



A lexical study of coffee shop signs in Jordan




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ABSTRACT

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Shop signs are essential because potential customers see signs before they use the service that a business offers. This study investigates how the promotion of goods or services is lexicalized in commercial café signs in the trendy Jordanian society. It investigates the linguistic material of café signs in a sample of 142 café sign boards in Irbid-Jordan. The signs were photographed and 20 cafés' owners were interviewed to better understand the factors that affect their use of café signs. The study employed the qualitative approach to analyse the observation and interview data. The results revealed that the café signage was largely dominated by the English language due to its vitality, globalization, economic motivations, and the customers' positive attitudes toward English. The study also revealed the lexicalization of trendy café names, lexical modernization, foreign cultural and pragmatic referents, such as superiority, religious, emotional, ethical, physical strength, color, historical, floral, celebrity reference which aim to heighten prominence. Different linguistic strategies including politeness strategy, personification, and metaphor were found in the signs to attract customers. The study would contribute to a better understanding of the use of English in lingua franca contexts in Jordan, and utilizing these commercial signs as a realistic source of learning linguistic strategies and pragmatics.

Contribution/ Originality: Due to the scarce studies of café signs in Jordan, the current study analyses the use of different languages in the linguistic landscape which offers specifics about written communication between language users. The study contributes to a better understanding of the use of English in lingua franca contexts in Jordan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Irbid is situated in northern Jordan and it is the cultural capital of the Arab World and of Jordan. It is located about 70 kilometers north of Amman and approximately 20 kilometers south of the Syrian border. It has the second largest population in Jordan (around 2 million). Irbid region is also home to several colleges and universities, which makes it a students' destination city for home and international students from 50 African and Asian countries. The high concentration of universities and academic institutions has played an essential role in modelling the distinctive identity of the city. Much of the economy of Irbid is based on the service sector (Gubser, 2022; Malkawi & Rababah, 2012; Rababah, Al Zoubi, Al Masri, & Al-Abdulrazaq, 2021).

Marketing makes a significant and a substantial effect on buying and selling behaviors of consumers and sellers for several reasons. It usually assists in fostering a sense of identity (branding) and informing consumers about a business before stepping foot into the building or shopfront (Kalaiganam, Tuli, Kushwaha, Lee, & Gal, 2021; Obeidat, Momani, Ammari, & Rababah, 2022). Oftentimes, knowledge, building trust, and reputation come down to how well the signage is able to express these functions of marketing, hence making it such an indispensable part of any successful and valuable business (Bilá & Ivanova, 2020; Hadiyanti, 2020; Obeidat, Momani, Hayajneh, et al., 2022).

Generally, signage serves as a kind of silent salesclerk for any business. Specifically, external signs can draw attention to the business and help distinguish it from others whereas interior signs assist clients and consumers to locate products and can lead to driving sales when added to distinct displays (Maria & Larisa, 2017; Rababa'h, 2000; Rababah, Harun, & Shapii, 2019a, 2019b). Consequently, shop signs are essential because potential customers may see signs before they see the service a business offers. Signage is considered an indispensable component of a business's general promotion strategy. According to Hadiyanti (2020), a sign that comprises a business's logo is able to help reinforce its trademark or brand. Typically, signs are employed to convey information about the business as well as to help the process of promotions for the business. Its effect is continuous and massive, especially the exterior sign since it is visible to customers all the time.

According to many business studies, for instance Badran (2020); Hadiyanti (2020); Kalaiganam et al. (2021); Danaa et al. (2022); Rababah and Malkawi (2012), if someone plans to start a business, it is essential to take into consideration how the owner plans to use and exhibit signage. A creative and attractive sign helps a business stand out from the competition. Routinely, customers and consumers tend to shop from a business they have previously heard of. Thus, a shop sign can help in planting the seed for potential customers and sales.

In the last few decades, cafés have spread all over Jordan, especially the small takeaway ones. Standing out in a big sea of cafés is a great challenge for businesses hoping to excel and succeed. Thus, great signage can be a game-changer in the highly competitive hospitality industry. An innovative and distinctive shopfront sign will possibly entice consumers from a far distance and happily draw them into the café they feel that they will enjoy. Therefore, signage is one of the critical factors of business success (Badran, 2020; Hadiyanti, 2020; Kalaiganam et al., 2021; Rababah & Malkawi, 2012).

