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# 1 Introduction: Captivating Studies of Language in Public Spaces

## 1.1 Introduction

Over the last couple of decades, the study of linguistic landscape has established itself as an attractive and exciting field of research. In this book, we want to present a panorama of this ever-expanding field, based to some extent on our own studies and publications. Today, there are more signs in public spaces than ever before and visual information is more and more dominant. In shopping streets and commercial and industrial areas, we find the highest density of signs with an abundant visual display of texts, symbols and images. In addition, the sides of roads, in particular on highways near urban areas, can have large numbers of signs. Almost all of those signs show some form of language. Language is on display all around us, often in textual form on shops, advertisements, posters, notices, warnings, street name signs, etc. This aggregate of signage is the outcome of developments over the years, where new signs are being put up all the time and old ones are being taken down, turning linguistic landscapes into a dynamic whole.

The coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), however, has made it clear how sudden changes can take place in linguistic landscapes. During the strict lockdowns in various places, signage lost most of its relevance because almost no one was looking at the signs. Soon after, almost overnight, shopping streets and other public spaces around the world were transformed and a great number of new signs related to the pandemic were on display. For example, signs warning about social distancing, giving instructions on the use of hand sanitizers, indicating an obligation to wear a mask, presenting QR codes for scanning menus or home delivery and handwritten signs offering different types of support. The changes created opportunities for innovative linguistic landscape studies and several researchers have published work about the new meanings they found in the signs (Hopkins & Van der Hoven, 2022; Hua, 2020; Kusse, 2021; Marshall, 2021; Ogiermann & Bella, 2021; Svennevig, 2021). A dedicated website on the linguistic landscape of COVID-19 presents a series of blog posts (<https://www.covidsigns.net/>), and the website Language on the Move has various articles on COVID-19 (<https://www.languageonthe.move.com/tag/linguistic-landscape/>) (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 COVID-19 sign

The study of linguistic landscapes is one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing fields in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. An increasing number of researchers analyze language on signs in public spaces, mainly in urban contexts. In the 1970s and 1980s, there were some forerunners, but only after Landry and Bourhis (1997) presented their insightful reflections on the concept of linguistic landscape, some years later a group of researchers began to study language signs in their own right (see Chapter 2). In this chapter, we first discuss some definitions of the term linguistic landscape and the scope of the field (Section 1.2). We then look into the expansion of the field (Section 1.3) and the use of the labels linguistic and semiotic landscape (Section 1.4). We also briefly reflect on landscape as a concept (Section 1.5) and we include some concluding remarks (Section 1.6). The chapter ends with an overview of the book (Section 1.7).

## 1.2 Definitions, First Use and Scope

The term *linguistic landscape* deserves a bit of effort at giving a definition. Providing a comprehensive definition is, however, not all that easy, and we shall supply a number of possibilities that have been suggested

in the literature. The field lacks clear-cut boundaries, and each definition usually presents a possible delimitation. This circumstance may be slightly discomfoting for some readers, but this will be encountered in many other research fields as well because, after all, a field is usually an assembly of theories, methods, research problems, premises and topics, and efforts to define a field exhaustively are seldom entirely adequate.

In their seminal article, Landry and Bourhis (1997: 23) proposed the following shorthand definition to refer to the linguistic landscape: ‘the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region’. In the same article, the authors also provided a longer definition which was made up of a list of six common items in public spaces: ‘The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration’ (Landry & Bourhis, 1997: 25).

This appealing definition has become by far the most widely quoted in the literature, leading Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau (2009) to go so far as to claim that most papers on linguistic landscape quote this definition, while Zabrodskaja (2010) and Amos (2016), in two book reviews, have spoken out against the overuse of this definition, although fact-checking their claims showed that the actual numbers were not so high (Gorter, 2019a). Interestingly, Blackwood (2016: 647), also in a book review, has argued that ‘the discipline has now matured such that the very frequent citing of their seminal work [Landry & Bourhis] as a baseline should be avoided’.

### 1.2.1 An excursion into ‘first use’

The effect of the success of this definition by Landry and Bourhis (1997) has been that several authors refer to them for the ‘first use’ of the term linguistic landscape, but as we will show this is not entirely correct. First times have something special that make them important because they can mark the beginning of a new field such as linguistic landscape studies. Unsurprisingly, many publications make reference to the ‘first’ occurrence of linguistic landscape. In the ever-growing literature, we can find many quotes similar to those in Box 1.1.

#### BOX 1.1 EXAMPLES OF QUOTES CONTAINING FIRST USE OF THE TERM LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE

- ‘The linguistic landscape is a relatively new subject of research. This concept was *first* defined by the Canadian researchers Landry & Bourhis (1997: 25)’ (Edelman, 2006: 1).

- ‘The term “linguistic landscape” appears to have been *first* used by Landry and Bourhis (1997)’ (Spolsky, 2009a: 26).
- ‘The concept of “linguistic landscape” was *coined* by Landry and Bourhis (1997)’ (Juffermans, 2012: 260).
- ‘*Originally* employed in an article by Landry and Bourhis (1997), the expression “linguistic landscape”...’ (Zabrodskaia & Milani, 2014: 1).
- ‘The study of linguistic landscape (LL), a term *first* coined by Landry and Bourhis (1997)’ (Nikolaou, 2017: 161).
- ‘The term linguistic landscape was *firstly* introduced by Landry and Bourhis (1997)’ (Fakhiroh & Rohmah, 2018: 96).
- ‘The term linguistic landscape (...) was *first* introduced to linguistics by Landry and Bourhis in 1997’ (Strandberg, 2020: 2).
- ‘As a landmark study of “Linguistic Landscape”, Landry and Bourhis (1997) *first* defined the term as... [etc.]’ (Sheng & Buchanan, 2022: 1).

(emphasis added)

Note: This list only contains one example per two or three years, but without much effort the list could have more than one similar quote from each year and could easily be much longer.

All the quotes in Box 1.1 somehow seem to agree that Landry and Bourhis (1997) were the *first* to use or introduce the term linguistic landscape. But were they really? Have these authors checked or are they perhaps parroting each other? This excursion into the first use of the term linguistic landscape will demonstrate that it is not as obvious as the quotes in Box 1.1 seem to suggest. An interesting source is Backhaus (2007: 54), who explains that ‘some pioneer linguistic landscape studies had been conducted decades before Landry and Bourhis in 1997 finally “invented” the discipline by providing it with a proper name’. This quote could be read as the use of the name for the first time, in English, because the earlier studies that Backhaus points to do use the terms *gengo keikan* in Japanese or *paysage linguistique* in French. One wonders, is it acceptable to see the translation of an existing term into English as the first use of the term, or as inventing a whole new discipline?

