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Keep social distance: The linguistic landscape of the major malls in Jeddah amid the COVID-19 pandemic

Nadine Lacsina

Effat University, Saudi Arabia

Aiden Yeh*

Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, Taiwan

Abstract

This study examines the linguistic landscape of the two major malls in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through social distancing posters and signs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study draws on the conceptual framework of linguistic landscape theory, speech acts and semiotics to unveil language dominance, linguistic messages, image-text relations and poster elements that enforce social distancing. A survey questionnaire, primarily aimed at expats, was also administered to find out how they view and interpret the use of bilingual modes in disseminating the social distancing measures. The semiotic analysis reveals that Arabic and English are used in most of the posters, but Arabic remains the dominant language and the preferred medium of information dissemination. Speech acts analysis shows that representatives and directives facilitate implementation of social distancing. The findings also suggest that semiotic modes and signifiers (inscription and materiality) reinforce the effectiveness of the posters. Overall, the use of Arabic and English reflects the country's stance on language policy and economic vision for Jeddah to be a truly global city amid the pandemic.

Key words

linguistic landscape, COVID-19, Jeddah, social-distancing posters, speech acts

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has spread throughout the world at an alarming rate and has had devastating effects on the lives of many and the global economy (Yezli, 2020). Unlike other nations in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia has set up facilities and implemented policies as pandemic measures (Khan, Sears, Wei, Brownstein, Hay, Kossowsky, Eckhardt, Chim, Berry, Bogoch and Martin, 2013). Apart from the readiness of the medical sector, social distancing has been implemented to mitigate the spread of the virus. Social distancing is the physical effort to reduce social interaction and crowd clustering (Aslam, 2020). The implementation of social distancing measures can be difficult as they have a significant impact on the norms, such as religious practices, of the populace (Yezli, 2020). Aside from religious practices, the Saudis are known to traditionally engage in social gatherings with their families at regular intervals (Addas and Maghrabi, 2020). However, there has been a shift from private to more public venues which is in line with the country's development plans or "Vision 2030" which include the opening of cinemas, diversely themed restaurants, inclusive gyms, museums, and investment in shopping malls and tourism (Bin Abdulaziz, 2018).

* Address for correspondence: Aiden Yeh, English Department, Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, 900 Mintzu 1st Road Sanmin District, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. E-mail: aidenyeh@gmail.com

Shopping malls, given the more arid climate and culture of retail in Saudi Arabia, have been given an ever-growing economic boost since their inception in the country (Alfaifi, 2015). They are the hub for numerous social activities for natives and expatriates. These shopping malls are avenues for socio-economic and socio-cultural activities. Hence, they are a notable area of study for the implementation of social distancing regulations.

Saudi Arabia's response to the pandemic as ordered by Royal Decrees can be summarized in two phases: the first phase involved the formation of necessary committees to analyse and address the spread of the pandemic, while the second phase included application of necessary precautions to combat COVID-19. The regulations that were implemented revolved around halting gatherings under the key principle of "We Are All Responsible". Subsequently, Umrah (pilgrimage to Mecca) was suspended, the number of pilgrims to the holy cities was reduced, travel was regulated and quarantine was imposed. To augment the effort to fight the pandemic, mobile applications (such as Seha, Tabaud, Tawakkalna, and Ta'akad, Ministry of Health, 2021a) were developed to track exposure and monitor infections. As for vaccination rules, vaccinations are free for all types of residents within the Kingdom, and appointments are made through another mobile application, Sehhaty (Ministry of Health, 2021b). In October 2021, COVID-19 regulations were eased. However, due to the surge of cases involving the Omicron variant in December, precautionary measures reinstated the mandatory use of masks, observance of social distancing, reduction of congregation during prayers in public spaces, and requirement of a booster dose by 9 February 2022 ("Saudi Arabia's New Covid-19 Rules", 2021).

The Ministry of Interior issued penalties for private establishments that violate preventive measures against the coronavirus. Violations include not monitoring the infection-monitoring application (Tawakkalna), allowing unvaccinated individuals to enter shops, allowing entry to employees who refuse to wear masks, allowing entry to COVID-19 positive customers, and failure to provide disinfectants inside the shops ("Saudi Ministry Clarifies Penalties", 2022). According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), it is important to implement social distancing policies such as putting up signage. Hence, the government has installed bilingual (English and Arabic) signage such as billboards, posters, floor markings, etc. in public places. Given that English is a known lingua franca for large commercial areas, its inclusion in the bilingual signs in malls was intended for foreigners and/or non-Arabic speakers (Alhaider, 2018). Therefore, investigating their effectiveness amid a pandemic that requires lesser social clustering is crucial. Grounded on Linguistic Landscape's (LL) theoretical framework, this study examines social distancing posters and their cogency in implementing Covid-19 measures of two major malls in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In particular, the study explores which languages are represented and dominant, how languages are arranged, and how the images augment linguistic messages to prompt social distancing.

2. Literature review

Linguistic landscape is a field which attracts researchers across different disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, politics, environmental studies, semiotics, communication, and many more (Shohamy and Gorter, 2009). The concept of LL has been adopted in the analysis of language situation, presence of different languages in an area, languages spoken in different areas, description of the history of languages, and dialects (Labov, Ash, Boberg, 1997; Sciriha and Vasallo, 2001; Kreslins, 2003; Gorter, 2006). However, the most prominent and widely used definition of LL is Landry and Bourhis's (1997):

The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, public signs on government buildings combine to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration. (p. 25)

In the same way, Jazul and Bernardo (2018) state that the purpose of public signs is mainly to disseminate information, represent linguistic situations, and show the sociolinguistic context, language function, and power relations in a certain place. Such objectives are in line with Landry and Bourhis's (1997) point of elaboration on LL, i.e., the informational and symbolic functions of the signs. The informational function provides information on the territorial and language restrictions of a certain place and the existing linguistic communities in a territory, whereas the symbolic function examines language dominance and power relations as dictated by the competing language communities in an area.

2.1 The dichotomy of authorship of signage

Authorship is relevant in the study of public signs as it manifests a deeper understanding of the intention upon which both public and privately issued signs are designed. Several discussions on the dichotomy of signage authorship were given emphasis in the scholarly work of Scollon and Scollon (2003), Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, and Trumper-Hecht (2006), Huebner (2006) and Tan (2014). Scollon and Scollon (2003) coined the terms “municipal discourses” and “commercial discourses” to refer to signs that were constructed by bodies of authority and private institutions respectively. In the same manner, Huebner (2006) labels the same dichotomy as “government” versus “non-government” signs. In addition, Tan (2014), directly used “official” and “private”. However, Ben Rafael et al’s (2006) “top-down” and “bottom-up” categorization of signs was used in this study.

