



## **Report 2016**



The contents of this report are the intellectual property of the authors. No part of this report may be circulated or reproduced without explicit permission from the authors, or from the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, United Kingdom.

# **Linguistic Landscapes in Greater Manchester**

Elouise Jay

# Table of Contents

1. Literature Review
2. Objectives
3. LinguaSnapp
  - 3.1. Oldham
  - 3.2. Cheetham
  - 3.3. City Centre
  - 3.4. Ashton-under-Lyne
  - 3.5. Rusholme/ The Curry Mile
4. Conclusions
5. Bibliography

## 1. Literature Review

Within this literature review of studies on linguistic landscapes, I will refer to reports and articles that have analysed the linguistic landscapes (hereafter LL) in various countries and connect these studies to the LL within Manchester. I will use LinguaSnapp in order to complete my research and take influence from articles analysed in this review.

### *Linguistic Landscapes in a Multilingual World – Durk Gorter*

I used Gorter's overview of LLs and its theories in order to begin my exploration into Manchester's LL, and to put into practice said theories. Gorter begins by describing various studies on certain LLs which had never been explored previously. These landscapes concern Keren Kayemet Street in Jerusalem, Brussels, and another study by a different group of researchers in Jerusalem. Gorter describes the history of LLs as a whole, referring to an article by Landry and Bourhis (1997) that started the slow introduction into studying the linguistics in towns, cities and on a macro level, countries.

More recently, however, the research put forward in this field has focussed on '*the analysis of language(s) displayed on signs in public space*'. Moreover, this research has been rapidly growing between the years of 2007 and 2013 (Gorter, 2013). If this is the case, within the last three years since Gorter had written this article, there would have been an even bigger increase in the amount of publications based on the field of LLs.

An aspect of Gorter's article which I find interesting is his reference to the use of English in non-English speaking countries; which Rosenbaum et al. (1977) called *snob appeal*. When applied to the city of Manchester and of course many other English-speaking places, it seems the meaning of *snob appeal* is reversed. English businesses can use other languages to attract people looking for foreign-made clothes, food, services etc.

### *Linguistic Landscape as Symbolic Construction of the Public Space: The Case of Israel – Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Elana Shohamy, Muhammad Hasan Amara and Nira Trumper-Hecht*

Ben-Rafael et al. (2008) have studied the history of Israel, paying close attention to the Jewish history and the languages concerned with said history. The groups and languages referred to here are as follows: Israeli Jews, Palestinian Israelis, non-Israeli Palestinians and English, Arabic, Hebrew. Ben-Rafael et al. look at various perspectives; one from Pierre Bourdieu, another of presentation-of-self, and finally what they call the good-reasons perspective. Within my analysis of Manchester's LL, I will attempt to apply each of these perspectives where they are relevant.

During the research in Israel, the group of linguists sampled 30% of top-down LL items and 70% of bottom-up LL items, which could be seen as an over-generalization. However, from my interpretation I believe that this group have used a smaller sample of top-down items in order to save themselves time; these top-down items were issued by Government, and so the language(s) used here would be more or less the same throughout the study.

Ben-Rafael et al. divided each location into cities, towns and residential areas, which they then described by characteristics attributed to the population (upper class, Jewish majority, etc.). The results found in this study were extensive, and gave a thorough description of the LL in Israel. I found the way in which this research was carried out very interesting and useful, and I will do my best to obtain similar results with my analysis of Manchester's LL.

*Reading the Curry Mile – Language Use in the Linguistic Landscape of Rusholme, Manchester* – Leonie Elisa Gaiser.

Gaiser's analysis of the Curry Mile in Manchester proves to be as comprehensive as the previous two studies. The analysis connects the theoretical functions of LL to that of Rusholme, succeeding in making the report personal yet informative and unbiased. Gaiser makes reference to the factors that contribute to a LLs ever-changing image, which are '*legal, social, economic, cultural and even emotional*'.

Gaiser focuses some of her research on the intentions of LL items, and how said items are received. LL as a form of communication is incredibly subjective, and thus items that I will find in Manchester's LL will not be analysed with regards to their intended message; only the language and the placement of a LL item will be taken into account.

*Singapore's Balancing Act, from the Perspective of the Linguistic Landscape* – Peter K.W. Tan.