After closely reading the original article by Landry and Bourhis (1997), we can look at what the authors said. This quote in their text is important: ‘It is in the language planning field that issues in relation to *the notion of linguistic landscape first emerged*’ (emphasis added) (Landry & Bourhis, 1997: 24). Notice the word *first*, and hence its importance, which acknowledges that the notion existed before. On the same page, the authors also remark ‘it is to this Belgian case that we owe the

origin of the concept of linguistic landscape'. The authors refer to a study by Verdoodt (1979) on Belgium and by Corbeil (1980) on Canada, but both those publications are in French and the words 'linguistic landscape' obviously are not used, so if not the precise words, at least the notion originated before 1997 according to the authors themselves. Monnier (1989) used the words *paysage linguistique* and *visage linguistique* in his study of the signage of Montreal, whereas he had only used *visage français* in a similar study three years earlier (Monnier, 1986). Interestingly, early studies into the public use of Catalan also mention the words *paisatge lingüístic* (linguistic landscape) (Solé & Romaní, 1997: 58; see Chapter 2).

Aware of the importance of the name of the field, Spolsky (2020) remembers that he used the term 'public signs' in his earliest studies (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991). He then states 'it was Landry and Bourhis (1997) who first applied the term "linguistic landscape" (in French, *paysage linguistique*) to the public signs of a neighborhood' (Spolsky, 2020: 4). However, Spolsky also indicated that some others had used the term linguistic landscape 'for all the language practices of a community, spoken and written', and he points to Voegelin (1933) as the earliest user. However, the idea that Landry and Bourhis were the first to refer to the public display of language as linguistic landscape is incorrect in the literal sense. Puzey (2016: 403, footnote 4) referred to a source that predates Landry and Bourhis by 35 years stating that 'one significant early use of the term "linguistic landscaping" was... the practice of bestowing aesthetically pleasing names on homes (Lowenthal, 1962)'. Perhaps this whole issue of first use is, in the end, not worth much more than this excursion, but, as our curiosity was piqued, we have tried to trace down the earliest published use of the expression linguistic landscape. Thanks to Google Scholar, we found the words in the magazine *Forest and Stream* published in 1896, thus pre-dating the Landry and Bourhis article by more than 100 years. The expression is included in an article that provides a vivid description of a debate about Waldo Lake in the Cascade Mountains, Oregon, where linguistic landscape refers to a metaphor for a heated debate (Greene, 1896). Perhaps this fact-finding excursion can put an end to the spread of the idea about the first use of the term linguistic landscape and help to debunk this emergent myth in the field of linguistic landscape studies.

### 1.2.2 Other definitions, labels and scope

The much quoted definition by Landry and Bourhis (1997) could easily be further expanded by adding other types of signs to their list of items, such as posters, stickers, sidewalk sandwich boards, neon lights, foam boards, scrolling banners and inflatable signs. Other newly created sign types could also be added based on recent technological developments,

including electronic flat-panel displays, LED signs, video walls and touch screens. One might be inclined to conclude that a linguistic landscape is just a collection of different types of signs or, said differently, that it includes all language items that are visible in public space; or, in yet other words, any visual display of textual language.

Other authors define linguistic landscape with slightly different formulations. For example, Lou (2016a: 2) formulates it as follows, 'Linguistic landscape consists of all visual forms of language present in the public space of a pre-determined geographic area'. With a slightly different emphasis on choices, Matras *et al.* (2018: 53) define linguistic landscape as 'the configuration of language choices on public signage in multilingual settings'. Presenting a more sociological definition, Ben-Rafael and Ben-Rafael (2019: 7) refer to 'the symbolic construction of the public space by means of linguistic codes'. A link to discourse is created by Kramsch (2014: 242), who defines linguistic landscapes as 'discourse in action, multimodal discourse, shaping our environment through signs that cry out in different languages'. Using a more abstract formulation, Malinowski and Dubreil (2019: 1) refer to linguistic landscape as 'the geospatially situated domain of material texts and textual practices in public space'. Some years ago, we defined the study of linguistic landscapes simply as a concern with 'the use of language in its written form in the public sphere' (Gorter, 2006a: 2). This definition is pretty much as good or as bad as other definitions we have found in the literature.

Various authors have proposed some original and innovative shorthand labels to refer to this general idea of linguistic landscape using different expressive phrases and definitions. Some examples are 'the words on the walls' (Calvet, 1990), 'scriptorial landscape' (Gade, 2003), 'the decorum of the public life' (Ben-Rafael *et al.*, 2006: 10), 'the linguistic items found in the public space' (Shohamy, 2006: 110), 'environmental print' (Huebner, 2006: 31; 2016: 1), 'words on the street' (Foust & Fuggle, 2011) and 'language tapestry on display' (Kasanga, 2012). At one time, the label 'multilingual cityscape' was suggested as an adequate designation (Gorter, 2006b: 83) because most studies have been carried out in urban contexts. In Section 1.2, we discuss the alternative, competing designation 'semiotic landscape'. In this book, we will stick to the label linguistic landscape because this has become the most popular term, it is the most frequently used designation in the literature and it has become the preferred label among researchers. Authors frequently use the shorthand 'LL' for linguistic landscape. We have chosen not to do so in this book, except in direct citations.

It is not an easy task to provide a precise outline of the scope of the field of linguistic landscape studies. To sketch the limits of this emerging field is a challenge because soft boundaries are characteristic. Some years ago, Shohamy and Waksman (2009: 313) rhetorically asked an intriguing question about the scope of the field: 'What can be considered linguistic

landscape?'. In their view, the linguistic landscape has to be conceived of as an ecological arena with fluid and fuzzy borders that also includes oral language, images, objects, placement in time and space, and how people interact with signage. They want to go beyond the written texts on signs because public space is a negotiated and contested arena. Later, Shohamy (2015) argued for a broader definition of the construct of language that serves as a communicative device and cannot be separated from other language dimensions. She expressed this idea in another publication as 'any display in public spaces which communicates varied types of messages' (Shohamy, 2019: 27) and she also pointed to additional components related to multimodality. An up-to-date explanation about the scope of linguistic landscape studies was provided with the launch of the journal *Linguistic Landscape*. In the opening article, its editors Shohamy and Ben-Rafael (2015: 1) argue that the main goal of linguistic landscape studies is 'to describe and identify systematic patterns of the presence and absence of languages in public spaces and to understand the motives, pressures, ideologies, reactions and decision making of people regarding the creation of LL in its varied forms'. This statement covers a wide range of possibilities for all kinds of investigations. Looking back over a decade, Shohamy (2019) observes developments in the definition and scope of linguistic landscape studies due to the expansion beyond written texts. According to her, the boundaries of linguistic landscape research continue to be debated, in particular the question 'Where are the boundaries of the linguistic landscape?'. Some authors do not want to go beyond the written texts in public spaces and they oppose anything outside, because otherwise everything could be a linguistic landscape and this could imply that it loses its explanatory power (Figure 1.2).