2.2 Ben-Rafael et al’s (2006) top-down and bottom-up signs

Ben-Rafael et al (2006) claim that the analysis of signs requires stages. The private-public dichotomy can be used in the first stage of analysis, which is categorization of signs. Ben-Rafael et al (2006) categorize signs into top-down and bottom-up. Top-down signs are “issued by national and public bureaucracies, public institutions, signs on public sites, public announcement and streetnames” (p.10), whereas bottom-up signs are “issued by individual social actors, shop owners and companies like names of shops, signs on businesses and personal announcements” (p. 14).

The top-down and bottom-up dichotomy helps unveil the language preference of the authorities and how this preference is acknowledged and accepted. The dichotomy mirrors the similarities and differences between the authorities and most of the populace in terms of attitude and language choice. Analysing top-down signs reveals the language policy and the state’s ideology, while bottom-up signs reflect the impact of the language policy and the attitude of the actors towards the language they prefer (Jazul and Bernardo, 2017).

2.3 Linguistic landscape and place semiotics

Socio-economic and political meanings are derived and given further understanding with the consideration of specific elements present in signs. By analysing the relationships of such elements/modalities (e.g., typography and placement), connotation and signification that contribute to preference and dominance emerge. Among the pioneering research on the importance of the interrelationship between language and modalities such as colour, size and placement are Scollon and Scollon (2003), Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), Jaworski and Thurlow (2010), and Kasanga (2015).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) underscore that language is one of the semiotic modes that needs to be analysed along with other semiotic resources, such as size, location of signs, and colour. Based on this, Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) furthered the importance of socio-cultural elements implied in signs that are manifestations of cultural context because of human interactions with signs. Moreover, Kasanga (2015) contributed to the study of semiotic landscape by positing that the emphasis on the analysis of visual images such as icons, pictures and diagrams is better than verbal descriptions. All these studies draw on Scollon and Scollon’s (2003) geosemiotics, which they defined as “the study of the social meaning of the material placement of signs and discourses and of our actions in the material world” (p. 2). Geosemiotics covers three dimensions: interaction order (actions), visual semiotics (format and design), and place semiotics (environment). This study focuses on the latter.

2.4 Place semiotics

Scollon and Scollon’s (2003) place semiotics, which is one of the dimensions of geosemiotics, can also effectively provide substance to this research. Place semiotics has three main aspects used for the analysis of LL:

- a. *Code Preference* signifies the dominant language used in signs. The presence of multiple codes leads to choice of position, which depicts a semiotic system or how languages are deliberately ordered in a sign. The preferred language is located above if written vertically and is in the right if written horizontally. Sometimes, the preferred language may also be in the centre. However, special cases as in Arabic must be taken into consideration because of the default direction of writing (right to left).

- b. *Inscription* pertains to the choice of typeface, colour, material, and how signs are hung. Various fonts help in advertisements as they create impressions. Materiality pertains to the material out of which the sign is made. Layering refers to the attachment of a sign on top of another. This is done when additional information is added to an existing sign posted.
- c. *Emplacement* refers to location of signs, which is at the heart of geosemiotics. Emplacement is divided into three categories. *Decontextualized* semiotics refers to signs that never change their forms. *Transgressive* semiotics deals with any signs that are in the wrong place, such as graffiti or vandalism. *Situated* semiotics refers to regulatory signs. Scollon and Scollon (2003) emphasized that situated semiotics investigates meaning with the help of sign placement.

2.5 Linguistic landscape and speech acts

Linguistic landscape includes texts that carry meaning based on the context in which they are written. These utterances use different speech acts which have certain effects on the readers. In fact, Cenoz and Gorter (2008) state that LL can improve a learner's pragmatic competence because LL offers texts in public space that challenge learners to understand the communicative intent of signs and linguistic forms.

Similarly, Cenoz and Gorter (2008) posit that the texts in the LL have different functions. Kelly-Holmes (2005) mentioned the functions, which are: expressive (expresses feelings), directive (persuades or offers advice), informational (informs or describes), interactional (maintains a small talk), and poetic (communicates using a different code). These language functions according to Kelly-Holmes (2005) are very much like the different types of speech acts proposed by Searle (1969).

Aside from the semiotic sources, the way the linguistic message is expressed is another aspect which sheds light on this research's question as to how the posters can prompt readers to abide by social distancing measures. A growing area of study which focuses on how utterances can make people do things is speech acts. Speech acts are utterances which influence the listener or doer. They can be grouped into three types: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

2.6 Typology of speech acts

Speech Act Theory was pioneered by Austin (1962) and was reworked by Searle (1969). They believed that an utterance or written expression performs an act. Furthermore, Austin (1962) underscored that an utterance performs specific acts through an utterance's communicative force. He then enumerated three types of acts: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. Locutionary act refers to the actual utterance. Illocutionary act refers to the intention of an utterance. Perlocutionary act pertains to the effect of an utterance on an addressee in a particular situation (Huang, 2006). Among the three facets, illocutionary act has received more attention from researchers because it enables people to analyse how speakers do things with words (Sbisà, 2019).

Searle (1969) classified speech acts into five types:

<i>Representatives</i>	-	express the beliefs of the speaker; are in the form of asserting, claiming, concluding, reporting and stating.
<i>Directives</i>	-	express commands and let the hearer do something; are in the form of advising, commanding, ordering, questioning and requesting.
<i>Commissives</i>	-	express future action; are in the form of offering, pledging, promising, refusing and threatening.
<i>Expressives</i>	-	express attitudes or states; are in the form of apologizing, blaming, congratulating, praising and thanking.
<i>Declaratives</i>	-	express changes in the state of affairs; are in the form of declaring and nominating.