It is worth mentioning that the language used in the public domain including signposts is called the linguistic landscape. Some scholars, such as Landry and Bourhis (1997) referred to the "linguistic landscape" (LL) as the "visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs." In the same vein, Fuller and Wardhaugh (2020) pointed out that research into displayed in public spaces, such as posters, signs, advertisements, and letterings. According to Backaus (2007), linguistic landscape is a sociolinguistic phenomenon used in societies for numerous socio-economic purposes, such as guiding, notifying, cautioning, and advertising. AlHyari and Hamdan (2019) argued that linguistic landscape generally, has two functions: (i) informative as it conveys information regarding the product, and (ii) symbolic, that is it denotes the status of the languages.

The study, according to the researchers' knowledge, is the first of its kind that analyzes the linguistic features and pragmatic functions of café signs in Irbid. The study of shop signs from a sociolinguistic angle has been carried out worldwide; however, it has rarely examined the café signs, in Irbid. Hence, the present study may fill a gap in the literature and enrich linguistic landscape research by adding value to previous research on this phenomenon. It enhances the understanding of the way the linguistic landscape of café signs is constructed and highlights socio-cultural values, norms, and practices in Jordanian Arabic. Consequently, this study would be useful for linguistic landscape researchers who are unfamiliar with socio-cultural values, norms, and practices in Jordanian society. The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the languages displayed on takeaway and dine-in coffee shop signs in Irbid?

2. What are the reasons that influence the owners of coffee shops to use foreign languages in their café signs according to their participants' perspective?

This scope of this research is limited to the topic, place, and sample of the study. It only investigates the language of external café signs in Irbid city. This means that the study excludes cafés located outside the city center of Irbid and excludes the signs that show restaurants and cafés together. It collected 142 café signs; 102 signs from dine-in café (i.e., cafés that offer tables and chairs for customers inside the shop to relax) and 40 café signs from takeaway cafés that do not offer a place to sit in. Therefore, the researchers do not recommend generalizing the findings of the study to another city in Jordan or other cities outside Jordan.

Coffee shops have seen noticeable growth in Irbid-Jordan in the last decade especially the small takeaway ones. This massive growth in this modern industry makes it interesting to research and identify the linguistic and sociopragmatic choices of the signage used in this sector. The present study aims to investigate the language used in exterior café signs in Irbid city in Jordan. It analyses the café signs language both quantitatively and qualitatively. It concentrates on the language choice and the linguistic features of the café signs (i.e., morphological, semantic, phonetic and syntactic form). Moreover, it examines their pragmatic functions and how they can attract customers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have analyzed the linguistic landscape in different languages but most of them have not focused on shop signs (AlHyari & Hamdan, 2019; Amer & Obeidat, 2014; Badran, 2020; El-Yasin & Mahadin, 1996; Hadiyanti, 2020). El-Yasin and Mahadin (1996) investigated most signs shown on some of the famous streets which merge between the old and contemporary parts of Irbid. The study was based on 355 signs to analyze the pragmatic functions served by the used language. The study focused on the linguistic features of the shop signs. First, the words of the shop signs were classified whether they were in Arabic or a foreign language. Then, the words were classified whether were they written in Arabic or other script. Finally, the researchers studied the intended meaning of these words as well as how they were employed to promote goods and services for customers to buy. The study demonstrated how the owners used language on their shops' signs as a means to inform and persuade customers.

El-Yasin and Mahadin (1996) stated that the "use of language not only imparts information to the reader but also tries to influence his behavior" (p. 410). Consequently, the researchers explained that there are six forms of foreign impact on Jordanian shop signs which are: using foreign words or Arabic names written in Roman letters, using foreign words already used in colloquial Jordanian contexts, using foreign brands; using foreign words that are not in use among the native speakers in any natural context, using foreign store names, using foreign languages to have a completely foreign sign (El-Yasin & Mahadin, 1996). The researchers argued that the last three forms are primarily employed to influence the customers' behavior. As such, using foreign languages might give a positive impression through its association with a desired foreign quality.

