



**Language Choice of the Shop Signs in
Baghdad: A Sociolinguistic Study**

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تهدف الدراسة الى التحقق في الاختيار اللغوي للمحلات التجارية في بغداد والبحث عن العوامل التي تحدد اختيار لغة الاسماء للمحلات التجارية، يستخدم الباحث استبانة لغوية اجتماعية واستبانة مجتمع لغرض تحقيق اهداف الدراسة فتتكون العينة من ٢٠٠ اسم محل تجاري تم اختيارهم من ثلاث مناطق في بغداد وهي: حي المنصور والغزالية والشعب، توزعت الاستبانات على ٣٠ صاحب محل الذين طلب منهم ان يملئوا استبانة المجتمع التي تساعد في تكوين وبناء الاستبانة اللغوية الرئيسية. تم استحصال صحة واعتماد الاستبانات من قبل عدد من اساتذة متخصصين من الجامعة العراقية قبل توزيعها على المشاركين. تظهر النتائج بان الاسماء الاجنبية للمحلات التجارية تستخدم بتزايد من قبل اصحاب المحلات وان الاسماء المستخدمة للعلامات المحلات بعضها احادية اللغة والاخرى ثنائية (عربية، اجنبية، مختلطة عربي واجنبي). اما بالنسبة للعوامل فهناك صلة قوية بين البرستيج والمصالح التجارية لاستعارة واستخدام الاسماء الاجنبية للمحلات التجارية. فيعتقد المشاركين ان استخدام الاسماء الاجنبية في علامات محلاتهم التجارية سيجذب الزبائن ويجعل بضائعهم قابلة للبيع. اما بالنسبة للاتجاهات حول اختيار اللغة العربية لعلامات المحلات التجارية فهي ايجابية لانه من الطبيعي ان اللغة العربية هي اللغة الرسمية واستخدامها هي للتمييز بين علامات المحلات من بعضها البعض.

Abstract

This study aims at investigating language choice of shop sign in Baghdad and examining the factors that determine language choice of naming the shop signs. The researcher uses a sociolinguistic questionnaire and pilot study to achieve the objectives of the study. The sample consists of 200 shop names selected from three areas of Baghdad, namely, Hay Al-Mansour, Al-Ghazaliya and Al-Shaab. The questionnaires are delivered to 30 shop owners who are demanded to answer the questions of the pilot study that helps build the main questionnaire. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire are obtained from a number of professors from Al-Iraqia University before delivering the questionnaires to the participants. Results show that foreign names in shop signs are growingly used by shop owners. The chosen languages for the shop signages are either monolingual or bilingual, i.e., (Arabic, foreign, and mixed of Arabic and foreign). As for the factors, there is a strong connection between prestige and commercial interests to borrow foreign names. Participants believe that taking foreign names for their shop signs will attract more customers and their products will be sold. Attitudes towards choosing Arabic for shop signs are positive because normally Arabic in Baghdad is the official language which serves them to distinguish their signs from each other.

Keywords: Shop signs, Language choice

Background of the study

Throughout history languages have been encountering each other to be in a position of high power and to have the feeling of ownership. These issues become the core investigation of applied linguistic field of studies. In the recent times, English language has been competing other languages in the world and is virtually being taught in every country as a foreign language for business, education and other functional purposes. Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, et al. , (1978) describe English language as an "international language" and it is almost spoken by 300 million by native speakers and 250 million as a second language around the globe. They add that English becomes "a major vehicle of debate at the United Nations, and the language of command for NATO, it is the official language of international aviation, and unofficially is the first language of international sport and the pop scene (P.1). Moreover, they state "more than 60 per cent of the world's radio programs are broadcast in English and it is also the language of 70 per cent of the world's mail" so that "English has grown to its present status as the major world language" (P.1). Alhilali (2017) stated that the imperialism of British mandate policy in Iraq in 1914-1921 had a great impact on the economic, cultural, political and educational systems in Iraqi community. She reviews in her book the history of the educational system in Iraq during British occupation between (1914-1921) and how the British policy mandate used English language to spread its dominance and influence in the region. Since that time English language has been taught at schools as a foreign language. According to Aldoori (2008) many schools in Baghdad started to teach English language after British occupation of Baghdad in 1917 and the people compulsorily went to learn English for functional needs. However, as a foreign language, according to Haijal (1993) English language in Iraq is very important to be taught because it is believed that it is the language of science and technology and it helps connect with foreigners outside of the country. Moreover it is the language that is needed by students of medicine, chemistry, engineering and many other majors. According to Ahmed (1989) "English was, in the first place, introduced into the urban schools as an

