Multilingualism and linguistic landscapes (LL) in two Sinophone cities:

A comparison of Singapore and Taipei

華語區多語現象與語言景觀——以新加坡與台北為例

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"Linguistic landscape" (LL) is a general term for language displayed on private, public and commercial signs (Shohamy, Ben-Rafael and Barni 2010, Shohamy and Gorter 2009). In the past two decades, LL have become an increasingly important area of research in the intersections of sociolinguistics, media studies, geography and semiotics. Looking at LL from the perspective of language planning, my presentation distinguishes formal and informal LL. A typical example of formal LL are street signs, the visual and linguistic contents of which follow guidelines of official language planning agencies, both in terms of language choice and design. Informal LL, on the other hand, include signs designed and written by individuals and put on display in shops, markets, coffee bars, public bulletin boards, etc. I will discuss to what extent informal LL can be analyzed as expressions of language attitudes and acts of unofficial language planning. My analysis will be based on LL examples collected in the cities of Singapore and Taipei. These two cities are predominantly inhabited by speakers of Sinitic languages. At the same time, however, they differ considerably in terms of coexistence of different Sinitic and non-Sinitic varieties. The comparison will highlight the differences in responses to language variation and expressions of language ideologies by official language planning agencies and individuals.

References：

Shohamy, Elena, Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Monica Barni. 2010. *Linguistic landscape in the city*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Shohamy, Elena and Durk Gorter. 2009. *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery*. New York & London: Routledge.