2.7 Anchorage and relay

Barthes's concept of anchorage and relay was based on his *Rhetoric of the Image* (1977) where he emphasizes the importance of the linguistic message when analysing images. He highlights the syntagmatic relationship among semiotic resources. He argues that the linguistic message restricts readers to the various possible pools of signifieds produced by the signifiers they see and read. While

Barthes concentrated on the interpretation of visual signs to verbal text messages, contemporary scholars such as Kress and van Leeuwen (1996; 2006) focused on visual autonomy, i.e., placing the image at the fore, still connected to the associated text but not entirely dependent on it. In other words, the meaning of a text does not solely come from the verbal signs but also from auxiliary semiotic forms employed in the construction of meaning (see Baldry and Thibault). For example, printed material may only show words (i.e., verbal signs), but other elements like the actual material used, writing tools, font type, layout and its shape and form are all part of what Kress and van Leeuwen call “the ensemble of modes” (1996, p. 41) that instills the message of what is inscribed. Nowadays, linguistic messages are present in articles, titles, captions, film dialogues, advertisements and comic strips (Martinec and Salway, 2005). Panzaru (2012) posits that the texts accompanying visual evidence help achieve the target shared meaning. McCloud (1994) argues that ideas are not as effectively conveyed when the text and image modes are separated. Marsh and White (2003) categorized the relationship between image and text into contextual and semiotic taxonomies. Contextual being the relations between the literal meanings of the image and caption, while semiotic deals with the relations between the signified meanings of image and caption. The relationship between the message and image is often seen in advertisements because there is an intentional signification of the image, whereas the signifieds of the message are already formed a priori. Nonetheless, they both play an important role in helping prospective customers to get the intended meaning of the advertisement. For instance, in a study conducted by Adegoju and Ademilokun (2015) on verbal and visual signifiers of advertising offers in Nigeria, advertisers intentionally blended both the image and message to make the readers act in the direction of the offer in the advertisement.

2.8 Globalization in linguistic landscape

The instances in which English dominates a native language in signs were shown in studies like De Los Reyes’s (2014) LL study of the main train stations in the Philippines. It was largely observed in highly frequented areas such as transport stations in the Philippines that English dominated the LL of the country.

Another example would be S’Arenal Beach in Mallorca, Spain. It is a known Spanish-speaking beach-tourism region, but due to the presence of a variety of nationalities, such as English-speaking nationals, German, Catalan and French, signs were mixed with their languages in monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual signs. Monolingual signs despite errors were mostly in English (Bruyèl-Olmedo and Juan-Garau, 2009).

In some studies, certain elements were brought up as key reasons why the LL in certain areas was significantly populated by English, yet still had a firmer hold on their native languages as the more dominant language. An example would be Finzel’s (2013) study of the LL of Hong Kong. Finzel (2013) brought up living or establishment spatial context as another important element. As if to show status, areas with bigger businesses tend to be more proficient in English and thus had more signs in English. On the other hand, communities filled with smaller shops such as butcheries preferred to use native languages more.

Meanwhile, in Huebner’s (2006) study on the LL of Bangkok, city or community size and its engagement in economic activity also proved significant. It could be seen how in a relatively larger metropolitan sector English was one among many languages included in multilingual signs. While English was present in these signs, Thai script was still largely more dominant. However, smaller neighbourhoods in Thailand used English less.

Lastly, in Jazul and Bernardo’s (2017) LL study on Manila’s Chinatown, more politically driven discussions arise as the Filipino identity was barely noticeable due to the local government’s preference for English. Meanwhile, their studies further showed that Manila Chinatown’s signs utilized more English in its bilingual and multilingual signs, which used more Chinese or English than Filipino.

While the studies above mentioned dominance mainly through the order of text, several studies also highlighted the importance of other elements in signs which can be used to influence emphasis. Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) contended that focusing on language may overlook other modalities which could contribute to socio-cultural substance. This argument is influenced by Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) idea of multimodality that considers language as one of the many semiotic modes that contribute to communication.

In relation to text formatting – which influences the quality of text – size and typeface were investigated by Beymer, Russell and Orton (2008). The study used an eye tracker, and results showed that most of the participants were able to read faster with better text quality (serif or sans serif) such as larger text size.

Gradisar, Turk and Humar (2006), on the other hand, focused on examining the role of colours in text readability. They concluded that varying colour combinations for text and background also render adverse effects on reading time. To be specific, blue, white and black included in colour combinations resulted in faster reading time.

Meanwhile, Braun, Silver, and Stock (1992) discussed the role of emphasis in warning texts by font face and use of bolded text. The results of their investigation showed that Helvetica (a non-serif font) as a font face had higher readability than Times New Roman and Goudy (which are both serif fonts).

2.9 Linguistic landscape in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Content and policies

Arabic is the official language of Saudi Arabia; however, English has been considered the lingua franca due to the country's efforts to bridge communication between foreigners and Saudis (Almoaily, 2019). Alfaifi (2015) mentioned that government initiatives to create a lingua franca based on English is mostly driven by the current global economic and socio-political setup. Liton (2012) emphasized that the Saudi government's efforts to establish English as a lingua franca is aimed at achieving global competence in economic, educational and transnational fields.

Realizing the need to train its citizens to communicate with foreigners, the government introduced English as a foreign language (EFL) to its citizens (Zuhur, 2011). In 1995, the Ministry of Education declared the language as the only foreign language to be taught in public schools. Meanwhile, Karmani (2005) strongly links learning EFL to the petroleum industry, so English language teaching is referred to as “petro linguistics”.

Because most Saudis still only speak Arabic, Saudi Arabia has enacted educational endeavours to fully implement English as its foreign language. This effort extends not only to the business aspect but also in the education system. Al-Tamimi's (2019) study probes the effectiveness of the policies in developing EFL among Arab learners. The Ministry of Education believes that English is the key to survival in the 21st century (Barnawi and Al-Hawsawi, 2017).

With the available studies on LL in the context of Saudi Arabia, the topic is approached through populated and strategic areas such as markets and tourist spots, similar to other international studies.

Alfaifi's (2015) contribution to the current LL of the country is set in the context of Khamis Mushait, a known tourist spot in Saudi Arabia. While it is pointed out in his study that Khamis Mushait is revealed to be bilingual, Arabic still dominates its LL. Alfaifi (2015) brings up the role of translated and transliterated signs, which is revealed to be common in the country. However, given the existing linguistic freedom in such setups, Alfaifi (2015) proposes that there must be clearer language policies to define and solidify the position of Arabic while learning foreign languages such as English should be more systematic.

Meanwhile, another study on the country's LL was done in the setting of economic engagement. Alhaider (2018) categorized signs based on two different economic settings: a public market or “souq” and a private mall. Alhaider's (2018) emphasis on the difference in settings between these two markets is seen in the intent of store owners. Because the crowd in public markets asserts nativeness and locality, most of the signs are dominated by Arabic and are hugely monolingual; while Asir Mall is more open to selling and trading international goods, hence its stores use multilingual signs expressed in English and Arabic.

The bilingual results of the studies previously mentioned align with the results of Al-Athwary (2017), Karolak (2020) and Hopkyns and van den Hoven (2021) who examined the LL of other Arab-speaking areas such as Sana in Yemen, Souk Naif in Dubai, and two localities in Abu Dhabi respectively.