obligatory subject only to serve the objectives of the British local authorities” (p. 17); a point which is confirmed by Al-Chalabi’s suggestion (1976) that English was introduced to be taught as the second language (SL) starting from the first grade at elementary school during the first year of the British invasion. But later, a decision was made to teach English from the fifth grade at elementary school and its status was changed from a second language into a foreign language. However, after American occupation of Iraq in 2003, the status of EFL (English as a foreign language) has been noticeably changed, especially in the educational sector, through an official decision decreed by the Iraqi Ministry of Education to teach English in the first grade at elementary school and to get along with an international standard curricula for teaching English at the pre-university educational stages.

This indicates that there is an increasing awareness for the importance of teaching English language in Iraq and this point supports the findings of the study of Ahmed and Hasson (2017) which concluded that the ‘Linguistic imperialism’ represented by the English language in Iraq after 2003 has been shown noticeably through many aspects in the Iraqi society such as:

- Increasing the number of educational institutions and programs that offer teaching English language as a foreign language (TEFL) sponsored by UK and USA. In addition to that, establishing the first American university in Iraq which is located in Suleimaniya governorate to produce cultural exchange between the two countries.
- Attending private institutes and travelling abroad to get certificates in English by large number of Iraqis to get best jobs.
- Many American markets opened in Iraq where their goods and are sold and this increased the opportunities for Iraqis to get jobs which require English skill. In fact, many imported goods in the market where in English words without translation into Arabic.
- Emerging many English words used among Iraqi society in everyday communications due to the new imported technology such as Facebook, account, Youtube, etc.
- Aspiring to get certificates from the ‘prestigious and much-credited reputation’ American and British Universities by many Iraqis.

Moreover, the aspects of English influence in Iraq is shown clearly through the naming of shop signs, business signs and posters in English words besides the new coming imported brands spread in the Iraqi markets.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Although Iraq is an Arab country where Arabic is used as the mother tongue, the spread of foreign names in shop signs is noticeably increasing in the Iraqi streets. Therefore, the study intends to investigate the spread of foreign naming of shop signs in Iraq and the motives that trigger the use of these signs.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The study aimed at investigating the language used in shop signs by the shop owners in Baghdad, Iraq. It also examined the determining factors that stand behind language choice in shop signs.

1.4. Questions of the study

To achieve the aforementioned objectives of the study, it answered the following questions:

1. What languages are used in shop signs in different areas in Baghdad?
2. What are the factors that determine language choice of naming the shop signs in Baghdad?

1.5. Significance of the study

There is rarity in the investigation of shop signs in a sociolinguistic perspective in the Middle East especially in Iraq in spite of it is carried out widely internationally. Thus, the current study hopefully intends to fill this gap in the literature. Besides, it intends to explore rare investigated areas in Baghdad in the field of sociolinguistic shop signs through a chosen sample which may add more to literature. Additionally, the methodology of the study may take it more significant as it is qualitative and quantitative.

1.6. Limitations and Limits of the study

The findings of the current study are restricted to the time, place, i.e., Hay-Almansour, Al-Ghazaliya and Al-Shaab districts, and the selected sample.

Results found in this study cannot share general concepts of all shop signs in Iraq. It is limited to the sample and instrument used in it. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized into a whole what is beyond the sample chosen for the study. The collected data was within the span of the limited time.

