

Name: Teresa Ong

Affiliation: Griffith University, Queensland, Australia

Email: ongtesa@gmail.com

Title:

Observing Creative Writing Forms on Signboards in Australia

Abstract:

In today's globalised world, the development of modern technology and the advent of the Internet have created multilingual urban environments, which made digital communication ubiquitous in our daily life. This mode of communication has now crossed through from virtual into physical spaces. Symbols and communicative tools used in digital interaction are found in the physical landscape, as exemplified on signboards. Blommaert (2012) mentions that in 'superdiversified' environments, people appear to blend together any linguistic and communicative resource available to create complex linguistic and semiotic forms. These hybrid forms of communication, which are an epiphenomenon of globalization and its resulting hypertextualized communication, are progressively 'destandardizing' our traditional writing practices. Nevertheless, they are seen more and more as a practical means to save time and space in a fast evolving world. In this study, a set of data on 'creative writing forms' collected from Australia are presented. They are divided into two categories: (1) objects stylized to represent letters, and (2) creative word play. I argue that these forms are an epiphenomenon where simplified/visually concise communicative conventions (which are most often prevalent in electronic communication, e.g. chat, sms, etc.) are progressively becoming more visible in the physical landscape of our everyday life and are adopted in the linguistic landscape. Through the results presented in this study, I aim at gaining a deeper understanding of the contemporary linguistic landscape, the creative language forms witnessed in Australia and the fast changes brought forth by economic globalization which are impacting literacy and language practices in modern urban environments.

References:

Blommaert, J. (2012). Chronicles of Complexity: Ethnography, Superdiversity, and Linguistic Landscapes. *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies*, Paper 29.