Tan's research into Singapore's LL is mostly based on official, top-down signs from agents such as public schools and police authorities. He notes the official languages of Singapore and connects these four languages to the numerous public signs within Singapore. There are different formulas of the signs (for example, English and Japanese, or Chinese and English) or even single-language signs which Tan is able to coherently analyse and link the reasons for which one or two specific languages are used rather than others in a specific location (e.g. tourism). Tan concludes his research by summarizing five reflections which were important to his study are as follows:

- a. The LL exhibits the state's progressing view on languages.
- b. Some statuses of the languages used in Singapore's LL are representative of the country's history in that the status of a language will not change (due to key documents).
- c. The languages used can become iconized; the languages used in an LL can create a status symbol for the location. '*... they are used symbolically to mark space, as in the use of Chinese in Chinatown*'
- d. Certain languages used in a LL are for functional reasons only – i.e. tourism.
- e. The state's position on language use can be manipulated due to 'indirect agencies'.

I will attempt to link each of these summaries to the LL in Manchester whilst committing to my research in a similar manner.

## **2. Objectives**

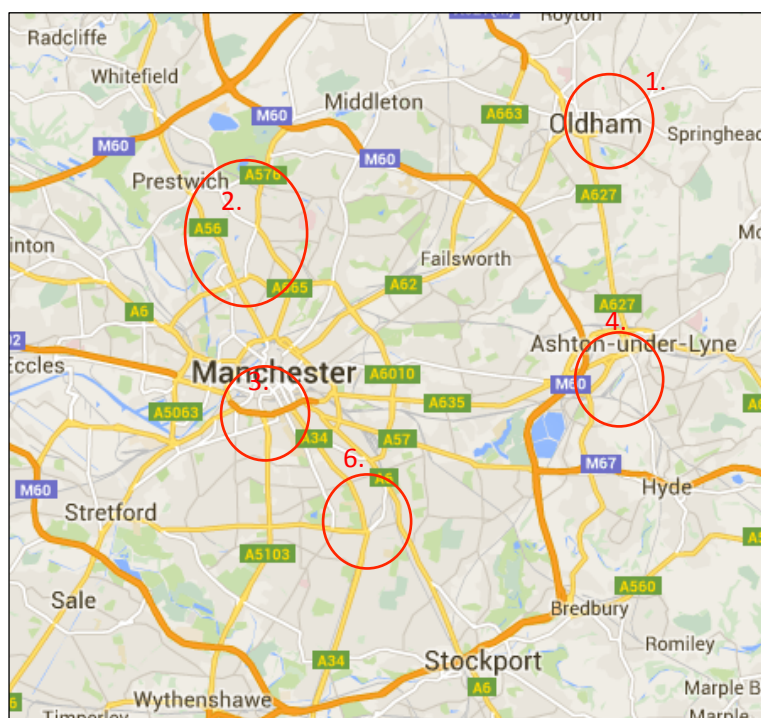
Throughout my literary research, I have noted some aspects of studies that will be useful to me whilst looking at the LL in Manchester. 1.a to 1.c are the steps I will follow during the research, and the subsequent points are the ways in which I will analyse my findings.

- a. Ben-Rafael et al.
  - i. Divide Manchester into smaller subsections; for example, Rusholme, Moss Side, city centre etc.
  - ii. Create a profile for each of these areas based on % languages spoken.
  - iii. Compare and contrast the signs documented on LinguaSnapp for each location with the majority languages/ per cent of languages spoken in said area.
  - iv. Hypotheses to apply to research:
    - i. Pierre Bourdieu: the LL code which is more dominant belongs to the dominant group

- ii. Goffman and Presentation-of-self: identity markers of a community are present in its LL.
- b. Tan.
  - i. I will take into account Tans considerations at the end of my research and attempt to apply each point to Manchester's LL.

### 3. LinguaSnapp

LinguaSnapp is a smartphone application which serves the purpose of compiling LL items for them to be translated and plotted on a map, to display Manchester's (and other cities') expansive multilingual setting. Highlighted here are the sections of Manchester which are highly populated with potential LL items.

