

1. The Linguistic Landscape of Honolulu Chinatown

Panel chair: Jacob Algrim

Wo Fat Walls: Development Discourse and Competition for Space

Jacob Algrim

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This study employs the nexus analysis framework of Scollon & Scollon (2004) to investigate the linguistic landscape of Honolulu Chinatown, focusing on the Wo Fat Building's first-floor external walls, an iconic historical building currently under renovation. These walls serve as a corpus for selecting visual texts of various typologies, including authorized texts, graffiti, and a community mural. The study draws on Angermeyer's approach (2017), using these texts in ethnographic interviews to gather diverse community perspectives. The research design, informed by geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003), considers the array of semiotic resources in public spaces. Findings reveal Wo Fat's walls as a platform for intersectional dialogue, reflecting the community's diverse, sometimes conflicting values, and highlighting the differential representation of languages and cultures in public spaces. This study contributes to documenting the complex linguistic landscape of Honolulu Chinatown, a neighborhood rich in diversity and intersectional discourse.

Linguistic Evolution in Honolulu Chinatown's Bilingual Street Signs

Jiang Song

This paper delves into the complex linguistic landscape of Honolulu Chinatown's bilingual street signs. It examines these signs' origins, transformations, and cultural relevance by mapping their Hawaiian origins, examining their English counterparts, and analyzing their Chinese translations across various historical periods. The analysis is underpinned by data drawn from local Chinese newspapers, historical documentation spanning over a hundred years, and interviews with residents, community leaders, and business owners. The study reveals that shifts in bilingual street names mirror demographic changes, political currents, economic influences, and the evolving interplay between Chinese, other Asian languages, and English within the community. The research demonstrates that bilingual street signs function not only as navigational aids but also as emblems of cultural identity, contributing to the distinctive ambiance of Chinatown. Additionally, the study highlights the pivotal role these signs play in enhancing tourism, enriching the visitor experience, and shaping the brand image of Chinatown districts.

Lei: Cultural Objects for Space

Chen Ying-Yu

This linguistic landscape research adopts ethnographic methods to explore the development of Lei shops in Honolulu Chinatown, conducting an interview with the first established Lei shop in Honolulu, "Cindy's Lei & Flower Shoppe". The Lei represents inclusive Hawaiian culture and strongly binds the local residential community. The evidence is that "Lei" has never been translated into Chinese because it is a local cultural object with special meaning, and transactions are mainly conducted in English since many customers are local people. The Chinese immigrants play an important role in

providing for a local need while assimilating to a new cultural context. Nowadays, floral items comprise the most of the sales in Lei shops. Therefore, the displays in the stores and shop names have also changed. The economic function of the Lei shaped both past and modern Honolulu Chinatown, but its cultural inclusivity embraces all immigrants and connects them to the local community.

2. Ideological borders in the LL within diaspora contexts

Panel chair: Patricia Gubitosi

Ideological borders on a Filipino-American Private Store

Pangasinan, classified as one of the 184 living Philippine languages, is considered endangered and is spoken in the north-central region of Luzon, Philippines (Eberhard et al. 2023). In the US, there are approximately 2,270 individuals of Pangasinan heritage. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, there is a presence of Filipino-American community in Lewisville, North Texas, but importantly, Pangasinan-American families. This presentation explores the ideological borders in relation to ethnic identity by analyzing the semiotic and linguistic elements employed on the signs inside and on the storefront of the only Filipino store and restaurant in the city. This presentation investigates the semiotic and linguistic landscape examining how these elements contribute to the shaping and framing of its identity

Ideological Borders of the Linguistic Landscape of the Escondido Tianguis

The linguistic landscape are sites that reflect and shape “nature and meaning of social and cultural diversity” (Hiebert, Rath & Vertovec 2015). As a concept and physical location, a market “is central to any understanding of intercultural exchange.” (Wood and Landry 2008). In the case of the Escondido Tianguis, an open-air market, a complex interaction between people and goods (Zhua, Ostuji and Pennycook 2017) are observed in small shops and restaurants (Sorjonen and Raevaara 2014; Thissen 2015). In this presentation, I consider how the study of smellscape and soundscapes in the Escondido Tianguis interact intersectionally with their multisensory, multimodal, and multilingual properties (Zhua, Ostuji and Pennycook 2017) in the interpretation of small shops and restaurants. These complex interactions operate simultaneously as a site of exclusion (Pennycook & Ojutsi 2015), and as a way of delimiting semiotic boundaries of their territorial identities of the everyday.”

