
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Pan Arab Linguistic and Translation Errors and Strategies in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to identify the types of linguistic and translation errors in bilingual linguistic landscapes (LLs) collected from seven Arab countries. Analysis of 96 Arabic-English and 229 English-Arabic LLs showed that top-down LLs constituted 54% of the Arabic-English and 46% of the English-Arabic LLs, whereas bottom-up constituted 41% of the Arabic-English and 59% of the English-Arabic LLs. About half of the LLs are commercial/promotional, followed by directional and safety/regulatory LLs. 32% of the LLs were translated correctly (Keep a safe distance, Road ahead closed, Use safety harness, Vital signs, Departures) as they are top-down LLs issued by government bodies, hospitals, airports, or municipalities that typically employ professional translators, use standardized terminology, context-aware phrasing, cultural and idiomatic sensitivity, ensuring accuracy, clarity, and functional equivalence. 15% have syntactic errors (Danger Forklift Traffic Area خطر...رافعة البضائع منطقة المرور, and 20% contain grammatical errors with faulty agreement, singular/plural, definite/indefinite, derived forms, and faulty interpretation of prepositional phrases and idioms prevalent in bottom-up signs (Care for Life > نهتم بالحياة; Slow Down > تحت تمهل). Semantic errors as meaning misidentification, contextual misfit, idiom misinterpretation, inappropriate collocation, and incorrect word choice constitute 26%) Vertical Steamers عمودية غالية; Custard Apple كسترد). Orthographic errors accounted for 3% (*Ciub street for Club street, Par King for Parking, نعتزر instead of نعتذر) and 13% contained multiple errors with overlapping semantic, grammatical, syntactic, lexical, and/or contextual inaccuracies. Some Arabic equivalents sound awkward and meaningless (Biohazard/Medical Waste واقية النفايات الطبية; Clearance Price تصفية السعر; Prepared Meats استعداد اللحوم; Tetra Pack Juice الحفظ على الموقع كمين (حافظ على نظافة الموقع); Hair Straighteners سيراميك الشعر; Keep Site Clean موقع نظافة). In most LL translation, literal word-for-word translation was the dominant strategy, followed by transliteration instead of using a native Arabic equivalent. Linguistic and translation errors in bilingual LLs are attributed to DIY (Do It Yourself), complex, long, or technical source phrases, cultural and linguistic mismatch, lack of standardized glossaries, lack of standardization of equivalents and transliterated forms, and low translator training. Recommendations for improving the linguistic and translation accuracy of bilingual LLs in Arabi countries are given.

KEYWORDS

bilingual linguistic landscapes, Arab countries, English-Arabic linguistic landscapes, Arabic-English linguistic landscapes, translation errors, linguistic errors, grammatical errors, orthographic errors, syntactic errors, semantic errors

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1. Introduction

Linguistic landscapes¹ (LL) refer to the visible and salient languages on commercial and public signages in a place or region. They cover² the language of commercial shop signs, public notices, commercial posters, street names, road signs, signs on

¹ [Linguistic landscapes](#).

government buildings, place names, advertisements, billboards, notice boards, product information, façade names, posters, border signs, graffiti, and commemorative plaques. They also include³ exterior/outdoor signage as store brand/names, promotional deals and offers, informational, directional/wayfinding signs, sidewalk board signs, pylon signs, window graphics, banners, vehicle graphics, monument, pole, frame interior and construction site signs. LL's serve several purposes such as providing clear communication, informing the public, wayfinding and store navigation, attracting and guiding customers, advertising and marketing, brand awareness, enhancing branding and increasing profits, establishing brand aesthetics, generating impulse sales and increasing purchase decisions (Al-Jarf, 2024b; Al-Jarf, 2021b).

Being monolingual, bilingual or, multilingual, the language of LLs has been a subject of interest to researchers in many countries in order to understand language use and visibility, explore language contact and hybridity, investigate sociopolitical influences on language choice and examine translation practices and errors. A review of the literature showed numerous studies that examined bilingual signs in China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, and Greece such as translating public signs in Nanning, China (Tan, 2021); Chinese-English translation of public signs from the Functional Theory perspective (Amenador & Wang, 2020); Chinese-English translation strategies of public signs based on the Functional Equivalence Theory (Shi, 2014); a case study of English translation of scenic areas and spots in Zhangjiajie and the standardization of bilingual signs in public service areas from the perspective of Skopos Theory (Zhao & Zou, 2019); the use of indirect translation of public signs, literal translation, and the cultural values (Xiaoqiong, 2016); English-translation errors in public signs in China (Guo, 2012); making sense of bilingual touristic signs in China (Radtke, & Yuan, 2011); towards interaction during lexical transfer based on bilingual signs (Tsuji & Fujita, 1991); conflicts and complexities in bilingual street signs in Hong Kong from a functional perspective (Song, 2020); linguistic competence in English linguistic landscape in Hong Kong (Finzel, 2012); translation procedures in five public signs in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia (Ariani & Artawa, 2022); translation ignorance in bilingual signs in Indonesia (Retno Wulandari, 2011); errors in bilingual road, street and shop signs in Iran (Hojati, 2013); types of errors in the use of English in bilingual and multilingual linguistic landscape in Tehran (Mohebbi & Firoozkahi, 2021); the semiotic role of translation in bilingual advertisements in Greece (Kourdis, 2009) and others.

Another group of studies analyzed linguistic and translation errors in LLs and shop signs in Arab cities as Riyadh, Jeddah, Abha, Irbid, Aqaba, Tizi Ouzou, Erbil, Sana'a, Ramallah, and Dubai. For example, Ahmed Al-Sofi et al. (2025) analyzed bilingual public sign errors as tourist shops, cafes, restaurants, and local boutiques in Abha, Saudi Arabia. They found faulty plural forms, word order errors, wrong word choice, contextual inappropriateness, discourse-level errors as "*Welcome in Abha*" instead of "*Welcome to Abha*", and spelling errors in Arabic names as "*Asear*" instead of "*Aseer*". In Riyadh and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Alotaibi & Alamri (2022) examined bilingual shop signs of fashion outlets, and department stores in malls and found Arabic-English mixing with spelling errors, Romanized Arabic inconsistencies, inconsistent transliterations (*Riyadh vs. Riyad*), spelling errors, and hybrid Arabic-English phrases as "*Al-Malaz Mall*" spelled as "*Al-Malaz Mol*".

In Jordan, Qudeisat & Rababah (2021) studied multilingual shop signs as food outlets, fashion stores, and electronics in Irbid. They revealed creative transliterations (*Shawarma Palace* as شوارما بالاس) with spelling errors, and inconsistencies as "*City Mall*" written as "سیتی مول" (which is a non-standard Arabic script). In addition, Amer & Obeidat (2014) analyzed shop signs in Aqaba. They highlighted mistranslations (*Car Maintenance* as صيانة السيارات), and awkward English phrasing due to literal translation. They noted code-switching errors in Arabic-English signs as "*Sea View Restaurant* مطعم مشاهدة البحر" which is literal and unnatural in Arabic. Al-Kharabsheh (2008) and Al-Kharabsheh et al. (2008) analysed translation issues in shop sign as fast food, electronics, clothing, restaurants, pest control, and general retail shops. They detected morphological (incorrect verb forms), collocational (*Fast Food and Chicken*), unintentional humor due to literal translation and lexical ambiguity as "*Goat Restaurant*" for a goat meat eatery, "*Super Fly*" for a pest control shop; non-standard Romanization as "*Al-Malik Al-Saree*" (The Fast King) for a fast-food outlet.

In Algeria, Briki & Chebli (2022) performed a geosemiotic analysis of multilingual café, clothing, and bookstore signs in Tizi Ouzou. They noted Berber-French-Arabic multilingualism, orthographic (French-Arabic script mixing), and semantic (misused loanwords) as "*Café Timgad*" written in Latin script with Arabic phonetic errors. They critiqued colonial language hierarchies. Another study by Mehria et al. (2019) focused on Arabization of foreign words in restaurants, cafés, snack bars and menus in Adrar. They identified phonetic adaptation errors (incorrect stress), script inconsistencies (Pizza بيتزا) with incorrect stress and "*Hamburger*" rendered as هامبرغر (non-standard Arabic script).

