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專業 創新 胸懷全球
Professional · Creative
For The World

(Re)discovering Hong Kong through surveying its linguistic landscape

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Project No.: 6000653

Academic Unit: LT

Abstract

Language is everywhere in our lives: road signs, advertisements, building names, government notices, etc. These publicly displayed texts form a novel landscape of places we live in --- the Linguistic Landscape (Landry and Bourhis, 1997). Hong Kong, as an international cosmopolitan, is rich in language and cultural elements, which offer great potentials for studies in humanity and social sciences. Our project aims at motivating and organizing students to discover the diverse local linguistic and social characteristics through collaborated survey of the city's unique linguistic landscape. They will go outside of the campus to search for interesting linguistic landscapes and take photographs and notes. Our students are more drawn to visual stimuli and favor learner-centered teaching, which are characteristics of the new generation of learners (Prensky 2010). Field trips with peers and searching for textual signs will motivate them into self-initiated inquiry of information and post-task reading.

Additionally, sharing their discoveries of Hong Kong with overseas students, our students will then be able to understand perspectives of others towards their home languages and cultural heritages. Such exploration and discussion will provide hands-on experience for students studying abstract and theoretical concepts in humanities and social sciences. The experience and discoveries will help foster appreciation of one's own heritage and promote effective cross-cultural communication. Overall speaking, the project will promote our students' awareness and pride as local residents and global citizens from exploring contextual and social use of languages as reflected in the cityscape. Finally, the intended outcome from this project will also provide valuable empirical materials for future teaching involving linguistic, cultural, historical, and social issues.