Linguistic landscape: a mechanism that reflects, contests, promotes and negotiates language diversity in public spaces

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Elana Shohamy is a professor of Language Education at the School of Education, Tel Aviv University where she researches various topics of multilingualism and diversity within the contexts of critical framework, language rights and co-existence. Her work in language testing focuses on the power and the misuses of tests in education and society, classroom assessment, fair testing for immigrants and minority groups, and more recently multilingual assessment. The work in language policy addresses an expanded framework for language policy introducing the notion of mechanisms used to create and impact de facto policies but also to create more engaged policy. In the past decade Elana has been researching the area of Linguistic Landscape (LL) referring to the diversity of languages in public spaces with a focus of conflicts, contestation and social justice. Her books include: The Languages of Israel: Policy, ideology and practice (w/ B. Spolsky, 1999); The power of tests: A critical perspective of the uses of language tests (2001); Language policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches (2006); Linguistic landscape: expanding the scenery, (ed. w/ Durk Gurter, 2009); and Linguistic landscape in the city (ed. w/ Ben Rafael and Barni, 2010). Elana is the editor of the journal Language Policy and the new and upcoming journal Linguistic Landscape. Elana is the winner of the 2010 lifetime achievement award granted by the International Language Testing Association (ILTA), in Cambridge, UK.