Al-Athwary (2017), through the analysis of 755 multilingual signs in Yemen, concluded that the majority of the signs were written in Arabic and English. Moreover, in Sana's effort to promote modernity, the use of Arabicized English was employed. Meanwhile, Karolak's (2020) study sampling Souk Naif in Dubai shows that despite Arabic being the official language of the country, English appears to be the primary language used. This is also amid the multitude of languages used by a racially diverse migrant population that prefers to use English as a lingua franca. Lastly, Hopkyns and van den Hoven

(2021) also examined the LL of a seaside community and an industrial site in Abu Dhabi amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study shows that handmade bottom-up signs were predominantly monolingual (English only), while top-down signs were bilingual (Arabic and English). Meanwhile, other minority languages such as Korean rarely appeared in COVID-19 signs.

2.10 Changes in linguistic landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been changes in the LL of public areas in major cities around the world. Places like business establishments display posters and signs pertaining to COVID-19 safety measures. There have been related studies on LL and COVID-19; a few are mentioned below.

In a very recent study conducted by Zhao (2020) on the linguistic study of COVID-19 signs used in France, Italy and the Netherlands, it was revealed that France mainly used French in their signs supporting their “one nation, one language” policy. Meanwhile, Italy used a fair amount of English although Italian was the most used language in signs. Lastly, the Netherlands has the highest usage of English which strongly reflects the country’s proficiency in English. In general, all three countries mainly used their first languages in implementing COVID-19 safety measures.

In a study conducted by Marshall (2021) on the COVID-19 LLs in Vancouver’s North Shore, it was shown that there were rapid changes in the local LL of Canada. Posters and signs had been added to the existing LL to ensure that people follow the safety measures. The study also reflected the multilingualism among the people living in the three municipalities of the North Shore. The dominant languages were English and French, while there were also signs catered to immigrants which included languages such as Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Italian and Polish.

While the existing studies serve as a benchmark for future studies on the above-mentioned aspects, none of the studies examined the effect of the language used in signs on readers. Also, very limited attention was given to the relationship between the symbol used and the actual caption in the signs. Consequently, this research aimed to look further into the linguistic aspect of the signs and how the language used in the signs directs people to follow COVID-19 social distancing measures.

3. Research objectives

Given the context and policies of Saudi Arabia with regards to the use of English, this research aims to investigate the current LL of Jeddah City through social distancing posters during the pandemic and to establish the effectiveness of these posters in implementing social distancing in the major malls in Jeddah. These objectives were further explained and explored through the following questions:

1. What are the languages used in the social distancing posters?
2. What is the dominant language in the posters?
3. How are the texts in the posters linguistically expressed?
4. How do the signs and images in the posters enhance the linguistic message to construct social distance?
5. Do the posters successfully prompt recommendations for individuals to socially distance?

4. Methodology

4.1 Research design

This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research designs. The quantitative aspect of the study deals with frequency count of languages used, language placement, and inscriptions in the social distancing signs. The qualitative method was used to gather and analyse the semiotic data which included written texts, symbols, images, fonts, and colours in the same social distancing signs. The analyses of the primary data were then supported by a survey which covered both quantitative method in the form of Likert scale and qualitative method in the form of coding (Dogusoy, 2002; McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). The questions looked at the overall effect of the signs on people’s ability to follow social distancing measures, how people view and interpret the posters, what aspects of the posters contribute to the overall implementation of said posters, what languages are preferred, and the attitude and behaviour of people towards the use of both English and Arabic in disseminating the social distancing measures through the posters. The questionnaire was written in simple English,

since English is the lingua franca in Saudi Arabia, and was primarily aimed at foreigners and those who can speak/understand the English language. Aside from this, Jeddah, which is the setting of the study, is a bilingual city where both English and Arabic are officially used in business and education sectors.

4.2 Data of the study

A total of 237 valid pictures of COVID-19 posters signs was taken from the two major malls in Jeddah – Red Sea Mall and Mall of Arabia. The criteria for choosing the signs are: (1) the poster is situated where customers can easily see it (i.e., store entrances), and (2) recurring posters count as one, especially those that were provided by health organizations.

4.3 Setting of the study

Jeddah is the second largest city in Saudi Arabia. It is located on the west coast of the peninsula and is directly across from Sudan and Egypt (Blum, 2014). It has become a multicultural hub and a major destination because it is near Makkah which is one of the seats of the Muslim faith. Muslims all over the world travel to Jeddah to visit Makkah and perform the pilgrimage. With tourism growing, malls have become a hangout place for tourists and residents. Red Sea Mall and Mall of Arabia are the two major malls in Jeddah. They are strategically located near banks, schools, hotels and airports making them accessible to everyone (Figure 1).

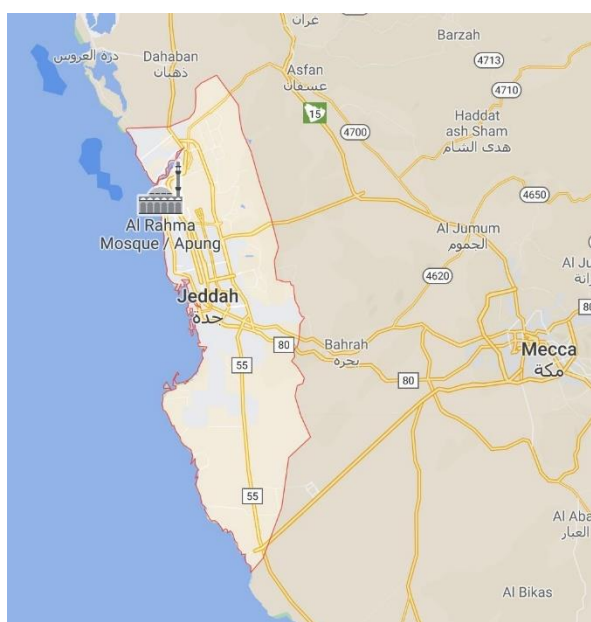


Figure 1. Location of Jeddah

Mall of Arabia is located on the eastern side of Madinah Road and south of Makkah Road. These are the major roads used to enter and depart Jeddah City. Mall of Arabia is situated near the old airport and the newly built one, which opened in 2019. Its location makes it a good venue for LL studies as this mall caters to both tourists and residents. Mall of Arabia's area is 261,000 square meters across three floors. During the pandemic, Mall of Arabia adhered to the ministry's order to observe strict compliance with COVID-19 measures.

