

Walls of Resistance: Graffiti, Language, and Student Protest in the July Movement at Dhaka University

*Journal of Asian
Social Science Research*
2026, Vol. 8, No. 1: 1-30
<https://cassr.net/jassr/>
© The Author(s) 2026

Md Sabbir Hossain*

University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Abstract

University campuses are important sites of student protest, yet limited attention has been paid to how multilingual graffiti functions as political discourse within campus movements. This study examines graffiti produced during the July Movement at Dhaka University to determine how linguistic and semiotic choices shaped political expression, student identity, and activism. Using a qualitative design, the study combines field observation, photographic documentation, content analysis of 18 graffiti samples from different campus locations, and interviews with eight students representing supportive, oppositional, and mixed views. The analysis focuses on borrowing, expression borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, adaptation, morphological variation, and semiotic meaning across Bangla, English, Persian, Urdu, and Spanish. The findings show that graffiti transformed campus walls into a contested linguistic landscape through which students expressed resistance, solidarity, anger, satire, and collective memory. Code-switching and code-mixing connected local grievances with broader activist vocabularies, while borrowed and adapted expressions linked the movement to historical and transnational repertoires of resistance. The study contributes to protest-language and linguistic-landscape scholarship by demonstrating how multilingual campus graffiti makes activism visible, memorable, and politically contested. It concludes that graffiti should be understood as both a communicative resource and a site of struggle over meaning, identity, and public memory.

Key Words: Adaptation, borrowing, code-mixing, code-switching, Dhaka University, graffiti, July Movement, morphological variation, semiotic meaning

* Corresponding author:

Md Sabbir Hossain

Institute of Modern Languages, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Email: mdsabbir-5th-2019515188@iml.du.ac.bd

INTRODUCTION

Graffiti is often treated as a marginal, informal, or even illicit form of writing. Yet, in moments of political crisis, it can become one of the most visible forms of public speech. Its power lies not only in what it says, but also in where, how, and in which language it says it. In contentious political spaces, graffiti transforms walls, gates, corridors, and public buildings into sites of symbolic struggle. It makes dissent visible, condenses political anger into memorable slogans, and turns ordinary urban or institutional space into a contested linguistic landscape. Within university campuses, this function becomes especially significant because campuses are not merely educational institutions; they are also historically important arenas of student mobilization, political debate, and collective identity formation.

Scholarship on linguistic landscapes has shown that public signs, inscriptions, and visual texts participate in the production of social meaning, linguistic hierarchy, spatial identity, and contested political belonging (Angermeyer 2017; Shulist 2018; Themistocleous 2019; Mulyawan et al. 2022; Landry and Bourhis 1997; Gorter 2006; Gorter and Cenoz 2017; Seloni and Sarfati 2017; Sakhiyya and Martin-Anatias 2023; Yao 2023; Baranova 2024; Zhang 2024; Nambu and Ono 2025; Álvarez 2025). A related body of work on graffiti and protest discourse demonstrates that graffiti can operate as a form of political communication, an expression of informal culture, and a means through which marginalized or oppositional voices challenge dominant narratives (Sheivandi et al. 2015; Seloni and Sarfati 2017; Radavičiūtė 2017; Zhang and Chan 2021; Hána and Šel 2022; Hess and Mulyana 2022; Miranda Correa 2023; Shariatpanah et al. 2022; Álvarez 2025; Amjad 2025; Archakis, Serafis, and Kitis 2018; Debras 2019; Demaj and Vandenbroucke 2024; Moskovljevic, Masood, and Skoric 2025; Reed, Asún, and Fernández Droguett 2026; Hána 2026). These studies have moved the analysis of public writing beyond official signage and commercial display by showing how unofficial texts also shape public space, social memory, and political subjectivity. At the same time, research on urban linguistic landscapes has emphasized the role of multilingualism, code choice, and multimodality in constructing identity and negotiating power in public settings (Blackwood 2015; Moriarty 2014; Sakhiyya and Martin-Anatias 2023; Yao 2023; Siziba and Maseko 2024; Zhang 2024; Motschenbacher 2024; Bhujel and Sinha 2024; Nambu and Ono 2025).

However, three limitations remain in the existing literature. First, much linguistic landscape research has focused on relatively stable urban signage, institutional language policy, or commercial multilingualism, while the fast-moving, ephemeral, and conflictual language of protest graffiti has

received less sustained attention. Second, studies of protest graffiti often emphasize political content, visual symbolism, or ideological messaging, but pay less attention to the specific linguistic mechanisms through which protest is articulated, including borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, transliteration, lexical innovation, and morphological adaptation. Third, university campuses remain under-theorized as distinctive protest linguistic landscapes. They are neither ordinary urban spaces nor fully controlled institutional spaces; rather, they are semi-public arenas where student actors, state authority, party politics, memory, and generational identity intersect. As a result, existing scholarship has not yet sufficiently explained how the linguistic form of campus graffiti helps produce the political force of student movements.

This article addresses that gap through an analysis of graffiti produced during the July Movement of 2024 at Dhaka University, a movement widely associated with the quota reform protests. During this period, campus walls became dense surfaces of political inscription. Graffiti appeared as slogans, accusations, demands, memorial statements, and expressions of solidarity. These texts did not simply record the movement after the fact; they participated in the movement's communicative life. They circulated political messages, marked spaces of dissent, and gave visual-linguistic form to student anger, aspiration, and collective identity.

The central research question of this study is how did the textual graffiti of the July Movement at Dhaka University use linguistic resources to articulate political demands, construct student identities, and contest authority within the campus space? More specifically, the article asks how borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, and morphological variation functioned in the graffiti, and how students with different positions toward the movement interpreted the political and communicative force of these inscriptions.

The article argues that the graffiti of the July Movement should not be read merely as spontaneous protest decoration or as a collection of isolated slogans. Rather, it constituted a critical campus linguistic landscape in which language choice, hybrid forms, and textual placement worked together to produce dissent. The use of Bangla, English, mixed linguistic forms, and adapted lexical items reflected more than linguistic diversity; it indexed competing claims about justice, merit, citizenship, youth identity, political legitimacy, and resistance. In this sense, multilingual and morphologically creative graffiti became a semiotic resource through which students transformed Dhaka University's campus into a visible arena of political contestation.

This argument contributes to sociolinguistics, linguistic landscape studies, and political discourse analysis in three ways. First, it shifts the analysis of protest graffiti from message content alone to the linguistic forms through which protest becomes socially meaningful. Second, it advances the study of university campuses as critical linguistic landscapes where institutional space can be temporarily reconfigured by student movements. Third, it shows that the Dhaka University case has significance beyond Bangladesh: it offers a way to understand how youth movements in the Global South use multilingual public writing to challenge authority, construct collective identity, and produce alternative political narratives in moments of crisis.