² <https://timorlesteanddiasporas.exeter.ac.uk/research-areas/linguistic-landscape/#:~:text=The%20linguistic%20landscape%20of%20a,signs%20on%20government%20buildings%2C%20etc.>

³ <https://www.apexsignage.com.au/signage-that-retailers-should-consider/#:~:text=Effective%20exterior%20retail%20signage%20works,information%2C%20either%20internal%20or%20external.>

In Iraq, Abdulwahid (2017) examined errors in clothing stores, salons, electronics shops, and restaurant signs in Erbil, Kurdistan Region. They identified spelling errors (*Resturant*), grammatical errors (incorrect verb tenses), and lexical choice errors due to literal translations from Kurdish or Arabic as "*Resturant*" instead of "*Restaurant*", "*Hair Saloon*" instead of "Hair Salon", in addition to grammatical and word choice errors in Kurdish-English signs. Misspelled English words (*Resturant* for *Restaurant*), incorrect verb conjugations, and calques from Kurdish/Arabic were found as well.

In Yemen, Al-Athwary (2014) & (2017) examined English-Arabic translation in Sana'a's shop signs as barber shops, restaurants, and photography studios. He found Arabic-English calque translations with syntactic errors, non-standard Romanization of Arabic, grammatical, lexical, and orthographic errors. He noted humorous mistranslations (*Ladies Haircut & Gents*), lexical errors (mistranslated idioms), spelling errors (*Ladies Haircut & Gents*), and grammatical errors (missing articles), literal translation (*Goat Restaurant*), and incorrect noun form (*Photograph Studio*).

In Palestine, Farran & Hortobágyi (2020) analyzed Arabic vs. English linguistic landscape in Ramallah and reported incorrect translations, pragmatic errors (*Keep Clean*), signs overly direct in Arabic, spelling errors (*Palestine*" vs "*Palastine*) and "*No Parking*" translated as "ممنوع الوقوف" (correct but font inconsistencies used).

In the UAE, Gu & Almann (2024) examined Arabic-English signage of high-end retail, tourism, and real estate signs in Dubai, and found lexical errors as "*Dubai Marina*" mistranslated as "*Marina Dubai*", syntactic errors (awkward preposition use) as "*Burj Khalifa*" spelled as "*Burj Kalifa*" in promotional signs, and transliteration errors as "*Burj Kalifa*" instead of "*Burj Khalifa*."

The above literature review of Arabic studies shows lack of research that investigates linguistic and translation errors in bilingual LLs in two or more Arab countries, error types and gravity according to the LL origin and purpose. Therefore, this study seeks to analyse and identify the types of linguistic and translation errors found in bilingual LLs in seven Arab countries. Specifically, it aims to analyse the Arabic-English and English-Arabic LLs; find out the percentage of top-down and bottom-up LLs; the percentage of linguistic and translation errors according to the LL purpose; the percentage of correctly translated LLs; the semantic, syntactic, grammatical, orthographic, and pragmatic errors; types of translation strategies followed (transliteration, literal, conceptual, partial, explanatory (paraphrase); linguistic and translation accuracy according to the LL origin (top-down vs bottom-up) and purpose; and linguistic and translation error causes and gravity according the LL origin and purpose.

Findings of the current study are useful for language teaching, translation studies, and urban sociolinguistics. They offer authentic, real-world data of language use, visibility, and perception. They will help researchers understand the linguistic, cultural, and social dynamics of a place, city or region and assess the effectiveness and reception of language planning. They will uncover linguistic errors, cultural mismatches, and creative adaptations and shed light on practices in public communication, tourism, and urban design. They capture language contact, borrowing, and hybridization and how languages evolve in response to technology and global trends.

Moreover, the classification of linguistic and translation errors in LLs according to the origin and purpose of LLs in the current study is significant. A mistranslation on a regulatory sign (safety instructions) has far more serious implications than one on a shop name. Mapping errors in bilingual LLs can identify which domains (tourism, religion, commerce) are more prone to certain types of errors, viz grammatical, semantic, or transliteration. Purpose-based error classification in LLs allows them to explore how language is used to shape public space, whether to instruct, welcome, sell, or guide. This ties into broader themes in linguistic landscape studies like language visibility, social, and cultural representation. Findings of the current study can inform translator trainers and provide them with a bilingual LL dataset that could be used in translator training or sociolinguistics courses. The volume and variety of LLs herein provide a robust dataset. Additionally, results will inform municipal language policy makers of the linguistic and translation accuracy of public LLs. For instance, if directional signs frequently contain orthographic errors, this means that there is a need for better quality control in public LLs.

Furthermore, this study is part of a series of studies by the author on shop signs and naming practice in which she investigated numerous issues as definiteness and indefiniteness in Arabic product names (Al-Jarf, 2024a); English language representation in Korean linguistic landscapes (Al-Jarf, 2024b); when to translate and not translate Arabic and foreign shop names in Saudi Arabia (Al-Jarf, 2024c); semantic and syntactic anomalies of Arabic-transliterated compound linguistic landscape in Saudi Arabia (Al-Jarf, 2023d); deviant Arabic transliterations of foreign shop names in Saudi Arabia and problems that shoppers have in decoding them (Al-Jarf, 2022a); promotional, sociocultural and globalization factors contributing to the dominance of foreign shop names over Arabic names in Saudi Arabia (Al-Jarf, 2022a); linguistic-cultural characteristics of hotel names in Makkah, Madinah and Riyadh (Al-Jarf, 2021b); the interchange of personal names in Muslim communities (Al-Jarf, 2023e); absence of vowels in the English spelling of Arabic personal names, English spelling of Arabic compound personal names, English spelling of the glottal stop and voiced pharyngeal fricative in Arabic personal names, English transliteration of Arabic personal names with the definite

article /al/, gemination errors in Arabic-English transliteration of personal names, and variant transliterations of the same Arabic personal names on Facebook (Al-Jarf, 2023a; Al-Jarf, 2023b; Al-Jarf, 2023c; Al-Jarf, 2022c; Al-Jarf, 2022d Al-Jarf, 2022g); proper noun pronunciation inaccuracies in English by Educated Arabic speakers (Al-Jarf, 2022e); student-interpreters' foreign proper noun pronunciation errors in English-Arabic and Arabic-English media discourse interpreting (Al-Jarf, 2022f); and teaching English with linguistic landscapes to Saudi students studying abroad (Al-Jarf, 2021b).

2. Data Collection and Analysis

A corpus of 325 bilingual LLS (96 Arabic-English and 229 English-Arabic) was collected from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Tunisia, Palestine during the author's visits to these countries. Part of the English-Arabic and Arabic-English LLS were also taken from Google Images. The sample included street names, road signs, commercial shop signs, place names, notice boards, advertisements, commercial posters, product information, public notices, billboards, façade names, posters, border signs, signs on government buildings, airports, hospitals, universities, and others. They also include⁴ exterior/outdoor signage as store brand/names, pylon signs, window graphics, promotions, deals and offers, directional/wayfinding, informational, monument, pole, and frame sidewalk board signs, interior signs, banners, vehicle graphics, construction site signs and others.

First, the LLS in the sample were sorted out into English-Arabic and Arabic-English LLS. Secondly, they were categorized according to the producer/origin (top-down vs bottom-up) LLS. Top-down LL are official, institutional, or government-produced signs such as street names, public road signs, government building signs, and official notices. They often reflect official language policies and power structures, as in the following examples:

- Governmental and municipal LLS (بلدية أبو ظبي، أمانة منطقة الرياض)
- Religious and cultural markers (المسجد الحرام، شهداء أحد)
- Safety, regulatory, and instructional signs (ممنوع الوقوف قطعياً، اترك مسافة أمانة)
- Educational and institutional names (معهد أكاديمية الزرقاء، جامعة سوهاج الجديدة)

On the other hand, bottom-up LLS are privately produced by individuals, businesses, or communities. They can be commercial, cultural, promotional as in shop signages, product promotions, personal or business names, cultural branding, advertisements, graffiti, restaurant signs and menus. They often reflect language use in a community, creativity, and cultural identity. For example:

- Shop names and commercial brands (رامز هايبرماركت، النافع للزهور)
- Product labels and promotional signs (مشروبات الطاقة، تنزيلات)
- Restaurant and service names (خباط الربيع، فطائر الأمور)
- Personal or business names (رؤية انجاز التجارية، Vision Enjaz Trading Company).

