"The legacy of Michel Foucault's work on discourse has engendered lively discussions on how to delimit, theoretically and methodically, the analysis of discourse as a field of research, and the present volume of articles places this new publication in the center of these debates. Its topics range from the fuzzy boundaries displayed by graffiti to disagreement on what accounts as repair in talk-in-interaction. Covering a great variety of phenomena whose analysis depends on the researcher's awareness of the fuzziness of the data involved, this book is highly recommended reading for anyone occupied with the study of human behavior, verbal and non-verbal."
—**Thorstein Fretheim**, Professor Emeritus, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

This book focuses on the multifarious aspects of 'fuzzy boundaries' in the field of discourse studies, a field that is marked by complex boundary work and a great degree of fuzziness regarding theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and the use of linguistic categories. Discourse studies is characterised by a variety of theoretical frameworks and disciplinary fields, research methodologies, and lexico-grammatical categories. The contributions in this book explore some of the nuances and implications of the fuzzy boundaries in these areas, resulting in a wide-reaching volume which will be of interest to students and scholars of discourse studies in fields including sociology, linguistics, international relations, philosophy, literary criticism and anthropology.

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Theoretical, Methodological, and Lexico-Grammatical Fuzziness

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Praise for *Fuzzy Boundaries in Discourse Studies*

"This innovative volume sets forth a comprehensive challenge to consider how and where we draw the lines between and amongst various areas of discourse studies. By agitating these boundaries, this work teases out new understandings and fresh perspectives at the macro, meso, and micro levels of discourse. This collection provides a solid and impressive foundation upon which we can wrestle with fuzzy questions as new methods and technologies invigorate the field over the next decade. A welcome gift."

—Professor Mary Lynne Gasaway Hill, *Department of English Literature & Language, St. Mary's University*

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5

Urban Wall Monologues: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Graffiti in Granada

Carmen Aguilera-Carnerero

1   Introduction: What Is Graffiti?

Anyone who lives in an urban environment is used to coexisting with walls decorated with diverse messages. Graffiti and street art belong to the city as much as buildings, urban furniture, monuments or other elements of the urban landscape.

The origins of graffiti have been traced back to the Egyptian pyramids, the remains of Pompeii and many Middle Age buildings (Garí 1995: 27). Scratching, carving and painting messages (either symbols or letters) on the walls are not recent phenomena and ancient graffiti messages addressed topics from the pleasures of food to advice on love and friendship (Bartholome and Snyder 2004).

To determine what constitutes graffiti, several questions arise: is graffiti an artistic manifestation or a sample of graphic vandalism? Should it contain text, just an image or both? Must it be provocative, controversial or include taboo language? Is it the main product of a subculture?

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Silva (1986) suggests the following definition[1] of graffiti:

A message or group of messages, filtered by marginality, anonymity and spontaneity that by saying what they want to express, violate the prohibition in the social space within which they express themselves. (Silva 1986: 28)

From that definition one can infer the fuzzy boundaries of graffiti[2]: while it shares some of the standard features of canonical acts of communication (see below), it mainly concerns writing the forbidden, a genre of writing that cannot be divorced from its illicit creation. The graffiti artist is always clandestine, furtive and tries to pervert the urban order.

However, a very important element is missing in that definition. It is true that graffiti means transgression but not only for the context in which it is born but because it is linked to the social commentary of marginalized groups that want to be heard. Hence, the invaluable content of the messages created by social actors who use the city walls as the channels to convey their frustrations, disappointments and anger against well-established social structures.

2   Graffiti in Granada: Origin and Development

Granada, one of the most popular cities in southern Spain, is home to the popular Alhambra—a fortress built during the Muslim ruling of Spain—which is the eighth most visited monument in the world and the first in Spain.[3] Granada therefore combines a huge tourist sector with a well-known university which also appeals to students from all over the world.[4]

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[1] Silva's original definition has been loosely adapted and translated by the author of this chapter.

[2] In this chapter, I will use the term 'graffiti' for written messages (accompanied or not with images), leaving the term 'street art' for those creations in which the artistic form prevails over the content of the written message.

[3] https://andaluciainformacion.es/sociedad/471038/la-alhambra-sigue-siendo-el-monumento-ms-visitado-de-espaa/.

[4] The University of Granada, founded by Emperor Charles V in 1531, is the fourth largest university in Spain and the favourite destination for Erasmus students in the last years. https://www.granadahoy.com/granada/UGR-consolida-favorito-estudiantes-Erasmus_0_1196580696.html.