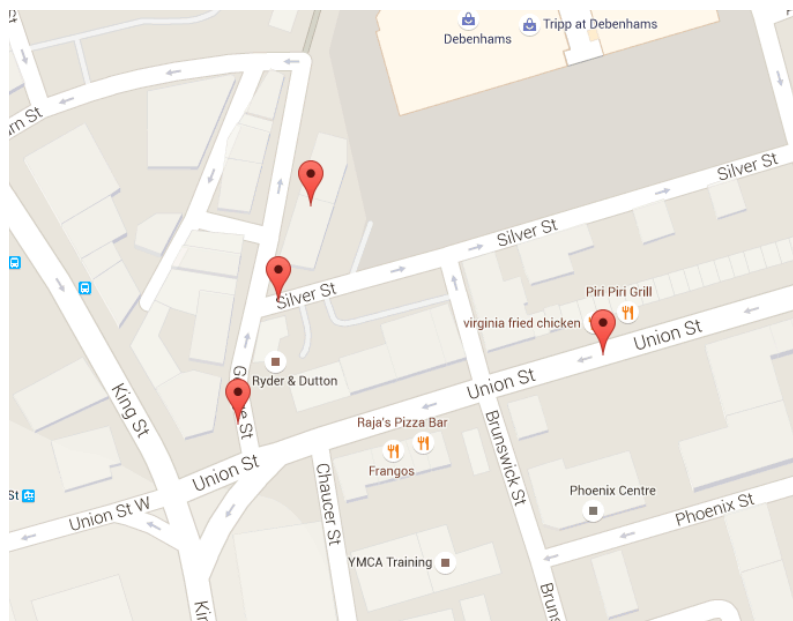


- 3.1. Oldham
- 3.2. Cheetham
- 3.3. City Centre
- 3.4. Ashton-under-Lyne
- 3.5. Rusholme/ The Curry Mile

### 3.1. Oldham.

Oldham's top three ethnicities are White; Asian or Asian British and; Black or Black British.<sup>1</sup> The Asian or Asian British category is nearly two times higher than the national average at 10%. The top three religions are Christian; no religion and; Muslim.

Languages Spoken / Percentage <sup>2</sup>	English	89,50	Bengali	4,00	Urdu	2,00
Religion	Christian	69,9	No religion	18,4	Muslim	7,6
Ethnicity	White	85,5	Asian or Asian British	10,2	Black or Black British	2,1



The LinguaSnapp information does not seem to be as representative of the diverse community as I had expected to find in Oldham; I had foreseen many LL items written in Bengali and Urdu, as they are the second and third predominant languages in this Metropolitan borough. However, the four signs found are presented in the following table:<sup>3</sup>

Location of LL item	Source	Language	Purpose
George St A	Souvenir shop	English/ Arabic	Emblematic
George St B	Electronics shop	English/ Arabic	Communicative
Silver St	Clothing shop	Arabic/ English	Emblematic
Union St	Minimarket/ food store	English/ Polish	Communicative

All signs found in Oldham are Arabic or Polish, which is strange as both those languages are not in the top three languages spoken (localstats.co.uk).

<sup>1</sup> file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Oldham\_In\_Detail.pdf

<sup>2</sup> <http://localstats.co.uk/census-demographics/england/north-west/oldham>

<sup>3</sup> All information in this table is found at [linguasnapp.manchester.ac.uk](http://linguasnapp.manchester.ac.uk)

### 3.2. Cheetham

Cheetham Hill Rd has a large cluster of LL items to be researched. However, it will be best to begin my analysis of Cheetham by compiling its top three languages spoken, top three religions and top three ethnicities from a census.

Languages Spoken / Percentage <sup>4</sup>	English	65,50	Urdu	8,90	Panjabi	4,20
Religion	Muslim	43,30	Christian	32,20	No religion	14,00
Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	41,8	White	37,2	Black or Black British	10,6