Thirdly, LLS were classified according to their purpose, which includes the following types:

- **Official and governmental signage** (street name signs, traffic signs, public transportation maps and schedules, government building plaques, emergency instructions and so on).
- **Commercial and business signage** (shop names and storefronts, restaurant menus displayed outside, business hours signs, sale banners and promotional posters, multilingual price tags or product labels); informational and instructional signs, tourist information boards, museum and gallery descriptions, hospital and clinic directional signage, airport and train station announcements.
- **Advertising and marketing** (billboards and posters, window decals and sidewalk chalkboards, branded delivery vehicles with multilingual slogans, flyers and handouts posted on walls or poles).
- **Educational and institutional signage** (university campus signs, library notices and multilingual book sections, school entrance signs with mission statements).
- **Temporary and mobile signs** (event posters, election campaign signs, construction site warnings, pop-up market signage).
- **Tourism and hospitality** (guided tour signs, museum guides and placards, hotel welcome signs in multiple languages, multilingual beach safety signs).
- **Cultural and symbolic texts** (murals with slogans or poetry, graffiti and street art with written messages, commemorative plaques and monuments, political protest signs or banners, religious inscriptions on mosques, churches, or temples).

Fourth, linguistic and translation errors in the bilingual LLS were classified into:

⁴ <https://www.apexsignage.com.au/signage-that-retailers-should-consider/#:~:text=Effective%20exterior%20retail%20signage%20works,information%2C%20either%20internal%20or%20external.>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ممنوع منعا باتا في هذه المنطقة • Kids' Play Area منطقة لعب الاطفال • Left Luggage حفض الامتعة • Foundation Program Unit وحدة البرنامج التأسيسي • تنبيه! الرجاء Use Hand Sanitizer استخدم مطهر اليد • Notice! Wash Hands Before Returning To Work ملحوظة الرجوع الى العمل يجب غسل اليدين قبل 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • طاحونة Grinders • سيراميك الشعر Hair Straighteners • طعام عالمي International Food • انترنت كافيه Internet Café • كاوية Irons • مطعم كتاكيت للبرجر Katakeet Restaurant • لتقديم الوجبات • اكسسوارات الرعاية الصحية Healthcare Accessories
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3.2 Classification of Linguistic Landscapes According to Purpose

Table 2 shows that about half of the Arabic-English and English-Arabic LL in the sample have a commercial/ promotional purpose (52% & 58% respectively), followed by directional geographic (10% & 13% respectively); then safety/regulatory (5% & 13% respectively). Examples of the different purposes of Ls are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Percentages of the Arabic-English and English-Arabic Ls According to Purpose

Purpose Category	Arabic-English (100)	English-Arabic (263)
Promotional / Commercial	52%	58.2%
Directional / Geographic	10%	12.9%
Safety / Regulatory	6%	12.9%
Educational / Institutional	6%	3.8%
Instructional / Product	10%	6.8%
Cultural	8%	0.4%
Social / Greeting	2%	0.8%
Financial / Customs	—	4.2%

Table 3: Examples of Linguistic Landscapes by Purpose

Purpose	Arabic Examples	English Examples
Promotional	تموينات البيت الجميل، فطائر الأمور، حمزة للاتصالات، خياط الربيع، الركن السويصري، ساحة النخبة، شركات العطور، العقد الراقي، واحة سعاد مخبز وسوبرماركت الخليج، الاغذية الصحية، المشط الموحد للحلاقة.	Boxed Chocolate, Coffee Makers, Fashion Store, Hair Straighteners
Instructional	اغسل يديك، حافظ على النظافة، لا تترك الأطفال وحدهم	Wash Your Hands, Keep Site Clean, Do Not Leave Children Unattended
Safety	خطر، مواد قابلة للاشتعال، منطقة عمل، معدات ثقيلة	Danger High Voltage, Forklifts Operating, Humps Ahead
Regulatory	ممنوع التدخين، لا تدخل، دخول المصرح لهم فقط	No Smoking, No Entry, Authorized Personnel Only
Directional	إلى البوابة، صالة الوصول، موقف السيارات، المصاعد	Go to Gate, Arrival Hall, Parking Area, Elevators
Informational	معلومات، استعلامات، مكتب المفقودات، مكتب البريد	Information, Lost & Found, Postal Facility
Medical	عيادة، طوارئ، مركز القلب، الإسعافات الأولية	Shamel Polyclinic, First Aid, Heart Center
Recreational	منطقة ألعاب الأطفال، صالة بولينغ، نادي رياضي	Kids' Play Area, Yalla Bowling, Fitness Club
Educational/ Institutional	جامعة سوهاج، معهد أكاديمية الورقة للتدريب	Sohag University, New Academy Institute for Training
Religious	عمرة وزيارة، منتدى، صالة الصلاة	Umrah and Ziyarah Forum, Prayer Lounge
Social/Greeting Cultural	أهلاً وسهلاً بكم في طيبة الطيبة، نتذوق الطعام الإيطالي	Welcome to Taybah Taybah, Taste Italian Food

3.3 Correct Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

Findings revealed that 32% of the LLs in the sample were translated correctly (33% Arabic-English & 31% English-Arabic LLs). Many of the LLs in Table 4 (*Keep a safe distance, Road ahead closed, Use safety harness, Vital signs, Departures*) are top-down, issued by government bodies, hospitals, airports, or municipalities. These institutions typically employ professional translators or use standardized terminology to ensure accuracy, clarity, and functional equivalence. Phrases like (*Soft Drinks* مشروبات غازية; *Powered Drinks* مشروبات الطاقة; *Tea & Coffee* شاي وقهوة; *School Bags* حقائب مدرسية; *Shower Gel* سائل الاستحمام) are common retail or product labels with well-established equivalents in both languages. These translations are often formulaic or widely accepted, reducing the risk of error. Signs such as *This room is protected by a clean agent gas suppression system. Do not enter without authorization during or after discharge* (يمنع دخول المنطقة المخططة الا اذا كان) and (*Do Not Enter Junction Until Exit Is Cleared* منع دخول المنطقة المخططة الا اذا كان) reflect a clear understanding of the communicative purpose. The translators applied functional translation strategies, ensuring that the message is not only linguistically accurate but also pragmatically appropriate. Some translations, like (*God Bless You* > الله يحفظك) and (*Umrah and Ziyarah Forum* > منتدى العمرة والزيارة), show cultural sensitivity and idiomatic alignment. These reflect deep familiarity with both the source and target cultures, allowing for natural and respectful renderings. Many signs are short and direct, such as "Danger," "Give Way," "Keep Distance," "Pull It ... Return It." These are less prone to structural or semantic errors, especially when the translator understands the context. Medical and airport signs (*Female Patients For Your Safety Please Advise The Radiology Technician If You Are Pregnant* عزيزتي المريضة.. حماية لك وللجنين الرجاء اخبري) *Metallic Implants Ferromagnetic* (معدن مزروعة داخل الجسم فنية الاشعة اذا كنت حامل قبل اجراء الاشعة); *Flight Connections* (مواصلات); *Ethiad Business Class Lounge* (قاعة الاتحاد لدرجة رجال الاعمال) use domain-specific vocabulary that is often standardized across institutions. This ensures consistency and accuracy, especially in high-stakes environments like healthcare and aviation.