Empirically, the study focuses on approximately eighteen textual graffiti samples collected from different locations within Dhaka University during and after the July Movement of 2024. It also draws on interviews with students who supported and opposed the movement in order to examine how graffiti was interpreted by participants and observers within the campus community. The analysis concentrates primarily on textual graffiti rather than pictorial or purely visual elements, although it recognizes that graffiti is often multimodal in practice. By treating these inscriptions as both linguistic data and political artifacts, the article documents an important dimension of the July Movement while also developing a broader account of how language operates in student-led contentious politics.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative case-study design to examine the linguistic features and socio-political meanings of graffiti produced during the July Movement of 2024 at Dhaka University. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study is concerned not with measuring the frequency of graffiti, but with interpreting how language choices, textual forms, and campus space interacted in a specific moment of student activism.

Dhaka University was selected as the research site for three reasons. First, it was one of the central locations of student mobilization during the July Movement. Second, the campus has a long historical association with student politics, public protest, and language-based political expression in Bangladesh. Third, during the movement, its walls, gates, corridors, and public surfaces became visible sites of political inscription. This makes Dhaka University an appropriate case for examining how protest graffiti functions as a campus-based linguistic landscape.

The primary data consist of approximately eighteen graffiti samples collected from different locations across the Dhaka University campus. The researcher documented the graffiti through photographs and field notes, recording the location, surrounding context, visible language choices, and relevant observations about placement and visibility. Although some graffiti contained visual or pictorial elements, the analysis focuses primarily on textual features. Visual elements are considered only when they help clarify the meaning of the written message.

Graffiti samples were selected through purposive sampling from the wider corpus of graffiti documented during fieldwork. The selection followed four criteria. First, the graffiti had to be clearly connected to the July Movement, the quota reform issue, or the wider political debates surrounding the movement. Second, the text had to be sufficiently legible for linguistic analysis. Third, the sample had to display identifiable linguistic features, such as borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, expression borrowing, lexical innovation, or morphological adaptation. Fourth, the selected samples had to represent diversity in language use, location, message type, and political tone. Repeated, illegible, purely pictorial, or linguistically indistinct graffiti were excluded. The final set of eighteen samples was therefore not intended to represent all graffiti on campus statistically, but to provide a focused and diverse body of data for qualitative linguistic interpretation.

The study also draws on semi-structured interviews with eight Dhaka University students. Snowball sampling was used because participants' positions toward the movement and their familiarity with specific graffiti were not always publicly identifiable. The recruitment began with students known to have knowledge of the movement, and they then referred the researcher to other relevant participants. The final interview group consisted of four students who supported the July Movement, three students who opposed it, and one student who supported the quota reform movement but did not support the later demand associated with "Step Down Hasina." This classification allows the study to include supportive, oppositional, and more mixed perspectives.

Eight interviewees were considered sufficient for the purpose of this study because the interviews were not used to make broad statistical claims about all Dhaka University students. Rather, they were used to contextualize how selected graffiti were interpreted by students with different political positions. The sample provided enough variation to compare supportive, oppositional, and ambivalent readings of the graffiti, while remaining manageable for close qualitative analysis. The interviews

focused on students' perceptions of the graffiti, their understanding of the political messages conveyed through linguistic choices, and their views on whether graffiti shaped student discourse, motivation, or activism during the movement.

Data collection involved three main tools: a smartphone camera for photographing graffiti, a field notebook for recording location and contextual notes, and a voice recorder for interviews. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed alongside the graffiti data. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns in both the textual graffiti and interview responses. The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, the graffiti texts were categorized according to linguistic features, including borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, expression borrowing, and morphological variation. Second, these features were interpreted in relation to their political messages and campus locations. Third, interview responses were used to examine how students understood the meanings and effects of the graffiti.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research. Interview participants were informed about the purpose of the study and gave consent before participating. Their identities were anonymized, and no personally identifying information is disclosed in the article. Interview recordings and transcripts were handled confidentially. Since the graffiti were located in publicly visible campus spaces, they were treated as public texts; however, the analysis avoids identifying individual graffiti writers where authorship is unknown or politically sensitive.

RESULTS

Findings present the key linguistic features observed in the graffiti of the July Movement 2024 at Dhaka University. The analysis is structured according to the identified linguistic variations: borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, adaptation, morphological variation, and semiotic. Each variation is examined through graffiti sample analysis. Additionally, the study explores how these linguistic strategies contribute to the broader role of graffiti in shaping public discourse and activism on campus.

Linguistic Features

Grffiti serves as a dynamic site of linguistic experimentation, where various linguistic features emerge as tools of political expression. In the context of the July Movement 2024 at Dhaka University, multiple linguistic strategies were employed to convey messages, assert identities,

and mobilize support. This section explores the key linguistic variations evident in the collected graffiti samples, including borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, adaptation, and morphological variation.

Borrowing

The graffiti presented in the Images 1 and 2 reflects a complex interplay of historical, political, and linguistic influences in Bangladesh. The use of borrowed words such as “ইনকিলাব” (Inquilab), “জন্দিবাদ” (Zindabad), and “মুর্দাবাদ” (Murdabad) carries deep historical significance, stemming from Arabic, Persian, and Urdu linguistic traditions. These terms have been widely utilized in various socio-political movements in the Indian subcontinent, including Bangladesh’s own struggles for democracy and national identity. The adoption of these terms in the 2024 July Movement graffiti is not incidental but deeply rooted in the nation’s historical and political discourse.



Following the partition of India in 1947, Bangladesh was initially part of Pakistan, where Urdu was promoted as a dominant language. Given that a majority of Bangladesh’s population is Muslim, linguistic influences from Arabic and Persian were naturally absorbed into political rhetoric. After gaining independence in 1971, Bangladesh’s political landscape was primarily shaped by two major parties: the Awami League, which led the liberation war under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), established in 1978 by Ziaur Rahman. Over time, political narratives and slogans became deeply intertwined with ideological positioning. The Awami League adopted “জয় বাংলা” (Joy Bangla) as its rallying cry, associating itself with the liberation war, while BNP popularized “বাংলাদেশে জন্দিবাদ” (Bangladesh Zindabad),

which carried connotations of nationalism but also retained linguistic ties to Urdu and Persian. Additionally, Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islamic political organization with historical links to Pakistan, frequently used Arabic and Persian-derived phrases in its slogans, reinforcing a religiously motivated political identity.