Amer and Obeidat (2014) studied the language of business in 278 shop signs in Jordan-Aqaba city. They interviewed 24 shop owners to find out the reasons behind their use of English language on the shop signs. The study concluded that bilingual shop signs were dominant, that is, most of the selected sample was in Arabic and English. Bilingual signs constituted more than 50% of the total sample. Arabic names were translated into English to give information about services and goods to foreign visitors as Aqaba is a tourist city in Jordan. The shop owners, who were interviewed, stated that English was principally used to attract the attention of foreign customers. Besides, they reported that English is associated with modernity, prestige and globalization. The researchers note that some English words such as dry-clean or pizza have become loanwords in Arabic.

AlHyari and Hamdan (2019) examined the shop signs in Al-Salt, Jordan. They selected two shopping streets for the investigation. The study aimed to examine shop signs in terms of language arrangement, language choice, and specific linguistic structures. A total of 181 shop signs were photographed by the researchers and then

analyzed. The study found that around 88.6% were monolingual Arabic signs. The low number of monolingual English signs implies the possibility of the lack of proficiency in English in the targeted customers to comprehend the sign.

Badran (2020) investigated the linguistic landscape of shop signs in Palestine from a sociolinguistic as well as psychological angle. The study was based on a collection of 600 shop signs from various geographic locations within Ramallah, Hebron and Bethlehem. 300 shop owners were asked to fill in a questionnaire and participate in semi-structured interviews which were held by the researcher. The findings of the study revealed that language choice of the shop signs was intended to fulfill economic, social, demographic, and attitudinal considerations. The findings showed that English bilingual signs were mostly used in wealthy areas rather than in underprivileged areas while Arabic monolingual signs were used predominantly in deprived areas. The study revealed that some shop owners attempted to enhance the business self-image by employing an influential language like English rather than Arabic (the mother language) in the names of shops. As such, Arabic and English were chosen due to diverse reasons, depending on the social prestige that is prevalent in the shopping areas.

Hadiyanti (2020) analyzed the use of English in cafés in Gresik. The study aimed to identify the percentage of using English in cafés in Gresik, figures of speech used in the cafés, and the reasons that made the cafes' owners use English in the café signs. The data was collected by observing selected cafés. Moreover, interviews with the cafés owners were conducted by the researcher. The results of the study revealed that English was dominant. Besides, the study found that coffee shops use figurative language (such metaphors) in each sign in the cafés. It revealed that one of the strategies for the application of English by the café managers was building a European atmosphere in the cafés by applying figurative language on the signs.

The literature reveals that studies of the LL phenomenon are scanty in Jordan, particularly in Irbid. Thus, the present study aims to analyze the linguistic features and pragmatic functions of café signs in Irbid to fill a gap in the literature and enrich LL research. This enhances the understanding of the way the LL of café signs is created and highlight socio-cultural values, norms, and practices in Jordanian Arabic.

3. METHODS

The study aimed to identify the languages used in the coffee shops in Irbid, in general, linguistic features and pragmatic functions, in particular, and the reasons behind the use of English from the owners' perspectives.

3.1. *The Population and Sample of the Study*

The population of the study included approximately 350 coffee shop signs in Irbid city. These shops offered different services and goods to their customers but mainly they provide different types of coffee. Owing to the difficulty of collecting and studying all coffee shop signs in Irbid, a randomly selected sample of 142 coffee shop signs (102 signs from sit-in coffee shops and 40 signs from small takeaway coffee shops) from the city center in Irbid were photographed by the researchers. The researchers interviewed 10 coffee shop owners from each of the above two types of coffee shops to better understand the factors that affected their choice of coffee shops sign names.

3.2. *Study Tools*

Two tools were employed to collect data, namely, observation and interviews. Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 owners of sit-in coffee shops and 10 owners of takeaway coffee shops. The participants were asked different questions about choosing coffee shop titles (see Appendix I). The coffee shop signs were categorized in terms of monolingual signs (Arabic or foreign language) and bilingual signs, (foreign and Arabic translation, foreign and Arabic transliteration). Then, coffee shop signs were examined in terms of specific linguistic features and pragmatic functions.