Aside from the latter, the city has a remarkable, fluctuant hippy community based in the historical Albayzin neighbourhood together with a deeply rooted gipsy community mostly living in the Sacromonte caves. All these factors make Granada a unique and vibrant place comprising very diverse yet peacefully coexisting social groups.

The first graffiti found in Granada go back to the Muslim period (during the Nasrid dynasty) as vestiges discovered on the walls of the Alhambra and in the Albayzin quarter prove (Barrera Maturana 2002, 2004, 2006 based on the previous work by Gómez-Moreno, 1886–1887).

More recently, during the twentieth century, the rebirth of graffiti in Granada——in the way we understand the concept today——arose at the end of the 1980s as a parallel phenomenon to what was happening in other parts of the world with the emergence of the hip-hop and break-dance culture, thereby inaugurating a different way of interpreting the city (Pérez Sendra 2014).

Currently, the clandestine and illegal graffiti proliferate, with pieces of work mainly found in areas close to the highway due to the harsh fines enforced. The academia (the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Granada), however, has integrated graffiti into the syllabus (ibid.), giving them status and importance within the contemporary art scene.

3   It's Complicated: The Relationship Between Graffiti and Local Authorities

The relationship between graffiti and urban spaces has traditionally been very complicated since graffiti have associations with vandalism and delinquency, that is, illegal activities that spoil the cities' landscapes. In the twentieth century, graffiti (together with squatting and culture jamming) was designed to express views that were counter-hegemonic (Waldner and Dobratz 2013: 381).

The direct association of graffiti with urban crimes has its origins in the 'Theory of the Broken Windows' proposed by Kelling and Wilson in 1982.[5]

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[5] This theory was introduced by the criminologists Kelling and Wilson in 1982 in the general information journal *The Atlantic*. See Larrauri (2007: 9 ff.) for the account of several theories that

The image of the broken windows exemplifies a chaotic neighbourhood tied with vandalism and, consequently, criminal activity. Therefore, if we eliminate urban disorder, we eradicate vandalism and the possibility of potential crime. Graffiti alongside broken windows are elements to be removed from the urban landscape.

In the specific case of Granada, the legislation about graffiti has changed slightly in recent years. I partially disagree with Sánchez Cota (2016) when she says the local authorities of Granada have zero tolerance for graffiti. Rather, they have zero tolerance for what in this chapter is called 'graffiti', but not to 'street art' which is not only a protected activity but encouraged by the authorities, though not without controversy.[6]

4   Types of Graffiti

Graffiti have been classified according to different criteria ranging from location (outdoors, indoors), the type of message (image, text or a combination of both), the material used to paint (chalk, spray can or other) or the technique used by the graffiters (abstract painting, symbols, stencil) to mention but a few.

Gadsby (1995), in a thorough review of the literature on graffiti, identifies nine theoretical approaches to the topic, namely cultural, gendered, linguistic (cf. Breva Claramonte and García Alonso [1993], Garí [1995], Vigara Tauste and Reyes Sánchez [1996], Ugarte García [2012] and Farnia [2014]), folkloric, quantitative, aesthetic, motivational, preventative and popularization.

A different perspective—mainly the graffiti's natural resistance to control, law and authorities—was undertaken by Lachmann (1988), Ferrell (1995), Halsey and Young (2006) and Waldner and Dobratz (2013), among others. The feminist approach is provided by Rosewarne (2005), who deals with graffiti as elements that underline masculinity as well as the social exclusion of women.

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explore the connection between the theory of Broken Windows and the zero-tolerance policy and their consequences.

[6] https://www.granada.org/inet/wordenanz.nsf/93953ad78e19e38ec125735500246d99/9f4542b8 7e530744c12581770029a058!OpenDocument.

The geographic link is shared in the studies by Blume (1985), Gándara (2002), Kozak (2005) and Silva (2006), who focus their research on the production of graffiti in South America.

Departing from these approaches, scholars have provided several taxonomies considering one or more of the potential criteria. Silva (1986) distinguishes between what he calls (a) graffiti of the May '68 kind, which are anti-authority wall slogans with macropolitical purposes, and (b) New York graffiti, which are underground and figurative, contain ghetto self-references and have micro-politic purposes, a taxonomy which, broadly speaking, coincides with Garí's (1995) proposal.

Vigara Tauste and Reyes Sánchez (1996) distinguish between graffiti and paintings, the former more artistic, produced by well-known artists and often containing verbal messages while in paintings (*pintadas*) the verbal message is central. This corresponds with Baudrillard's ideas (1974: 36–37), who talks about ideological-politically oriented graffiti and others that merely seek the aesthetic pleasure without conveying any immediate social or political meaning.