Table 4: Examples of Linguistics Landscapes Correctly Translated

Examples of Bilingual LLs with their Translation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Airline Lounges</i> قاعات شركات الطيران • <i>Assembly Point</i> نقطة التجمع • <i>Auto Teller</i> صراف آلي • <i>Autocare</i> خدمة السيارات • <i>Baggage Claim</i> استلام الامتعة • <i>Canned Food</i> مأكولات معلبة • <i>Chocolate Bars</i> الواح شوكولاته • <i>Condensed Milk</i> حليب مركز • <i>Deal Destinations</i> وجهة التوفير • <i>Departures</i> المغادرة/المغادرون • <i>Flavored Milk</i> حليب بنكهات • <i>Give Way</i> اسمح للمرور • <i>Golden Petrol</i> البترول الذهبي • <i>Grillers & Grills</i> شوايات • <i>Healthcare Accessories</i> اكسسوارات الرعاية الصحية • <i>Home Theatre</i> مسرح منزلي • <i>Keep Distance</i> إبقاء مسافة • <i>Kids' Play Area</i> منطقة لعب الاطفال • <i>Let's Eatalian</i> لنلتذوق الطعم الإيطالي • <i>Luch Box</i> صندوق الغداء • <i>Luggage Belt</i> حزام الامتعة • <i>Men Care</i> العناية بالرجل • <i>Party Wear</i> مستلزمات الحفلات • <i>Pass Delivery</i> تسليم الشارات • <i>Pass Desk</i> مكتب الشارات • <i>Per Piece</i> للقطعة • <i>Sauces & Pickles</i> صلصات ومخللات • <i>Shopping Area</i> رواق تجاري • <i>UHT Milk</i> حليب طويل الاجل • <i>Wooden Bakery</i> مخازن الحطب • <i>Keep a safe distance</i> اترك مسافة آمنة • <i>Spike Barrier</i> احذر مفرقع كفريات • <i>Use safety harness (belt)</i> استخدم حزام الامان 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strictly Prohibited Parking</i> ممنوع الوقوف قطعيا • <i>Vital Signs</i> المؤشرات الحيوية • <i>To Haram</i> الى حد الحرم • <i>Used Cars Center</i> مركز السيارات المستعملة • <i>Tom Pets Clinic</i> عيادة توم الاليف • <i>Danger Suspended Load</i> انتبه خطر حمل معلق • <i>Admission and Billing</i> التنويم وحسابات المرضى • <i>Road Ahead Closed</i> امامك طريق معلق • <i>Saudi red crescent authority</i> هيئة الهلال الأحمر السعودي • <i>Operating your fire extinguisher</i> كيفية استخدام طفاية الحريق • <i>Keep away</i> لا تقترب من هذا المكان • <i>Foundation Program Unit</i> وحدة البرنامج التأسيسي • <i>Reduce Speed .. Humps Ahead</i> خفف السرعة امامك مطبات • <i>US Pre-Clearance Flights</i> التدقيق المسبق لرحلات الولايات المتحدة • <i>No Metallic Articles or Watches</i> معدنية ممنوع الدخول بمواد او سماعات • <i>Notice Please Use Hand Sanitizer</i> تنبيه! الرجاء استخدام مطهر اليد • <i>Speed short way to PRISON or DEATH</i> السرعة قد تقودك الى السجن او الموت • <i>Danger Active Archaeological Site Do Not Leave the Path</i> خطر موقع حفريات أثري ممنوع النزول من الطريق • <i>In Case Of Fire Do Not Use The Stairs</i> في حالة الحريق لا تستخدم المصاعد • <i>The Dream Of Parenthood Is Not Impossible</i> حلم الانجاب لم يعد مستحيلا • <i>We Take Care of Your Heart by the Best Surgeons and Doctors</i> نعتني بقلبك من خلال افضل الجراحين • <i>Get Back Your Life with Knee Replacement Operations</i> لممارسة حياتك مع عمليات استبدال مفصل الركبة • هذه الطريق تؤدي الى منطقة التابعة للسلطة الفلسطينية الدخول للمواطنين الإسرائيليين ممنوعة وخطرة على حياتهم

In some examples, the multiple errors are a result of literal translation without contextual awareness as “Care For Life > نهتم بالحياة” and “Slow Down > تحت تمهل” which show semantic and idiomatic mismatches. It is clear that the translators have relied on word-for-word translation, ignoring the pragmatic function or cultural equivalence. In other examples, the translators over-relied on machine translation in phrases like (Keep Site Clean> الحفاظ على الموقع كلين and Tetra Pack Juice> عصير بتغلق تترا) which suggest unreviewed and unedited machine output. This resulted in transliteration errors, unnatural phrasing, and hybrid forms that are confusing rather than clarifying. Further examples of LLs with multiple errors are provided in Table 5. Many of these examples with multiple linguistic and translation errors are bottom-up LLs, created by businesses or individuals without access to trained translators.

Table 5: LLs With Multiple Linguistic and Translation Errors

Linguistics Landscapes and Their Translation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature only (Printed matter only) *المطبوعات فقط • Malted drinks (Barley Drinks) *مشروبات الشعير • P.P.E. must be worn all time *at site (P.P.E. must be worn at site all the time) • ABU DHABI MUNICIPALITY Apologize for any inconvenience *Work for your convenience بلدية أبو ظبي نعتذر عن أي *ازعاج العمال ليمنحك *راحمكم (بلدية أبو ظبي نعتذر عن الازعاج وتعمل من اجل راحتكم) • Go To Gate البوابة (اتجه الى البوابة) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danger .. Forklift Traffic Area خطر رافعة البضائع *منطقة (خطر ... منطقة مرور رافعة شوكية) المرور • Librar (Bookstore) مكتبة قبة اشبيليا • Lulu Shopping Gift & Digital Cards بطاقات لولو *شوبن جفت (بطاقات لولو التسوقية والبطاقات الرقمية) * • Meeting Point *الالتقاء (منطقة تجمع) • No Mobile Phones *المتحركة (الهواتف الجواله) • Super Fest (مهرجان رهيب) سوبر مهرجان • Table Top Stoves افران طبخ طاولة

A. 3.5 Semantic Errors

Semantic errors are the most frequent in the sample of LLs in this study as they constitute 26% of all errors, with more semantic errors in the translation of English-Arabic than Arabic-English LLs (18% & 9% respectively). Semantic errors reflect a nuanced understanding of how meaning can be distorted in translation. They often co-occur with other syntactic, grammatical, orthographic, and transliteration errors. Many semantic errors occur in bottom-up signs, where translation is done by non-specialists. Product labels and institutional terms are more prone to semantic distortions due to lack of domain knowledge. In this study, semantic errors cover meaning mismatches, inappropriate collocations, contextual misfits, idiom misinterpretation, and faulty lexical choices, each of which is described below.

3.5.1 Meaning Misidentification

Meaning misidentification shows deep semantic distortions, where the translator misunderstood the core concept of the LL, and fails to grasp the intended concept or communicative function of the source phrase in the LL as in the examples in Table 6 which show how the translator has deviated from the intended meaning due to lexical or conceptual misalignment and misinterpretation of the source terms. This often results in translations that are either misleading or entirely unrelated to the intended message. Meaning misidentifications are particularly problematic in top-down signages, where clarity and authority are expected. They also reflect DIY (do it yourself) translation practices, where non-professionals rely on intuition or machine translation without domain knowledge as in “Boxed Chocolate > صندوق شوكولاتة” and “Prepared Meats > اللحم استعداد”, which clearly illustrate misidentification of referents. Errors in Table 6 stem from literal translation of lexical items without regard to idiomatic usage as Home Offices > البيوت المكتبية instead of المكاتب المنزلية. Some LLs (Care for Life and Slow Down) appear again in other tables, which suggests overlapping error types, which is natural but can be clarified with cross-references. This kind of semantic error is due to lack of domain knowledge.