1.7. Definitions of Terms

Shop signs: The names of shops named by shop owners and registered officially in the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Language choice: Bentahila (1983) identifies language choice as "any speaker of any language has at his disposition a range of language varieties.." and enables him/her "to choose the appropriate language for any particular purpose" (p. 50)

2.1. Review of theoretical and empirical literature

The current study is in line with the field of linguistic landscape studies which concerns with language of shop signs. Landry & Bourhis (1997) defined linguistic landscape as "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings" of a certain area, region, or urban congregation. (p. 25). Spolsky and Cooper (1991) classified eight major types of signs, including street signs, commercial signs, warning notices and banning, building names, informative signs (such as directions and hours of opening), memorial plaques, object things (such as post box, fire extinguisher), and graffiti. All-together they represent the linguistic landscape.

Linguistic landscape was also defined by Palumbo and Herbig (2000) as "a trademark or a distinctive name of a product or manufacturer. It is a name, term, sign, symbol, design or any combination used to identify the goods and services of a seller" (p.120). Abed-el-Jawad (1986) reported that the core purpose of naming is to give a symbolic system of identification. He added that "the choice of names in the Arab culture is often a careful mental process that is influenced by linguistic, social, psychological or cultural considerations" (p. 81). He also asserted that names have significant meanings that may reveal the attitudes and beliefs of the name-givers. With reference to branding, it is defined by Walker (2006) as "a process of attaching an idea to a product" (p 172). The function that branding has is listed by Holt (2002) as follows:

Branding is a strategic point of view, not a select set of activities.

Branding is central to creating customer value, not just images.

Branding is a key tool for creating and maintaining competitive advantage.

Brand strategies must be incorporated into the marketing mix. (p.1)

Naming and branding in Baghdad is usually formed by shop owners to persuade their customers to come and purchase their products or services. In this regard, El-Yasin and Mahadin (1996) indicated that shop signs are designed to develop the quality of goods and services provided by the businesses that the shop owners offer. According to them, shop names had two roles; the first is to distinguish shops from one another and the second one is to advertise goods. Referring to the borrowing foreign names for shop signage Abdul-Fattah and Zughoul (1996) explained that "the aim of using foreign shop signs is to promote an image of modernity, good quality (of goods), efficiency, utility and other Western values." (p. 84). Simonson (1997) confirmed that "foreign influences are strong in business, because the access to different cultures is increasingly present in daily life, where consumers are subject to the influence of foreign images." (p. 105). He also, confirmed that "the speed with which these new identities and images will be adopted depends on the attitude of each consumer in relation to these influences. (p. 105). Similarly, Campbell (2004) indicated two reasons why speakers of a mother language tend to use foreign names. The proposed reasons are mainly 'necessity' and 'prestige'. She also reported that "when speakers of a language acquire some new item or concept from abroad, they need a new term to go along with the new acquisition; often a foreign name is borrowed along with the new concept." (p.64). Saleh and Al-Yassin (1994) conducted a study of the widespread of foreign shop signs in Jordan from a socio-cultural viewpoint. They examined the motivation of Jordanian businessmen for choosing the foreign signs which are hung on their stores. Additionally, the researchers investigated the possible influences of English use in this particular domain on the national language and on the attitudes of Jordanian future youths towards both Arabic and English. Results revealed that tradesmen use English appellation not because of unfaithfulness to the Arabic language and culture or because of Arabic incompetence in this context, but mostly because of its impact in promoting their trade. From the traders' point of view, the use of English in their shop signs gives splendor to their goods and gives fine traits of quality, modernity, sustainability, functionality, and management, a tendency reflecting an increasing socio-economic perspective that gives a great value to something called 'foreign'. Moreover, the researchers expressed their concerns of Jordanian youths to be exposed to the influences of hybrid expressive styles showed in shop signs which could eventually cause national language loss and disuse, at least, in this domain. Zughoul (2007) examined the use of business sign language in Jordanian streets and studied the contents of those signs. He also explained the sociolinguistic implications of the foreign language choices as represented by those signs. To achieve his objectives, Zughoul (2007) conducted an extensive survey of business signs in nine major Jordanian cities including Amman, the capital

city, and its suburbs. He chose a sample consisting of 2400 signs. Results display that Jordanian business signs create a tremendous source of indigenous, cultural heritage and foreign values. Notwithstanding that the community is monolingual and monoculture, the use of English signs in the streets was phenomenal.