Gadsby's heterogeneous taxonomy (1995) suggests six different groups of graffiti: latrinalia (Wolff 2011; Escudero 2013), public, tags, historical, folk epigraphy and humouristic. This classification is not operative for the present analysis, since it mixes several different criteria to establish her categories such as location (latrinalia and public), the identification of the addresser (tags), the moment of decoding the graffiti (historical), the surface used to make graffiti (folk epigraphy) and the specific content (humouristic) giving way to the fact that graffiti could belong to different categories simultaneously.

The motivation underlying graffiti production was taken into account by Blume (1985), who analyses and establishes a distinction between conversational graffiti (addressed to a particular reader or group of readers and expects for a written answer) and declarative graffiti (the author does not expect an answer from the readers; the addressee is not a specific group), and Gándara (2002), who distinguishes between corporative graffiti (made by an institution or group with propagandistic purposes) and non-corporative graffiti (usually spontaneous and more creative).

Despite being essential for scholars interested in the nature of graffiti, these studies lack the perspective of the narrative of the subculture they

are embedded in and that they shape together with the role of the social actors who use graffiti as a rebellious way to shout against well-established power structures as well as to build up identity among the community they represent. This analytical gap is precisely what our study aims to fill to a certain extent.

5   Graffiti as Communicative Acts

From a linguistic point of view, graffiti can be read as communicative acts. If we apply Jakobson's (1960) model of the functions of language (based on Bühler's [1934] previous work) and the elements involved in any communicative act, it is relatively easy to distinguish the addresser (sender) or author of the graffiti, the addressee (receiver) or reader of the graffiti and the message, that is, the graffiti itself.

However, the graffiti as a communicative act also displays many fuzzy boundaries. Graffiti harbours an assorted variety of discourses: political, social, economic, gender-oriented or even philosophical (as we will see later in the corpus) realized through a wide range of linguistic realizations in order to get their message across to the widest possible audience. The main target of the graffiti is, for the most part, the vindication of some social claims or the counter-reaction to any established power or social reality. Hence the study of graffiti from a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective seems more than appropriate. Graffiti takes over the public space in an illegal way and their anonymous nature tightly linked with their clandestine and illicit birth distinguishes graffiti from political pamphlets or illegal publications even though they may overlap in terms of content and communicative aim.

The anonymity of both addresser (or author of the graffiti) and addressee (the reader) has led Blume (1985: 142) to contend that graffiti are instances of 'defective communication'. Still, many works of literature are anonymous too and the lack of a recognizable author is typical of advertising and folk discourse (e.g. legends, myths, tales, proverbs, sayings). In other words, as Foucault (1977) stated, the author function is not universal or constant in any discourse.

According to Blume (1985: 141–142), the relationship between the addresser and the addressee in the discourse of graffiti is anomalously characterized by the fact that the author writes without aiming at a given addressee, while occasionally the message can also be directed at a specific group. The author and reader do not know each other and there is no social connection between them. The reader of the graffiti can respond to the text by writing back occasionally, but not frequently and without knowing to whom s/he is replying.[7]

In addition to the participants of the communicative act mentioned above (addresser, addressee and message), in his theory of enunciation Ducrot (1972) also introduces the 'locutor' as the participant who appears to be responsible for the utterance within the utterance itself. It is a discursive subject built into every message. The polyphonic approach deals with the diversity of different voices coexisting within texts and, consequently, graffiti can be interpreted from the point of view of heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981) since they contain different viewpoints or different voices which lead Ducrot to talk of 'enunciative polyphony'. However, as Gándara states (2002: 68) there are numerous graffiti without a locutor as they are not tagged and the message is not attributed to anybody. Though the author associates this feature with the type of graffiti she calls 'philosophical-reflexive', no example in the corpus belonging to that category has a locutor, irrespective of their content.

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[7] There are some discursive strategies, as Gándara rightly points out (2002: 71), that somehow select the addressee: one is the choice of the place where the graffiti occurs; graffiti in a male toilet is selecting a male audience as well as interpellating him in a context of intimacy. Meanwhile, on any street wall, the random reader will establish a relationship with the message. There are also other factors inherent to the message such as the use of certain restricted codes that only certain groups are able to decode. Another strategy is the selection of typography and letter size that attracts certain looks and excludes others. Even the choice of diverse aesthetics draws the attention of particular addressees.

In contrast, there are graffiti that do not exclude any kind of addressee and, on the contrary, intend to reach the widest audience possible. The visibility is determined by the election of the place, the readability (a sine qua non condition) and the content use being clear and explicit. Even in some graffiti, there are addressees who are directly addressed (e.g. a love message).