Table 6: Meaning Misidentification in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

Meaning Misidentification	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biohazard/Medical Waste (نفايات النفايات الطبية *واقية طبية خطرة) • Boxed Chocolate (علب شوكولاته) *صندوق شوكولاتة • Clearance Price (سعر التصفية) *تصفية السعر • Custard Apple (فاكهة الكاكا) *كسترد تفاح • During taxi (سيارات الأجرة) (سير الطائرة على المدرج) • Global Group (المجموعة العالمية) *مجموعة العالمي • Home Offices (المكاتب المنزلية) *البيوت المكتبية • Makeen Logistics (مكين للتخطيط والتنفيذ) مكين اللوجستية 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Entry (ممنوع الدخول) ممر ممنوع • No Public Entry (عدم ادخال العامة) • Prepared Meats (لحوم جاهزة) اللحم استعداد • Rest Area (استراحة) مكان الأكل • Shamel Polyclinic (مجمع عيادات) (شامل عيادات شامل المجمع) • Tetra Pack Juice (عبوة عصير تترا) Juice عصير بتغلق تترا • Downloads (Sale) (تنزيلات) • Styling Tools (أدوات تصفيف الشعر) معدات الشعر

3.5.2 Inappropriate Collocation in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

Table 7 shows examples of LL with inappropriate collocations capturing unnatural or awkward word pairings that native speakers would not use. Examples like "Insect Killers > قاتل الحشرات instead of مبيد الحشرات; Boxed Chocolate صندوق شوكولاتة instead of علب شوكولاتة and Personal Car نهتم بعنايتك rather than العناية الشخصية result from direct translation without regard for collocational norms in Arabic. These collocations are grammatically incorrect, but they are semantically odd, and stylistically inappropriate.

Table 7: Inappropriate Collocation in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live Healthy (عيش بصحة) عيش الصحة • Lost Luggage (العفش الضائع) مصلحة الامتعة • Bottled Water (معبأة) مياه *معلبة • Boxed Chocolate (علب شوكولاته) صندوق شوكولاتة • Heavy Construction Traffic (مرور شاحنات ثقيلة) منفذ شاحنات ثقيلة • Information (معلومات، استعلامات) إرشادات • Insect Killers (مبيد حشرات) قاتل الحشرات • Issue De Secours (مخرج الطوارئ) منفذ الاغاثة • Personal Care (العناية الشخصية) نهتم بعنايتك • Salad Dressing (تتبيلة السلطة) تزيين السلطة • Travel Agencies (وكالات سياحة وسفر) وكالات الأسفار • Turbulent Weather (المطبات الهوائية) والطقس *المضطرب • China Town (الحي الصيني) المدينة الصينية

3.5.3 Contextual Misfit in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

Examples in Table 7 are technically correct but contextually inappropriate. "China Town > المدينة الصينية" and "Stationary > المكتبة" show how situational mismatches can distort meaning. Many of these errors reflect lack of awareness of genre, setting, or audience. translations as Carrier > حاملة طائرات are domain-specific misapplications. In a military context, حاملة الطائرات is the appropriate translation, whereas in a civil context, ناقل is more appropriate. In aircraft landing safety instructions, taxi means an aircraft moving slowly along the ground before take-off or after landing, but not as a means of transportation used in a daily context.

Table 8: Contextual Misfit in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

Contextual Misfit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm stars Massage (تدليل في هداة النجوم) • Keep Site Clean (حافظ على الموقع *كلين (حافظ على نظافة المكان) • Live Station (منطقة طازج (منطقة المأكولات الطازجة) • Carrier (حاملة طائرات (الناقل) • Musical Instruments (معدات موسيقية (آلات موسيقية) • No Mobile Phones (يمنع استخدام الهواتف المتحركة (الجوالة) • Prepared Meats (اللحوم استعداد (لحوم جاهزة) • Baby Bassinet to be Removed and Stowed for Taxi, Take Off, Landing and Turbulent Weather (تستعمل حمالة الأطفال اثناء السير على المدرج) و الإقلاع والهبوط & الإقلاع او الهبوط او خلال المطبات الهوائية يجب إزالة *سرير الأطفال وتخزينه في *سيارات الأجرة (السير على المدرج) و الإقلاع والهبوط & الإقلاع او الهبوط او خلال المطبات الهوائية (المطبات الهوائية) • Make Housekeeping Part Of Your Daily Routing. (اجعل النظافة والترتيب جزء من عملك اليومي) • Diversion ahead R/A closed (detour). (امامك تحويلة الدوار مغلق) • Literature only (printed matter). (المطبوعات فقط) • Al-Karawan laundries (laundromats). (مغاسل الكروان) • Stationary (library, at a university). (المكتبة) • Library (Bookstore). (مكتبة قبة اشيبليا)

3.5.4 Idiom Misinterpretation in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

The fourth type is idiom misinterpretation. Table 8 shows examples of LLs with idiom misinterpretations. This is because these idiomatic expressions were mistranslated literally. "Slow Down > تحت تمهل" is a strong example of non-idiomatic rendering. "Downloads > تنزيلات" appears to be more of a false friend or lexical misfit than an idiom.

Table 9: Idiom Misinterpretation in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care For Life (نهتم بالحياة) • Slow Down > تحت تمهل (خفف السرعة) • Downloads (تنزيلات)

3.5.5 Incorrect Lexical Choice in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

Table 10 shows lexical mismatches, in the translation of LLs. These examples show how wrong word choice can alter meaning. "Biohazard > النفايات الطبية واقية" and "Vertical Steamers > غلاية عمودية غالية" show how word-level errors can severely distort meaning. "Currency Exchange > صرف" instead of "صرف العملات/صرف/صرافة/صراف" misses the financial nuance. Many of these errors stem from false cognates, machine translation, or lack of domain-specific lexical knowledge. "First Aid الطبي الإسعاف" instead of "الإسعافات الأولية" is a literal translation that does not reflect the exact expression that is commonly used in daily communication.

Incorrect lexical choice is caused by word-for-word translation without paying attention to idiomatic or contextual meaning, unfamiliarity with technical or institutional terminology, unedited translation output, misrepresenting meaning, vague or polysemous English terms which lead to incorrect interpretation, use of Arabic words with multiple English equivalents fitting in different contexts such as "library", and/or partial translation of some LL source texts.

Table 10: Examples of Incorrect Lexical Choice in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

• Air Humidifiers (مرطبات) ملطف الهواء	• Humps Ahead (مطبات) *مرتفعات امامك
• Biohazard/Medical Waste (خطر) النفايات الطبية *واقية	• Irons (مكاوي)
• Bread Toasters (محمصة توست)	• Meeting Point (منطقة التجمع)
• Classrooms (غرف التدريس (فصول دراسية/قاعات دراسية)	• Milk Powder (حليب بودرة)
• Currency Exchange (صرف (صرفة/صراف)	• Musical Instruments (معدات (آلات) موسيقية)
• Custom Control (مراقبة الديوانة)	• Nothing To Declare (لا شيء للإعلام (للافصاح) به
• Dilute to taste (امزج وتذوق (اخلط بالماء وتذوق)	• Vertical Steamers (مكواة بخارية عمودية) غالية عمودية
• First Aid (الإسعافات الأولية) الطبي الإسعاف	• Shamel Polyclinic (مجمع عيادات)
• Forklifts Operating (منطقة عمل ونش شوكة (رافعة شوكية)	• Stationary (المكتبة (أدوات مكتبية)
• Goods To Declare (الاعلام بالأمثلة (ما يصرح به)	• Tetra Pack Juice (عصير بتغلق تترا (عبوة عصير تترا)
• Hair Straighteners (سيراميك الشعر (أدوات فرد الشعر)	• Muster Point (Assemble point) (نقطة تجمع
• Postal Facility (خدمات بريدية (مرفق بريدي)	• Labor at work (عمال يشتغلون)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danger High Voltage عالية (فلطية) خطر قلطية (خطر جهد كهربائي عالي) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malted drinks (barley drinks) مشروبات الشعير
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3.6 Syntactic & Grammatical Errors in Linguistics Landscapes