**Figure 1.2** Abundance of signage in Times Square in New York City



Even when broadening the scope is accepted, it seems that the main concern of researchers on linguistic landscapes has remained the analysis of the display of some sort of visible language on signs in the public sphere. However, it does not refer exclusively to its written form, because multimodal, semiotic, other visual and sometimes oral elements have been included.

With examples from the journals *English Today* and *World Englishes*, we can try to draw some contours as to what we consider to be a linguistic landscape study and what is not. These journals have published several studies that clearly seem to fall inside the scope of the field. We have included several of those studies in the various chapters, in particular in Chapter 9 on the spread of English. However, the journals have also published some studies that are only tangentially related to work on linguistic landscapes. We consider the following articles in *English Today* to fall outside the scope of the field. For example, Jianxiu (1999) provides some musings on the use of English in China, including a mention of shop signs and directions. There is a similar article on English in Japan by Hyde (2002), who deems signs to be useless for learning ‘real English’. Another article concerns English in advertising and brand names in Brazil (Friedrich, 2002), while a different article describes a few linguistic characteristics of road signs in English (Rastall, 2003). Baumgardner (2006) writes about English in the world of business in Mexico, which is conceived of as far broader than shop names. Similarly, in *World Englishes* we find a study by Vettorel (2013) on English in Italian advertising. Although it has an element of arbitrariness, we have decided not to include that type of study. We only consider a study to belong to the linguistic landscape field when the focus is primarily on public display of language. Obviously, there is not one ‘English’, but as we will see in later chapters, many Englishes are used and displayed in different contexts in different countries.

We should further keep in mind that in the academic literature the concept linguistic landscape is competing with other uses of the same term, as was pointed out some years ago (Gorter, 2006a: 1–2). A book, a conference or an article with ‘linguistic landscape’ in the title is no guarantee of its relevance to the field and this can easily lead to disappointment for expectant readers. Kasanga (2017) made this observation in his review of a book by Hibbert (2016) which contains ‘linguistic landscape’ in the title, but the book is about languages in South Africa in general. A conference that was announced with the title ‘Shifting Linguistic Landscapes’ (Werklund University, 2021) included only one paper (by Melo-Pfeifer) that we consider directly related to the field.

It is obvious that the concept has been used in diverging ways with different meanings. Thus, it can frequently refer to a general language situation or to linguistic diversity. In sociolinguistics, the concept describes the situation of languages in countries such as Malta (Scirha & Vassallo,

2001), Panama (Sánchez Arias, 2019) and the Baltic States (Kreslins, 2003). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Dunn *et al.* (2020) wanted to understand where the linguistic landscape had changed, but they only measured the number of different languages used in a country based on data from Twitter. As a general expression, linguistic landscape can in such cases be synonymous with ‘linguistic market’, ‘linguistic mosaic’, ‘ecology of languages’, ‘diversity of languages’ or ‘language situation’, which all refer to a social context of language use. In other cases, the term obtains a meaning related to the linguistic system, for example therapeutic words (Fleitas, 2003) or the spread of dialects (Labov *et al.*, 1997). Finally, the linguistic landscape can include the description of language history or even degrees of proficiency in languages.

### 1.3 Expansion of the Field

Academic research into linguistic landscapes is a relatively recent development that has come to blossom in the early 21st century, even though the analysis of signs as such has a long tradition in both semiotics and advertising. The origins of the field can be dated back to the 1970s, but the most significant developments have taken place during the last two decades. In 2006, it was predicted that ‘studies of the linguistic landscape can become a major locus of scholarly activity in the coming decade’ (Gorter, 2006b: 88). A few years later, the question was posed ‘whether the study of linguistic landscape as a separate domain offers a new and unique area of study and a different way of understanding phenomena is still an open and challenging question’ (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009a: 2). More than 10 years later, the answer to that question has become unequivocally clear. Linguistic landscape studies have indeed developed into a new and unique field that offers fresh and distinct insights into a plethora of phenomena related to languages in public spaces.

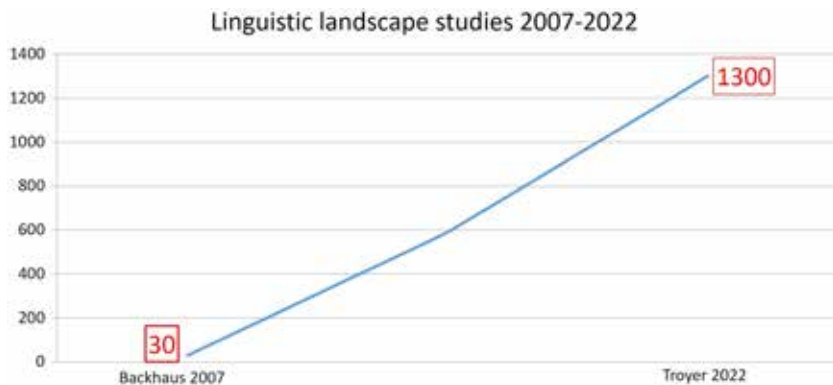
In recent years, the perspective has become an accepted specialization of applied linguistics (Gorter, 2013), sociolinguistics (Van Mensel *et al.*, 2016), language policy studies (Shohamy, 2019) and contact linguistics (Bagna *et al.*, 2021; Bolton *et al.*, 2020). It has also provided fresh insights for the field of onomastics (Puzey, 2016). Blommaert (2013: 4) argued convincingly that work on linguistic landscapes ‘can make the whole of sociolinguistics better, more useful, more comprehensive and more persuasive, and to offer some relevant things to other disciplines in addition’. One can conclude that the language we see around us on signs in the public sphere of cities all over the world has become an accepted and valued source of research data in various disciplines and can lead to reflections on some of the central issues.

The number of publications considered as belonging to the field of linguistic landscape studies clearly indicates that the field has risen exponentially. In one chronological table, Backhaus (2007: 56) listed

10 publications from before 1998 and another 20 publications from 1998 to 2006, although he did not include the early Catalan studies (see Section 2.2.4). When about seven years later, Troyer (2014) presented his online bibliography, he counted a total of 287 publications, of which 235 (or 82%) had appeared between 2007 and 2014. As of October 2022, the same online bibliography has more than quadrupled and contains over 1,250 entries. Between 2006 and 2010, approximately 30 new publications appeared per year. This rose to 75 per year between 2011 and 2015, and to 150 in the years from 2016 to 2019, with the number increasing to over 200 articles and chapters in each of the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 (Figure 1.3).