3.3. Data Analysis

The study employed the qualitative approach regarding the use of systematic descriptions of the, linguistic features and pragmatic functions and the analysis of the results of the interviews. It also employed the quantitative approach to calculate the percentage of English used in the signs. The data were collected by observing the signs of the selected coffee shops. After that, the observation data was examined by categorizing the results of the percentage of English used in the coffee shops and labelling the types of figures of speech. Additionally, individual semi-structured interviews with the coffee shop owners were conducted. The data of the interview were analyzed by interpreting the prominent points in the results of the interviews.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Participants' Perspective of Using Café Signs

A total of 142 cafes' signs were analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively to determine the language choice of the cafes' signs. Table 1 displays the number and percentage of cafes' signs in Irbid city center regarding the choice of language.

Table 1. Cafes' signs in Irbid city center in terms of language choice.

Language choice	Monolingual Arabic		Monolingual foreign language		Bilingual Arabic & foreign language	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Takeaway cafés	61	60%	36	36%	5	4%
Dine-in cafés	8	20%	29	72%	3	8%

It is clear from the Table 1 that the monolingual choice of language is dominant in both types of cafes' signs whether they are in Arabic or a foreign language. Notably, the monolingual Arabic signs constituted 60% of takeaway cafes' signs. However, the monolingual foreign language signs constituted 70% of dine-in cafes. Interestingly, the analysis shows that only a small number of both types of cafes use bilingual signs, 4% in takeaway cafes and 8% in dine-in cafes. This finding is different from previous studies that investigated all types of shop signs in different cities in Jordan which found that bilingual signs were used abundantly. For example, Amer and Obeidat (2014) study of shop signs in Aqaba city found that bilingual Arabic and English signs constituted 58% of all shop signs which was the highest percentage among all shop signs that were investigated. The findings of the present study also refute Al-Kharabsheh, Al-Azzam, and Obeidat (2008) results which revealed that Jordanian customers tend to have better tendencies towards signs written in both Arabic and English compared to the signs written in Arabic only.

4.1.1. Using Foreign Language in Café Signs

To reveal the reasons behind the prevalent use of foreign languages, especially the English language in café signs, the researchers interviewed 20 owners of cafes in Irbid city. The reasons for using foreign language in the café signs differed. Most of the café business owners claimed that the foreign names sounded more interesting, distinctive, and high-status than their Arabic equivalents. They believed that foreign names would leave a modern image and create a European-like atmosphere that would attract more customers who were usually fascinated by the culture of the West. This concurs with Hadiyanti (2020) who claimed that English language often tends to have an impressive impact on her Indonesian participants' insight of the product positively. This also agrees with Badran (2020) who argued that English as an international language is widely employed and favored in the business part. He argued that the development of English as a lingua franca amongst businesses gives inspiration to the coffee shops owners to create a place for them. Moreover, the findings of the present study support (Ross, 1997) results which revealed that English, these days, is viewed as an eye-catching, trendy language for shopping signs. An

English name would lend the impression of a fashionable reputation, implying that it is part of the international scene and at the forefront of the newest developments and latest designs.

The café owners claimed that the educational level and the socio-economic class of customers have a role in choosing the business name, especially cafés near universities or colleges. Similarly, some owners argued that the most prestigious and expensive cafés in Irbid have foreign names such as STEEL Café, VOGO Café, and CORTINA. D. Coffee House. This agrees with Hussein, Nofal, and Mansour (2015) study which claimed that well-off people prefer shopping in renowned shops that have foreign names. While some of the owners claimed that the use of foreign names, especially English ones, reflects the universal impact of foreign culture on Jordanian culture. According to Lawrence (2012), the choice of English in the names of coffee shops is influenced by larger sociolinguistic patterns associated with stylishness, extravagance, and youth. He found that English serves as a marker of modernity, luxury, and youth. In general, foreign languages and particularly the English language, are used to attract customers which can help to increase sales. In this vein, Cohen (2015) proposed that English is widely considered the language of modern business; it has international stature as it is highly esteemed and recognized by the majority of people worldwide.