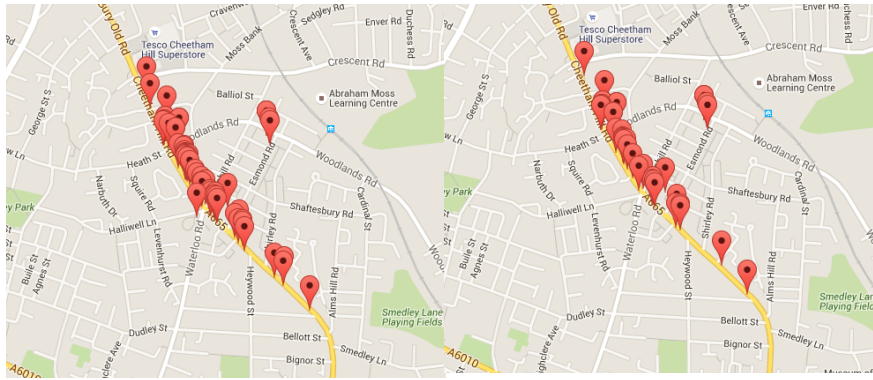
In this table, it is clear that the cultural make-up of this borough is incredibly different to that of Oldham. We can see supporting evidence of this when we look at LinguaSnapp. Due to the LL items presented in Cheetham being so concentrated, I will take samples from four languages found on Cheetham Hill Rd to gain a brief overview of the languages used and their purposes.

From the table below we can see that Cheetham Hill Rd is home to various languages, which are used in different ways. Urdu seems to be the largest used language for printed signs on shops, and 366a Cheetham Hill Rd is (from what I can determine) the source which has promoted the largest amount of languages in one sign.

Location of LL item	Source	Language	Purpose	Other notes
366a Cheetham Hill Rd	Lawyer/ notary	English/ Chinese/ Urdu/ Arabic	Emblematic	‘Welcome’ sign, to draw in business from clients whose first/ primary language is not English
575 Cheetham Hill Rd	Bakery	Urdu	Communicative	Inclusive to those who speak Urdu: the font is large and eye-catching
402 Cheetham Hill Rd	Grocery/ corner shop	Polish/ Czech	Communicative	Sells Polish and Czech products: includes Czech and Polish customers
88 Bury Old Rd (continuation of Cheetham Hill Rd)	Grocery/ corner shop (personal message: non-commercial)	Polish	Communicative/ recruitment	Job advertisement for Polish people. Exclusive.

<sup>4</sup> <http://localstats.co.uk/census-demographics/england/north-west/cheetham>





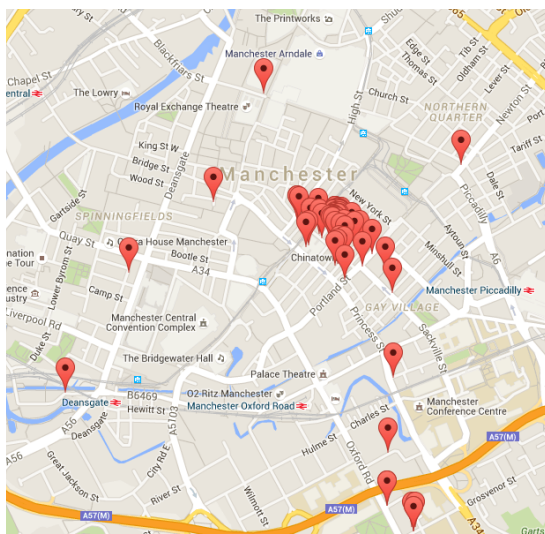
A 1

A 2

Shown here in figure A1 are the LinguaSnapp markers of sources which display LL items in all languages. They are clustered on Cheetham Hill Rd, which is said to be one of the most diverse streets in Britain.<sup>5</sup> Figure A2 shows the markers for sources which display LL items in Urdu. As one can see, Urdu dominates the LL on Cheetham Hill Rd, which is probably due to the fact that 41% of people are Asian or British Asian. Even though this percentage of people may not all speak Urdu (we can see this due to Urdu being spoken by nearly 9% of Cheetham citizens).

### 3.3.City Centre

Whilst analysing the city centre of Manchester, I will be looking at the following area:



This section of Manchester is home to Chinatown, Manchester Arndale, and the beginnings of Oxford Rd. Most buildings in this part of the city are shops, hotels, restaurants etc. For this reason, the following table will be a brief descriptor of the largest ethnic groups.