Even if the borders of the field are somewhat diffuse and drawing demarcation lines remains arbitrary, it is possible to count 25 edited books, 17 monographs (including 1 each in Spanish, Italian and Latvian) and 18 special issues of journals. We have to add to those the first eight volumes of the *Linguistic Landscape* journal (2015–2022) with 115 articles, 22 book reviews and 2 commentaries. Teaching about linguistic landscapes is also increasingly part of university courses and, consequently, the linguistic landscape is chosen as an attractive topic for numerous student papers, master theses and PhD theses. This boom in linguistic landscape publications obviously comprises a range of different themes, issues and dimensions. As we will show throughout this book, the field of linguistic landscape studies covers a complex pattern of theoretical approaches, analytical frameworks and research methodologies.

Publications have generated innovative investigations and their results offer fresh perspectives on themes such as multilingualism (Gorter, 2006a), minority languages (Gorter *et al.*, 2012a), the role of English (Bolton, 2012), language policy (Shohamy, 2015), conflict and contestation (Blackwood *et al.*, 2016; Martín Rojo, 2014; Rubdy & Ben Said, 2015), the effects of globalization on world cities (Ben-Rafael



**Figure 1.3** Graph of the exponential growth of the field

& Ben-Rafael, 2019), the field of education (Krompák *et al.*, 2022; Malinowski *et al.*, 2020; Niedt & Seals, 2021), monuments and museums (Blackwood & Macalister, 2019), gentrification (Trinch & Snajdr, 2020), typography (Järlehed & Jaworski, 2015) and creativity (Moriarty & Järlehed, 2019). According to Shohamy and Pennycook (2022), a focus on the material landscape itself, as a semiotic whole, has further expanded the scope of linguistic landscape studies to include skinscapes (Peck & Stroud, 2015) and bikescapes (Pennycook, 2019).

The expansion of the field is shown not only in the rapid increase in the number of publications but also in the geographic spread. A great number of investigations have been carried out on all continents under the umbrella of this interdisciplinary field. One of the major expansions of the field is the opening up to the Global South (Shohamy & Pennycook, 2022). The Zotero-online-bibliography (Troyer, 2022) can attest to the fact that studies are carried out in research sites all around the globe. The research locations vary hugely according to population size or demographic scale. We find studies in metropolitan areas with tens of millions of inhabitants such as Tokyo, New Delhi, Beijing and Shanghai, or large world cities such as Bangkok, Singapore, New York, Barcelona, Paris and Kyiv. Also smaller cities such as Donostia-San Sebastián and Dublin, and small towns such as Leeuwarden-Ljouwert in the Netherlands, Picton in New Zealand or Eupen in Belgium. Even though linguistic landscapes are mainly investigated in urban environments, more rural areas have also been included, such as those in South Africa or villages in the traditional Sámi areas inside the Arctic Circle in Northern Europe or on a 600 kilometers tour in Finland. One obvious reason for having fewer linguistic landscape studies in rural areas is, of course, that there are fewer signs outside towns and villages, in the countryside or in largely uninhabited natural areas. Pure nature in a literal sense, however, is hard to find because just about every spot on earth has traces of human beings who have planted their linguistic marks.

Most linguistic landscape studies are confined to one specific geographic area or level of analysis, which is often a city or town, but it can also be a whole country, a region, a neighborhood or a street. An analysis of one or a few streets is common, to such an extent that this has sometimes been referred to as the ‘typical “main street” approach’ (Pietikäinen, 2014: 483). Several studies have carried out comparisons between cases at one of these levels of analysis. In Chapter 4, where we discuss research methods, we return to the issue of the selection of a research site, or survey area, and we point to the neighborhood as the most adequate level.

The linguistic landscape can provide information about the use of different languages on signs which can then be compared to language use as reported in surveys, giving further insight into the sociolinguistic context. An analysis of the linguistic landscape may be relevant because

it can demonstrate the differences between the official language policy as reflected in official top-down signs and the impact of such a policy on individuals as reflected in private bottom-up signs. The use of a society's dominant language is expected for official or commercial signs, while other languages are usually not as common. The presence or absence of languages 'sends direct and indirect messages with regard to the centrality versus the marginality of certain languages in society' (Shohamy, 2006: 110). At the same time, the use of several languages in signage can contribute to the linguistic diversity of a society and signs can display the identity of specific social groups. In monolingual contexts, if those still exist, linguistic landscapes are, of course, also important. Some studies took place in a context that at first sight seemed to be predominantly monolingual. For example, in Tokyo, Japanese was clearly the dominant language in the linguistic landscape, but Backhaus (2007: 71) came across no fewer than 14 different languages, including English, Chinese, Korean and Latin.

Several reasons make linguistic landscape studies stand out as suitable for delivering interesting research results. First, these studies choose a broad view on the display of languages in public space, which is, at the same time, wide in scope and not limited in range to the study of one sign type, but tries to be attentive to all kinds of signs. Second, linguistic landscape studies go beyond just studying signs, by investigating who plans, produces and places signs as well as considering who looks at, reads or interacts with the signs. Third, the studies consider how linguistic landscapes reflect language demographics, functions of use, power dynamics, ideologies, histories and policies. Finally, linguistic landscape research includes studies of controlling or influencing what appears on signage with the aim of confirming or contesting existing language practices and hierarchies of prestige.

The study of linguistic landscapes is a multifaceted phenomenon that can be related to a multitude of perspectives and disciplines. Diversity can be seen as a built-in characteristic of a field pushed forward by the curiosity of many researchers from a range of disciplinary backgrounds. Its researchers are trained in, among others, linguistics, sociology, psychology, economics, history, social and urban geography, semiotics, communication studies, media and advertising studies and education. The studies cover a kaleidoscope of topics. The theoretical developments in the field are based on existing theories from other disciplines and specializations (see Chapter 3). The research applies largely existing research methods, although some issues remain unsettled and continue to be debated, such as the unit of analysis and the dynamic nature of signage (see Chapter 4). Photography and other innovative methods have been applied in the field (see Chapter 5). In sum, taking these developments together has led to the establishment of a prospering field.

Linguistic landscape studies have most often taken place in societies that are bilingual or multilingual because those studies can be more

revealing when they deal with multilingualism, variation and the conflict and contact of languages. Today, it is exceptional to find monolingual linguistic landscapes anywhere because English has spread massively to non-English-speaking countries while, at the same time, foreign brand names, shop names and slogans have spread to English-speaking countries.

The developments illustrate a young and heterogeneous field; however, taken together, it constitutes a recognizable body of work with a focus on the visual representation of language in the broad sense. The numerous linguistic landscape studies have provided new and additional perspectives on the relation between language and society. The focus of linguistic landscape studies is on today's urban areas, places where we find linguistically rich and visually stimulating surroundings, due to, among others, processes of globalization and technological change.