4.1.2. The Preference of Using the English Loanwords 'Café' and 'Coffee'

Regarding the frequent use of the English loanword 'café' and 'coffee' instead of the Arabic words 'maqha' or 'qahwah', most of the café owners argued that the English names sound more stylish and cultured which may create some kind of exquisite imagination in the customer’s mind and give them a pleasant picture of where they are just about to enter or about the beverage quality they are going to receive. Some of the participants argued that many coffee business owners tend to use the English word 'café' more than other words because the expression itself served as a marker of modernity and luxury which could attract more young customers to the business. As illustrated in Table 2, the analysis of the dataset confirms the fact of using the word ‘café’ more than other equivalent words in cafés’ signs in both types of cafés.

Table 2. Number of the expressions 'café', 'coffee', 'maqha' and 'qahwah' in café signs.

Expressions	Takeaway	Dine-in
Café	21	73
Coffee	10	12
Qahwah	1	13
Maqha	4	2
None	4	2

The analysis of the dataset reveals that the word 'café' was used 21 times in takeaway cafés and 73 times in dine-in cafés while the word 'coffee' was used 10 times in takeaway cafés and 12 times in dine-in cafés. In contrast, the Arabic word 'qahwah' was used once in takeaway cafés and 13 times in dine-in cafés while the Arabic word 'maqha' was used 4 times in takeaway cafés and twice in dine-in cafés. It is noticed from Table 2 that the word 'café' is the most frequent expression used in both types of cafés. However, it is clear that the expression 'maqha' is used more in dine-in cafés; this is because this expression is often connected with cafés that offer a place to sit inside or outside the café.

4.2. Specific Linguistic Features

4.2.1. Transliteration Features

Transliteration means making phonetic translation of the terms in a source language (e.g., English) into corresponding words in a target language (e.g., Arabic). This entails converting a word from a given writing system to a phonetically corresponding word in another writing system (Knight & Graehl, 1998). This section

presents vowel and consonant changes upon the linguistic features of transliteration in monolingual Arabic as well as bilingual Arabic-English café signs. That is, vowel substitution is often applied to English vowels which do not exist in the Arabic list. In the English language, typically, there are 27 short vowels, 5 long vowels, and 8 diphthongs. However, there are only 8 vowels in Standard Arabic: 3 short vowels (a, u, i), 3 long vowels (ā, u:, i:) and 2 diphthongs (aw, ay). Therefore, the extra vowels and diphthongs are substituted by their nearest phonetic counterparts (AlHyari & Hamdan, 2019). Generally, vowels often undergo a lengthening process upon transliteration. For example, in the following café sign 'Power Hoot Café', the vowel 'hoot' is transliterated into /oo/ (i.e., the English short vowel in /hɒt/ is substituted with a long one). The voiceless stop /p/ in 'power' is replaced with its voiced Arabic counterpart /b/ such as in "Binch Café". The same changes were done for the words in the café sign of "Power Shoot Coffee" in which the short vowel /ɒ/ in 'shot' is transliterated into /o:/, that is, the English short vowel is substituted with a long one.

The foreign consonant sounds were also sometimes replaced by their closest phonetic counterparts in Arabic. Consequently, the phonemes /p/, /tʃ/, and /v/ were replaced with their closest Arabic equivalent sounds /b/, /ʃ/, and /f/, respectively. For instance, the consonants /p/ in 'Pride', /v/ 'Pravista' and /tʃ/ in 'Chocolate' were substituted with their closest Arabic equivalent sounds /b/, /f/ and /ʃ/, respectively.

4.2.2. Morphological Features: Abbreviations

Abbreviations were demonstrated in the monolingual English cafes' signs. The abbreviations in signs are sometimes written to describe one's first name or family names such as 'H & K' which stands for Hani and Khalil. In addition, the conjunction 'and' is reduced to ampersand (the symbol '&'). Other examples of abbreviations are Mr., M & M, ICC, ORO, B12, MAXX, and CAV.

4.2.3. Semantic Features

The semantic features of the café signs include denotation, reference, connotation, synonymy, and divergence of meaning as discussed below.

4.2.3.1. Denotation

Denotation is "the objective relationship between a linguistic form and its referent" (Kreidler, 1998). A café's name, in this sense, may indicate an actual object in the real world. That is, denotation refers to a one-to-one relationship between the café signs and the services they offer. In this vein, most of the cafés in the dataset use words such as 'café', 'coffee', 'coffee house' in English language or their equivalences in the Arabic language such as 'qahwah', or 'Kafaya'.