Analysis of the bilingual LL data indicated that 15% of the total LLs have syntactic errors, i.e., errors in the structure of the phrases or sentences and their word order. Most LLs involve faulty word order issues, awkward phrasing, or structural anomalies as in "Danger Forklift Traffic Area رافعة البضائع منطقة المرور خطر ..", and "Keep Site Clean > حافظ على نظافة (الحفظ على الموقع كليلين > الموقع " are syntactically faulty. Examples of LLs with a reversed Arabic word order are:

- Shamel Polyclinic (مجمع عيادات شامل) عيادات شامل المجمع
- Clearance Price (سعر التصفية) تصفية السعر
- Boxed Chocolate (علب شوكولاته) صندوق شوكولاتة
- Prepared Meats (لحوم جاهزة) اللحوم استعداد
- Biohazard/Medical Waste (نفايات طبية خطيرة) النفايات الطبية واقية
- Global Group (المجموعة العالمية) مجموعة العالمي
- Tetra Pack Juice (عبوة عصير تترا) Juice عصير بتغلق تترا
- No Entry (ممنوع الدخول) ممر ممنوع
- Super Fest (مهرجان رهيب) سوبر مهرجان
- Home Offices (المكاتب المنزلية) البيوت المكتبية
- Makeen Logistics (مكين للتخطيط والتنفيذ) مكين اللوجستية
- Riyadh Sheraton (شيراتون الرياض) الرياض شيراتون
- Urouba Plaza (بلازا العروبة) العروبة بلازا
- Al-zarqaa academy for high training institute (Al-zarqaa High academic Training Institute for training) معهد اكاديمية الزرقاء العالي للتدريب
- Vision enjaz trading company (Enjaz Vision Trading Company) شركة رؤية انجاز التجارية
- *This Items Are Not Included In The Promotion (العرض الترويجي لا يتم تضمين هذه العناصر في العرض الترويجي) *This Items Are Not Included In The Promotion (لا يتضمن هذه المنتجات)

It is noteworthy to say that the Arabic word order especially in compounds is opposite of the English word order. However, in the faulty LLs, the Arabic translation has the same word order as the English source compound.

The following examples have a scrambled word order:

- Notice! Wash Hands Before Returning To Work (ملحوظة: يجب غسل اليدين ملحوظة الرجوع الى العمل يجب غسل اليدين قبل الرجوع الى العمل)
- Access Forbidden To All Unauthorized Personnel (منوع الدخول للأشخاص غير المرخص لهم) المصرح لهم لكل الأشخاص غير

Other syntactic errors are fragmented structures as in the following examples:

- We Build The Future. Today (تبنى غدنا .. اليوم) غدا بناء. اليوم
- Smoking Is Strictly Prohibited (in) This Area (missing preposition). (منمنوع دخول العامة) عدم ادخال العامة
- No Public Entry (ممنوع دخول العامة)
- P.P.E. must be worn *all time *at site (يجب ارتداء أدوات السلامة الشخصية)
- ABU DHABI MUNICIPALITY .. Apologize for any inconvenience .. Work for your convenience (بلدية أبو ظبي نعتذر عن أي ازعاج (بلدية أبو ظبي .. نعتذر عن أي ازعاج .. نعمل لأجل راحتكم) العمال ليمنحك راحكم)
- Free Follow Up Is One Week Time Date Of First Visit With The Same Dr. (follow-up is within one week of the first visit to the same Dr). (مدة المراجعة المجانية هي سبعة ايام من تاريخ الزيارة الاولى لنفس الطبيب)
- Vehicles with shaded *glasses (glass) that exceed(s) 30% are not allowed *for access (No Access for vehicles with 30% shaded glass). (يمنع دخول السيارات التي تزيد نسبة التظليل فيها عن 30%.)

Structural and word order errors in LLs often stem from literal translation or machine-generated output that fails to adjust for Arabic-English word order differences. Many signs are bottom-up, where translators may lack formal training in syntax. The prevalence of awkward or fragmented structures (*We Build The Future. Today*) suggests a lack of post-editing or proofreading. Syntactic errors often affect the intelligibility of the LL.

Regarding grammatical errors, 20% of the LLs (15% of the Arabic-English LLs & 22% of the English-Arabic LL) have number errors (singular/plural errors), faulty agreement, faulty singular/plurals, definite/indefinite, faulty derivative use, and faulty interpretation of prepositional phrases and idioms as in the following examples:

- **Faulty Singular** equivalents: Although names of appliances and Products in the English source text are plural, the Arabic translation in most examples is singular as in عروض *offer(s)*, النافع للزهور *al-nafee flower(s)*, مجلات *magazine (s)*, *air fryers* مطبخة (أجهزة ترطيب الهواء) ملطف الهواء (قلايات هوائية) قلاية كهربائية بدون زيت (قلايات هوائية) *air humidifiers* محمص *bread toasters* (مطاحن قهوة) مطحنة قهوة *coffee grinders* (عصارات) عصارة حمضيات *citrus, juicers* (قطاعات) قطاعة *choppers* (وجهات) وجهة التوفير *deal destinations* فرن حراري *convection ovens* (آلات صنع القهوة) صانعة القهوة *coffee makers* (غلايات) غلاية كهربائية *electric kettles* (غلايات عميقة) قلاية بدون زيت *egg boilers* (مضارب بيض) مضرب بيض يدوي *hand mixers* (خلطات يدوية) خلاط يدوي *hand blenders* (طواحين) طاحونة *grinders* (طباخات) طاهي البخار *food, steamers* (محضرات طعام) محضر طعام *foo processers* (أفران) فرن كهربائي *electric ovens* (مضارب بيض) مضرب بيض يدوي *hand mixers* (عصائر أطفال) عصير أطفال *kids juice* (مضرات الطعام) ماكينة المطبخ *kitchen machines* (عصارات) عصارة *juicers* (مكاوي) صانعة الروتي *roti makers* (أفران ميكرويف) فرن ميكرويف *microwave ovens* (مشذبات رجالية) مشذبة رجالية *mens trimmers* (آلات صنع الروتي) *sandwich grills* (آلات تحميص الساندويتشات) شواية الساندويتش *sandwich toasters* (آلات تحميص) مكنسة كهربائية *vacuum cleaners* (مكافئ) مكافئ بخارية عمودية) عمودية عالية *vertical steamers* (مفارم لحم) مفرفة لحم *Meat Miners*.
- **Faulty Plural Equivalents:** *General association for *foodstuffs (food) merchants*; يمنع *30% Vehicles with shaded *glasses (glass) that exceed(s) 30% are not allowed *for access*; *Perfume company* (شركة عطور) شركات العطور (حي سكني) *الاحياء السكنية *Residential area*; *Let's Go Outdoors* (هيا نذهب للنزهة) يلا نذهب *للنزهات.
- **Agreement errors:** *Quat Altariq rent a cars (a car)*; ماندرين باكستاني للكيلو *Mandarin Pakistan per kilo (Pakistani mandarin)*; *Cooking Hobs* (افران كهربائية) أفران *كهربائي *Warning .. Writing Is Strictly Forbidden ..* تحذير .. *"Quat Altariq rent a cars" > "cars" is plural, but "a" is singular.*
- **Overly use of the definite article:** *A Clean Place Is (a) Safe Place; No Unauthorized Entry* (غير المصرح) لهم *Evacuation Assembly Point* (تجمع) للاخلاء *Priority Seating* (إشارات عمل مؤقتة) الإشارات *Temporary Work Signs* (مقعد) المقاعد (مقاعد) *الاولوية *Healthy food* (أغذية صحية) "الاغذية الصحية" > *WORKING AREA (WORK AREA)*; *Go To Gate* (توجهوا الى البوابة) الاتجاه للبوابة.
- **Part of speech:** *Live Healthy* (عيش الصحة) عيش الصحة *Personal Care* (العناية الشخصية) نهتم بعنايتك *Need Help Walking?* (هل تحتاج مساعدة للمشي) للمساعدة اثناء المشي?
- **Faulty derived form** (e.g., using a noun instead of an adjective) *Healthy food (health food)*; منطقة عمل *WORKING AREA (WORK AREA)*; *Go To Gate* (توجهوا الى البوابة) الاتجاه للبوابة.
- **Part of speech:** *Live Healthy* (عيش الصحة) عيش الصحة *Personal Care* (العناية الشخصية) نهتم بعنايتك *Need Help Walking?* (هل تحتاج مساعدة للمشي) للمساعدة اثناء المشي?
- **Faulty preposition and preposition attachment:** *Hussain *for car rental co* معدي لتأجير *Modie *for rent *car (rent a car)*; *Care For Life* (رعاية مدى الحياة) نهتم بالحياة *Slow Down* (تحت تمهل) خفف السرعة.
- **Faulty verb form:** *Don't littering (Don't Litter)* ممنوع رمي المخلفات في هذه المنطقة.