6   Methodology and Corpus of Study

The corpus analysed in this study was collected from January 2017 to April 2018 and consists of 187 graffiti that I photographed in different parts of Granada.

The selection of graffiti studied in this chapter was made according to two criteria:

1. Location: All of them were found outdoors. Therefore, graffiti written n university desks or public toilets, for instance, were not considered.
2. Presence of text: All graffiti contain text ranging from single words to complete sentences that might or might not include images.

The methodology used for the analysis of the data was that of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA). Although one of the defining features of CDA is the lack of theoretical orthodoxy and heterogeneity (Hidalgo Tenorio 2011), van Leeuwen (2009: 278) rightly states there is a common goal underlying the different approaches: 'the critique of dominant discourses and genres that effect inequalities, injustices and oppression in contemporary society'. In particular, this study was influenced by Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 1995) principles of language description, interpretation of the discursive processes present in texts and the relationship between discursive and social processes. In Fairclough's approach, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (henceforth SFG) (Halliday 1985; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) is at the core. The three metafunctions that work simultaneously in language—that is, the ideational (the way we see the world), the experiential (the way we interact with its participants) and the textual (the way texts are organized)—are the core components of this approach. Central to the ideational function is the notion of transitivity, or how the speaker construes the reality in discourse. Three components are involved in transitivity: the process itself and, in this sense, SFG distinguishes six processes: the major ones that are material, mental and relational besides behavioural, verbal and existential; the participants taking part and the circumstances associated

with them. Speakers shape the reality they perceive through a wide range of syntactic structures and lexical choices through which they express their ideological stance.

The analysis of these aspects in our corpus of graffiti will allow us:

1. To elucidate the different kinds of marginalized discourses found in graffiti.
2. To describe their communicative force through the analysis of their linguistic structures.
3. To identify the social actors who try to become visible and become socially empowered through their representation in the public discourse in the city.

7   Taxonomy for Data Analysis

Fuzzy boundaries seem to be inherent to graffiti as a social reality. The willingness of the author to hide their identity, the choice of an illegal place to convey their message and their clandestine birth make graffiti an anti-hegemonic social practice per se.

Even more importantly, graffiti is an accurate indicator of the social attitudes, feelings and concerns of socially minoritarian (sometimes also marginalized) communities. The corpus of 187 graffiti studied in this chapter can be grouped into the following categories based on the types of social commentary they contain (Table 5.1).

Once classified, the different linguistic features that can be associated with each category were analysed. Although the concept of frequency is

Table 5.1 Distribution of the different types of graffiti in the corpus

Type of graffiti	Number of graffiti in the corpus
Feminist struggles	47
Anti-capitalist	18
Anti-establishment	30
Anti-clerical	4
Pro–animal rights	10
Poetic/philosophical	78

very relevant in Critical Discourse Analysis, it has been very difficult to find regular linguistic patters, especially syntactic ones; thus, the different categories have been mostly based on lexical choices and preferences.

7.1   Gender Struggles Graffiti

Within the broad category of gender struggles graffiti, we have been able to distinguish two clearly differentiated linguistic structures: one is made up of graffiti in which the message is addressed to a particular group of receivers, either women like *ante la duda, tú la viuda* ('in case of doubt, you rather be the widow'), *yo lo abortaría por si sale policía* ('I would abort it (the fetus) in case s/he becomes a cop'), *ni te cases ni te sometas* ('neither marry nor subjugate to anyone') or male chauvinist men and the patriarchal society in general, such as, *estamos hasta el coño de tantos cojones* ('we are totally fed up of so many men giving us orders'), *ni la tierra ni las mujeres somos territorios de conquista* ('neither land nor women are territories to be conquered'). This kind of graffiti contains syntactically elaborated messages mainly realized by clauses in which women are always represented either by a vocative (*mujer*) in which they are exhorted to take action or by the use of the first plural form of the verbs (*somos, estamos, matamos*) or pronouns (*nos*) which imply the inclusion of the speaker in the group.

Some of the graffiti in this subgroup highlight the feminist fight against the problem of gender violence, a very specific problem that has been especially serious in Spanish society.[8]

All the graffiti belonging to this subtype are tagged or complemented with the feminist or transgender symbol (sometimes combined with the anarchy symbol). Their linguistic structure is very complex, with rhyme as the most common pattern to make the message catchy in the style of commercial mottos or slogans sung in demonstrations. In addition, statements with the illocutionary force of threat are frequent, as in *El miedo va a cambiar de bando* ('Fear is going to change its side').