4.2.3.2. Reference

Reference is "the relationship between a language expression (form) and whatever the expression pertains to in a particular situation of language use, including what a speaker may imagine" (Kreidler, 1998). Thus, reference is an act which is performed by the speaker (producer). It is related to the speaker and his intents and the context in which it is used. Thus, reference tends to be not as steady as denotation. A coffee shop owner typically intends to use a sign name referring to something considering that the reader (client) would be able to understand what the intention of the business's name basically is. Café names such as 'Mugs', 'Espresso', 'Coffee's Fans', 'My Coffee', or 'Cardamom Sprinkle' clarify to the readers of the business' sign that it is a café. Moreover, most cafés' signs have a picture of a mug or a cup that is full of coffee with steam coming out. This picture can help the reader of the sign that the business is a café or serves coffee.

4.2.3.3. Connotation

Connotation is the opposite word of denotation while the latter is the word's explicit or literal meaning, the former carries a commonly understood cultural or emotional association (i.e., it is a feeling or indirect meaning) (Fontaine, Scherer, & Soriano, 2013). For example, blue denotes the color "blue" and it has a negative connotation of feeling sad in the English culture. Kreidler (1998) stated that "connotations vary according to the experience of individuals but, because people do have common experience, some words have shared connotations" (p.45). Cafes' names such as 'wake-up' and 'nicotine' indicate that these shops serve goods that makes someone awake, alert, or energetic. Thus, it can be said that these names carry indirect meanings (i.e., connotations).

4.2.3.4. Synonymy

In the dataset of the study, synonymy is manifested in both monolingual Arabic and bilingual Arabic-English café signs. For instance, the café shop 'Al-Rayan maqha & Café shop' uses two synonyms coffee 'maqha' and café shop connected with 'wa' (and; a conjunction in Arabic) in which the former is an Arabic word and the latter is a loan compound word. It is notable from the dataset that the use of these two synonymous words in café signs was frequent.

4.2.4. Syntactic Features: Word Order

Previous research on shop signs in Arabic has shown that the linguistic construction of the signs tends to appear on the micro-level (phrases, words or compounds but as a long sentence). As such, word order errors generally affect the organization of information. As seen, the data revealed some signs followed the Arabic syntactic structure such as 'Café Al-Sham' (i.e., Syria Café). Such mistakes give rise to applying the Arabic language linguistic construction to the English language. Typically, the construction of Arabic phrases is noun plus adjective while in English it is generally the reverse (adjective + noun).

Table 3. Café signs' pragmatic functions in Irbid city.

No.	Reference	Examples
1	Superiority reference	The prince, the emperor, Al-Sultan, the president, the mayor, the lord
2	Place reference	Jerusalem, University, Paris, Sydney, Palestine
3	Social relationship reference	Brothers, cousins
4	Religious reference	Al-Sheik (Religious person), Bismillah (In the name of Allah)
5	Emotional reference	Crazy, mood, joy, passion, smiles, happiness, fury
6	Ethical reference	Honest, honesty, generous
7	Physical or powerful strength reference	Power, steel, whale
8	Color reference	Black and white, green cup, golden gate
9	Historical reference	Petra, Jarasia (Jerash city)
10	Musical reference	Al-Oud (Stringed musical instrument or lute), cello, piano
11	Instrument reference	Mugs, cups, sword
12	Time reference	Morning, bonjour, sun rise, watch
13	Nature reference	Tornado, sky, spring, galaxy
14	Floral reference	Cady, Jasmine, flowers
15	Celebrity reference	Guevara, Escobar, nightingale