The symbolic (re)constructions of Ecuadorian’s borders in an immigrant neighborhood of Queens, NY

Ecuadorians have built and continue to create a new transnational identity reflected on their community's Linguistic Landscape (LL) in Queens, NY. Gubitosi et al. (2020) showed how Ecuadorians use different linguistic and semiotic resources (e.g., proper names from Ecuador, patriotic symbols, etc.) to build a transnational identity and reinforce the idea of territorialization of their neighborhood as their new home. However, the COVID pandemic's impact on this community forced them to reorganize their symbolic bonds as numerous businesses in the area were negatively affected by the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Using a multimodal approach and qualitative and quantitative methodologies, we examine how the Ecuadorian community has reconstructed ideological borders of place and people during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Queens.

Flavors of Tradition: Unveiling Asturian identity through Madrid's Dining Landscape

Migrants appropriate spaces in their new home through reterritorialization processes (Gubitosi & De Oliveira, 2020), which involve the reconceptualization of the language and symbols of the homeland and those used in the diaspora. Given that this contextual relation is expressed in the public sphere (Blackwood et al., 2016), we examine how linguistic and semiotic resources are used in Asturian restaurants located in Madrid, to represent spaces this community had in their motherland, Asturias (North-western Spain). By establishing new businesses that bring Asturian cuisine to their clientele far from their homeland, the Asturian community residing in Madrid emphasizes the symbolic connection with Asturias. By doing so, they also forge boundaries among themselves and Madrid. Following a multimodal analysis of signage (Androutsopoulos & Chowchong, 2021) in ten Asturian restaurants, this paper analyses sign-genres, the distinction between symbolic and communicative functions.

3. Chronotopes of Waste: Mapping Language-Material Borderlands

Panel chair: Crispin Thurlow

Cleaning up after global capitalism: Recentering the peripheries of waste

Charmaine Kong

This presentation traces the peripheralized geographies of global capitalism, orienting to linguistic landscape work on centre-periphery dynamics. I report an ethnographic study on waste systems in three quintessential institutions of capitalist production/consumption in Hong Kong: financial office blocks, shopping malls, and high-end hotels. My specific focus is wasting practices done by blue-collar workers: respectively, paper shredding, toilet cleaning, and laundry services. Grounding my social semiotic analysis in an archive of online mediatized data, photographs and fieldnotes, I examine a major frontstage-backstage contradiction: how waste, as a normative strategy, consolidates the discursive power of the centre, yet workers tasked with the removal of dirt remain central to the global economy. This simultaneous reinforcement and disruption of centre-periphery boundaries, exposes how the "wastescape" is more permeable than typically presumed.

Displacing waste and topographies of (un)knowing

Alessandro Pellanda

In this presentation, I approach waste as a socio-spatial phenomenon structured by processes of knowing/unknowing. In this regard, by focusing on spaces of waste-processing, I orient to research in semiotic landscapes which reaches beyond the realm of the visible. In this sense, the empirical focus shifts on analyzing pictures of these disposal sites taken from and through the windows of two Swiss trains connecting the cities of Fribourg, Bern, and Zurich. Because of the transient experience of landscapes that train rides afford, these become interesting sites for investigating how waste is displaced semiotically. With the help of an experimental visual essay, I then propose an alternative way of mapping these displacements. Ultimately, I argue that the topographies of displacement put in place in Switzerland reinforce the sociopolitical and affective underpinnings of never seeing how much waste is effectively produced.

Trash or treasure? The micro-landscapes of curbside gleaning

Laura Wohlgemuth

This presentation examines the discursive production and spatial organization of domestic waste as a matter of space-time contingent value production. Based on an ethnographic case-study of curbside gleaning in Bern, I document how language structures the spatial composition and temporal rhythms of these "micro-landscapes". This is where otherwise out-of-sight domestic economies are ejected onto the sidewalk and made partially knowable. Organized as a mediated discourse analysis, my analysis examines the way people manage boundaries such as private/public, slow/fast, and trash/treasure in their evaluation of other people's rubbish. Ultimately, and following earlier work, I demonstrate how these domestic registers of value are not only space-time sensitive, but informed by and, in turn, reproduce larger-scale regimes of value.