

A Linguistic Landscape Study Of Shop Signs In The Northern Part Of Jordan

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History</p> <p>Received: April 22, 2021</p> <p>Accepted: November 30, 2021</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords : Word Formation, Morphology, Shop signs. Linguistic Landscape</p> <p>DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.5759974</p>	<p><i>This study aims to explore the use of languages on the commercial shop signs in Irbid city and to find out the word formation processes in written texts used in shop signs. The sample of this study included commercial shop signs in one center called Irbid City Center which is located in the northern part of Jordan in Irbid City. The researchers used English word formation processes in English morphology to examine the data they discovered. The researchers came to the following conclusions after investigating the extent to which languages are used in shop signs and examining the word development processes in these signs. This research highlighted particular word formation processes such as borrowing, compounding, acronyms, eponyms, derivation, clipping, and backformation, all of which represent the value of the utilized languages as well as the contribution of foreign languages to the commercial field's aims. More research of shop signs at malls in various geographic regions, both locally and regionally, is needed. Because this research focuses on a specific set of word formation processes, there is a need to investigate additional processes in various Jordanian malls.</i></p>

Introduction

Linguistic landscape (LL) plays a significant role in forming and creating shop signs which reflect and emphasize the importance of the used languages. They also achieve valuable goals related to the commercial field which serve both the owner and the customer. The linguistic landscape also reflects the power and situation of all languages used in a particular sociolinguistic context.

Gorter (2007) declares that the linguistic landscape also affects the use of language such as the good existence of English language in the field of LL in the city of Rome may affect both the publicity and acceptability in addition to the use of English in the Roman and Italian community

). In general, there are two different functions of the linguistic landscape. The first function is informative which conveys information about the product. The second is symbolic that related to the status of languages. Akindele (2011) pinpoints that “the use of different languages in the signs also reflect the status, power and economic significance of different languages” (p.3).

Additionally, exploring these linguistic devices in the foreign languages used in shop signs represents the fundamental essence of this study. Word formation is one term that belongs to the LL which actually influences all languages used on shop signs. Moreover, word formation impacts the process of creating new words and short texts used on shop signs. Word formation is defined as “ the study of the ways in which new complex words are built on the basis of other words or morphemes “ (Plag, 2018, p. 17). Therefore, this study investigates the linguistic characteristics of languages in the form of visual and written texts used on shop signs. Also, the researcher identifies and analyzes the linguistic features of these texts according to the word formation processes including (borrowing, clipping, eponyms, conversion, blending, acronym and others).

This research can be conducted from multiple perspectives according to the languages which are used on shop signs in Irbid city that help in terms of promotion and customer’s attraction. Also, it examined the valuable linguistic features of shop signs. In particular, the current study aim at finding out the word formation processes in written texts used in shop signs.

Thus, this study sheds light on the linguistic features of languages that are used in the commercial field in Irbid city. The researcher explores the linguistic features which are related to the word formation processes including borrowing, clipping, eponyms, conversion, blending, acronyms, neologisms, compounding, coinage and derivation definitely in the shop signs in Carrefour mall.

According to Palumbo and Herbig (2000), most of shop signs may refer to the name of “a trademark or a special name of a product or manufacturer. It is also a name of a symbol, term, sign and others that distinguish the

services and goods of a seller” (p.120). Thus, the researcher intends to explore the extent of using languages in the commercial field in Jordan in regards to the commercial shop signs.

Moreover, this kind of study is rarely investigated especially in Irbid city in Jordan which refers to various reasons that are related to the place that data will be collected from (Alomoush, 2019; Amer, 2014). The study focuses on the shop signs in Irbid City Center which is considered as one of the biggest mall in Irbid city. In contrast, other studies investigate the shop signs in other Jordanian cities in Salt (Al Hyari&Hamdan, 2019), Amman (Mansour, 2013), and Petra (Alomoush, 2018). It also focuses on the most significant linguistic features of word formation processes among the written and visual language of the shop signs while other studies focused on studying shop signs in different cities according to many other perspectives that belong to the term of sociolinguistic elements used in shop signs such as the previous study in Amman (Mansour, 2013). Moreover, it investigates the arrangement of languages used in shop signs.

2.0 Literature review

The basis of this current study comprises semiotic approaches of Ferdinand and Charles theories of signs. In general, semiotics is the study of signs that are related to an epistemology which searches the existence or the presence of signs in societal life (Yakin, 2014). Moreover, semiotics considers for all things which can be seen or translated as a sign. According to Umberto Eco (1979) book entitled “A Theory of Semiotics”, he assumed that “semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign (p.7). A sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting for something else “(Umberto Eco, 1979, p. 7). Also, Umberto Eco pointed out that “something else” does not necessarily substitute its position. Thus, Umberto Eco oftentimes called this theory as a theory of deception and the reason is that it can be used for misleading others by giving wrong impression or idea (Umberto Eco, 1976).