4.2.5. Pragmatic Functions

The study revealed 15 types of references. Table 3 summarizes café signs' pragmatic functions in Irbid city. Pragmatics theory helps in explaining and analyzing the linguistic meaning of utterances in everyday language by examining the producer's intention (illocutionary force) in creating utterances and the recipient's interpretation of these utterances. According to AlHyari and Hamdan (2019) shop owners often select shop names that serve the aim

of promoting their goods and services. As seen, Jordanian shop signs tend to have the single major pragmatic function which is to promote the goods or services they offer. Thus, shop owners used different types of references to achieve this. The cafes' sign names carried pragmatic functions that attempt to inform the readers indirectly about them through the chosen names. There are two reference senses. The "symbolic relationship that a linguistic expression has with the concrete thing or abstraction it represents" or "the relationship of one linguistic expression to another, in which one gives the information essential to interpret the other" are two definitions of symbolism (Glossary of Linguistic Terms). It describes the connection between a language form and "whatever the expression pertains to in a certain circumstance of language use, including what a speaker may envisage" (Kreidler, 1998). Reference is a feat that the producer pulls off. The context in which it is used and the speaker's intentions are relevant. According to the café proprietors, they utilized the name of their establishment to relate to something so that the consumer would understand what the name's main purpose was. Max Mugs, Misscafé, and Nestlé are examples of café names that make it clear to everyone reading the sign that it is a café. Additionally, the proprietors utilize signs for their cafes that depict a mug of steaming coffee. The audience is made aware of the sign that the establishment sells coffee thanks to this visual cue. Here are some instances of how references have been used in café signatures:

Names of cafes such as "The Prince", "The Emperor", "Al-Sultan", "The President" "Lord", and "The Mayor" are trigger names implying potential customers are elite and aristocratic. Moreover, these names reflect the desire for superiority and luxury. Superiority is the state of being superior, higher, or better than something else. A café owner tries to show customers through the chosen name of the business that the café is big, super, special and exceptional in the area where customers can easily find the best service. This act shows the significant use of the superiority reference in signs. This finding is in line with Al-Kharabsheh, Obeidat, Al-Quran, and Al-Azzam (2014) result that naming shops with "glowing" names would attract the customers' attention who would believe think that they are "categorized among the top, classy, rich and wealthy" (p. 97).

Café owners tend to use names that have place references to offer shop customers a sense of belonging to the area where these shops are located or their aspirations. As such, attractive or significant places or landmarks names from inside or outside Jordan are frequently used, for example, some cafes carry significant places names for Muslims and Arabs such as Jerusalem and Palestine while some other names of places are globally famous tourist destinations such as 'Paris', 'Sydney' and 'Rome'. Historical references were also present in cafes names such as 'Petra' and 'Jarasia'. The former is a historic and archaeological city in southern Jordan which was built by Nabataeans in the 4th century BC. The latter is the old name of Jerash city, a tourist destination for its Roman ruins, which is located in the middle of Jordan. Thus, signs that carry such names imply relevance to the history and origin. Religious reference was also presented in café signs such as 'Al-Sheik' (religious person) and 'Bismillah' (In the name of Allah). Although religious names are widely used in shop signs in general, they are rarely used in café signs.

Some cafes' owners used names that have social relationship references such as 'Brothers', 'Cousins', 'Uncle', and 'Friends' cafes. Part of building strong relationships is having respectable, open, and consistent communication which can be accomplished by sharing one's thoughts and feelings with colleagues and trusted friends or family. The notion behind using these names is to build and strengthen individuals' relationships by gathering in a good café to stay in touch and share good moments. Besides, some cafes carried names that reference well-known figures such as 'Guevara' and 'Escobar'. Others used the most famous Egyptian romantic singer Abdul Halim Hafiz 'The Nightingale' who is considered one of the greatest romantic Egyptian and Arab singers; consequently, naming a café after this superstar is meant to motivate customers' romantic feelings and convey the impression that if someone comes in, he may experience a passionate atmosphere full of mood-enhancing classical music and songs.

Café owners refer to morally right actions to convince their customers that visiting their shops will bring them delight and pleasure; thus, some café names refer to ethical values such as 'The Honest', 'Honesty' and 'The

Generous' cafés.' Such ethics refers to the set of values that empower people to live complaisantly in groups. In using such names for coffee shops, the owners attempted to relate their business to good behaviors of virtues such as honesty, compassion, and loyalty. It is what societies decide to be right and satisfactory. Morally, right actions will mostly lead to contentment and pleasure. While some other cafes' names have emotional references such as 'Crazy', 'Mood', 'Joy', 'Passion', 'Smiles', 'Happiness, and 'Fury' cafés. In so doing, the owners attempt to create a special zone of feelings. There is a reference the positive and optimistic mindset that anticipates pleasant, promising, and desired outcomes. The shop signs allude to feelings of fulfillment, contentment, and joy. These names are probably used to reassure clients that "our services and products will make you happy and pleased".