In the 2024 July Movement, these linguistic elements reappeared in graffiti, reflecting the diverse ideological composition of the movement, which included members of the Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing, Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir, BNP's student organization, and various left-wing, right-wing, and independent activists. The phrase “মুজিববাদ মুরদাবাদ” (Mujibbad Murdabad) in the second graffiti image suggests a direct critique of the ruling party's governance, portraying the perception that Mujibism, or the ideological legacy of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, has led to unchecked political power and corruption. The imagery of a figure weighed down by an oversized coat, resembling the iconic Mujib coat, serves as a metaphor for political burden and misgovernance. The chained fists breaking free in the first graffiti symbolize defiance and a call for liberation from perceived oppression. The depiction of monetary symbols and corporate figures in the second image underscores grievances against economic inequality and corruption.

The graffiti's colours emphasize its messages. Recalling Bangladesh's political conflicts, red represents resistance, revolution, and sacrifice. Black symbolizes oppression and corruption, while white backgrounds boost visibility. Blue colours green, especially in money depictions, ironically criticize financial power and political corruption. These colours make a startling and ideologically charged combination. The graffiti mirrors Bangladesh's political discourse, where historical tales and language affect activism. Using Arabic, Persian, and Urdu slogans reinforces the fight for justice, reform, and democracy.

Expression Borrowing

The phrase “Patria O Muerte”, meaning “Fatherland or Death”, originates from the Cuban Revolution and was famously used by Fidel Castro and Ernesto “Che” Guevara as a revolutionary slogan against imperialism. This expression symbolized unwavering patriotism, resistance, and the willingness to sacrifice for national sovereignty. Similarly, the English version, “Motherland or Death”, carries the same ideological weight and has been used in various revolutionary contexts, emphasizing nationalism and the readiness to fight for one's homeland. The

presence of these borrowed phrases at Dhaka University during the July Uprising in Bangladesh indicates a deliberate attempt to evoke historical revolutionary fervor, drawing parallels between past global movements and the contemporary struggle for justice, democracy, and equality in Bangladesh (see Images 3 and 4).



Image 3

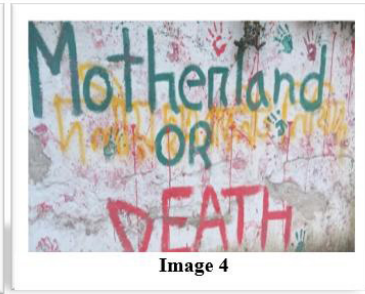


Image 4

During the July Uprising, students and activists at Dhaka University used powerful linguistic expressions to assert their defiance against perceived state oppression and corruption. The choice of “Patria O Muerte” and “Motherland or Death” resonates deeply with Bangladesh’s history, particularly the 1971 Liberation War, where patriotic devotion led to immense sacrifice for the nation’s independence. These expressions in the university’s graffiti reflect a call for resistance, much like in Cuba, where the phrase became a defining voice of rebellion. By using this international slogan, protestors at Dhaka University aligned their movement with broader global struggles against authoritarianism and neo-colonialism, framing their fight within a historical legacy of resistance. The phrase conveys a sense of urgency, implying that the political stakes are so high that only two options remain: liberation or destruction. Colours boost graffiti’s effect. In Image 3, red represents revolution, black resistance, and white visibility. Green represents nationalism, yellow change, and red battle, with handprints expressing unification in Image 4. At Dhaka University during the July Uprising, these graphics linked historical and present conflicts to show students’ quest for justice.

Code-Switching

The graffiti in Images 5 and 6 are deeply embedded in the historical and political discourse surrounding Bangladesh, particularly reflecting sentiments related to state oppression, enforced disappearances, and resistance movements. These linguistic expressions, through a blend of English and Bengali, do not merely serve as protest graffiti but also as symbolic references to both contemporary and historical struggles.



Image 5



Image 6

The phrase “Baba, I miss you” in Image 5 carries significant emotional and political weight. To fully grasp its meaning, one must contextualize it within Bangladesh’s political history, particularly spanning the last seventeen years under the governance of the Awami League. The reference points to a period when allegations of forced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and political oppression were frequently made against state forces such as the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), police, and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB). Reports indicate that individuals, particularly political dissidents, were forcibly disappeared, leaving behind families, including unborn children, who never saw their fathers. This graffiti thus serves as a collective voice of those who have lost loved ones to political violence, making a powerful emotional appeal.

The phrase “আমারে যাইতে দেন না, আমার একটা ছোট বোন আছে!” (Let me go, I have a younger sister.)” spoken by Golam Sarwar Saad during his unlawful detention by the police during the July Movement holds deep emotional and political significance. His desperate plea highlights not just personal distress but also a broader reality of state oppression and forced disappearances. The graffiti depicting such statements serves as a powerful tool of resistance, where code-switching plays a crucial role in amplifying its impact.

Additionally, the English lyric “One day you’ll leave this world behind, so live a life you will remember” echoes themes of martyrdom, resistance, and historical sacrifice. The line invokes the memory of figures like Nuruldin, Titumir, and Surya Sen, who sacrificed their lives resisting oppression in different historical periods. These leaders, pivotal in Bengali resistance movements, stood against colonial and authoritarian forces. The juxtaposition of this lyric with references to recent political turmoil suggests that the July Movement of 2024 is seen as a continuation of Bengal’s long-standing tradition of resistance. Image 5 shows urgency and defiance; red represents sacrifice and bloodshed, while yellow warns and awakens against repeated injustices.

In contrast, Image 6 takes a more satirical approach, utilizing code-switching and linguistic humour to critique the political discourse surrounding the Awami League. The phrase “Mr. কাউয়া” (Mr. Crow) is a deliberate blending of English and Bengali, serving as a derogatory nickname for Obaidul Quader, the General Secretary of the Awami League. The crow (কাউয়া) metaphor has been widely used in political rhetoric to depict sycophantic behaviour, implying that he blindly supported party leadership, particularly Sheikh Hasina, despite public discontent.

The statement “She has made us smart” is a sarcastic allusion to Obaidul Quader’s public speeches, where he frequently praised Sheikh Hasina’s leadership, asserting that her policies had transformed Bangladesh into a “Smart Bangladesh.” However, within the context of the July Movement, this statement is repurposed ironically, implying that instead of empowering the people, the policies led to greater dissatisfaction and political unrest. The extension of this phrase—“She has made us fly”—adds another layer of mockery, particularly in the aftermath of August 5, 2024, when Sheikh Hasina allegedly fled to India amidst the escalating protests. Here, “fly” metaphorically suggests both the students’ rise in political consciousness and the leader’s escape from accountability. The red letters and green leaf in Image 6 symbolize the contrast between idealistic nationalism and political violence. The government’s progress narrative is questioned by political chaos. Both visuals connect local and worldwide audiences using linguistic borrowing and code-switching. Historical allusions, colour symbolism, and humour make them effective protest tactics. According to Dhaka University’s political culture, these graffiti continue Bangladesh’s fight against authoritarianism.