Another recent study conducted in Jordan by Mansour (2013) which investigated the languages used in shop signs in Amman city in a sociolinguistic perspective. He explored three different areas in Amman, namely, Al-Wehdat Camp, Sweifieh and Jabal Al-Hussein, and the total number of the investigated shop signs were about 680. He used a questionnaire distributed among the shop owners from the sample of the study to achieve the objectives of the study. He concluded that most of the signs were in foreign names and he found that it was because the prestige perspective towards foreign names and the modernization attached to it.

McArthur's (2000) examined the multilingual nature of shop naming process in Zurich, Switzerland and Uppsala, Sweden. The study selected particular areas as sample of the study in the city centers of those two major cities. In Zurich, the sample consists of 31 shop names, show a considerable tendency towards English language with other 17 English-including shop names (55%). The prevalence of English in the field of business naming was noticed to varying degrees. In his conclusion, he found that English is in manifestation of omnipresence, in spite of the languages that they exist side by side with it. The other conclusion is the phenomena of the multilingual nature of the society in shop naming. Ross (1997) observed the state of Englishization of shop names in the Italian settings, in particular the city centers of Milan in Italy. Ross majorly focused on the motives for naming the shops and concluded hypotheses for the appearance of widespread use of shop signs. He suggested that the reason for the dominant use of English in the shop names of Milan, Italy can be attributed to the fact that "English is today seen as an attractive and fashionable language. An English name lends an aura of chic prestige to a business, suggesting that it is part of the international scene, following the latest trends, up-to-date with the newest ideas." (p. 31). He concluded that the phenomenon of Englishization of shop signs in Milan is because of displaying a manner of appreciating American lifestyles, values and culture. Another reason behind that is relating English to the prestige attached to it. Stewart and Fawcett (2004) explained the commonness of foreign languages in shop signs situated in six small towns in northwestern Portugal. The study examined a total of 271 shop signs. Although the shop signs in small towns in Portugal are monolingual, mainly in Portuguese, the rest signs (10%) are in English. It is noteworthy that the shop names shows an absence of signs in Spanish in places which are close to the border between Portugal and Spain, while English shop names were in a common shared trait. Almost two-thirds of the English language samples in the study were "snack table-service". The other cases included phrases like fast food, fashion and style, handcrafts, and café. Stern (1983) reported that a boomy brand name which has rising consumer awareness and contentment rates "can save millions of dollars over the product's life because it carries its own meaning, describes the product's advantages, is instantly recognized and serves to differentiate the product significantly from other competition." (p.1)

3. Methods and procedures

3.1. Sample of the study

The sample of the current study consisted of all commercial shop signs in the city of Baghdad, Iraq. These shops differ in terms of the services and goods they offer to their customers. Their names differ from each other in terms of the languages used by the shop owners. The researchers chose a purposively-selected sample of 200 shop signs from the three areas in the Capital city of Baghdad, namely, Hay Al-Mansour, Al-Ghazaliya and Al-Shaab which are organized by three socioeconomic categories, namely higher income class, medium income class and lower income class respectively. In addition, the researchers selected on the basis of suitability 30 shop owners from each of the above areas to examine their attitudes and evaluations as to the use of Arabic versus foreign sign names. They were demanded to fill out a questionnaire designed for this purpose.

Table 1: Demographic information of the selected sample

Age	Gender		Totality
	Female	Male	
(20 –30)	1	25	26
(31 –40)	3	33	36
(41 –50)	2	12	14
(51 –60 and above)	1	13	14
Total	7	83	90

Education			
Primary school or secondary school	1	24	25
Diploma	0	1	1
Bachelor degree	6	57	63
Other	0	0	0
Total	7	83	90
Marital status			
Single	1	25	26
Married	2	57	59
Other	4	0	4
Total	7	83	90
Workplace			
Hay Al-Mansour	1	25	26
Al-Ghazaliya	2	25	27
Al-Shaab	4	33	37
Total	7	83	90

The demographic questionnaire included a variety of significant demographic variables, namely, gender, age, educational backgrounds, marital status, and workplace. In Table (1) the demographic characteristics of the selected sample are shown.