Ethnicity	White	66,7	Asian or Asian British	17,1	Black or Black British	8,6
-----------	-------	------	------------------------	------	------------------------	-----

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/data-from-the-most-recent-census-shows-1284613>

### 3.3.1. Chinatown, Manchester City Centre

Chinatown in Manchester is centred around George St, M1. Most establishments exhibiting Chinese language items are small supermarkets, which I find interesting due to there being a lot of Chinese restaurants in the same location, but they are not documented on LinguaSnapp. One theory for this is that the restaurants themselves are targeted towards non-Chinese speakers, whereas the grocery stores are, and direct themselves towards the Chinese culture. The percentage of Asian or Asian British people living in the city centre is suited with the amount of Chinese language LL items that exist in the city centre. However, I would have preferred there to be more information in order to make better connections between the languages seen and the languages spoken in the centre of Manchester, but due to the centre being highly trafficked and not very residential, it is not easy to find this type of information.

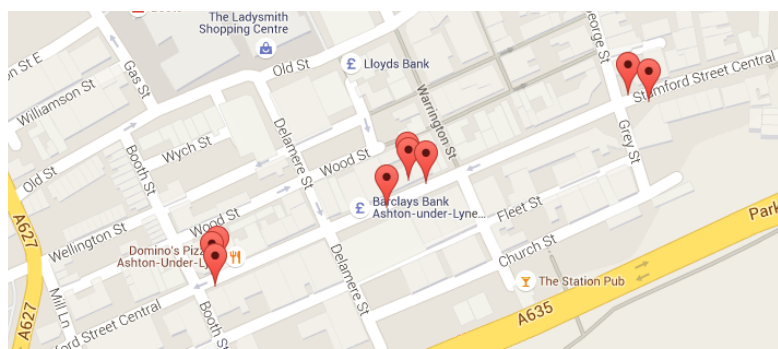
### 3.4. Ashton-under-Lyne

Ashton-under-Lyne is located in Tameside, Greater Manchester. To create a top three listing of

Language spoken /percentage	English	93,40	Gujarati	1,90	Urdu	1
Ethnicity	White	90,9	Asian or British Asian	8,5	Black or Black British	0,3

ethnicities and languages spoken, I will use statistics from Hurst, Ashton-under-Lyne, as there is not a clear census for Ashton-under-Lyne as a whole.

The statistics of the table above are shockingly different to those seen in Oldham, Cheetham and Manchester's city centre, and so it is difficult to come to a conclusion based on these facts alone.



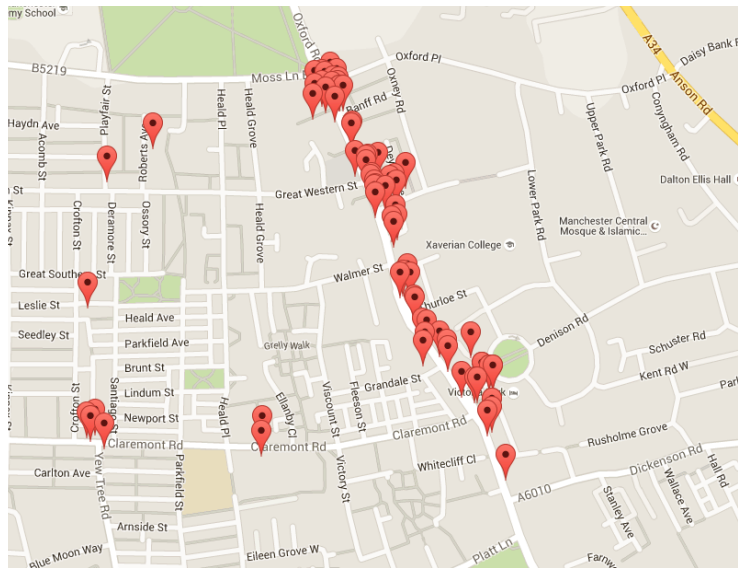
When one looks to LinguaSnapp's information on Ashton-under-Lyne, it is still unclear if there is a multilinguistic landscape at all.

After viewing the information on these LL item spots, I have seen that they are all Polish, with the exception of three, which are 'European shops' that presumably sell food from around Europe. Although the LinguaSnapp spots in Ashton-under-Lyne are, in comparison to the previous three areas of Manchester, underwhelming, they can still tell us a lot about Manchester's LL as a whole. The ethnic majority is White, but this could mean that the group comprises of people from Eastern Europe; this would explain the existence of Polish stores.