The high grammatical error rate reflects challenges in morphological complexity of Arabic (definiteness, gender, number); use of prepositions, which differs significantly in English and Arabic; pluralization and article use, especially in product labels and commercial signs. Many errors appear in retail and product LLs, where translation is often done informally or by non-specialists. Grammatical errors are more subtle but affect accuracy and fluency. They reflect a lack of control over English noun phrase structure and article-noun agreement. Absence of an indefinite article in Arabic often leads to omission or confusion in English translation. Grammatical errors also show a misunderstanding of when definiteness is required in English vs. Arabic. The difficulty in translating prepositional phrases is due to their idiomatic nature and structural differences between Arabic and English.

In summary, grammatical errors stem from morphological complexity, article system differences, and lack of idiomatic awareness. They are more frequent in bottom-up signs, where translation is informal or improvised.

3.7 Cultural Mismatch

The translation of *Peace be with you & Go in Peace* instead of have as a safe trip, take care, or good-bye is structurally acceptable, but it is culturally awkward or not commonly used in daily communication in English.

3.8 Orthographic Errors in Bilingual LL Translation

Although orthographic errors accounted for only 3% of the total LL sample, their impact on the clarity and credibility of LLs is disproportionate. These errors include misspellings, incorrect spacing, phonetic approximations, and typographic inconsistencies in both English and Arabic. Such errors, while seemingly minor, can significantly affect the readability and perceived

professionalism of public signs. Common examples include “*Ciub street*” for (*Club Street*), “*Par King*” for (*Parking*), and “*News Paper*” for (*Newspaper*), all of which reflect a lack of familiarity with English orthographic conventions. In some cases, informal or digital writing habits influence the translation, as seen in “*Cake & Coffee* كفي وكفي”, where كفي is spelled with a short vowel diacritic and ى rather than ي. Arabic orthographic errors were also observed, such as “*نعتزر*” which is a colloquial pronunciation instead of the Standard Arabic word “*نعتذر*”, indicating insufficient proofreading.

These errors are found in top-down signage, where institutional credibility is at stake. In bottom-up signs, they often reflect DIY (do it yourself) translation practices and limited access to editorial review. While orthographic errors may not distort meaning as severely as semantic or syntactic errors, they contribute to a broader perception of linguistic carelessness and can hinder effective cross-cultural communication.

Orthographic errors can be attributed to lack of proofreading, phonetic approximation, spacing confusion, the influence of informal writing, and the transfer of Colloquial Arabic pronunciation. Signs with orthographic errors seem to be printed without revision by a native speaker or editor. Also, some translators rely on how words sound rather than how they are spelled (e.g., “*Ciub*”). Compound nouns in English are often incorrectly spelled as two separate words (*News Paper*, *super market*). They do not seem to know when English compounds are agglutinated, separated by a hyphen or spelled separately.

Table 11 : Examples of Orthographic Errors in LL Translation

Arabic LL	English Translation	Error Type
A Warm Welcome to Nasmiles Lounge	صالة *ناسمايلز (ناس مايلز) ترحب بكم	Spelled together like English although it is difficult to decode in Arabic
Cake & Coffee	كيك و*كفي (وكوفي)	Numeral Substitution
Push Bar To Open	ادفع *القبض (المقبض) لتفتح	a misspelling or a typo
Sorry for the Inconvenience	*نعتزر (نعتذر) عن أي أزعاج	Colloquial Arabic pronunciation
جرائد	*News Paper (newspaper)	In English, <i>Newspaper</i> is agglutinated whereas in Arabic they are spelled separately
سوبرماركت علي	Ali *Super Market (supermarket)	Spacing. <i>Supermarket</i> should be one word
شارع النادي	*Ciub (Club) street	A typographical error
مخبز وسوبرماركت الخليج	GULF *super market (supermarket) & *bakery (Bakery)	Spacing & misspelling
موقف سيارات	*Par King (parking)	Spacing, Phonetic
وسط المدينة	Down Town (Downtown)	Spacing
مستلزمات الحفلات	Party wear	Confusing Homophones
المشط الموحد للحلقة	The unified *comp (comb)	Spelling error

3.9 Translation Variations in Similar LLS

Table 12 shows examples of similar LLS in the same street, town or even country with inconsistent translation. For Example, 13 signs of car rental companies in the same street in Riyadh have four translation varieties (*rent a car*, *car rental*, *for car rental*, *for renting cars*, *for rent a car*, *rent *a cars*) instead of the standard expressions (*Alamo Rent A Car and Budget Car Rental*), the first eight LLS in Table 12 have correct equivalent translations. These car rental LLS show structural and grammatical inconsistencies, especially in preposition use and noun phrase.

LLS with multiple and inconsistencies in translations can be attributed to linguistic incompetence, unfamiliarity with standard equivalents, overreliance on machine translation or phonetic guesswork, and lack of editorial oversight. Many of the translators of such signs may lack formal training in translation or proficiency in English and/or Arabic, leading to grammatical errors (*Quat altariq rent a cars*); incorrect word order (*Splendor Road Rent a car*) and literal or awkward phrasing (*No Public Entry > عدم إدخال العامة). Translators may not be aware of established bilingual terminology used in institutional or international contexts. “*Muster Point*” is a technical term used in safety protocols, but it may be unfamiliar to non-specialist translators. “*No Entry*” is mistranslated as “ممر ممنوع” instead of the standard ممنوع الدخول. *Assembly Point* was transliterated without post-editing as “اسمبلي بوانت” which also contains a typo or inaccurate transliteration. This results in non-standard, inconsistent, or unintelligible translations. Especially in bottom-up signage, there is lack of revision to ensure consistency or correctness. This leads to multiple versions of the same concept across different signs, even within the same institution or city.

Table 12: Inconsistent Translation of Same & Similar LLs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • إدارة الرحاب لتأجير السيارات AlRehab rent a car • روزا لتأجير السيارات Roza rent a car • الجبر لتأجير السيارات A Jabr Rent A Car • روعة الطريق لتأجير السيارات Splendor Road Rent a car • شركة وسم لتأجير السيارات Wasm co. rent a car • طريق الفرسان لتأجير السيارات Alfursan road rent a car • شركة الرشيد فرع تأجير السيارات Rent A car ALRASHEED COMPANY • رينتو لتأجير السيارات Rento car rental • قوة الطريق لتأجير السيارات Quat altariq rent *a cars • شركة حسين لتأجير السيارات Hussain for car rental co. • معدي لتأجير السيارات Modie for rent car • نانكو لتأجير السيارات Nanco for rent a car • رير فيو لتأجير السيارات Rear view *For Renting Cars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • نقطة التجمع Asmely Point • اسمبلي بواننت Emergency Assembly Point • نقطة التجمع للاخلاء Evacuation Assembly Point • منطقة الالتقاء Meeting Point • Muster Point نقطة تجمع
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • الوصول - صالة القdom - القادمون Arrival Hall/Arrivals • صالة المغادرة - المغادرون Departures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ممر ممنوع No Entry • عدم ادخال العامة No Public Entry • يمنع دخول الأشخاص الغير مصرح لهم (يمنع دخولك Do Not Enter Junction Until Exit Is Cleared) • المنطقة المخططة الا اذا كان مسارك سالكا
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ركن المطاعم - منطقة المطاعم - صالة المطاعم Food Court • مطاعم الردهة الغربية (West) Food Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ركن المطاعم - منطقة المطاعم - صالة المطاعم Food Court • مطاعم الردهة الغربية (West) Food Court

3.10 Translation Strategies Used in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

3.10.1 Literal Translation

Literal word-for-word translation is the most frequently used translation strategy in Arabic-English and English-Arabic LLs, whether the translation is correct or faulty. Although word-for-word translation sometimes works for straightforward, and denotative phrases, it often leads to awkward or unnatural equivalents when applied to idiomatic or culturally embedded expressions. For instance, "Welcome Dinner" becomes "عشاء أهلا وسهلا", Bus Shelter ماوى الحافلات are semantically odd and pragmatically ineffective. In addition, the literal translation strategy is responsible for many semantic and syntactic errors as in *No Mobile Phones* يمنع استخدام الهواتف المتحرك and other examples mentioned in the previous sections.