3.2. Instruments of the study

The current study used two instruments to achieve the objectives of the study. The first instrument is the pilot questionnaire and second is the sociolinguistic questionnaire. The collected information from the pilot study assisted the researchers to design and accomplish the main questionnaire after achieving its validity and reliability. The pilot questionnaire included questions given to the shop owners to obtain background information about the shop names and their owners such as gender, age, education, marital status, workplace and the languages they speak. Additionally, it consisted open-ended questions, investigating the languages used in the shop signs either officially or not, the date of creating the business, the advantages of the chosen names, the attitudes towards the Arabic and foreign languages used by the respondents to their shop signs. The sociolinguistic questionnaire included two parts: the first part included questions about the shop name languages used by shop owners. The second part included questions about the factors behind choosing the names of those shops.

Copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the intended respondents. The researchers tested the credibility of the questionnaire by means of test and retest. Results were presented in tables with frequencies and percentages.

3.3. Validity and reliability

As for the validity of the questionnaire, a panel of professional jurors from Al-Iraqia University, who are experts in the field of sociolinguistics, was asked to comment on the suitability of the form and content of the questionnaire. The jurors gave suggestions, recommendations and modifications that made the questionnaire items clearer and more informative. For the reliability, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha measurement tool and the estimated result was 0.836 which showed that the questionnaire items were consistent.

4- Findings of the study

4.1. Findings related to the first question: What languages are used in shop signs in different areas in Baghdad?

This question focuses on the languages used in shop signs in the selected areas. Results in table 2 below show that there are two main classes of shop signs concerning the languages used in them; namely, monolingual or bilingual signs. Each of which is divided into several subcategories as shown in the table below. The monolingual shop signs represented by: Arabic, foreign, Arabic transliteration and foreign transliteration signs. For instance, Hay-Al-Mansour includes Arabic shop signs such as Al-Obaidi, Al-Daleel, Maktabat Noor-Alshams and Mat'am Zarzor. Saydaliyet Al-Shefaa, Alghazaliya lilmafroshat in Al-Ghazaliya and Afran Alshaab, Salam lilathath, Hilaqet Ahmad in Al-Shaab.

Regarding foreign names Hay-Al-Mansour includes many shops such as Beauty center, Chocolate Bar, Turkish House. Also, Red tag, Mosaic, Dry and Clean exemplify such signs in Al-Ghazaliya and Lady, Coffee Time, Burger House in Al-Shaab.

Furthermore, among the Arabic transliterated signs. Hay-Al-Mansour includes Holiday Shoes, Lavender, and Mobile Store. Al-Ghazaliya includes a scanty number of this kind of signs like Nice and Beauty Salon whereas Al-Shaab includes Royal and Happy Baby.

When it comes to foreign transliterated signs, a very few number was noticed. Hay-Al-Mansour includes signs such as Azhar, Angham, and Ahwak whereas Al-Ghazaliya includes Al-Sharq, Al-Hayat, Ward, and Al-Shaab includes Shami, Al-Ghadeer and Al-Jazeera.

Concerning the bilingual shop signs, they are divided into two subcategories: mixed signs (Arabic and foreign) and Foreign & Arabic transliteration signs.

Results reported in Table 2 below show that the highest percentage of Arabic signs is used in Al-Ghazaliya with 31%. On the other hand, 24% of Arabic signs are used in Al-Shaab and 21% in Hay Al-Mansour. Regarding foreign signs (mostly English), the majority of which were in Hay Al-Mansour with 43%. However, 38% of them in Al-Ghazaliya use foreign signs and 30% in Al-Shaab.