Red Sea Mall is located on the western side of King Abdulaziz Road. Its area is 242,000 square meters and is located at the centre of an area comprising prestigious schools, bank offices and luxury hotels. This also qualifies as a good venue for LL research as it provides any researcher with the kind of languages used in the neighbourhood and the language that the neighbourhood prioritizes and uses more frequently.

4.4 Participants

Participants were determined through snowball sampling because of COVID-19 regulations set by Saudi Arabia, and the effort of the researcher to maintain a safe, public presence and to practise social distancing. The initial participants were randomly picked and asked to suggest people who visit Red Sea Mall and Mall of Arabia.

4.5 Data collection

Data collection lasted from 1 August until 30 August. Saudi Arabia was in total lockdown in May, meanwhile residents and citizens were asked to stay home after the implementation of a strict 24-hour curfew. In addition, the number of cases was at its peak from June. Thus, the collection of data was done in August to refrain from possible COVID-19 exposure and at the same time establish how social distancing measures, through the help of signage, help people follow guidelines.

The collection process involved taking pictures of signage requiring customers to practise social distancing from the two aforementioned major malls. Red Sea Mall COVID-19 social distancing signs were sampled first, then the signs in Mall of Arabia. The device used was a camera phone. The signs documented from the shops of both malls were strategically situated where customers could easily see them, such as entrances and storefront windows. Some signs were later grouped and counted as one due to repetition because several signs in both malls are copies of each other. In some cases, COVID-19 alert signs which implement social distancing were provided by local authorities, and shop management opted to use these universal signs. Originally, there were 267 posters, however, due to repetition, the number was reduced to 237.

In addition, an online survey was conducted because the number of people who visited malls drastically declined during the height of the pandemic. The survey was administered for only a week because of government restrictions prohibiting people to go to public places. Hence, the small population (n=50) was a result of excluding participants who failed to submit their surveys within the timeframe.

5. Results and discussion

In order to comprehensively analyse the data four frameworks were used: Ben-Rafael et al's top-down and bottom-up signs, Scollon and Scollon's (2003) place semiotics, Kress and van Leeuwen's semiotic modes, Searle's (1969) typology of speech acts, and Barthes's (1977) anchorage.

5.1 What are the languages used in the social distancing posters?

This study first classified the posters by using Ben-Rafael et al's (2006) top-down and bottom-up approach. Most of the posters were issued by private companies and umbrella businesses as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sign Authorship

Category	Total	Percentage
Top-down	6	2.67
Bottom-up	231	97.33
Total	237	100

There are only 2 languages used in the posters: Arabic and English. As expected, most signs use both languages. Table 2 depicts the data.

Table 2. Code Preference

Languages Used	Number	Percentage
Monolingual (Arabic)	59	24.89
Monolingual (English)	27	11.39
Bilingual	151	63.71
Total	237	100

The above results confirm that Saudi Arabia has embraced bilingualism which correlates with Alhaider's (2018) and Alfaifi's (2015) findings. This is parallel with the country's aim to be a global economic force which is a manifestation of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. It is also in sync with the efforts of the Kingdom to use English as the lingua franca in a commercial context due to the fact that more and more foreigners who are unable to speak Arabic choose to live in the Kingdom. To effectively communicate to the non-Arabic-speaking population, natives and personnel of establishments use English to accommodate diverse customers. Interestingly, the bilingual signs placed Arabic above the English instructions. This coincides with the country's effort to protect Arabic as a major tenet of their culture and identity as regulated by the Ministry of Commerce (Alfaifi, 2015).

5.2 What is the dominant language in the posters?

The placement of languages (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) on the posters was analysed to look into the importance of composition and visual framing. The Arabic-only signs emphasize the importance of social distancing by putting the regulations at top and centre or simply at the centre of the sign. Out of 237 signs, 31 or 13.96% Arabic-only signs put their regulations top-centre, while 29 or 11.43% put their rules dead-centre (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Make Up For Ever shop's Arabic-only poster

Out of 237 signs, 7 or 3.37% of English-only signs put social distancing reminders top-centre, and 15 or 6.16% put their policies dead-centre. 9 English-only signs or 3.91% of the signage put instructions at the bottom as seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Skecher shop's English-only poster

In instances where both languages were present, 138 signs or 57.75% of the signage put Arabic at the top and English at the bottom, while 5 signs (2.09%) put English at the top and Arabic at the bottom. Lastly, 3 signs or 1.34% put social distancing regulations in both languages side-by-side (Figure 4). This linguistic code preference shows the use of both languages, as English is typically written from left to right, while Arabic starts from right to left.



Figure 4. Ausie Grill restaurant's Arabic and English poster

Similar to previous studies (Finzel, 2013; Huebner, 2006; De Los Reyes, 2014), the above result shows that Arabic is still dominant and prioritized by people when giving crucial information.

Aside from the language placement, text size was also considered in the analysis of language dominance. 3 signs or 1.91% wrote their social distancing policies in English, (Figure 5), 8 or 4.94% made the Arabic text larger, (Figure 6), and 138 signs or 70.96% wrote about social distancing in both languages with the same size as seen in Figure 2.

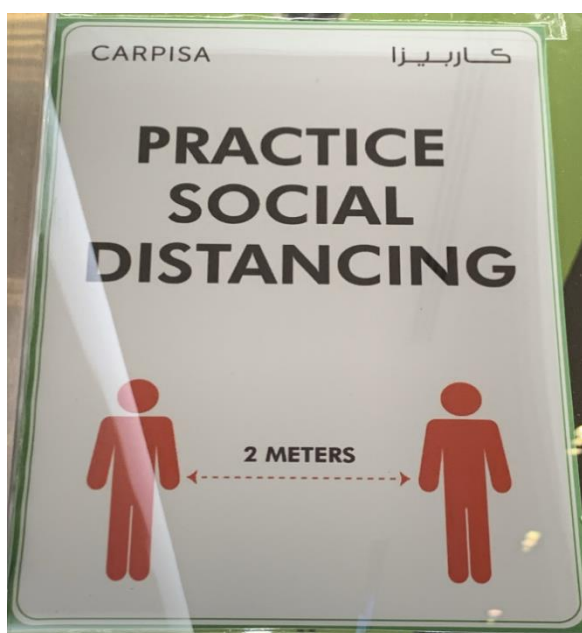


Figure 5. Carpisa shop's English-only poster



Figure 6. Whites shop's English-Arabic poster

5.3 How are the texts in the posters linguistically expressed?

To examine the linguistic message in the posters, Searle's typology was utilized. Only two among Searle's speech acts were found in the signage. Table 3 shows the number of posters which used representatives and directives respectively.