Code-Mixing

The graffiti stating “আমাদের নতুন secular বাংলাদেশে” (Our New Secular Bangladesh) encapsulates a broader historical and sociopolitical discourse regarding Bangladesh’s identity (Image 7). The phrase suggests a renewed commitment to secularism, a principle embedded in the country’s founding ideology but often contested in subsequent political developments. The use of the term “আমাদের” (our) in red symbolizes a collective ownership of this vision, while simultaneously alluding to the historical sacrifices made during both the 1971 Liberation War and the more recent July Movement. The words “নতুন secular” (new secular) are written in yellow, a colour often associated with optimism, signifying the protesters’ aspirations for a future free from religious divisions. Additionally, the term “বাংলাদেশে” (Bangladesh) in green reinforces the connection to both the nation’s natural landscape and its symbolic rebirth.



Image 7



Image 8



Image 9



Image 10

The graffiti “No আয়না ঘর, No হাওয়া ভবন, Only শান্তি” (No mirror house, No wind building, Only peace) reflects a rejection of authoritarian mechanisms historically associated with different political regimes (Image 8). হাওয়া ভবন (Hawa Vobon) was linked to enforced disappearances and political suppression during the tenure of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), while আয়না ঘর has been referenced in discussions of state repression under the Awami League government. The phrase “No” in red serves as a direct repudiation of these sites of political violence, reinforcing the protesters’ demand for systemic change. Both আয়না ঘর and হাওয়া

ভবন are inscribed in black, a colour that often signifies fear, secrecy, and oppression, visually reinforcing their association with authoritarian rule. In contrast, the phrase “Only শান্তি” (Only Peace) is rendered in blue, a colour commonly linked to stability and harmony, alongside an image of a dove—a universal symbol of peace. The background in yellow suggests an optimistic outlook for a future where such oppressive structures are dismantled. Through this visual and linguistic interplay, the graffiti articulates a vision of political transformation, where state-sponsored repression is replaced with democratic governance and social harmony.

Zahir Raihan’s well-known revolutionary statement “আসছে ফাল্গুন, আমরা দ্বিগুণ হব,” (“Falgun, a name of Bengali month, is coming, we will double in number”) which has historically symbolized the resilience of the Bengali people in times of political turmoil (Image 9). Traditionally, the term ফাল্গুন (Falgun) is metaphorically associated with the intensification of political resistance, as seen in various historical movements, including the anti-colonial struggle, the 1952 Language Movement, and the Liberation War of 1971. The shift from “আসছে” (coming) to “Already” in English signals an important linguistic and conceptual transformation, indicating that the movement no longer perceives itself as a future possibility but as an immediate reality. The reference to কৃষ্ণচূড়া ফুল (Krishnachura flower), which is often emblematic of protest and sacrifice, further reinforces this historical continuity. Additionally, the word “দ্বিগুণ” (doubled) is written in green, a colour associated with growth and renewal, indicating the movement’s increasing momentum. By integrating these historical references with contemporary political activism, the graffiti positions the July Movement as an extension of Bangladesh’s long-standing tradition of resistance against oppression.

The graffiti “KILLER HASINA” reflects a radicalized critique of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s 17-year tenure, during which allegations of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and political suppression became focal points of public discourse (Image 10). The explicit use of the term “KILLER” represents a linguistic shift from institutional critique to the personalization of political accountability. The choice of red for this phrase underscores themes of violence and bloodshed, aligning with widespread perceptions of state-sponsored repression. The call for ফাঁসি (execution) further highlights the intensity of public sentiment, framing Hasina’s governance within the discourse of justice and retribution. This graffiti exemplifies how political movements utilize visual and linguistic strategies to frame leadership narratives, shifting from broader institutional critiques to direct challenges against individual

figures. In doing so, it reflects not only political dissatisfaction but also the ways in which resistance movements construct their historical memory and demand justice within public discourse.

Adaptation

The phrase “Chin Tapak Dam Dam” originates from the Indian animated series *Chhota Bheem*, where it is used as a magical chant to bring about quick and extraordinary transformations (Image 11). Within the context of graffiti, this phrase has been reinterpreted to reflect a sense of immediate political and social change. Historically, Bangladesh has witnessed rapid shifts in power, from the anti-colonial resistance against British rule to the struggle for independence from Pakistan in 1971. The July movement, which began as a protest against the quota system, eventually escalated into a broader demand for governmental change, echoing past movements where public dissatisfaction led to major political shifts.

The graffiti artist strategically uses the chant to symbolize the expectation of an almost magical transformation in governance. The prison-striped character suggests oppression and the potential fall of an authoritative figure, reinforcing the notion that history has repeatedly seen rulers overthrown when the people’s will prevails. The yellow text against the dark background serves as a visual metaphor for hope emerging from years of suppression, aligning with past revolutions in Bangladesh where optimism and resistance led to fundamental societal changes. The graffiti, therefore, does not merely borrow a phrase from popular culture but repurposes it within a historical framework, drawing a parallel between Bangladesh’s political past and the anticipation of yet another transformation.



The phrase “Patria O Muerte”, meaning “Fatherland or Death,” is a historically significant revolutionary slogan associated with Cuban leader Fidel Castro and Argentine revolutionary Che Guevara (Image 12). It was prominently used during the Cuban Revolution, symbolizing unwavering commitment to national sovereignty and the willingness to sacrifice for the homeland. The phrase later gained global recognition as a call for resistance against imperialism and oppression.

In this graffiti, the visual elements amplify the message of urgency and defiance. The bold red and black lettering, with uneven strokes, conveys a sense of raw intensity and protest. The strategic use of red, often associated with revolution, struggle, and sacrifice, reinforces the gravity of the statement, while black adds a stark contrast, enhancing its visual impact. The slightly distorted and irregular letter placement suggests a dynamic, almost chaotic energy, reflecting the volatile nature of political movements.

The adaptation of this phrase in the context of the July movement at Dhaka University suggests a parallel between historical revolutionary struggles and contemporary political resistance in Bangladesh. By appropriating a slogan rooted in Latin American revolutionary discourse, the graffiti artist draws a connection between the fight for justice in different geopolitical contexts, emphasizing a universal theme of resistance against authoritarian rule.

Morphological Variation

The graffiti labelled “Pookie Nation” with a Hello Kitty-like drawing represents the transformation of Gen-Z from being perceived as passive and gaming-obsessed to becoming key stakeholders in the July Movement (Image 13). The phrase “HELLO KITTY LEAGUE” suggests a mockery of the initial underestimation of these young protesters. The pink background carries symbolic weight, often associated with softness, but in this context, it challenges the masculinity of the ruling student body (Bangladesh Chhatra League), implying that they relied on hired goons rather than direct confrontation. This graffiti embodies the linguistic creativity of Gen-Z, reclaiming derogatory labels and reshaping their identity as a powerful, digitally savvy generation that ultimately brought down a long-standing authoritarian rule.



