



EMORY
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Emory College
Language Center

presents



Jennifer Leeman

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Modern and Classical Languages,
George Mason University

February 26, 2015

4:00 pm

Oxford Building presentation auditorium
Main level

“Reading the Linguistic Landscape: New Approaches for Research and Teaching”

Linguistic landscape is framework for analyzing material manifestations of language in public space, such as on storefronts, billboards and street signs (Landry and Bourhis 1997). In this presentation, I describe the origins of linguistic landscape in the field of language planning and policy and discuss new directions within this fast-growing area of research. In order to demonstrate the value of an interdisciplinary, contextualized approach to linguistic landscape, as well as the ways that linguistic landscape can contribute to a deeper understanding of the construction of public space, I present research on the use of Chinese writing in Washington DC’s newly gentrified Chinatown (Leeman & Modan 2009, 2010a, 2010b). Our research, which draws from the fields of urban studies, cultural geography and linguistic anthropology, analyzes the symbolic use of Chinese targeted primarily to people who don’t speak it, and demonstrates how language is commodified as a part of a public/private initiative to ‘brand’ Chinatown as a unique commercial destination. I conclude the presentation with a consideration of how linguistic landscape can be incorporated into language education.

Co-sponsored by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese
and the Program in Linguistics

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