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[8]According to the Gender Violence Delegation, 51 cases of victims of gender violence happened in 2017. http://www.violenciagenero.msssi.gob.es/violenciaEnCifras/victimasMortales/fichaMujeres/pdf/Vmortales_2017.pdf.

In the transitive patterns found in this subgroup women appear as the agents of material processes *mujer ¡lucha!* ('Woman, fight!') or as the patients (i.e. the victims) of the visible heads of patriarchal societies: *nos tocas a una, te matamos todas* ('if you touch one of us, we will all kill you'). Male chauvinists are not explicitly mentioned as social actors in the processes but implicitly they are present through the use of plural verbal forms (*tocas*) or pronouns (*te*).

The lexicon is centred on warmonger metaphors or lexemes referring to violence being the most common in the corpus *muerte* ('death'), *miedo* ('fear') and *guerra* ('war'). This kind of graffiti depicts the presence of women in society as a battle (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 81) and, similarly, the fight against patriarchy as a war. Figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 illustrate these ideas.

Some of the graffiti in this group make reference to the sovereignty of women over their own bodies, either in relation to abortion as many of them refer to Spanish abortion laws (Fig. 5.5) or to the claim of women's rights to reject any type of unwanted physical contact (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7). The presence of images reinforces this written message as can be seen in the examples below. Figure 5.8 specifically refers to the Spanish legal restrictions regarding abortion by means of the personification 'pregnant by the law'.
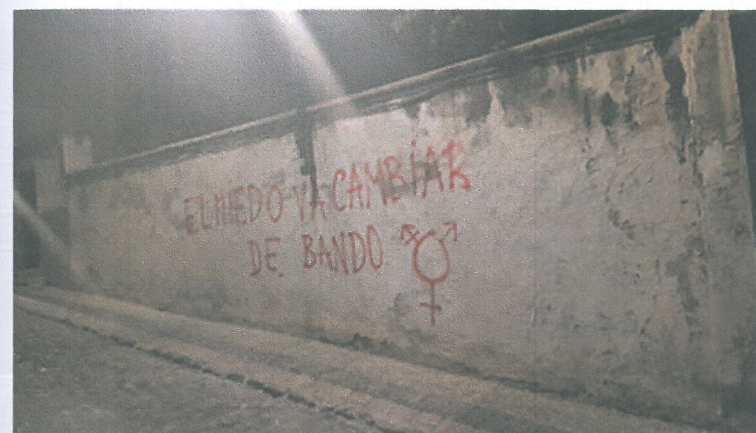
Fig. 5.1   Fear is going to change its side
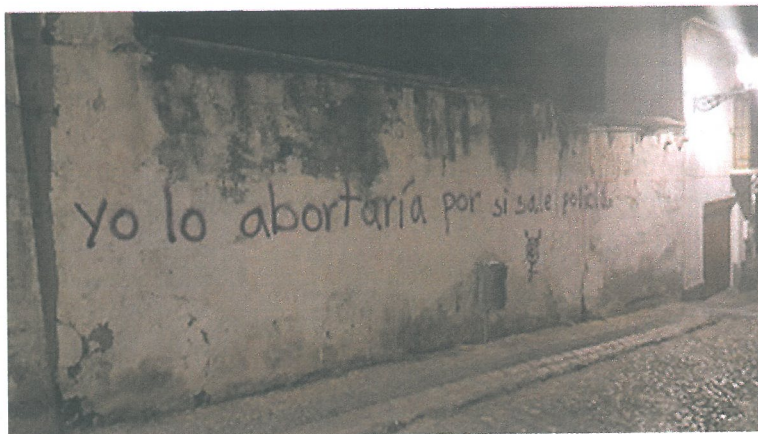
Fig. 5.2   I would abort it in case s/he becomes a cop

Fig. 5.4   We are at war

Fig. 5.3   In case of doubt, you be the widow

Fig. 5.5   Free love, love for free
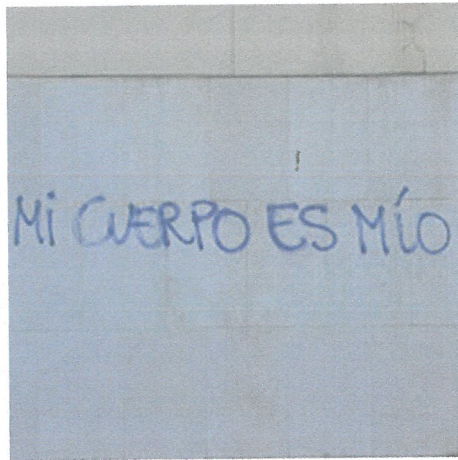
Fig. 5.6   When I say no, it is no
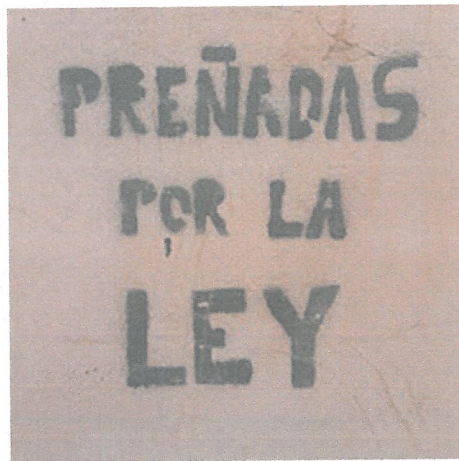
Fig. 5.7   My body is mine