Image 13



Image 14



Image 15



Image 16

In the second graffiti, a figure resembling Spiderman climbs a pole while holding the Bangladesh flag, alongside the text “THEY NOT LIKE US” (Image 14). The absence of proper grammar (“do” missing before “not”) signals the informal, direct language of digital youth, emphasizing urgency over correctness. The use of bold red letters reinforces the notion of repression—how the ruling power viewed the protesters as enemies. The image suggests that Gen-Z, often dismissed as mere consumers of entertainment, actually draws inspiration from pop culture to fuel their resistance. Just as superheroes fight against injustice, these young activists transformed themselves into real-life defenders of democracy.

The graffiti featuring a cat and the phrase “Oi Mama Na Plz” takes a sarcastic jab at Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s repeated evocation of her family’s tragic past to justify political actions (Image 15). The term “Mama” (uncle) is often used in Bangladesh to refer to authority figures, and here it appears in a pleading tone, rejecting the use of past grief as a shield against present accountability. The blend of Bangla and English showcases linguistic hybridity, a common trait in youth-driven protests. The cat illustration adds an element of irony (cute yet defiant) mirroring the digital-native humour of the movement.

This final graffiti, where “Oi Nani Plz Na!” is scrawled in mixed scripts, shifts the term of address from “Mama” to “Nani” (grandmother), emphasizing Sheikh Hasina’s aging leadership and perceived disconnection from contemporary struggles (Image 16). The playful tone contrasts with the gravity of police violence and student deaths during the movement. The dark, weathered background suggests the weight of historical repetition, where past injustices continue under new guises. This graffiti encapsulates the generational divide between a government clinging to past narratives and a youth-led uprising demanding a new future.

Semiotic Meaning

This graffiti powerfully represents state repression, where a uniformed police officer suppression of free speech, particularly during the July Movement, when student activists were arrested, attacked, and silenced for challenging the quota system. The red background enhances the visual intensity, symbolizing both resistance and the bloodshed endured by protesters. The colour red signifies the martyrs’ sacrifice, as the police unleashed brutal force, including gunfire, on unarmed students.



The image directly references a real incident from July 31, 2024, when Dhaka Metropolitan Police inspector (operations) Arshad Hossain was photographed gagging a student protester (Image 17). His unprofessional conduct led to his suspension by DMP commissioner Md Mainul Hasan. However, this act became a symbol of state oppression and the broader theme of silencing dissent under the ruling government. Many critics argue that under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s 17-year rule, democratic rights such as freedom of speech and voting rights have been systematically eroded, preventing citizens from having a voice in their governance.

The artwork portrays a figure labelled “গণতন্ত্র” (Democracy), with ropes choking its neck, held by two rifles (Image 18). The visual

metaphor suggests that democracy in Bangladesh is under siege, strangled by state violence and military-style oppression. The use of black and white colours reinforces a stark, lifeless atmosphere, emphasizing the bleak reality of suppressed rights. The rifles gripping the noose symbolize how force, rather than democratic dialogue, was used to quell the movement.

The image echoes widespread perceptions that democracy in Bangladesh has been effectively ‘executed’ by the current regime. Many believe that under the Hasina administration, free and fair elections have been denied to the people, with state institutions manipulated to sustain power. The white figure represents democracy, and its association with the colour of a burial shroud (কাফনরে কাপড়) suggests that democracy has been metaphorically ‘killed.’ The black background signifies the dark era of political oppression, highlighting the absence of democratic governance and justice.

This graffiti was created during the July Movement as a powerful call to action, urging students and citizens to reclaim their rights and protest against authoritarian rule. The artwork serves as both a critique and a warning, reminding the public of the dangers of losing democratic freedoms.

Graffiti, Student’s Discourse and Campus Activism

Interviews showed that graffiti on Dhaka’s university campuses had become a critical tool for activism, shaping both public discourse and student movements. During the July Movement, graffiti played a major role in mobilizing students, visually expressing their demands, and resisting administrative suppression. Supporters of the July Movement, such as Interviewees 2 and 3, argued that graffiti served as a permanent protest mechanism, ensuring that student grievances remained visible to everyone. However, opponents, such as Interviewees 6 and 7, claimed that graffiti created a false sense of consensus and often suppressed alternative viewpoints. This analysis examined both perspectives to understand how graffiti influenced activism in Dhaka’s universities.

Graffiti provided a visible and lasting platform for protest, especially when traditional means of expression were censored. Supporters such as Interviewees 4 and 5 believed that graffiti helped students reclaim their campuses from authoritarian control, making their struggles impossible to ignore. Interviewee 3 stated that “graffiti made our demands permanent; even if authorities erased them, we knew our voices had already been heard.” However, opponents such as Interviewees 6 and 8 argued that graffiti was

one-sided and left no room for opposition. Interviewee 6 noted that “these writings only represented the views of the movement’s supporters, making it seem like every student was on board, which was not true.” Interviewee 7 further criticized graffiti for pressuring neutral students to conform, as the overwhelming presence of movement-related artwork made dissenters feel outnumbered and isolated.

Supporters such as Interviewees 1 and 2 claimed that graffiti was instrumental in educating students about the movement, especially during internet shutdowns and media censorship. Interviewee 4 mentioned: “Even students who were unaware of the movement couldn’t ignore the messages on the walls. It forced them to think.” Interviewee 3 emphasized that graffiti acted as a constant reminder of the movement’s goals, keeping the protest spirit alive. However, opponents such as Interviewees 7 and 8 argued that graffiti did not provide a balanced perspective. Interviewee 7 stated that “the writings only pushed one side’s narrative. Those who disagreed had no way to counter those messages.” Interviewee 8 went further, claiming that graffiti was used as a propaganda tool rather than an educational one, as it manipulated emotions instead of encouraging open debate.

Graffiti had a strong emotional and psychological impact on students, reinforcing their commitment to activism. Supporters such as Interviewees 3 and 5 felt empowered by the messages on the walls. Interviewee 3 said: “Seeing phrases like ‘We will not be silenced!’ gave us strength. It reminded us that we were fighting for something bigger than ourselves.” Interviewee 4 also pointed out that graffiti acted as a moral boost for hesitant students, helping them feel part of a larger struggle. However, opponents such as Interviewees 6 and 7 argued that graffiti created psychological pressure on those who did not support the movement. Interviewee 6 noted that “when every wall is covered with slogans supporting the movement, how can someone who disagrees feel comfortable speaking out?” He also added: “It wasn’t just motivation for activists; it was intimidation for dissenters.” This showed how graffiti inspired some students but alienated others.