Obviously, covering this entire field is challenging and it is near impossible to provide a complete overview. Therefore, in this book we present our own panoramic view of this blooming field, with our emphasis, experiences and interests and, in part, based on our own empirical research work. Unavoidably, this implies that some parts of the field will receive less attention than others. Our investigations into the multilingual cityscape of Donostia-San Sebastián will be used throughout this book to illustrate developments (Figure 1.4).

The city of Donostia-San Sebastián is located on the southern coast of the Bay of Biscay and the border with France is only 20 kilometers away. Although a relatively small city with 186,000 inhabitants, its metropolitan area contains close to half a million people. The city has a



Figure 1.4 Signpost in Donostia-San Sebastián

cosmopolitan look and is a popular tourist destination. It is one of the most important urban centers of the Basque Country, the region straddling the border between Spain and France. The linguistic landscape of the city has gone through a major transformation over the past 40 years, as has the rest of the region. Public spaces have evolved into complex multilingual assemblages. During the Franco dictatorship (1939–1975), the region had a predominantly monolingual Spanish decor, but after the *transición* (transition) to democracy in the late 1970s, the regional minority language Basque received strong support from the regional government. An important aim of the language policies at the regional and local levels is to increase the use of Basque and this includes the visibility of the minority language on public signage. Donostia-San Sebastián, of course, is only one among many cities where interesting linguistic landscape studies have taken place, and relevant examples from several other cities will be provided throughout the book.

Overall, there is growing academic interest in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and several other disciplines on issues surrounding multilingualism, multiculturalism, multimodality and diversity, and this increased general interest is also reflected in the studies of the visible display of languages in public spaces.

#### 1.4 Linguistic Landscape or Semiotic Landscape

A student or a researcher new to the field may observe that while most authors seem to use the label ‘linguistic landscape’, some others apparently prefer ‘semiotic landscape’ and thus they may ask ‘What is the preferred designation of this field?’. Currently, the label ‘linguistic landscape’ is the most frequently used to identify the field of studies, although ‘semiotic landscape’ is a strong contender. This circumstance could easily give the impression that a lack of one clear label is an indicator of attempts to find the most adequate expression or of a struggle between different schools of thought. So, what is the difference, if any?

Jaworski and Thurlow (2010: 2) deliberately choose not to use the term linguistic landscape unlike others before them, preferring the label ‘semiotic landscape’ instead. Some years earlier, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996: 35) had already referred to semiotic landscape as ‘the place of visual communication in a given society’ in terms of ‘the range of forms or modes of public communication available’ and also ‘its uses and valuations’. In line with these ideas, the aim of Jaworski and Thurlow is to emphasize how written discourse interacts with ‘visual images, nonverbal communication, architecture and the build environment’. As indicated by the subtitle of their book, their focus is on the three elements of language, image and space. For them, space and image are as important as language, and semiotic captures all three. They define semiotic landscape as ‘any public space with visible inscription made through deliberate

human intervention and meaning making' (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010: 2). Moore (2019b: 3) assumes that the motivation for a new term by Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) is that 'in our modern multimedia world social space is used as a semiotic resource in which language and space interact very closely'.

Interestingly, in their edited book, Jaworski and Thurlow themselves also use the term linguistic landscape, as do most of the other authors contributing to the book. Today, there are authors in the field who prefer or even insist on using semiotic landscape (e.g. Järlehed, 2015; O'Connor & Zentz, 2016; Stroud & Jegels, 2014), but there are also others who use the two terms interchangeably (e.g. Izadi & Pavaresh, 2016; Schmitz, 2018). In a footnote, Lüdi (2012: 88) explains that he will not distinguish between both terms, although he states his preference for semiotic landscape 'because it explicitly includes multimodality', still he uses the term linguistic landscape more frequently in the text. A rather unique neologism was created by Johnson (2017: 7) in her suggestion to move beyond linguistic landscape into 'semioscape', which for her includes the voices of people, architecture and building materials. However, such a neologism only seems to lead to more terminological confusion. Additionally, the term semiotic landscape should not be mixed up with landscape semiotics, the study of physical and cultural landscapes through a semiotic lens (Lindström *et al.*, 2014).

Various authors use the combined expression 'linguistic/semiotic landscape' (among others, Banda & Jimaima, 2015; Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Moriarty, 2019; Reershemius, 2020; Thurlow & Gonçalves, 2019). This sometimes appears as a way to indicate how complex and difficult it is to find the most adequate expression or as a compromise. A recurring idea is that semiotic would be broader than linguistic. For some researchers, the label linguistic landscape in the literal sense of the word linguistic may perhaps be too specific or too narrow, because it seems then limited solely to language. In contrast, for others, semiotic landscape is too broad, because it includes all types of signs, also acoustic, haptic and gustatory. Moriarty (2019) claims that the use of semiotic landscape represents a shift in the field to a broader inclusion of all semiotic resources in a public space, including ideological implications, although she does not back up this claim with examples or data. Kerry (2017) even asserts that semiotic landscape research has its roots in linguistic landscapes and geosemiotics, stating that semiotic landscape research 'assumes a multimodal analysis'. Likewise, Ding *et al.* (2020: 2) argue that 'the semiotic landscape (...) is an addition to the study of linguistic landscape'. Also Reershemius (2020: 129) seems to be of the opinion that the term linguistic landscape came first and semiotic landscape was introduced later 'in order to take into account other semiotic resources'.

However, as we saw before, Shohamy and Waksman (2009) had already proposed a broad notion of language to go beyond written texts,



which was supported in the introduction to the same book (Shohamy & Gorter, 2009a). Later, Shohamy (2015, 2019) reiterated this view in order to potentially include all kinds of semiotic resources or, as Pennycook (2010: 69) noted, ‘it may make little sense to try to separate text from image’. In their study on urban smellscape, Pennycook and Otsuji (2015) offered further reflections on these conceptual issues. They aim at a broader understanding of the semiotic landscape which goes beyond multimodality and intentionality by including smells and odors in the analysis. This implies that they want to go further than the visible and the deliberate mentioned by Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) in the definition given above. For Pennycook and Otsuji, the elements of the senses and memories included in the definition by Kramsch (2014) are important. They propose a new approach that includes the relationship between the urban smellscape and the semiotic landscape.