Fig. 5.8   Pregnant by the law

7.2   Anti-Capitalist Graffiti

Another subgroup of graffiti specifically spreads an anti-establishment sentiment mainly focusing on three areas: criticism to consumerism, capitalism and the citizen disinformation provided by mass media. None of these graffiti are made spontaneously since almost all of them use the stencil technique and most of them are tagged.

Graffiti containing anti-consumerist messages are located in the shopping areas of the city and, more precisely, on the main façades of shops. Most of the messages are phrases that describe what the authors consider the object of criticism and the most frequent lexical terms belong to the lexical field of commercial trade, such as 'shops' or 'consumerism' (Figs. 5.9 and 5.10).

As with the political graffiti, some of the messages in this group are tagged with a jester symbol (Fig. 5.11).

The anti-capitalist messages focus on the bank system and its excessive presence in citizens' lives. The most frequent terms of this type of graffiti are 'bank' and 'capital' (Fig. 5.12).

The disinformation provided by mass media is the topic of a small group of graffiti that alludes to television (or the media by extension) as a source

Fig. 5.9   Full shops, empty lives

Fig. 5.10   Zombie consumerism area

Fig. 5.11   Consuming consumes you
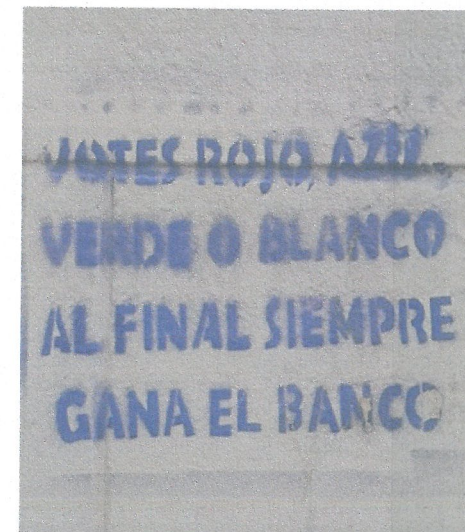
Fig. 5.12   Either you vote red, blue, green or white, in the end the bank always win

of biased or toxic information. In the examples below, the jester again—as the tag or locator—is sometimes present. The linguistic structures to convey the same message differ: the strong instruction of the imperative in Fig. 5.13 contrasts with the much softer warning expressed by the conditional sentence in Fig. 5.14. In all the examples found, television—rather than being a source of information—is the object of the harsh criticism.

Fig. 5.13   Kill your television
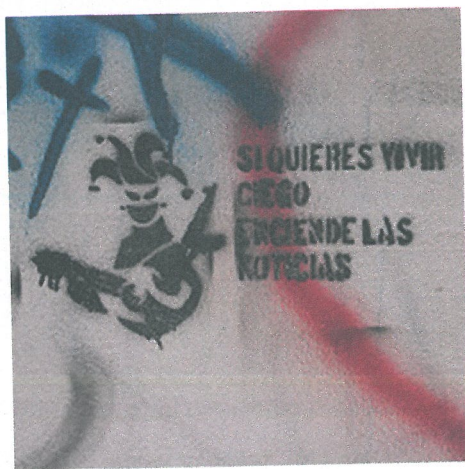
Fig. 5.14   If you want to live blindly, switch on the news

7.3   Anti-Establishment Graffiti

Waldner and Dobratz (2013) contend that graffiti is an expressive resistance tactic that challenges power relations and, particularly, political graffiti, which could be interpreted as 'contentious discourse outside the "normal" bounds of political discourse' (Waldner and Dobratz 2013: 383).

Although political graffiti can be considered a milder form of protest, it can reflect contention and conflict and, thus, deserves more attention from political sociologists (Waldner and Dobratz 2013: 277). For these authors, engaging in political graffiti may be motivated by a feeling of exclusion from the political process or the realization that politics (i.e. institutionalized politics) will not bring about change (2013: 277). Some forms of graffiti should be considered a serious form of political participation in which, as Kan (2001) argues, graffiti is created with an intended audience and motives.