Table 3. Representative Acts and Directive Acts Present in the Posters

Speech Acts	Frequency	Percentage
Representative	96	59%
Directive	68	41%
Total	164*	100%

*The remaining 73 signs utilized only symbols, hence speech acts were not observed

Representative acts

Searle (1969) defined representatives as stating, asserting, claiming, concluding and reporting. The most used speech act is representatives. These representative acts are in the form of statements which present facts about the safety measures observed by the stores. There are two kinds of statements present in all the posters analysed. The first mentions the maximum number of people allowed in a store to ensure social distance inside stores. This is according to the regulations set by the ministry based on store size. Below are examples of linguistic types and tokens from the texts in the posters that were collected:

- Maximum number of customers allowed in the store at the same time. (Message 1)*
___maximum, for the number of the guests allowed with the shop at the same time. (Message 2)
___maximum, for customers allowed to enter the store. (Message 3)
Maximum___customers at a time. (Message 4)
Maximum number of customers in store,___, making your shopping safe, all our associates are following safety guidelines and disinfecting all touch points regularly. (Message 5)
___max. (Message 6)
As per government guidelines, this store is limited to___, maximum number ___customers at a time. (Message 7)
For the safety of everyone, allowed number of clients inside only___customers. (Message 8)
For your safety, we will serve each ___customers [sic] inside the store. (Message 9)
___customers are allowed, better safety, better service. (Message 10)
Only___customers allowed. (Message 11)

These utterances target shop customers of both malls. Most representatives specify numbers to indicate the maximum numbers of customers allowed in a store, which was implemented by the government to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Although written differently, some posters relayed the same idea and used the same words. For instance, messages 1, 2, 3 and 5 almost had the same sentences although worded differently. Regardless, they all used “maximum” to emphasize the certain number allowed by the ministry. Slight differences in the position of the word “maximum” can also be seen in the posters. Similarly, message 6, which states “max” was the second shortest message in a poster. Although the message is short, simply indicating the maximum number still helps people to be aware and vigilant. Message 7 was more assertive because it started with, “As per government guidelines”, which informs the customers that it was done out of legal compliance. Meanwhile, message 8, and 9 also stated the number of customers without using “maximum”. Instead, these posters used the emphatic phrase “for your safety” to show compassion towards their customers’ safety.

On the other hand, other posters did not indicate the specific number of customers, and simply stated the importance of social distancing. Below are examples which can be found in the posters:

- Safe distancing will be ensured between cash tills, customer queues and store staff zones. (Message 12)*
Putting health first, this store is actively enforcing social distancing, 2m/6 feet. (Message 13)

Although all the representative acts state the importance of social distancing, messages from messages 12 and 13 are more reassuring because they focused on the importance of social distancing and how their stores strictly implement it. Message 13 mentioned that their store is actively enforcing it, so customers could shop without worrying.

The representative acts were used for awareness, so customers are mindful that overcrowding is not allowed. Information dissemination during a pandemic could be challenging, so these posters were utilized to relay regulations and spread awareness.

Directive acts

Searle (1969) defined directives in the form of advising, ordering, questioning and requesting. Because of the pandemic, reminding customers to maintain social distance has become important for everyone. Although the analysis revealed that representatives saw the highest frequency, directives had more varieties in terms of how the messages were written. The directives were mainly orders and requests.

The directives used verbs, such as *keep* and *maintain*. These posters ordered customers to strictly maintain social distance and indicated the specific distance to observe. Below are examples of the directives:

- Keep your safe distance... for your safety...(Message 14)*
- Keep distance. (Message 15)*
- Keep social distance, stand here. (Message 16)*
- Keep 2 meters apart. (Message 17)*
- Keep your distance, 2m (6ft). (Message 18)*
- Keep your distance, 2m. (Message 19)*
- Keep a safe distance to protect yourself and others, 1.5 meters. (Message 20)*
- 2m, keep safe distance. (Message 21)*
- 2m, keep distance. (Message 22)*
- 1.5 meter, keep distance. (Message 23)*

These utterances used the verb “keep” and the phrase “keep distance” to ask customers to maintain social distance. Also, these posters included the specific distance they require people to observe. Some posters included metres, whereas others used both metres and feet. Interestingly, words in these orders were just sequenced differently but mean the same. Messages 14 to 20 all placed “keep safe/your distance” at the beginning and mentioned the distance towards the end, whereas messages 21 to 23 placed “keep safe/your distance” otherwise. Meanwhile, other posters used the verb *maintain*, which are exemplified by:

- Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.(Message 24)*
- Maintain 2 meters distance between individuals (Message 25)*
- Maintain distance while you are shopping (Message 26)*
- Maintain social distance. (Message 27)*

Akin to the previous orders which utilized “keep”, these orders also used the word “distance” as a reminder. Message 24 goes beyond simple ordering for social distance by ordering people to keep their distance from people who have early signs of COVID-19. Other lexical tokens that carry directive messages or orders include verbs such as *practise, stay, wear, take care, sit and wait*.

As stated earlier, orders mostly utilized the verbs *keep* and *maintain*. For requests, similar verbs were used, however, the word *please* was used, which modifies each message and softens the imposition of the request. Hence, the stores sounded more courteous and polite as compared to others. However, even with the inclusion of *please*, the messages are still directed at making people distance themselves. Examples are as follows:

- Take care of yourself and others, please keep a safe distance. (Message 28)*
- Stay safe, please maintain social distance. (Message 29)*
- For your safety, please stand here. (Message 30)*
- For your safety, please leave a distance. (Message 31) Please keep your distance. (Message 32)*
- Please keep distance. (Message 33)*
- Please wait here, keep a distance. (Message 34)*
- Please wait here, maximum capacity in this store is _____shoppers. (Message 35)*

Please keep a safe distance, 1m. (Message 36)

Please ensure to keep 2 meters between you and the person in front of you at shopping area and checkout area. (Message 37)

Please stand 6ft, 2M, apart (Message 38)

Please line up here, keep 2 meters apart. (Message 39)

Aside from the use of the politeness marker *please*, the word *here* was also used to guide the customers where to stand. Messages with the word *here* were stickers on store floors. Directive acts showed how each of the stores is dedicated in implementing social distancing. The directives are more imposing and expect readers to comply with the measure.

Overall, using Searle’s typology, the analysis revealed that only two types of acts were used to state important facts, such as the maximum number of customers allowed in a store and to order/request customers to maintain social distance.