One of the issues that makes solving the terminological choice between linguistic and semiotic almost unsolvable is, of course, that the adjective has a dual meaning. On the one hand, linguistic refers to the characteristic of being related to language when used in expressions such as ‘linguistic behavior’ or ‘linguistic communication’. On the other hand, it refers to the scientific study of language, where linguistics is an academic discipline that includes the study of grammar, lexis, phonetics, discourse and pragmatics. In joining the words linguistic and landscape for an emerging field of studies, the new expression creates this ambivalence of interpretation because for some researchers it will be a figure of speech that points to the manifestations of language in public space, in the widest possible meaning of the word language. For others, however, it designates a branch of linguistics or a specialization comparable to sociolinguistics or applied linguistics. Seen in this disciplinary sense, the linguistic part of the label will be conceived of as narrowing the object of study down to issues related to linguistics and thus probably excluding research questions outside that scope. Perhaps going back to Saussure, who is seen as the father of modern linguistics, provides some additional insight. He proposed both a ‘*semiologie*’ (also referred to as semiotics) and a ‘*linguistique*’ as a part of the first. Semiotics has been closely linked to some approaches in linguistics. Furthermore, an important part of semiotics and linguistics is pragmatics which focuses on language use and has an important role in some linguistic landscape studies (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008; Kallen, 2009; Malinowski, 2015). Historically, linguistics and semiotics have thus been closely intertwined disciplines and therefore it is not surprising that current linguistic and semiotic landscape studies are close together as well.

Additionally, linguistic landscape studies usually focus on language used on ‘signs’, which is another word with several meanings, but in this case mostly taken in the sense of the public display of a message. The display of language on signs has almost unavoidably a visual element,

where linguistics has traditionally focused on the verbal. Of course, long before linguistic landscape studies arose as a specialized field in the early 21st century, investigators were undertaking research into signs.

In particular, semiotics as a discipline has a long tradition in the study of signs, meaning-making of signs, sign processes and sign-using behavior. Basically, semiotics is concerned with what constitutes a sign in the most general sense of the word, including different senses and different media. Obviously, semiotics has much to contribute to linguistic landscape studies, even if semiotic studies in general have paid relatively little attention to urban signage in public spaces as such. Spolsky (2009a) considered the possibility that some of the key answers for a theory of linguistic landscape could come from semiotics. In the same publication, he also argued for the relevance of a literacy approach to the study of verbal signs in public space. Furthermore, he observed that ‘the study of public multilingual signage is developing into a sub-field of sociolinguistics or language policy’ (Spolsky, 2009b: 66). More recently, Spolsky (2020) has argued that semiotics is the most promising theoretical framework for the field as a whole. According to him, future work on the linguistic landscape and public signage could become a branch of semiotics because it is a larger and better established field. Of course, Spolsky is right that public signage can be studied from the perspective of semiotic theory and even that, in principle, linguistic landscape studies could be incorporated into a larger discipline, but it seems unlikely that this will happen. One reason is that the linguistic landscape field can equally well be included under the umbrella of sociolinguistics or applied linguistics. A more likely development seems to be that the field of linguistic landscape studies remains an academic niche closely related to other specializations, rather than becoming fully integrated as a subfield in only one of the mainstream disciplines and not in others.

Researchers of linguistic landscapes, or semiotic landscapes, have rarely if ever argued for hard dividing lines or a need for orthodoxy. One could, perhaps, even argue that if researchers insist that their study is about the linguistic landscape, then it could be accepted as a linguistic landscape study, even if other researchers would have their doubts or perhaps even be inclined to reject the claim.

Within this field, researchers will be interested in different ways of studying not only the signs, but also the people, the producers of the signs and the passersby. They will place a different emphasis on how they analyze the signs or what they want to know about the people. Some researchers may ask why people chose the language or what their opinion is about it, because language choice and attitudes are typical sociolinguistic issues. Other researchers may be more interested in how people can learn specific forms of language on display, which is perhaps more an applied linguistic question. Again, others may wonder which meanings can be attributed to language, multimodal dimensions, design, placement

or material aspects, as more semiotic problems. There is a degree of overlap and there are many similarities. The differences seem to be more a question of emphasis by paying more attention to one aspect or another. Some researchers are starting with an investigation of the signage with an emphasis on the aspect of language, and then asking different questions: ‘Which languages are chosen? How and where language is used? What are its linguistic features?’. In contrast, scholars who are starting from an interest in semiotic resources, such as symbols or logos, may be primarily interested in meanings and multimodal aspects. One could perhaps even argue that some researchers are mostly concerned about what is written in a context, whereas others focus more on the context in which signs are written.

In this book, we will use the term linguistic landscape throughout, but we include studies that use the label semiotic landscape and, of course, we use the term to refer to or cite such works.

### 1.5 Landscape

Linguistic or semiotic is only half of the expression; the other word in the equation is landscape. The word landscape (*lantscap*) can be dated etymologically to early 13th-century Dutch, when it referred to a region of land or a territory (Antrop, 2013). The suffix *-scap* refers to creating or reclaiming land (compare *scheppen* in Dutch or *schaffen* in German). Only in the 17th century was the meaning of a painting depicting a scenery on land incorporated in English as a genre of Dutch painting, although the art genre itself is older. Obviously, today landscape can relate to both territory and scenery. The word has additional meanings, including the expression of ideas or thoughts and it can be used in a metaphorical way. According to Antrop (2013), general landscape research has given attention to the exact meaning and scientific definition, but the meaning shifts according to the context and the users’ background. Landscapes have distinct characteristics and are shaped by historical, economic and ecological factors. One approach in landscape research focuses, for example, on spatial patterns of land use, while another focuses on historical development and its meaning for heritage. One important point for linguistic landscape studies is the cultural geographic approach mentioned by Antrop (2013) because it focuses on the symbolic meanings of landscape as mentally and socially constructed. In an early publication (Gorter, 2006b), the concept of landscape was discussed in general, pointing to its double meaning as a tract of land and a picture as being common in different languages. Antrop and Van Eetvelde (2017: 42) observed that the word landscape ‘has multiple meanings and subtle differences exist between “landscape” and related terms in different languages’. They also provide an overview of the key meanings of the word landscape in several European languages. As discussed in Gorter (2006b),

the word is similar in all Germanic languages, based on the root for land. The same happened in Romance languages, which translated the root as *pays*. The Finnoegric languages use the root land, but Slavic languages use the root for region or territory (*kraj*). Russian has both *peyzazh* and *landshaft*, as loans from French and German. Interestingly, *peyzazh* refers to the subjective aspect, with an emphasis on poetical, pictorial and emotional values. The meaning of *landshaft* refers to the objective aspect, which makes it possible to change the landscape in a technical way (Lörzing, 2001: 35). These two dimensions, the more subjective emotional and the more objective technical, could also be applied in linguistic landscape studies, for example to distinguish between the dimensions of the symbolic or solidarity function and the informative or communicative function of language signs (Gorter, 2006b). Interestingly, English is the only language where landscape is not only a noun, but also a verb: to landscape and landscaping. It means that the expression ‘linguistic landscaping’ is rather common in the literature.