When dealing with Arabic transliteration, 22% of shop signs in Al-Shaab were transliterated in Arabic, whereas 17% in Al-Ghazaliya and 14% in Hay Al-Mansour. Regarding foreign transliteration, it is obvious that it recorded the lowest percentages in the selected areas. Hence, 7% is noticed in Hay Al-Mansour, 5% in Al-Shaab and only 2% in Al-Ghazaliya.

Regarding mixed signs (Arabic & foreign), 10% of them are used in Hay Al-Mansour and the same is used in Al-Ghazaliya and Al-Shaab with 9%. Regarding foreign signs accompanied with their Arabic transliterations, 10% of them are used in Al-Shaab and 5% in Hay Al-Mansour. Yet, only 3% are used in Al-Ghazaliya.

Table 2: Languages of shop names in the three areas in Baghdad

Sign language	Arabic	Foreign	Mixed (Arabic & foreign)	Arabic transliteration	Foreign transliteration	Foreign & Arabic transliteration	Total
Area	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Hay Al-Mansour	21	43	10	14	7	5	100
Al-Ghazaliya	31	38	9	17	2	3	100
Al-Shaab	24	30	9	22	0	10	100

4.3. Findings related to the second question: What are the factors that determine language choice of naming the shop signs in Baghdad? This question focuses on the factors that have an impact on language choice in business names. Results denote a variety of factors affecting language choice when naming a sign of a shop. Results in Table 3 below show the importance of attitudes in language choice. This is a demonstration that the majority of respondents, 65%, maintained that positive attitudes towards foreign names play an important part in language choice. However, 23% disagreed and 12% were "undecided".

On the other note, attitudes towards Arab names, give slight importance to language choice. This is because only 5% of the respondents agreed with that and 15% remained "unbiased". However, the vast majority, 80%, showed disagreement. When asked if foreign names play a part in showing bias against Arab products, nearly all of the respondents, 76%, disagreed, and 8% were "undecided". Yet, only 18% agreed that the use of foreign names expresses negative attitudes towards Arab products.

Table 3: Factors behind choosing shop sign languages

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Total %
1	Attitudes towards foreign names are favorable.	19	46	12	13	10	100
2	Attitudes towards Arab names are unfavorable.	0	5	15	37	43	100
3	The use of foreign	9	7	8	36	40	100

	names shows bias against Arab products.						
4	Foreign shop names might produce more positive commercial outcomes.	47	23	14	11	5	100
5	Foreign names seem more attractive to the customers.	53	14	10	17	6	100
6	The use of foreign names seems to be unique and prestigious.	46	27	5	17	5	100
7	The use of foreign names shows the major global effect of foreign culture.	31	36	17	11	5	100
8	The newly integration of Iraq into the world trade motivates the use of foreign business names.	13	19	45	16	7	100
9	The type of products I sell plays a role in choosing the type of name.	53	18	5	21	3	100
10	The educational attainment of my customers plays a role in choosing my business name.	21	22	14	23	20	100
11	The socioeconomic level of my customers plays a role in my decision about choosing my business name.	44	31	10	13	2	100

Again, results stated in Table 3 above show that the positive commercial outcomes obtained by using foreign names have a vital role in language choice. This is evidently clear as the majority of respondents, 70%, agreed that foreign names might produce positive commercial outcomes, whereas 16% disagreed with this statement and only 14% were "undecided". Furthermore, results show that foreign names are more attractive to the customers. For most of them foreign names seem to be more interesting as 67% agreed with the statement and 23% disagreed and 10% were "neutral". Again, concerning the role of uniqueness and prestige of utilizing foreign names in language choice, 73% agreed that the choice of using foreign names is more unique and prestigious than Arab ones, while 22% did not agree and only 5% were "undecided". With respect to the role of foreign culture in language choice, the respondents proved its importance. This is evident when they were asked whether the use of foreign names reflects the global impact of foreign culture, nearly all of respondents, 67%, agreed with this statement, while 16% disagreed and 17% were "undecided". In regards to the role of the newly integration of Iraq into the world trade with respect to language choice (i.e. international English) 32% agreed that it is motivating to use foreign names, while 23% did not agree and 45% were "undecided". Again, results show the importance of the type of products provided in language choice as when asked if the type of products they sell plays a role in language choice, the vast majority of respondents, 71%, agreed, whereas 25% disagreed and 5% were "neutral". The educational attainment of customers is not very important in language choice. This is due to 43% of the respondents agreed that it plays a role in choosing the language of the business name, also 43% disagreed and 14% were "undecided". With regard to the results related to the role of the socio-economic level of customers, the respondents' answers indicated that there