Supporters viewed graffiti as a symbol of student empowerment and as a way to reclaim university spaces from administrative control. Interviewee 5 stated that “graffiti transformed our campus into a resistance zone. It was our way of saying ‘This is our fight, and we won’t back down.’” He highlighted how graffiti linked local struggles to global resistance movements, citing phrases such as “Resist Now” and “Justice for Students” as examples of how students felt connected to worldwide activism. However, opponents such as Interviewee 8 argued that graffiti was a political tool used to spread anti-government sentiment. He

stated: “These writings did not represent all students. They painted the administration as villains while portraying protesters as heroes, creating a misleading narrative.” He criticized the movement’s use of political symbols, claiming that “instead of fostering discussion, graffiti fuelled division and hostility.”

Supporters believed that graffiti should be preserved as part of the history of student activism, arguing that it represented the true voice of students. Interviewee 2 stated: “If we erase these writings, we erase our history. Future generations deserve to see how we fought for our rights.” Interviewee 4 added: “History is often written by the powerful. Graffiti ensures that the voices of ordinary students are not forgotten.” However, opponents such as Interviewees 7 and 8 strongly disagreed. Interviewee 6 argued: “Preserving graffiti would create a biased historical record, as it only reflects one side’s viewpoint.” He warned that documenting graffiti could encourage future vandalism, setting a dangerous precedent in which political activism justifies property destruction.

The findings suggested that graffiti played a complex and controversial role in shaping activism on Dhaka’s university campuses. Supporters, including Interviewees 1 to 5, argued that it empowered students, kept resistance alive, and ensured historical accountability. They viewed it as a crucial part of student movements, enabling activists to communicate their demands despite censorship. However, opponents, including Interviewees 6 to 8, saw it as a tool of ideological dominance that suppressed opposing views, misrepresented campus-wide opinions, and potentially radicalized students. Ultimately, graffiti in Dhaka’s universities functioned as a double-edged sword: it served both as a powerful protest mechanism and as a controversial means of enforcing conformity. Whether seen as an inspiring act of defiance or an exclusionary political strategy, its influence on student activism was undeniable.

DISCUSSION

This study examined how graffiti produced during the July Movement of 2024 at Dhaka University used linguistic and semiotic resources to express political demands, construct student identities, and shape campus discourse. The findings show that the graffiti employed borrowing, expression borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, adaptation, morphological variation, and visual symbolism. These features suggest that protest graffiti should not be understood merely as spontaneous wall writing or political

decoration. Rather, in this case, graffiti functioned as a multilingual and multimodal form of public discourse through which students made political claims visible in campus space.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in connecting linguistic landscape research with multilingual protest discourse. Existing studies have shown that graffiti can act as a tool of resistance and that language in public space reflects relations of power (Blommaert, 2010; Fairclough, 2001). This study extends that discussion by showing how a university campus can become a critical linguistic landscape during moments of student mobilization. In the Dhaka University case, graffiti did not simply reflect the July Movement; it helped materialize the movement in public space. Through slogans, mixed-language expressions, borrowed political vocabulary, and visual symbols, campus walls became sites where students expressed grievance, solidarity, satire, accusation, and collective memory.

One major finding concerns the use of borrowed political vocabulary. Words such as “ইনকলিাব” (*Inquilab*, revolution), “জিন্দাবাদ” (*Zindabad*, long live), and “মুর্দাবাদ” (*Murdabad*, down with) connected the July Movement to older repertoires of South Asian political expression. This supports Haugen’s (1950) view that borrowing expands expressive possibilities in specific social contexts, and Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) argument that borrowing is often shaped by historical and cultural contact. In the graffiti analyzed here, these borrowed words carried more than lexical meaning. They evoked memories of political struggle, ideological confrontation, and collective mobilization. At the same time, the study should not overstate intentionality. Some of these terms are already familiar in Bangladeshi political discourse; therefore, their use may reflect inherited protest vocabulary as much as deliberate historical strategy.

Code-switching between Bangla and English was another important feature. English expressions such as “Revolution is Now” and “Rise Up!” appeared alongside Bangla slogans, creating a multilingual register of protest. This finding is consistent with Gumperz’s (1982) understanding of code-switching as a socially meaningful practice rather than a random linguistic shift. In the July Movement graffiti, English appeared to serve several possible functions. It could connect local protest to global activist language, address educated urban youth, attract wider attention, or produce a modern and assertive tone. However, these interpretations must be treated carefully. With only eighteen graffiti samples and eight interviews, the study cannot claim that English necessarily had a direct mobilizing effect.

It can only suggest that English formed part of the symbolic repertoire through which some protesters framed their message.

The interviews also showed that code-switching could be interpreted differently by different students. Some participants saw English as a way to make the movement more visible and globally legible. Others suggested that frequent English use might alienate students more comfortable with Bangla or create a sense that the movement spoke mainly to particular urban, educated, or youth-oriented audiences. This tension supports Fairclough's (2001) broader argument that language choices can both enable and restrict participation in discourse. In this case, multilingual graffiti may have expanded the movement's reach for some audiences while making others feel excluded.

Code-mixing further illustrates the hybrid character of the movement's language. Phrases such as “আমাদের নতুন secular বাংলাদেশে” and “No আয়না ঘর, No হাওয়া ভবন, Only শান্তি” combined Bangla and English within single slogans. Following Muysken (2000), such mixing can be read as a form of linguistic hybridity. In the July Movement graffiti, code-mixing appeared to emphasize key political terms, produce rhetorical force, and signal youth-oriented political style. Yet alternative interpretations are also possible. Some mixed forms may not have been carefully planned political strategies. They may have reflected everyday bilingual habits, digital communication styles, popular trends, or the desire to produce short and memorable slogans. This does not weaken their significance. Rather, it shows that political meaning often emerges from ordinary linguistic practices that become intensified in protest contexts.

The adaptation of popular culture was particularly visible in expressions such as “Chin Tapak Dam Dam.” This example shows how playful or familiar cultural references can be recontextualized as protest language. Such adaptation resonates with Barthes' (1977) idea that cultural signs can be reused to produce new ideological meanings. In this case, a phrase associated with entertainment was transformed into a symbol of anticipated political change. For younger protesters, such references may have made graffiti more relatable and emotionally engaging. However, as some interviewees suggested, popular-cultural adaptations can also be read as trivializing political struggle or simplifying complex issues. This ambivalence is important: the same linguistic creativity that makes graffiti powerful for supporters may make it appear unserious or manipulative to opponents.

Morphological variation and non-standard forms also played an important role. Examples such as “PLZ” and “THEY NOT LIKE US” reflected informal, compressed, and youth-oriented language. Androutsopoulos (2000) argues that non-standard language forms can signal creativity, identity, and resistance to dominant norms. In the Dhaka University graffiti, such forms suggested urgency, digital influence, and generational identity. They also challenged expectations of formal political language. Still, these forms should not be interpreted only as resistance. They may also reflect online writing habits, meme culture, speed of production, or the stylistic norms of youth communication. The political meaning of such forms therefore lies not only in their grammatical deviation, but also in how they circulate within a broader youth protest culture.