Linguistic landscape is, of course, basically a metaphorical use of the word landscape. Still, in linguistic landscape studies, both the literal meaning and its representation are used. On the one hand, there is the study of features of languages as they are literally used in signs, and on the other hand, what languages represent, in connection to issues of the relative power and prestige of different languages in a sociolinguistic context. Signs in public spaces can be taken as the literal panorama passersby perceive when walking or driving through a street and, at the same time, the visible signage could be an indicator of the languages of the inhabitants or visitors and there can be different meanings or interpretations. The duality of the literal scenery and its representation is thus relevant for linguistic landscape studies.

The basic idea of landscape as a well-defined area that is somehow created, as a space that can be seen at one time from one place, is important for research methods in linguistic landscape studies. This idea is related to the unit of analysis and the research area where an investigation takes place (see Chapter 4).

In the opinion of, among others, Nash (2016) and Savela (2018), insufficient attention has been paid to the concept of landscape, given its relevance for linguistic landscape research, even though some authors have reflected on the concept, including Jaworski and Thurlow (2010), Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) and Spolsky (2009a). Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996: 35) argue that landscape ‘only makes sense in the context of their whole environment and of the history of its development’. They refer to the etymology of -scape related to shaping: landscapes are the product of human action and social history; for them, this aspect also applies to the semiotic landscape. Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) build on this line of thought and present a program of studies based on human geography and art history that attempts to cover a wide range of

issues related to the study of space as a semiotic resource. Following the geographer Cosgrove, they conceive of landscape ‘as a way of seeing the external world and as a visual ideology’ (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010: 3) because space is not only physical, but also socially constructed. In agreement with Jaworski and Thurlow (2010), Leeman and Modan (2009) proposed to rethink the concept of landscape based on how the term is used in cultural geography, both as a place and as a way of seeing. Thurlow and Gonçalves (2019: 113) argue that the concept of landscape, even if it looks fixed, has to be understood as ‘entailing dynamic, contingent, and often mobile processes of landscaping’.

Spolsky (2009a) perceived the term ‘landscape’ as misleading, and when he reflected upon the name of the field, he mentions cityscape as preferable to landscape, because the field investigates ‘urban public verbal signs’. To some extent, we agree with Spolsky that signs are found less often in landscapes in the literal sense, as in nature, but are observed much more frequently in cities, thus in a cityscape. In almost all places, a cityscape will not have just one language, so, in that sense, as we said before, the term multilingual cityscape could be more accurate (Gorter, 2006b: 83). In the journal *Landscape Research*, Nash (2016) takes a polemic stance in his book reviews of Blommaert (2013) and Hélot *et al.* (2012). He answers his own critical and stimulating question ‘Is linguistic landscape necessary?’ with both yes and no because linguistic landscape studies are thus far mainly sociolinguistic but they need landscape research. He concludes that linguistic landscape studies need ‘more precise landscape attention’ (Nash, 2016: 5). Savela (2018) reflects more extensively on the term landscape and how it has been used or defined by geographic landscape researchers. Obviously, landscape is a more complex word than a territory or a region and there is no agreement on one definition among geographers. They commonly approach it as a pictorial representation, as a view or a way of seeing. Savela (2018: 32) follows the geographer Tuan’s ‘understanding of landscape as an integrated image, an ordering of reality, consisting of smaller units, which function as subsidiary clues to a larger construct’. Signs as individual units may appear chaotic, but taken together they function as one whole. This idea of a landscape as both order and disorder, or chaos and gestalt, can also be found in Ben-Rafael *et al.* (2010). Savela (2018: 32) argues that ‘one should not focus solely on the landscape items as such, (because) otherwise one risks not seeing the overall pattern’. He also mentions that in the field of research on landscapes in general, the issue of language as such has seldom been addressed.

The suffix of the word land-‘scape’ can be linked to a series of different combinations with *scape* as an alternative or as additional dimensions of linguistic landscapes. Some authors have taken the work by Appadurai (1990) on globalization into consideration because he proposed five scapes as dimensions of fluid and shifting global cultural flows: ethnoscares,

mediascapes, technoscapes, ideoscapes and finanscapes. Pennycook and Otsuji (2015) mentioned inspiration from the geographer Porteous who proposed a list of scapes based on the senses (allscapes, dreamscapes, etc.). In linguistic landscape studies related to education, ‘schoolscape’ (Brown, 2012) has gained traction, and others have proposed ‘education-scape’ (Vandenbroucke, 2022). Spoken language is included in ‘soundscape’ (Scarvaglieri *et al.*, 2013) and online studies have been referred to as ‘cyberscape’ (Ivkovic & Lotherington, 2009). Other examples are as follows: body inscriptions and tattoos form a ‘skinscape’ (Peck & Stroud, 2015); for tourists there is a ‘linguandscape’ (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010); an ethnography about odors is on a ‘smellscape’ (Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015); the study of graffiti deals with ‘graffitiscape’ (Wachendorff *et al.*, 2017) or ‘graffscape’ (Gonçalves, 2018); and the study of ethnic restaurants is on ‘foodscape’ (Abas, 2019) or ‘semiofoodscape’ (Järlehed & Moriarty, 2018). Other uses are ‘refugeescape’ (Moriarty, 2019), ‘memoryscape’ (Moore, 2019b), studying share-bikes in Sydney leads to ‘bikescape’ (Pennycook, 2019), and Thurlow and Aiello (2007) used ‘semioscape’ to analyze the tail fin designs of airplanes. A contrast has also been drawn between ‘cityscape’ and ‘ruralscape’ (Muth, 2015). Finally, an extension from the public to the private sphere leads to ‘homescape’ (Boivin, 2021). In sum, the literature on linguistic landscapes abounds with an endless number of possibilities of ‘scapes’.

Overall, the expression ‘linguistic landscape’ seems to have been most often accepted among researchers and it maintains this preferred place in the face of efforts at replacement and further terminological refinement.

## 1.6 Concluding Remarks

The study of linguistic landscapes aims to add another lens to our knowledge about language in society by focusing on language choices, hierarchies of languages, contact phenomena, regulations, aspects of literacy and more. Linguistic landscape work has evolved from early investigations that looked somewhat like inventories of linguistic diversity on signs in public spaces, which Pennycook (2009: 305) labelled ‘carthographies’. On closer inspection, one can observe that variation has been a characteristic of investigations from the beginning, even if a wider range of topics are covered nowadays in how and where linguistic landscapes originate, are constructed, perceived, experienced or create meaning. External factors continue to influence the ways in which language is displayed, among those globalization, flows of people due to migration and tourism, technological innovations and the internet, language policy and the revitalization of minority languages and sudden changes such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Linguistic landscape studies have to take those changes into account and such studies become especially significant when they concern social change or conflict and contact between languages or language groups.