### 3.5. Rusholme/ The Curry Mile

The Curry Mile is definitely one of the most famous locations in Manchester, and for good reason. It boasts many restaurants which provide a mix of South Asian cuisine, Shisha cafes which promote the South Asian culture and jewellery/ clothing stores directed towards the South Asian community.

Altogether, Asian/ British Asian ethnic groups add up to 44,7%, including in this category those of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Chinese heritage. The Asian/ British Asian community in Rusholme overshadows the White ethnic groups which stand at about 41%, and we can see this clearly when looking at the LinguaSnapp locations along the Curry Mile.



Pictured here are all the markers of LL items on Wilmslow Rd (the Curry Mile). The majority of these markers are plotting Arabic signs, some show Urdu signs, and a smaller amount offer Kurdish Sorani or Hindi. These are the most notable languages, although there will be others either on or off LinguaSnapp. I have picked out some signs from LinguaSnapp which I find the most interesting, as each depicts different viewpoints of Linguistic Landscaping.

This sandwich board on Wilmslow Road, and the job being offered are exclusive to those who know Hindi, and the idea of only applying if one speaks Hindi gives the impression that the proprietors only want those who are knowledgeable to, what I assume, is their own culture. Although this sign can be seen as emblematic; symbolizing the preservation of Hindi in a non-Hindi speaking country, it is also a statement, due to the very same ideals; that the language of Hindi is being preserved and protected in a non-Hindi speaking country.



The public advertisement below is directed at both those who speak English and those who speak Arabic. The author of this sign decided to include both English and Arabic speakers, possibly to engage a wider audience, and therefore reach more people who could potentially rent a room – which is the aim of this advertisement in the first place.



#### **4. Conclusions**

Pierre Bourdieu stated that the LL code which is most dominant belongs to the most dominant group (with regards to ethnicity and language spoken). During my research, I have found that this is not necessarily a true statement. In Oldham, the second and third most popular languages spoken were Bengali and Urdu, but LL items found in this area were written in Arabic and Polish. In Cheetham, this ‘Bourdieu’sard’ rule could loosely apply, considering that LL signs are written in mostly Urdu and Polish, and the second language most spoken is Urdu. Ashton-under-Lyne is near impossible to decipher, however, due to its lack of information. The Curry Mile applies to Bourdieu’s theory, as the dominant LL items on Wilmslow Rd are Arabic, which is the dominant language in Rusholme.

Although I have completed my research thoroughly, I cannot feel comfortable stating that each of the locations studied and their LL’s are representative of their community, as I have not experienced such a sense of community in any area other than the Curry Mile. This location, however, clearly has identity markers attributed to its community; language, food, activities, clothing.

This table shows the ways in which Tan's reflections on LLs can be attributed to Manchester's own LL.

<b>Tan's (2014) reflections</b>	<b>Can it apply to Manchester's LL?</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1. The LL exhibits the state's progressing view on languages.	Yes	This statement applies well to Manchester and its views on multilingualism/multiculturalism
2. Some statuses of the languages used in Singapore's LL are representative of the country's history in that the status of a language will not change (due to key documents).	Yes	For example, the status of English will remain the same as it is the language of the city and country
3. The languages used can become iconized; the languages used in an LL can create a status symbol for the location. ' <i>... they are used symbolically to mark space, as in the use of Chinese in Chinatown</i> '	Yes	Chinatown in Manchester has similar connotations, and so does the Curry Mile in Rusholme
4. Certain languages used in a LL are for functional reasons only – i.e. tourism.	No	The LL items are focused on those who live in Manchester (supermarkets). Although there are tourists in Manchester, there are no LL items which are targeted towards them
5. The state's position on language use can be manipulated due to 'indirect agencies'.	No	

## 5. Bibliography

Ben-Rafael, Eliezer; Shohamy, Elana; Amara, Muhammad Hasan; Trumper-Hecht, Nira. 2006. Linguistic landscape as symbolic construction of the Public space: The case of Israel. *International Journal of Multilingualism* 3:1, 7-30.

Gaiser, Leonie. 2014. Reading the Curry Mile: Language use in the linguistic landscape of Rusholme, Manchester. MLM website.

Gorter, Durk. 2013. Linguistic landscapes in a multilingual world. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 33, 190–212.

Tan, Peter K.W. 2014. Singapore's balancing act, from the perspective of the linguistic landscapes. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 29:2, 438-466.