5.4 How do the signs and images in the posters enhance the linguistic message to construct social distance?

This research drew on Barthes’s (1977) theory of anchorage and Kress and van Leeuwen’s semiotic modes to examine how the linguistic message restricts the possible relayed meanings to readers. Anchorage is a message that limits the possible pools of signifieds in photographs and advertisements. To achieve a shared meaning, the linguistic message must enforce the visuals and vice versa.

The 237 posters were grouped based on the images used. Six different icons were used in the posters – feet, people, stop, crowding, people with distance, and distance icons. The posters vary in terms of linguistic message, inscription and materiality; however, the icons used were all the same. Hence, only six posters were analysed because they are already representative of the total number of the posters collected.

Feet Icon



Figure 7. Floor Sticker at Awoan Shop



Figure 8. Floor Sticker at Blue Age shop



Figure 9. Floor Sticker at Sun & Sand Sports Shop



Figure 10. Floor Sticker at Caramel Shop

Most designs for floor stickers used an image of shoes/feet to enforce social distance. From the examples, Figures 7-10 show very similar images and messages, although inscriptions vary. The images are accompanied by the anchoring verbal texts, *keep social distance*, *please stand here*, and *keep distance for your safety*. Both the icon and the message complement each other. The feet icon shows customers where to stand inside the stores, and the shoes icon was designed to fit actual customer feet. In the figures shown, the colours of the feet stood out because the colours were darker. Meanwhile, the texts located on the top and bottom of the feet direct customers where to stand. Without the text, the feet icon connotes directions. Combining the icon and the message creates a specific meaning which prompts customers to stand on the floor sticker enforcing social distancing.

People Icon



Figure 11. L'Occitane shop's poster



Figure 12. Diesel shop's poster



Figure 13. Marks & Spencer shop's poster



Figure 14. Al-Qurashi shop's poster

The people/crowd icon (Figures 11-14) is commonly used on posters placed on walls and/or doors of the shops. This icon and the text complement each other in several ways. First, the actual number of people in the icon matches the number of people allowed. Second, the image signifies customers who wish to get inside the store. The anchoring text sheds clarity on the image itself; by placing these images on the doors, people will immediately notice, read and respond accordingly. Without it, the crowd icon will be ambiguous to understand. The anchoring text can be seen beside the picture in Figure 13, whereas the text in Figure 14 is under the picture. This position allows better understanding of the image. In Figures 11 and 13, the size of the specific number of customers is larger than the rest of the message. This clearly reflects crowding restriction.

As for the image, the preference for the use of a group of people relates to the observance of social distancing. Some versions of the image, like Figure 14, literally show people social distancing. The shared meaning that the image and the message creates is the number of guests allowed. Customers can understand that the store restricts the number of guests.

Stop icon



Figure 15. Back Comfort shop’s social distancing poster

As shown in Figure 15, the stop icon was incorporated in the design of some signs. The relationship between the icon and the text can be seen but is not as impactful as the others because the hand icon can mean several things and is used in several contexts. In this specific context, the use of anchorage is crucial because the image used is a general one, so the meaning is heavily shaped and influenced by the linguistic message. The texts were written in varying modes and sizes. The message *stay safe!* is larger than the rest which directs customers to take care at all times. Next, the stay-safe phrase is larger to show customers that the store cares for them and is more empathetic because they remind customers that their safety is their utmost priority. *Please maintain social distance* is just secondary and is written in smaller size as staying safe already includes the obligatory social distancing measures above *wearing masks at all times*.

The icon is a hand which translates to “stop”. This is supported by the red octagon which is usually seen on road signs. People stop and act when they see this icon because it generally means “stop” or “do something”. Since the icon means stop, the anchorage then makes clear what the hand is for. This poster catches and directs their attention to the stop sign with the linguistic messages *stay safe* and *maintain social distance* to follow COVID-19 measures, specifically social distancing

Stop Crowding Icon



Figure 16. Adidas shop’s social distancing poster



Figure 17. Nahdi pharmacy’s social distancing poster



Figure 18. Nawaem shop’s social distancing poster

The stop crowding icon was rarely used. The image is clearly explained by the text because without the text, the image may be understood in several ways. It may mean that people are not allowed to enter. Hence, anchorage in these posters is very crucial. The text is purposely located at the bottom of the image to help readers get the shared meaning right after viewing the image as seen in Figures 16-18. The image, on the other hand, uses two combined icons – mall goers and the red stop logo which is understood as not allowed. If customers saw that the store had already met the limit as indicated by the linguistic message, others would no longer enter.

People with Distance Icon



Figure 19. Rivers World shop’s poster



Figure 20. Mayoral shop’s poster



Figure 21. Reebok shop’s poster



Figure 22. Danube grocery shop’s poster

Another frequently used icon illustrates two social distancing individuals. As shown in Figures 19-22, the image and message complement each other in many ways. First, the message explains what both people are doing. Second, the space specifies the exact distance to observe. Third, the message also accounts for the arrows used in the poster.

The two individuals wearing masks and the two arrows are obviously associated with the pandemic, which match the meaning of the message, (Figure 22). The images mirror what people do in public places—wear a mask and distance themselves. The choice of colours used to fill the persons, arrows, and font colour of the message are semiotic modes (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) that made the signs more noticeable. Altogether, both the visual and anchorage shape the shared meaning that anyone entering the store must strictly mirror the poster.

Distance icon



Figure 23. Popeye's restaurant's order queue floor sticker



Figure 24. Popeye's restaurant order pickup floor sticker

The distance icon was only used twice. Having the same features as the feet icon, the distance icon only varies because of the arrows, and it is not as impactful as the feet icon. Arrows are accompanied by texts to provide clearer instructions. Without the texts, the arrows could lead to different sections of the store – such as order queue (Figure 23) and order pickup (Figure 24).

The arrows – nine on each side – indicate that customers must observe social distancing measures on both sides. Both the visual and anchorage direct customers to specifically stand on the sticker to socially distance on both sides.

Through anchorage (Barthes, 1977) and other semiotic modes (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), the images in the posters were easily understood because of the texts. This coincides with Adegoju and Ademilokun's study (2015) which revealed that both image and verbal cues enhance the delivery of the message, and make readers notice the exigency of performing an action after reading posters. Without these texts, most images lead to different interpretations since they can be utilized in many contexts and the only way to restrict the intended meaning was with an anchoring text, so that the customer gets that one meaning that both the visual and message want to relay.

