

Exploring the linguistic landscape: How individual differences among bilingual adults modulate eye movements when viewing multilingual artificial signs

Naomi Vingron

McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Jason Gullifer

McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Debra Titone

McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Abstract

Eye movement research reveals how people allocate visual attention when reading, scanning the environment around them (Rayner, 2012). These cognitive processes come together when people view what sociolinguists refer to as, the linguistic landscape, consisting of signage in the public space. Linguistic landscapes around the world are jointly determined by top-down socio-legal provisions, and bottom-up capacities and attitudes of individual people (Leimgruber, Vingron, & Titone, 2019). In a preliminary study, we found that bilinguals differed in how they viewed naturally occurring linguistic landscape images (Vingron et al., 2018). We are currently analyzing data from a follow-up study that investigated whether individual differences in language experience among bilinguals modulate their eye movements to artificial linguistic landscape images that systematically manipulate text language, position, and size, while controlling for linguistic content.