The semiotic elements of the graffiti strengthened the political messages of the written texts. Images of a police officer gagging a protester or democracy represented as a tied figure conveyed ideas of repression, silencing, and democratic crisis. These findings align with semiotic approaches that treat images, colours, and spatial placement as meaning-making resources (Peirce, 1931; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In the July Movement graffiti, visual elements helped compress complex political claims into emotionally powerful images. However, the effects of these images should be interpreted cautiously. The study can show how the images were structured and how some students interpreted them, but it cannot prove their broader psychological or political impact on the entire campus community.

The interview data further complicate the interpretation of graffiti as activism. Supporters described graffiti as a tool of empowerment, memory, and resistance. They argued that it helped keep student demands visible, especially when conventional channels of communication were limited. Opponents, however, viewed graffiti as one-sided, exclusionary, or propagandistic. This contrast is central to the study’s answer to the second research question. Graffiti shaped student discourse not because all students agreed with it, but because it turned campus walls into contested political surfaces. It made some students feel represented and mobilized, while making others feel pressured, misrepresented, or silenced.

This finding matters beyond Dhaka University because it highlights a broader feature of protest communication in multilingual societies. In South Asia, political expression often moves across languages, scripts, registers,

and symbolic traditions. Protesters draw from local histories, religious and regional vocabularies, English-language activist discourse, digital culture, and global revolutionary references. The July Movement graffiti shows how these resources can converge in campus-based protest. The Dhaka case therefore contributes to comparative studies of South Asian protest communication by showing how multilingual graffiti can connect local grievances to wider repertoires of resistance while also producing tensions around audience, legitimacy, and representation.

At the same time, the scale of this study requires careful interpretation. The analysis is based on eighteen graffiti samples and eight interviews. These data are sufficient for close qualitative interpretation, but they do not allow broad generalizations about all graffiti produced during the July Movement or all student views at Dhaka University. The study also does not measure the actual causal influence of graffiti on mobilization. It can show how graffiti encoded political meanings and how selected students interpreted those meanings, but it cannot determine how many students were persuaded, mobilized, or alienated by the graffiti.

Overall, the findings suggest that graffiti in the July Movement functioned as both a communicative resource and a site of contestation. Borrowing connected the movement to inherited political vocabularies; code-switching and code-mixing produced multilingual protest messages; adaptation and morphological variation reflected youth style and digital influence; and semiotic imagery intensified the emotional force of political claims. These features show that multilingual protest graffiti can help produce political identity and public memory, but they also show that such identity formation is uneven and contested. For this reason, the significance of the Dhaka University case lies not only in its local political context, but also in what it reveals about multilingual political expression in South Asian student movements more broadly.

This study has several limitations. First, the data collection period was limited to four months, while graffiti is highly dynamic and often temporary. Some graffiti may have disappeared, been overwritten, or been removed before they could be documented. Second, the study analysed only eighteen graffiti samples, selected for their linguistic and semiotic relevance. The sample therefore provides depth rather than representativeness. Third, the interview data were drawn from eight participants, which allowed for comparison between supportive, oppositional, and mixed perspectives, but cannot represent the full range of views within the Dhaka University

community. Future research could expand the corpus, include more participants, compare multiple campuses, and examine how protest graffiti circulates between physical walls and digital platforms.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the graffiti of the July Movement at Dhaka University used borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, adaptation, morphological variation, and visual symbolism to express political demands, construct student identities, and turn campus space into a contested site of protest discourse. In direct response to the research question, the findings indicate that graffiti functioned not only as a form of visual protest, but also as a multilingual political resource through which students articulated resistance, solidarity, anger, satire, and collective memory. The main contribution of this study is to show how protest graffiti can be understood as part of a critical linguistic landscape. The Dhaka University case demonstrates that multilingual graffiti does more than reflect political activism; it helps shape how activism becomes visible, memorable, and debatable in public space. By combining Bangla, English, borrowed revolutionary vocabulary, youth slang, popular-cultural references, and political imagery, the graffiti linked local student grievances to broader traditions of South Asian and global protest communication.

At the same time, the study has clear limitations. The analysis is based on eighteen graffiti samples and eight interviews from one university campus. The findings therefore provide close qualitative insight rather than broad generalization. The study also cannot determine the full causal impact of graffiti on student mobilization, since it examines selected texts and selected student interpretations rather than the whole movement or the wider student population. Future research could compare graffiti across different campuses, protest sites, or political movements in Bangladesh and South Asia. It could also examine how protest graffiti circulates between physical walls and digital platforms, and how different audiences interpret its linguistic and visual messages. Overall, the study concludes that graffiti in the July Movement was a politically charged form of multilingual public writing. Its significance lies not only in what it said, but in how it used language, image, and campus space to make student protest visible, contested, and historically meaningful.

References

- Amjad, Iram. 2025. "Reclaiming Sociolinguistic Identity through Graffiti Art: A Social Semiotics Approach to Wall Expressions." *Discourse & Society* 36(6): 823–843. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265251323910>.
- Androutsopoulos, Jannis K. 2000. "Non-Standard Spellings in Media Texts: The Case of German Fanzines." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4 (4): 514–533. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9481.00128>.
- Angermeyer, Philipp Sebastian. 2017. "Controlling Roma Refugees with 'Google-Hungarian': Indexing Deviance, Contempt, and Belonging in Toronto's Linguistic Landscape." *Language in Society* 46 (2): 159–183. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404516001020>.
- Arias Álvarez, Alba. 2025. "Graffiti and Urban Transformation: The Ideological Discourse in the Semiotic Landscape of the Asturian Mining Valley." *Social Semiotics*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2025.2451930>.
- Baranova, Vlada. 2024. "The Linguistic Landscape of the War: Minority Languages, Language Activism, and Contesting Identities in Russia." *Linguistic Landscape* 10 (1): 55–78. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ll.23006.bar>.
- Barthes, Roland. 1977. *Image, Music, Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath. London: Fontana Press.
- Bhujel, Birendra, and Sweta Sinha. 2024. "Linguistic Landscape as Social Identity Construction of the Public Space: An Empirical Study of the Plain Region of Darjeeling District." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2024.2371933>.
- Blackwood, Robert. 2015. "LL Explorations and Methodological Challenges: Analysing France's Regional Languages." *Linguistic Landscape* 1 (1–2): 38–53. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ll.1.1-2.03bla>.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Debras, Camille. 2019. "Political Graffiti in May 2018 at Nanterre University: A Linguistic Ethnographic Analysis." *Discourse & Society* 30 (5): 441–464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926519855788>.
- Demaj, Uranela, and Mieke Vandenbroucke. 2024. "The Geosemiotics of Ethno-Political Graffiti in Kosovo: Polyphony, Emplacement and Heteroglossia." *Social Semiotics* 34 (5): 937–962. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2023.2239735>.