In addition to the images, other elements such as inscriptions were observed in line with Scollon and Scollon's (2003) place semiotics framework of the study. Based on the data gathered, most signs use non-serif fonts over serif fonts. 227 or 95.78% wrote their regulations in non-serif fonts, while 10 or 4.22% opted to use serif fonts. These results correlate with what Dogusoy, Cicek, and Cagiltay (2016) posit that non-serif fonts make reading easier. In terms of colour, 64 or 27% of signs mainly used white as backgrounds. Green is the next-most utilized with a total of 45 or 18.99% of the signs. Some signs used striking colours with a total of 35 or 14.77%. 27 or 11.39% used blue. 23 or 9.7% signs use red, 11 or 4.64% use pink and black, 9 or 3.80% use yellow as the main colour of their signs. 7 or 2.95% signs had no backgrounds. Some signs used their shop colours for their signs, such as grey (2 signs or

0.84%), and orange, brown and maroon (1 sign each or 0.42%). The same study by Gradisar, Turk, and Humar (2006) revealed that white, blue, black and green help the human eye read faster.

5.5 Will the posters successfully prompt recommendations for individuals to socially distance?

Table 4. Nationality of participants

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Saudi	17	34
Yemeni	10	20
Filipino	9	18
Palestine	3	6
Syrian	3	6
Egyptian	2	4
Nigerian	2	4
Pakistani	2	4
British	1	2
Lebanese	1	2
Total	50	100%

50 respondents were asked if the posters prompted them to socially distance themselves. Table 4 shows the nationalities of the respondents. The almost equal number of expats and natives determine the efficacy of the posters because having mixed nationalities helps determine the level of effectiveness of the posters.

The participants were asked to provide at least 2 of the languages they speak. 49 or 98% of them speak English, while 47 or 94% speak Arabic. Being able to speak both languages aided in determining the effectiveness of the posters.

To check poster effectiveness, respondents were asked if the posters prompted them to social distance. 44 or 88% responded yes, while 6 or 12% responded no. The respondents explained their answers. Through coding, the themes which emerged are: the signs (1) remind recipients of the dangers of COVID-19; (2) provide directions on how social distancing can be effectively performed; (3) instruct for effective social distancing practices; (4) act as good social distancing signals; while those who responded with no mostly justified their answer with how the signs (5) are unnoticeable; or (6) are used on a population that is not committed to curbing the rise of COVID-19 cases.

Participants were also asked which between the two languages present in COVID-19 posters do they respond to. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. In which language do you respond to when reading COVID-19 posters?

Language	Frequency	Percentage
Arabic	1	2%
English	14	28%
Both	35	70%

Most of the participants felt that the social distancing posters effectively got their attention. Different elements in the posters aided the efficacy of the posters and the participants chose the elements which they deem the most effective in implementing the specific examined COVID-19 measure. Table 6 presents the elements and their frequencies.

Table 6. If yes, which elements of the poster catch your attention?

Element	Frequency	Percentage
Poster colour	29	60.40%
Poster size	24	50%
Message	22	45.80%
Symbols	17	35.40%
Text style	13	27.10%
Text colour	12	25%

Among the respondents, the Saudis were further asked about their perception of the COVID-19 posters in relation to their government’s efforts to rid the country of the virus. They were asked if the COVID-19 posters appealed to them as commands or reminders. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Do the COVID-19 posters serve as a ____?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Command	2	8.70%
Reminder	21	91.30%

The results indicated that the regulations in signs were presented in the form of reminders as stated by the Saudi participants. They were then asked the extent of their obedience to the special rules. 3 or 14.20% of them said they always followed such rules, 15 or 71.40% responded with often, 1 or 4.80% responded with *sometimes*, and 2 or 9.50% claimed they *rarely* follow regulations. The results also show that (1) not everyone in the population seems to exhibit a sense of urgency to defeat COVID-19. Those who often follow social distancing rules claim that they obey rules because they (2) fear penalty fees, (3) should unite to defeat COVID-19, and (4) understand the situation better.

As for expats’ conformity to the same rules, 27 respondents were asked how frequently they followed social distancing rules. 19 or 73.10% of the expats said they *always* follow such rules, 6 or 23.10% answered *often*, and 1 or 3.80% answered *sometimes*.

The expats were then further asked about their perception of the essence of the COVID-19 posters in relation to their human rights. They were made to specify if the signs make them feel as if their rights, as individuals residing in Saudi Arabia, were restricted. 24 or 96% of them do not feel like their rights were restricted, 1 or 4% claim that their rights feel somehow restricted, while 2 abstained. The respondents felt that the signs (1) are regulations set for the safety of all, and (2) must be followed to exhibit compliance.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

This LL study which utilized Ben-Rafael et al’s (2006), Scollon and Scollon’s (2003), Searle’s (1969) typology of speech acts, Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996, 2006) semiotic modes, and Barthes’ (1977) anchorage gave an overview of the LL of two major marketplaces in Jeddah City by examining the use of social distancing posters to curtail the spread of COVID-19. Analysis of these posters provided further lenses on the LL of Jeddah City in terms of languages used, language dominance, image-text relations and elements of posters which prompted people to follow social distancing protocols. The study revealed that most social distancing posters used both English and Arabic. Regardless of the presence of the two languages, it was revealed that Arabic is still the dominant language used in information dissemination.

This research also showed that the messages accompanying the images are in the form of requests and commands. Using Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996, 2006) semiotic modes and Barthes’s anchorage, linguistic messages serve as a guide to better understand the images in the posters. Furthermore, the linguistic message is successful in restricting the meaning that the image intends to relay. In terms of the effectiveness, most respondents stated that the posters made them follow social distancing protocols and added that elements, such as poster colour, size, and messages are the major elements that draw their attention to the posters.

With all the details provided, it clearly shows that language plays a significant role in the country's effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The stores' use of Arabic and English reveals the LL of the major shopping centres in Jeddah which corresponds to previous studies on the Kingdom's LL (Alhaider, 2018; Alfaifi, 2015; Blum, 2014). These similar findings suggest that the language choice of these two shopping malls is concurrent with Jeddah's preparation for Vision 2030, which aims to prepare Saudi Arabia to embrace socio-economic advancements. Changes in crucial sectors will enable Saudi Arabia to fully keep up with globalization. The use of a language that will connect Saudi Arabia to the rest of the world is vital. For this reason, English being Saudi Arabia's legally enacted foreign language and lingua franca (Elyas and Badawood, 2016) opens more opportunities for the country to better its relations with foreign investors.

Further research is needed to examine the city's LL. This study only looked at the LL through social distancing posters. Hence, a thorough study looking at other signs and with a larger survey population will surely provide substantial input. Moreover, performing a comparative research study which examines the LL of cities such as Riyadh and Al-Khobar will help us understand the current LL of Saudi Arabia as a whole and see how globalization and Vision 2030 have influenced these changes.

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