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 – 1913), a linguist from Switzerland and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839 – 1914), a philosopher from America have made great considerable contributions in the field of the modern semiotic history. Ferdinand de Saussure is widely known as the founder of modern linguistics. The essence of Saussure’s theory focuses on a principle that deals with language as a system of sign, and alongside language there are several sign systems in the world. He compared between the systems of linguistic sign to other sign systems that can be founded in the real world in consideration to the important role that presents in building and structuring reality. He concentrates on the underlying system of language comparing to the use of language.

Substantially, Saussure’s theory emphasizes the internal construction of cognitive thought process or the activity of human minds in constructing both the physical and abstract signs of their surroundings. Additionally, the structure of linguistic signs in the language system comes among them which permit them to act as individuals and deal with each other. Saussure’s theory asserts that “ language does not reflect reality but rather constructs it because we don’t only use language or give meaning to anything that exists in the world of reality, but also to anything that does not exist in it” (Chandler, 2002, p. 28).

While Saussure has proposed the term of “semiology”, Peirce introduced the term of “semiotic”. According to Peirce point of view, semiotic is a synonymous of the notion of logic which concentrates on the knowledge of individuals through a thinking process. Moreover, sign border and human mind form the main principles of Peirce’s theory of sign. He divided signs into three aspects which related to sign of ground, thing that refers to as a referent (Yakin, 2014).

Peirce theory focused on logic and adopted logical thinking, he explored the way that people think and use their rationality and general senses (Leeds – Hurwitz, 1993). Peirce emphasized that people speculate and think through the signs, which give them a great chance to deal and communicate with each other. Also, this enable individuals to perceive and give meaning to anything in the surrounding environment (Zoest, 1991). Essentially, Peirce theory relies on the base that everything can be a sign while it has the capacity to symbolize something else according to human thought and translation. He definitely points out that sign can be conveyed either intentionally or by chance. Thus, the ideology of Peirce theory of signs includes things that are originated by individuals or not as long as it can be understood and recognized by their minds (Eco, 1991).

2.2 Empirical studies

Even though previous studies have been conducted on using foreign languages in shop signs, until now few studies investigate the role of linguistic features in foreign languages used in shop signs in Irbid city-Jordan. In this respect, Zhang &Tuo (2015) investigate the Chinese-English translation (C-E translation) of linguistic signs in China in the field of linguistic landscape by following specific theoretical framework and principals for practicing the translation of linguistic signs. They collect the samples from many sources including shopping signs, bus stations, airports and others in China which considers as one of the most important countries that

attract foreigners all over the world. In addition, the researcher used both descriptive and explanatory methods to manipulate samples and find out the results. They firstly present the general status of C-E translation of the linguistic signs in China. Next, they apply the theory by analyzing the situation of linguistic signs in translation. Then they identify three categories that are commonly in the C-E translation in order to classify the problem. Finally, they find out that most Chinese linguistic signs contain various errors which are classified as lexical and syntactic errors. They also indicate that pragmatic errors are commonly found which affect information of the signs for foreign tourists.

Additionally, Jing-Jing (2015) examines the regulation and order of languages used in signs in Japan. Also, he explores the construction of the campus linguistic landscape and how the sign readers reflect the multilingual of the campus they are living in. He investigates signs from three main perspectives which refer to as the physical, political, and experimental dimensions that fertilize the recognition of multilingualism. Moreover, the researcher used quantitative methods in the form of questionnaire to study various attitudes of the students toward a multilingual campus by collecting the languages used in signs in the main streets in Ito campus of Kyushu University. The findings of this research emphasize that students have the ability to speak bilingual languages in their daily life. Also, they keep using multilingual languages to certain degree.

Gap of the study

Although there were many studies conducted on shop signs (Shang & Gou, 2017), most of them were in different languages (David & Manan, 2015), different contexts (ZHANG & Tuo, 2015) and different methods (Jing-Jing, 2015), studies in Jordan are very scarce (Guihang & Bingjie, 2017). Thus, this study is to fill a gap in the field of linguistic landscape by using a type of qualitative measures for all shop signs in Irbid city, Jordan definitely shop signs in the biggest mall Carrefour. Moreover, it will add to the literature of Jordanian context.

3.0 Methodology

The current qualitative study aims at investigating languages used in the commercial field in Irbid city in Jordan, particularly on shop signs, and exploring the linguistic features of word formation processes of written texts used on shop signs. The population of this study consists of all visual and written shop signs which are used in the commercial field in Irbid city especially those that are written in several languages. Thus, the population includes only permanent shop signs that aim to introduce several services and goods. The total number for the population of this study is one thousands of commercial shop signs in Irbid city. In the current study, the samples of this research consists of all types of shop signs involving café, clothes and fashion shops, supermarkets and many restaurants.