Remarkably, some café owners used names that have color references such as 'Black and White', 'Blonde', 'Green Cup' and 'Golden Gate' cafés. Color terms here have been employed effectively for their positive connotative meanings. For example, green, according to the respondents, is viewed positively and it is often associated with safety and nature whereas golden is associated with expensive things since gold is a precious element. Other cafes' names have musical references such as 'Al-Oud' (stringed musical instrument-lute), 'Cello' and 'Piano' cafés since music might stimulate a specific kind of customers who like to be in a romantic atmosphere. Some other cafes' names have floral references such as 'Cady', 'Jasmine' and 'Flowers' cafés. As the participants argue, flowers in the Jordanian Arabic culture have a long-term positive effect on moods and an immediate impact on happiness. Some other café names have natural references such as 'Tornado', 'Sky', 'Spring' and 'Galaxy' cafés. The participants believe that such names are associated with magnitude and power to give customers a feeling that they are in spacious and powerful cafés.

Some cafes' names have a time reference, especially names related to the morning time such as 'Morning', 'Bonjour', 'Sun Rise' and 'Watch' since most of the people prefer to drink coffee in the morning before going to work, university or college. The participants believe that such names improve the customers' mood and whet their appetite to drink coffee. Other cafes' names have physical or powerful references such as 'Power', 'Steel' and 'The Blue Whale'. Using the expression 'whale' as a café's name gives customers the feeling of strength and ultimate power as it is considered the biggest animal on Earth. Finally, some cafes' names have instrument references such as, 'Mugs', 'Cups', 'Sword', and 'Sieve'. For example, the sieve which gives the impression that the café is like an instrument that is used to detach wanted elements from undesirable material. Naming a café after this instrument may suggest that this café prepares coffee from those constituents that have been chosen after sieving the good or desired elements.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study investigated the café shop signs in Irbid city center. A total of 142 takeaways and dine-in café signs were photographed and scrutinized in terms of language choice, and some linguistic features such as transliteration as well as morphological, syntactic and semantic and pragmatic functions. The results of the study revealed that the monolingual choice of language is dominant in both types of cafes' signs whether they are in Arabic or English language. The study revealed that the English names, according to the participants, sound more attention-grabbing, exclusive, impressive and prestigious than their Arabic equivalents because they may give a more modern image and create a European atmosphere that would attract more customers who are attracted to a presumed luxurious-sounding place equipped with the latest furniture and decorations. These are the reasons behind choosing foreign names by cafés owners.

The finding of the study showed the prevalence of English in the signs as status as a means of worldwide communication. The study revealed that the LL has both an informative and a figurative function. The informative function displayed in the signs indicated the language to be used in communication at shops as well as other businesses. Likewise, it reflected the relative power of the English language. The use of the different languages in the LL also has a symbolic function mainly when language is a salient dimension of a linguistic group. The use of

English in café names is due to the association that English is more modern and more prestigious than the local language. The linguistic landscape can provide a different viewpoint when analyzing the sociolinguistic situation. The LL does not essentially reflect the use of languages in oral communication but it offers information and specifics about written communication between language users. It can contribute to a better understanding of the use of English in lingua franca contexts in Jordan. However, this study is limited to the analysis of linguistic signs in Irbid city streets.

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Appendix I. Interview questions.

Sample list of interview questions for the discussion of selected café signs:

1. In your own words, can you explain what the word "café signs" means?
2. Do you often try to be use a certain name when you make a sign? What affects your decision do this?
3. Could you give an example of things that you would consider "attractive or significant"?
4. Do you think it is important to be use a sign for the customers?
5. Do you think that café owner should try to use attractive names to attract the customers' attention? To anyone? In any situation?
6. Could you give some examples of what you would use if you open a café? What makes this "..." attractive? Does that depend on who that "someone" is? What exactly do you think it depends? Could you give some examples?
7. In the situation... you choose "...". Could you explain why you chose this?
8. Why do you think this is the best name?
9. You mentioned that you would use "..." because it is attractive. What makes it attractive in your view? Is it important to use attractive names?

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