is an essential role of such standard in language choice. This is obvious when the vast majority, 75%, agreed that the socio-economic level of the customers has a role in choosing the business name. However, 15% did not agree and 10% were "undecided".

5.0 Discussion, conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Discussion of results related to language choice

Results shown in Table 2, regarding language choice indicate that shop signs in the selected areas are multilingual where some other languages are involved other than English language and the native language of the country, which is Arabic (e.g. Mat'am Zarzor), English (e.g. Coffee Time), French (e.g. Le Femme), Turkish (e.g. Söz) and Italian (e.g. Filippo). In comparison with other foreign languages, English is majorly used as only four non-English shop signs found in the survey.

Results also show that the examined shop signs are mainly divided into two main categories, namely, monolingual signs and bilingual signs. It is noteworthy that all signs are written in Arabic and/or in Roman alphabets. Monolingual signs involve only one alphabetical system either Arabic or Roman alphabets. They are divided into several subcategories such as: Arabic, English, Arabic transliteration, and foreign transliteration. As Iraq is an Arab country whose mother tongue is the Arabic language, it is normally noticing signs in Arabic language because it is the official language in the country. Such signs reflect concerted linguistic and orthographic systems and are marked by their Arabic form and substance. They involve native Arabic lexis, with no loan or borrowed words. Besides, they are written in Arabic alphabet. The lexis used in such signs show a variety of technological (e.g. Al-takani lilhasibat), historical (e.g. Hamorabi), regional (e.g. Afran Lubnan), religious (e.g. Bab Al-Rayyan), cultural (e.g. Al-Arousa), local (e.g. Sama Baghdad), emotional (e.g. Al-mawada), prestigious (e.g. Al-raqi), sports (e.g. Real Marid), vocational (e.g. Assabbagh), environmental (e.g. Al-khaleej Al-Arabi) and attractive (e.g. Dale' Sayyartek) referents. Sometimes, they show the first name or family name of the owners (e.g. Hazim Abboud and Al-Obaidi). The results show that the highest percentage of using Arabic sign is in Al-Shaab while the lowest percentage found in Hay-Almansour and Al-Ghazaliya. This could be attributed to the socioeconomic level of the customers who frequent to the respondent's shops in the selected areas. Similarly, the foreign signs show concerted linguistic and orthographic systems and are marked by their foreign form and substance. They include foreign lexis (mostly English), with no Arabic words. Besides, they are written in Roman alphabet. Results in Table 2 show that this kind of signs is few in Al-Shaab. Yet, most of the signs in Hay-Almansour and Al-Ghazaliya are foreign ones. Such results could be attached to the fact that is in terms of the socio-economic class of the customers in these areas. Another fact could be probable is that the people in Hay-Almansour and Al-Ghazaliya tend to use foreign signs as a reflection of modernity, prestige and eye-catching technique. Few shop signs utilize foreign lexis written in Arabic alphabet. This kind of signs, as reported in Table 2, represents the limited use of Arabic transliteration of foreign lexis in the three areas. This might be due to the fact that people tend to make the labeling of their shops easier and more accessible and attention-grabbing to all people. Foreign transliterated shop signs utilize Arabic lexis written in foreign alphabet. This kind of signs, as reported in Table 2, represents the limited use of Arabic transliteration of foreign lexis in the three areas. This might be due to the fact that people tend to make the distinction of their shops easier and more accessible and attention-grabbing to all people. Mixed signs (Arabic and foreign) are the signs that consist of two words or more. These signs contain both Arabic and foreign words, written in Arabic alphabet (e.g. Al-mawada link). Results reported in Table 2 show that this kind of signs is almost strange in the three areas. However, of all these, Al-Shaab has the highest occurrence of such signs as compared with Hay-Almansour and Al-Ghazaliya. This might be due to the disposition of people to use monolingual signs for their shops. The foreign sign with its Arabic transliteration is kind of sign that involves using foreign lexis written in the Roman alphabet side by side with the transliterated forms of the same lexis in Arabic alphabet (e.g. City of Beauty). Results reported in Table 2 show that these signs are scarcely used especially in Al-Shaab. Although this kind is not very common in Hay-Almansour and Al-Ghazaliya, but these two areas have more signs of this kind than Al-Shaab. Also, results reported in Table 2 show that the prevalence of foreign signs along with Arabic transliteration in Hay-Almansour and Al-Ghazaliya due to the fact that shop owners prefer to have simple and well-organized signs. All in all, these results are in line with Zughoul's (2007) in that foreign shop signs are increasingly noticed. Also the results agree with McArther (2002) who confirms that the multilingual nature of the community determines the use of foreign names in shop signs.