- Fairclough, Norman. 2001. *Language and Power*. 2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Gorter, Durk. 2006. "Introduction: The Study of the Linguistic Landscape as a New Approach to Multilingualism." *International Journal of Multilingualism* 3 (1): 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790710608668382>.
- Gorter, Durk, and Jasone Cenoz. 2017. "Linguistic Landscape and Multilingualism." In *Language Awareness and Multilingualism*, edited by Jasone Cenoz, Durk Gorter, and Stephen May, 233–245. Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02240-6_27.
- Gumperz, John J. 1982. *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511611834>.
- Hána, David. 2026. "The Created and Perceived Political Symbolism of Public Space: A Systematic Review of Political Graffiti in Europe Using AI." *GeoJournal* 91: 91. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-026-11643-2>.
- Hána, David, and Jan Šel. 2022. "Political Graffiti in the Political Symbolic Space of Prague, Czechia." *Urban Research & Practice* 15 (5): 679–698. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17535069.2021.1902556>.
- Haugen, Einar. 1950. "The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing." *Language* 26 (2): 210–231. <https://doi.org/10.2307/410058>.
- Hess, Djamila, and Deddy Mulyana. 2022. "Beyond Art: Graffiti as a Medium of Counterpublics." *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 38 (3): 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2022-3803-01>.
- Kress, Gunther, and Theo van Leeuwen. 2006. *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- Landry, Rodrigue, and Richard Y. Bourhis. 1997. "Linguistic Landscape and Ethnolinguistic Vitality: An Empirical Study." *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 16 (1): 23–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X970161002>.
- Miranda Correa, Melisa. 2023. "Contextual Graffiti and Collective Action Frames at the Chilean Social Outbreak in 2019." *Linguistic Landscape* 9 (4): 387–412. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ll.22002.mir>.
- Moriarty, Máiréad. 2014. "Contesting Language Ideologies in the Linguistic Landscape of an Irish Tourist Town." *International Journal of Bilingualism* 18 (5): 464–477. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006913484209>.

- Moskovljevic, Milos, Muhammad Masood, and Marko Skoric. 2025. "Spraying the Walls, Feeds and Laws: Graffiti as Memetic Technologies of Contentious Politics." *Communication, Culture and Critique* 18 (3): 247–260. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcaf018>.
- Motschenbacher, Heiko. 2024. "Contrasting a University's Language Policy with Its Linguistic Landscape: A Norwegian Case Study." *Current Issues in Language Planning* 25 (3): 237–265. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2023.2283652>.
- Mulyawan, I Wayan, I Made Suta Paramarta, and I Nyoman Suparwa. 2022. "Language Contestation at Batukau Temple, Bali: A Linguistic Landscape Study." *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 9 (1): 2090651. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2090651>.
- Muysken, Pieter. 2000. *Bilingual Speech: A Typology of Code-Mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nambu, Satoshi, and Mitsuko Ono. 2025. "Linguistic Landscape of Shin-Ōkubo, Tokyo: A Comparative Study of Koreatown and Islamic Street." *International Journal of Multilingualism* 22 (2): 650–668. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2024.2344181>.
- Peirce, Charles Sanders. 1931–1958. *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Edited by Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss, and Arthur W. Burks. 8 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Radavičiūtė, Jūratė. 2017. "Linguistic Landscape of Tbilisi: A Case Study of Graffiti." *Respectus Philologicus* 32 (37): 80–90. <https://doi.org/10.15388/RESPECTUS.2017.32.37.08>.
- Reed, Jean-Pierre, Rodrigo A. Asún, and Roberto Fernández Droguett. 2026. "Writings Acts and Protest Actions: The Role of Graffiti during the 2019 Outbreak in Santiago, Chile." *Critical Sociology*. Published online February 8, 2026. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205251409365>.
- Sakhiyya, Zulfa, and Nelly Martin-Anatias. 2023. "Reviving the Language at Risk: A Social Semiotic Analysis of the Linguistic Landscape of Three Cities in Indonesia." *International Journal of Multilingualism* 20 (2): 290–307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2020.1850737>.
- Seloni, Lisyā, and Yusuf Sarfati. 2017. "Linguistic Landscape of Gezi Park Protests in Turkey: A Discourse Analysis of Graffiti." *Journal of Language and Politics* 16 (6): 782–808. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.15037.sel>.

- Serafis, Dimitris, E. Dimitris Kitis, and Argiris Archakis. 2018. "Graffiti Slogans and the Construction of Collective Identity: Evidence from the Anti-Austerity Protests in Greece." *Text & Talk* 38 (6): 775–797. <https://doi.org/10.1515/text-2018-0023>.
- Shariatpanah, Shadab, Bahman Zandi, Shirin Pourebrahim, and Razieh Beyraghdar. 2022. "Graffiti in the Linguistic Landscape of Kermanshah." *Language Related Research* 13 (4): 531–568. <https://doi.org/10.29252/LRR.13.4.16>.
- Sheivandi, Laleh, Ali Taghinezhad, Asma Alishavandi, and Somayeh Ranjbar. 2015. "Exploring Linguistic Aspects in Iranians' Graffiti." *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research* 2 (5): 62–73. <https://www.jallr.com/index.php/JALLR/article/view/92>.
- Shulist, Sarah. 2018. "Signs of Status: Language Policy, Revitalization, and Visibility in Urban Amazonia." *Language Policy* 17 (4): 523–543. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-017-9453-3>.
- Siziba, Liqhwā, and Busani Maseko. 2024. "Multilingual Contestations and the Reproduction of English Legitimacy in Bottom-Up Linguistic Landscape: An Analysis of Shop Signs in Bulawayo." *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 11 (1): 2364490. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2364490>.
- Themistocleous, Christiana. 2019. "Conflict and Unification in the Multilingual Landscape of a Divided City: The Case of Nicosia's Border." *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 40 (2): 94–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2018.1467425>.
- Thomason, Sarah G., and Terrence Kaufman. 1988. *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Yao, Xiaofang. 2023. "Metrolingualism in Online Linguistic Landscapes." *International Journal of Multilingualism* 20 (2): 214–230. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2021.1887197>.
- Zhang, Hong, and Brian Hok-Shing Chan. 2021. "Protest Graffiti, Social Movements and Changing Participation Frameworks: The Case of Macao." *Journal of Language and Politics* 20 (4): 515–538. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.20036.zha>.
- Zhang, Tianyang. 2024. "Linguistic Landscape as a Way to Construct Multiple Identities in the Context of Globalization: The Case of an Ancient Town in China." *Social Semiotics*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2024.2405511>.