Table 3.1
Selected Numbers of Shop Signs in Each Floor

Floor Number	Number of shop signs
F.1	25
F.2	50
F.3	45
F.4	30

The selected samples of this study have been chosen in a purposive way from the population above as the following:

Table 3.2
Classification of the Selected Samples – Carrefour Mall

Shop's Name	Number of samples
Clothes shops	50
Accessories shops	20
Cosmetics shops	25
Restaurants	20
Supermarkets	25
Café's	10
Total	150

In regards to the approved instrument for this research, the researcher take photos for each selected shop sign in the process of data collection. Collecting samples in this way may help the researcher to answer the question of the study that related to language choice and linguistic features.

A digital camera is used to photograph all selected shop signs distributed on four floors of the biggest mall then each sign was analyzed separately. Moreover, photos were taken for a special kind of shop signs where you can find a huge commercial presence definitely in Carrefour mall in Irbid city which fit the process of collecting population and data. Furthermore, samples are chosen accurately in a suitable way that allows the researcher to find out results in a consistent form.

the researchers analyze the selected samples and data based on the dimension of language choice and the dimension of linguistic features in the term of word formation especially in visual and written texts on shop signs.

Table 3.3 Dimensions of Data Analysis

Language choice	Word formation devices
Arabic Language	Borrowing, clipping, eponyms, conversion, blending, acronym, neologism, compounding, coinage and derivation.
English Language	
English – Arabic	
French	

In regards to the first dimension, the researcher classifies all languages used on shop signs in the term of the most dominant languages. The researchers sort languages into types as (Arabic language, English language, English – Arabic and French). The researchers analyze texts in the term of word formation processes such as (borrowing, clipping, eponyms, conversion, blending, acronym, neologisms, compounding, coinage and derivation) then the researchers find out and explain each word formation process that may increase the importance of the used languages.

Findings & Discussion

“Word formation processes in shop signs”.

This section analyzes a set of shop signs that are written in monolingual English language and other foreign languages relying on the processes of word formation that include borrowing, coinage, derivation, compounding and other processes. For answering the second question, the researcher classified the shop signs according to the word formation processes which are used to create new forms of foreign languages used in shop signs. Additionally, the researcher presents various pictures of shop signs in Irbid city center that are analyzed qualitatively. Table (4.2) shows a set of the most common word formation processes.

Table 4.2
Percentages and Examples of Word Formation Processes in Shop Signs in Carrefour Mall

Word Formation Processes	Percentage	Examples
Borrowing	11%	Piano, Pizza
Acronyms and Eponyms	17%	LC WaIKIKI. TC TOP CLOTHS
Compounding	12%	Kahvehane, PASTAHANE
Derivation	14%	EUROMODA, VIA MODA
Clipping	10%	Burger
Backformation	13%	Tailor
Others	23%	Gifts Center, Heaven

a. Borrowing

Yule (2014) states that “borrowing is the taking over of words from other languages” (p. 52). For example, English language legally takes the word “jewel” from French language and consider it as one’s own. Sign 5 presents a monolingual English sign which is written only in English language. The word “Piano” is borrowed from the Italian word “Pianoforte quiet”. It is a musical instrument that indicates the ability to play both loudly and softly. Additionally, the uses of the word piano in sign (5) does not represent its meaning at all.



Sign 5. A monolingual English Scarf Shop Sign

Sign (6) introduces another example of borrowed words which is “PIZZA”. “PIZZA” as a single word is borrowed from Italian which means “Pie”. Also, the following shop sign presents an example of compounding. The term “COZYPIZZA” is produced by joining two separate words “COZY” and “PIZZA” to create a new single form which means “warm pizza”.



Sign 6. A monolingual English Restaurant Sign

Sign (7) shows another borrowed word which is “Cotton”. “Cotton” is a borrowed word from the Arabic term “Cutn” and it is borrowed from old French word “Coton”.



Sign 7. A monolingual French or Arabic clothes shop Sign

b. Acronyms and Eponyms

Sign (8) consists of two initial words. The first shortened form “LC” is an example of one of the substantial word formation processes which is acronyms. Yule (2014) states that “Acronyms are new words formed from the initial letters of a set of other words” p. 56. LC has been shortened from the initial French words which are (Les Copains) which means (friends). The second word “Waikiki” is written to feature the most famous Waikiki beach which represents an example of (eponym). Yule (2014) explains “Eponyms are new words based on the name of a person or a place” p. 56.



Sign 8. A monolingual French Clothes Shop Sign

Sign (9) presents another example of acronym process. The abbreviated form TC stands for two initial English words. The shorten “T” represents the word “TOP” while the shorten “C” represents the second word “CLOTHS”.