5.2. Discussion of findings related to factors determining language choice

There are two main factors which affect determining language choice for shop signs: attitudinal factors and commercial factors. Attitudes play a significant part in language choice. It is certain that any language will be used broadly if there are positive attitudes towards it. This is obviously noticed as the results showed that the respondents' attitudes towards Arabic are positive. Moreover, positive attitudes towards foreign names are of great significance in language choice. Such attitudes are shown by the respondents' indication that the foreign names are regarded as more interesting, unique and prestigious than Arab names and the use of these foreign names is not regarded as a bias against Arab ones. This result agrees with Ross (1997) who indicated that the use of English is regarded as an attention-grabbing fashionable language. English names render high value and prestige to a business. It also agrees with Abdel-Jawad (1986) who confirmed that names have important meanings that may reflect the name-givers' attitudes and beliefs. As a result of the main purpose of establishing businesses is to attain commercial advantages, people try to do their best to make their shops more attractive to customers. Eventually, positive commercial productions play an important role in language choice. Furthermore, shop owners try to relate their shop names to the products they sell or services they offer. Therefore, the type of goods plays a significant role in determining the language used in shop signs. Moreover, the global effect of foreign cultures contributes to determining language choice. This can be attributed to the fact that openness to the world has helped societies share cultures. Thus, people tend to be eager to be in contact with foreign cultures. This result agrees with Stern (1983) who quoted that a boomy brand name which has rising consumer awareness and contentment rates "can save millions of dollars". It also agrees with El-Yassin and Mahadin (1996) who indicated that shop signs aimed to promote goods and services provided by businesses that display them. In a conclusion, the outcomes of the surveys conducted on the three shop signs indicate that there is a diversity of languages used in shop signs in Baghdad and the attitudes towards the use of languages other than Arabic are positive. This explains the nature of the bilingual and multilingual shop signs in the country. The languages that are used in such signs are predominately Arabic and English. Language choice is decided by several factors including attitudinal, commercial and other factors. Arabic is the native and official language of the country while English is viewed as a foreign language, yet, the massive majority of foreign shop signs are written in English. From the perspectives of the shop owners, they consider using foreign language for their shops as eye-catching to their customers, prestigious, favorable to people, reflecting the high quality of the goods sold or services offered in these shops. The global influence of foreign cultures has a role in deciding language choice. And finally the educational and economic statuses of customers are relatively worthy in language choice.

Recommendations

Due to the fact that the current study has examined the languages used in shop signs in only three areas, which are Hay-Almansour, AL-Ghazaliya and Al-Shaab, further research can be conducted on shop signs in other areas in the city of Baghdad such as, Al-Amirya, Al-Karrada, Al-Hurriya. Further research can also be conducted on shop signs in other parts of Iraq such as Mosul, Suleimaniya, Hilla, Al-Anbar, or Basrah. It is also recommended that similar studies can be conducted after one or two decades to find whether there are an increasing number of languages used for shop signs or if these factors still have impact on shop owner's choices or there are other factors.

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