Political graffiti is meant for public consumption (Hanauer 2011) and fulfils three functions (Hanauer 2004: 382):

1. Providing an entrée into the public discourse of ideas that are ignored by other media.
2. Providing an individual with the opportunity to publicly voice controversial ideas.
3. Providing marginalized persons a venue.

In the corpus, these three functions are overtly expressed since all the political graffiti convey the transmission of counter-hegemonic discourses in Spanish society, that is, those of the establishment of anarchy, republican feelings or the frontal opposition to monarchy, the privatization of the state, the criticism of security forces or global political leaders as well as solidarity with some of the most relevant political events happening in Spain lately (such as the referendum held in Catalonia to claim independence from the rest of Spain).

The exhortations to the working class to mobilize and rebel against higher social classes together with the calls to establish anarchy are the most numerous graffiti. The most frequent lexemes are related to the Marxist theory such as 'proletarian', 'working class' or 'class struggles'. Figure 5.15 includes an icon reinforcing the metaphorical written message with the drawing of the broken chains (the oppressive political system we are inserted in) and the anarchy symbol. The one in Fig. 5.16 is very complex with a metaphorical invitation to adopt a rebellious attitude and refuse to vote in the elections because politicians are vipers fed by citizens' votes. Both the text and image express this idea. Figure 5.17 contains the tag of the jester and follows a much more sophisticated linguistic pattern with rhymes and drawings that show a small man carrying a flag until he kneels under its weight and becomes blurred.

In most of the graffiti of this type, material processes are predominant, with citizens as the agents and the state or the politicians as usual patients since most of them give instructions or exhort citizens to take real action.

Fig. 5.16 They (politicians) are vipers. You (the state) feed them with your vote

Fig. 5.15 Let's break the chains, let's destroy

Fig. 5.17 Fewer flags and more working-class fight

Fig. 5.18   That's the way Spain is built

Fig. 5.19   Mercenary police

National security forces as well as historical dictators or politicians are also the object of severe criticism. The police are always associated with images related to violence (Fig. 5.18) or are qualified by premodifiers such as 'mercenary' or 'terrorist' (Fig. 5.19).

A very interesting and small subtype is made up of drawings of the famous world leaders (including Hitler and Bush Jr.). All of them are produced in stencil and their content is very violent, with messages often associated with death. The graffiti in Fig. 5.20 invites the potential 'sons of bitches' to follow their leader (Hitler) and commit suicide too.

A different subgroup comprises the political graffiti that express negative views against the monarchy or the Spanish empire. The graffiti in Fig. 5.21 was made on the eve of Columbus' Day (Spain's national Day) and the ideology of the message seems to clarify the author's view on the discovery of America (a genocide) and its celebration: *Los genocidios no se celebran* ('Genocides must not be celebrated').

Fig. 5.20   Small suggestion for sons of bitches: Follow your leader

Fig. 5.21 Genocides must not be celebrated

Fig. 5.22 Opus Gay

7.4   The Anti-clerical Graffiti

The discourse of anti-clerical graffiti aims directly at the Catholic Church. There are few examples of them but all of them are highly elaborated in technical terms; that is, they are not spontaneous, through a stencil pattern and, most importantly, located in carefully chosen places in the city, either on the back wall of very popular churches downtown or in the main square where the cathedral is. The geographic location is central because the context may impart meaning: 'Political art much like graffiti writing and street art, when placed in a gallery can become neutralized' (Lewishon 2008: 134). Some of the graffiti in this subtype contain messages such as *Opus Gay* (pun on *Opus Dei*), *Estafa Santa* ('Holy Cheat': referring to Easter) (Fig. 5.22).

Although few in number, the criticism implied in the discourse of this subtype of graffiti is very powerful. All the messages pinpoint the implicit hypocrisy of the traditions or policies adopted by the Catholic Church (Fig. 5.23). Such anti-clerical graffiti are invariantly multimodal, as they