Sign 9. A monolingual English Clothes Shop Sign

c. Compounding

Compounding is “a joining of two separate words to produce a single form” (Yule, 2014, p.53). Sign (10) is written in Turkish language, which is one of foreign languages that are rarely used in the commercial field in Irbid city. The word “Kahvehane” is an example of a compound word that is formed by using both initial Turkish words “Kahve” and “hane”. Kahve is translated into English to mean “coffee” while “hane” means “house”. The whole word “Kahvehane” means “ coffee house” which is an institution released by Ottoman Empire that aim to present Turkish coffee to the world.



Sign 10. A monolingual Turkish Coffee Shop Sign

Sign (11) is a bilingual food shop sign which is written by both foreign languages: Italian and Turkish. “PASTAHANE” presents another example of compounding process which mainly consists of two initial words “PASTA” and “HANE”. The first word “PASTA” is an Italian word which means “Spaghetti or Macaroni”, the second one “HANE” is a Turkish word which means “house”. Both words are joined to form the new word “PASTAHANE”.



Sign 11. A bilingual Italian and Turkish Food Shop Sign

d. Derivation

Derivation is the process of forming a new word by using affixes (Yule, 2014). Affixes are small “bits” that can be added to the beginning, middle, or end of a word. Sign (12) presents an example of using affixes to produce a new word. The word “EUROMODA” consists of the prefix “EURO” which is the abbreviated form of the word European that belongs to the European currency. Additionally, the prefix “EURO” is added to the beginning of the French word “MODA” which means fashion in order to create the shown word.



Sign 12. A monolingual English Accessories Shop Sign

e. Clipping

Clipping “is when a word of more than one syllable is reduced to a shorter form” (Yule, 2014, P.54). Sign (13) presents an example that belongs to the process of reducing long words to use the short form. The word “hamburger” consists of more than one syllable which is reduced to a shorter form “burger”.



Sign 13. A monolingual English Restaurant Sign

Sign (14) introduces another example of reduction. The word “café” is the shortened form of the term “cafeteria” which is a kind of restaurant offering many drinks and fast meals.



Sign 14. A bilingual English – French Cafe Sign

f. Backformation

Backformation “is when a word of one type (usually a noun) is reduced to form a word of another type (usually a verb) (Yule, 2014, P. 54). Sign (15) shows the word “Tailor” which is used as a noun and can be reduced to a new form to be a verb “Tail” which means “sew”. So, the verb “Tail” can be created by cutting the last two letters “or” that form a noun.



Sign 15. A bilingual English – Arabic Tailor Shop Sign

g. Others

As mentioned above in table (3.5), there are a set of shop signs that can not be classified under any word formation processes. This emphasizes that there is a variation in the linguistic value of many selected shop signs. Sign (16 & 17) illustrate examples of shop signs that do not belong to the processes of word formation.



Sign 16. A bilingual English - Arabic gifts Shop Sign



Sign 17. A monolingual English Cosmetics Shop Sign

All results mentioned above in table (3.5) clarify the varied use of word formation processes in shop signs are written in foreign languages in Irbid which demonstrate that languages and words which are used in shop signs can be created through various word formation processes including borrowing, acronyms and eponyms, compounding, derivation, clipping and backformation. This result is consistent with what Giyatmi, Hastutti & Wijayava (2014) investigate about the formation of brand names in Indonesia.

Conclusions And Recommendations

This study aims to explore the extent of using languages on the commercial shop signs in Irbid city and to find out the word formation processes in written texts used in shop signs. The sample of this study included commercial shop signs in one mall called Irbid City Center which is located in the northern part of Jordan in Irbid City.

By exploring the extent of using languages in shop signs and by analyzing the word formation processes in these shop signs, the researchers have come with the following conclusions. This study clarified specific word formation processes, such as borrowing, compounding, acronyms, eponym, derivation, clipping, and backformation which reflect the value of the used languages in addition to the contribution of foreign languages to achieve the goals of the commercial field.

The current study has many limitations in terms of the size of sample, methods and duration. Although there are a lot of signs in Irbid, this study is confined to a small sample, Irbid City Center, which is located in the northern part of Jordan country. Moreover, the data collection will last for a period of two months which is considered a short period. Thus, the above mentioned limitations might affect the generalization of the results.

5.3 Recommendations

1. As the sample of this current study was limited to a specific mall which is located in Irbid city, there is a need for more research to investigate shop signs in malls in other geographic regions in Jordan such as in the capital city Amman. Also, the same research can be carried out after a period of many years to explore if the status of using languages is still the same or different.
2. As this study sheds light on a set of word formation processes, there is a need to explore other processes in other malls that are located in different cities in Jordan.

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