Languages on signs are a panorama that spectators see when walking the streets. The relationship between the linguistic landscape and its sociolinguistic context is bidirectional. On the one hand, the linguistic landscape can reflect the relative power and prestige of the languages in a particular context. The totality of the visible signage is the outcome of various processes in a specific situation and the linguistic landscape can be an additional source of data about a sociolinguistic context similar to a census, a survey or interviews. The dominant language of an area has a greater chance of being represented, for example, in place names or commercial signs, while the use of a minority language will often be less common. On the other hand, people will process the visual information of their surroundings, including the written languages on signs, and in that way the linguistic landscape adds to the construction of a sociolinguistic context. This can influence how the prestige of languages is perceived, and it can also have an effect on linguistic practices.

The main aim of our book is to present a panorama of the field of linguistic landscape studies. We present a view of early writings, the scenery of its main approaches, the proliferation of a diversity of perspectives and the expansion of the field in several directions. We look into various issues clustered around a limited number of themes that have been investigated most frequently by researchers in the field. By doing so, we try to provide some answers based on actual data and a great number of research publications. We observe the field from a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches so that we can present our broad overview of this dynamic and constantly developing field.

In photographic terms, we have tried to apply a wide angle lens in order to maximize our field of view, but in framing an encompassing panorama, we had to make selections and decide on what and what not to include. Other authors would have made another cut and probably emphasize other lines of work. This panorama is not a neutral undertaking and we are aware that our choices were guided by our own former work and our preferences. This book is an attempt at describing the state of the art in this field, but in many ways it remains a snapshot. It is not easy, or perhaps impossible, to answer the question of what linguistic landscape really is. We agree with Backhaus (2019: 165) when he states, 'If there is one thing we can say for sure at this point, it is that there is definitely no one proper way of doing linguistic landscape research'. Various questions about linguistic landscapes have been asked, such as: Does it refer to language only or also to other things surrounding us, such as sounds and buildings? What are the connections between signs, languages and people? How can linguistic landscape be applied as a pedagogical tool in an educational system? For a much longer list of relevant questions see Shohamy and Gorter (2009a: 2). For us, one of the most important reasons for developing and contributing to the field is that it furthers our understanding of the relationship between language and



**Figure 1.5** Multilingual sign in tourist area in Mallorca

society. As we will see throughout this book, there are endless opportunities and infinite ways of looking into that relationship through the lens of the public display of language (Figure 1.5).

### **1.7 Overview of the Book**

To conclude this Introduction, we briefly present the next 11 chapters. In Chapter 2 – History: Early Stages of an Emerging Field – we recount the story of how the field of linguistic landscape studies came about. We begin with an overview of seminal studies in five different contexts in the late 20th century. Those projects studied signage in Israel, Belgium, Canada, Spain and Japan. Those scattered studies, together with some others, are the early beginnings of the field. From there, we move on to four by now classic studies published in 2006 that were carried out in Israel, Thailand, Japan, the Basque Country and Friesland. Those studies initiated the establishment of a proper field. The chapter also presents an outline of an increasing number of publications, panels at international conferences as well as annual linguistic landscape workshops, and how those have contributed to strengthen and enlarge a community of researchers who share an interest in the study of public signage and multilingualism in urban contexts. Even if the study of the



linguistic landscape is still a relatively recent development, it already has a solid infrastructure. In Chapter 3 – Theoretical Approaches: A Range of Perspectives – we show the broad range of theoretical approaches in linguistic landscape studies. The diversity of theoretical perspectives can be explained because of the complexity of its object of study which has been investigated by a range of different disciplines. In this chapter, we start with theoretical work grounded in the social sciences, such as ethno-linguistic vitality, frame analysis and geosemiotics. Then, we focus on a few linguistic perspectives such as pragmatics, contact linguistics and language variation. Other theoretical approaches are based on disciplines such as history, economics, cultural geography and policy studies. Our own theoretical model of multilingual inequality in public spaces (MIPS) is then presented. The model aims to describe, analyze and explain the cyclic sequence associated with the construction of linguistic landscapes. In Chapter 4 – Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches – we follow the well-known division between quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Over the past few years, researchers have applied a wide range of different analytical techniques to linguistic landscape data, among those statistical and corpus analysis, and ethnographic, narrative, discourse and critical analysis. We further reflect on the two unresolved issues of the unit of analysis and the sampling area. In Chapter 5 – Photography and Other Distinctive Research Methods – we identify photography as the most typical research method of linguistic landscape studies. Research designs typically include a sample of digital photographs of public signage. We discuss the researcher as photographer, photos as data and the use of photos in publications. In the next sections, we examine innovative research methods, which are video-analysis, walking interviews and eye tracking.

In Chapter 6 – Multilingualism is All Around Us – the focus is on the diversity of languages and multilingualism as topics in almost any linguistic landscape study. We mention some recent developments in the study of multilingualism including the concept of translanguaging. We emphasize their application to the study of the linguistic landscapes. Proposals to categorize multilingual signs are presented and we explain how signs with more than one language can pose a challenge. The chapter goes on to report the results of some studies on multilingualism in the linguistic landscape, among others, studies conducted in Donostia-San Sebastián. In Chapter 7 – The Visibility of Minority Languages – we first introduce the study of minority languages in general. Thereafter, the chapter discusses how the visibility of language is a key factor for minority language groups. The main part of the chapter consists of a comparison of 24 different minority languages. A separate section discusses studies of Chinatowns. The chapter also discusses processes of commodification and tokenism, when minority languages become sellable products. In Chapter 8 – The Influence of Language Policies – we first explain the

relevance of language policy and planning research. Second, we examine the cases of Quebec in Canada and Brussels in Belgium where important language policy studies have taken place. Next, we discuss how different models have been applied and what we can learn from the results. Finally, we discuss our own work on Basque and language policies. Chapter 9 – English Can Be Seen Everywhere – examines how English plays a role in almost any study. We start by discussing globalization and English studies in general. We then apply the well-known model of inner, outer and expanding circles, together with ideas on language hierarchy. In Chapter 10 – Educational Contexts – we first look at linguistic landscapes as a pedagogical tool. The linguistic landscape can be a source of authentic input for language learning. Moreover, research studies also indicate that the linguistic landscape can be used to develop students' motivation and to raise language awareness. The second half of the chapter deals with schoolscape inside schools in different contexts, including our study of the functions of signage inside Basque schools. Chapter 11 – What's In the Names? – discusses the various types of names in linguistic landscapes. Onomastics, the study of proper names, is relevant for linguistic landscape studies. We further discuss the problem of attributing names to languages. Two recurring themes are the effects of a name change, and what names signify. In Chapter 12 – Expanding the Field of View – the concluding chapter, we deal with some topics that have only been touched upon tangentially in the foregoing chapters: borders, gentrification, gender and sexuality and graffiti. We discuss some further topics that remain insufficiently researched or unresolved. We look forward to consider technological developments and a trend toward uniformity and discuss future directions this fascinating field may take.