign/slogan/ad to be used in
 different countries); (2) in multilingual countries
 such as Belgium, English serves as a neutral (i.e.,
 sociolinguistically unmarked) lingua franca; and (3)
 English is often used for its creative potential in
 bilingual word play (“Flemish stew is good for you”).

After their presentations, student research teams
 were given a grade, and in addition to the grading
 rubric, we supplied a written evaluation. Here are

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550 two examples of written evaluation (the first was for
551 a strong effort, the second was for an average one):

- 552 (1) All boxes ticked. Empirically grounded and
553 theoretically informed, coherent and easy to
554 follow presentation, delivered with flair and
555 proficiency (jargon used in context,
556 presentation was informed by relevant
557 research, delivery was fluent and accurate). The
558 audience was able to see how you arrived at
559 your findings & conclusions (e.g., the tension
560 between local and global discourse practices,
561 with a hint of “Flamisch”). Honest, fair
562 responses during the Q&A sequence. A mature
563 effort. Congratulations.
- 564 (2) Well prepared and easy-to-follow presentation,
565 despite the bullet-point-heavy slides. Telling the
566 audience that you “found some interesting
567 articles” is one thing; showing how the
568 literature informed your analysis is quite
569 another (disclose your sources!). Clever move to
570 talk about five functions, even though I wasn’t
571 able to tell them apart. How, for instance, does
572 one distinguish between signs invoking
573 “international allure” (function number 4) and
574 brand communication (function number 3)?
575 Your observations were visually illustrated and
576 you made an effort to contextualize and narrate
577 your findings. Delivery: some minor issues
578 (“English is used monolingual**ly**”), but none
579 that interfered with comprehension.

580 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS 581 FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

582 This teaching case picks up on a long-running but
583 nonetheless current debate on the challenges of
584 globalization for professional communication
585 programs. “Because globalization involves
586 increasing interactivity and integration—processes
587 that involve the blurring, shifting, and crossing of
588 boundaries as well as the hybridizing and
589 pluralizing of individual identities and
590 societies—professional communicators must
591 increasingly be able to navigate, negotiate, and
592 cross these boundaries” [16]. Our aim in developing
593 a LL assignment for master’s students of
594 professional communication was to teach them to
595 navigate these hurdles. We challenged them to
596 examine the “communication-related challenges,
597 abilities and barriers” [14] from the perspectives of
598 entrepreneurs writing for a globalized marketplace.

599 We pointed students at the value of *lookalike*
600 language as a linguistic resource: rather than
601 dismiss it as bad or deeply non-native English,

lookalike English communicates socially relevant 602
information about entrepreneurs and service 603
providers in globalized cities around the world. In 604
this way, we wanted to show them that the new 605
breed of entrepreneur must think and speak 606
globally, discover and conceptualize problems, and 607
then solve those problems with innovative 608
solutions [17]. While entrepreneurs must be able to 609
identify opportunities, gather resources, and strike 610
deals, they must also possess soft skills, like “*social* 611
perception (the ability to perceive others 612
accurately), *expressiveness* (the ability to express 613
feelings and reactions clearly and openly), 614
impression management (skill in making favorable 615
first impressions on others), and *social adaptability* 616
(proficiency in adapting one’s actions to current 617
social contexts)” [21]. 618

Post-hoc interviews with students demonstrate that 619
documenting and sharing lived experiences with 620
peers and instructors encourages self-monitoring, 621
and inspires them to view existing 622
knowledge/practices in different contexts and give 623
different meanings to that knowledge or those 624
practices. As a pedagogical tool, then, the LL is an 625
underused methodology rife with possibilities for 626
exploring entrepreneurial communication in all of 627
its breadth and variety, providing access to 628
perhaps the most visible and creative materialities 629
of entrepreneurs and service providers: shop 630
windows and signs. 631

Suggestions for Further Research As Dewey 632
reminded us, “We never educate directly, but 633
indirectly by means of the environment” [22]. 634
Disrupting the familiarity of a lecture room 635
challenges students to consider alternative 636
perspectives and reflect on attitudes previously 637
thought of as common sense. It makes evident 638
things into puzzles, and provokes fresh perceptions 639
and a more reflective approach to the 640
taken-for-granted. Immersion in the field presents 641
the language skills to be acquired not as lessons to 642
be learned but rather as something to be taken up 643
into their own experience, in order to maintain an 644
intimate connection between knowing and doing. 645

To stretch experiential learning even further, 646
follow-up research could investigate the effects of 647
enabling business practitioners to actively engage 648
with and participate in the in-class discussions. 649
Another avenue of research worth exploring is the 650
potential of using LL research for listing key 651
themes professional communication teachers and 652
program developers might attend to as they design 653
or revise courses and programs. A final suggestion 654

would be to extend the scope of the assignment to include not only *perceived spaces*, but also *conceived spaces*: using newspaper articles, websites covering nearby events, and local census data, as well as maps and other documents, would undoubtedly increase students' awareness of the tension between convention and creativity in entrepreneurial communication.

Limitations Needless to say, the students' learning experience was inherently ill structured. The outcomes varied based on the social setting and the scene. Learning in this way requires an approach that is highly constructivist and typically team-based or social. In this process of experiential learning, the lecturer is not so much a teacher but a coach, facilitating the negotiation of meaning and reflection about the learning process. On top of that, teachers need to be good at answering students' questions on the spot, even when their

misconceptions are unclear because they are still processing the information.

Counterbalancing this limitation (or challenge), however, is the evidence listed in the post-hoc interviews which shows that the assignment helped business students develop a key quality of high-achieving professional communicators: "Adaptive to complexity in the workplace; can interpret what they need to know on the fly" [23]. If students are to become successful in the modern corporate world, they must gain many diverse experiences that they can use to transform and adapt themselves to fast-changing circumstances throughout their lives. Being global may not be a pursuit for the fainthearted, but a linguistic landscaping exposure to real life, careful coaching along the way, and in-class discussion about these messy fieldwork experiences may help attain that goal.

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