Fig. 5.23 From March 16–23: Saint Scum

all include images, while their textual messages are made up by phrases, not clauses, in which one of the constituents is a term associated with the lexical field of religion (*Dei* or *Santa*) and the premodifier that is the element that introduces the criticism (cheat, gay, vagina). Phrases are descriptive and more straightforward than clauses, especially when accompanied by an image.
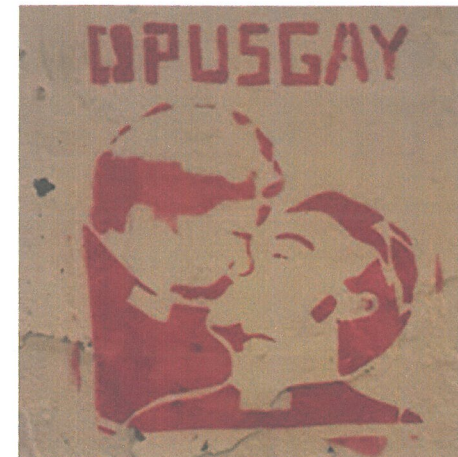
7.5   Pro–Animal Rights Graffiti

Another subtype of graffiti is the one that conveys a strong pro–animal rights message. Veganism, though a rising world trend, is still a minoritarian movement in Spain; hence, this subtype of graffiti is associated with the marginality of a community still not powerful enough.

The linguistic structures of this kind of graffiti are more complex than the ones found in other subtypes with clauses that contain their underlying philosophy. The lexical field around which most of these graffiti revolve is the anatomy of life versus death; hence, the most frequent lexemes are *live, life, corpses* or *killer* such as *El deseo de vivir no distingue entre species* ('the wish to live does not distinguish among species') (Fig. 5.24), *La vida no tiene precio. Los animales no somos objetos* ('Life is priceless. (We) animals are not objects') and *Por cada jaula abierta una hermane liberada* ('For any open cage, a released sister/brother').

Other linguistic structures commonly found within this subtype of graffiti are the imperatives, exhorting the readers to join their cause such as 'Go vegan' or 'Eat pussy, not animals' (Fig. 5.25).

A special mention should be made of the graffiti related to bullfighting *Asesino a sueldo* ('contract killer' referring to a bullfighter), since it is a very controversial issue that has divided Spanish society because of the torture and ultimate death of the bull in the ring. Graffiti, again, brings out to the public space the social commentary on one of the most debated topics in Spain (Fig. 5.26).

Fig. 5.24   The wish to live does not distinguish among species

Fig. 5.25   Eat pussy, not animals

Fig. 5.26 Contract killer (referring to a bullfighter)

Fig. 5.27 If you were not scared, what would you do?

7.6   Poetic/Philosophical Graffiti

The most numerous group of graffiti is the poetic/philosophical (Gándara 2002). The diversity in structures and content is outstanding: from rhetorical questions (Fig. 5.27) to thought-provoking statements (Fig. 5.28) and pleas realized syntactically through imperatives. The topics are varied and usually are reflections on mankind, society, the world or the writer

Fig. 5.28 Plastic surgery is West's burqa

him-/herself. This subtype of graffiti does not contain any kind of social criticism (at least, not explicitly as in the rest of subtypes we have analysed above) against any power structure or social majority but they are rather intimate, personal and individual. A few graffiti belonging to this subtype are examples of hypocodification (Eco 1975) because the codes are not easily interpreted by anybody except for the graffiter since the meaning of the message is hermetic.

8   Conclusions

As we have seen in this chapter, graffiti is a form of communication that displays fuzzy boundaries ranging from the mere linguistic structures to the more discursive and contextual features. One of the most distinguishing traits of graffiti is its context of production, since it takes over the public space in an illegal and clandestine way, making it difficult to identify the addresser. At the same time, an analysis of graffiti in Granada from a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective has revealed the different claims of different minorities and marginalized groups. The linguistic structures used by social actors are varied and carefully chosen to serve the purpose

of their requests: to attract the citizens' (and authorities') attention to their demands. From the use of rhyme patterns reflected in advertising, through the communicative strength contained in imperative structures to the selection of a warmongering-oriented lexicon of feminist graffiti, the authors use an array of resources to make their voices heard and, in this sense, graffiti allows much more structural flexibility than the canonical features of any other given genre.

The use of images in the corpus serves to reinforce the content of the textual message. The main role of graffiti in Granada is to transmit a message that challenges those groups in power, transgressing the shared public space in a risky but controlled way while they undermine domination. Graffiti are dynamic and living communicative structures that sometimes were drawn on very specific dates as responses to particular problems (a given date, law or social event) since they are invisible forces that represent what Scott (1990) called 'infrapolitics' or signs of everyday resistance.

Even the poetic or philosophical graffiti could be interpreted as giving voice to the actors that are not listened to, or heard, in a mainstream, homogenous society. In a way, graffiti is an oppositional act to Spanish and local powers as well as clearly intersectional with the actors, targets and witnesses all playing different roles. Their discourses are articulated and intertwined in a much freer way because of the set of fuzzy boundaries that makes it a unique way of communication.

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