3.10.2 Transliteration Instead of Translation in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

The second most common strategy is transliteration which is used in 17% of the Arabic-English LLs and 12% of the English-Arabic LLs in the sample as in common in brand names, place names, and culturally specific terms. In those faulty examples, transliteration resulted in semantic opacity or hybrid forms that confuse readers who are unfamiliar with the source language in the LL. For example, اسمبلي بواننت for (*Emergency Assembly Point*) is phonetically rendered but functionally meaningless to Arabic speakers, first because it has an Arabic equivalent (نقطة تجمع) and secondly because it is difficult to decode especially by native speakers who do not know English. This strategy contributes heavily to semantic and transliteration errors (See Table 13 for examples in translations of transliterated words in parentheses).

Table 13: Examples of English and Arabic Transliteration in Bilingual Linguistic Landscapes

• Ehalat (Referrals) الاحالات	• *كوفي شوب (مقهى) Coffee Shop
• Ashi Zaki (Ishi Zaki) اشى زاكى	• *كسترد تفاح (فاكهة الكاكا) Custard Apple
• Jamieat Sohag Aljadida (New Sohag University) جامعة سوهاج الجديدة	• اكتشف Discover The New Flyadeal Boutique Products
• Diwan Eam Muhafazat Sohag (Sohag Governorate General Office) ديوان عام محافظة سوهاج	• منتجات *بوتيك (متجر) طيران أديل الجديدة
• Shierae aljanub (Shira'a Aljanoub); شارع الجنوب لتقديم الوجبات	• *بواننت اسمبلي Emergency Assembly Point (نقطة تجمع) (طوارئ);
• Shuhada Uhud (Uhud Martyrs) شهداء احد	• *فاشن ستور Fashion Store (متجر أزياء)
• Alam al hazazy, Shierae aljanub عالم الهزازى	• الحرية *مول (مركز تسوق) Freedom Mal
• Madinat Sohag; مدينة سوهاج	• (وقود) *فيول Fuel
• Al Masjid Al Haram المسجد الحرام	• اتحاد *الجمناستك (الجمباز) Gymnastics Federation
• Al Masjid Al Nabawi المسجد النبوي	• لايف ستايل (أسلوب حياة) Life Style
• MATAR Sohaj Aduwalaا مطار سوهاج الدولي	• بطاقات لولو *شوبن Lulu Shopping Gift & Digital Cards
• أطياف *جاردن (حديقة أطياف) Atyaf Garden	• *جفت (هدية التسوق) والبطاقات الرقمية
	• The Wide وايد (a coffee shop)
	• مخايز فيجن Vegan

3.10.3 Conceptual Translation

Conceptual translation is used 7% of the total LLs in the sample. It refers to reconstructing the meaning or concept with an equivalent expression rather than translating word-for-word. This strategy is often more effective in conveying pragmatic intent, especially in institutional or culturally sensitive contexts. However, it requires a high level of linguistic competence, and when poorly executed, it can still result in semantic or grammatical errors (misuse of "الغير" in "الأشخاص الغير مصرح لهم"). Examples of linguistic landscapes translated conceptually are given in Table 14.

Table 14: Examples of Linguistic Landscapes Translated Conceptually

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission And Billing Admission And Billing Autocare السيارات Common Teaching Blocks ميني غرف التدريس اهلا وسهلا بكم في طيبة الطيبة Welcome to the holy city of Madinah Hand Crafted To Perfection محضرة يدويا بحرفية ومنتهى الاتقان No Unauthorized Entry يمنع دخول الأشخاص الغير مصرح لهم Reduced Mobility Persons قاصري الحركة العضوية يمنع دخول السيارات التي تزيد نسبة التظليل فيها عن 30% Vehicles with shaded glasses that exceed 30% are not allowed for access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dilute To Taste امزج وتذوق Duty Free السوق الحرة Hamza phone حمزة للاتصالات Tunisian civil aviation and airports authority ديوان الطيران المدني والمطارات Riyadh Taif for Non-Muslims الرياض الطائف اتجاه اجباري لغير المسلمين Authentic Italian Products Promotion in Saudi Arabia عروض المنتجات الإيطالية التقليدية في السعودية Al Amour restaurant فطائر الأمور Welcome to the city of the prophet من مدينة الرسول نحمد الله على سلامتكم
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3.10.4 Explanatory (Paraphrase)

An explanatory equivalent or paraphrase is used in 2% of the LLs as in the following examples:

- Half Pay Back لكل 200 ريال تحصل على قسيمة بقيمة 100 ريال
- View للقهوة المختصة
- Civil Aviation Authority ديوان الطيران المدني والمطارات
- Katakeet Restaurant مطعم كناكيت للبرجر لتقديم الوجبات
- Caution تحذير استخدام الدرابزين
- Reduced Mobility Persons قاصري الحركة العضوية
- Air Fryers قلاية كهربائية بدون زيت

Explanation/paraphrase is used when the translator adapts the source text to make it more accessible, culturally appropriate, or pragmatically clear for the target audience. This may involve expanding the phrase, rewording idioms, or adding clarifying information. It is particularly useful in translating culturally embedded expressions or promotional content. It adds clarifying information to ensure the message is understood. It is especially useful in commercial or promotional contexts, where cultural references or idioms may not translate directly. However, overuse can lead to verbosity or loss of stylistic tone. It's a helpful strategy when used selectively and with editorial control.

3.10.5 Partial Translation

Partial translation is used in 4% of the LLs in this study. It occurs when only part of the original message is translated, often due to space constraints, lack of comprehension, or machine translation errors. This strategy is problematic because it leads to semantic incompleteness, functional ambiguity, and reader confusion. It is frequently associated with bottom-up signs and reflects low translation quality.

Table 15: Examples of Partial Translations in English-Arabic and Arabic-English Linguistic Landscapes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Extinguisher = (مطفاه حريق) Infrared Cookers (طباخ) طاهي بالأشعة - موقد كهربائي (بالأشعة تحت الحمراء) Prayer Lounge (مصلى) الصلاة Katakeet Restaurant مطعم كناكيت للبرجر لتقديم الوجبات (Katakeet Fast Food Restaurant) Library (Qubbat Ishbiya Bookstore) مكتبة قبة اشبيليا WARNING electricity تحذير ضغط كهربائي عالي 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caution (Cation..use staircase) تحذير استخدام الدرابزين Shierae aljanub (Shira'a Aljanoub Fast Food) شارع الجنوب لتقديم الوجبات Barbar shop (Ligh Barber Art) فن انوار للحلاقة The unified comp (Unified Comb Barber Shop) المشط الموحد للحلاقة Corner restaurant (Cabin Corner Restaurant) مطاعم زاوية المقصورة
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(Warning.. High Voltage)

• مخابز فيجين Vegan (Vegan Bakery)

3.11 Linguistic and Translation Errors According to LL Producer and Purpose

Data analysis indicated that top-down LLs issued by ministries, airports, hospitals, and municipalities as official warnings, instructions, directions and information LLs are significantly more accurate and standardized, with over 70% correct translations. This could be due to rigid formal requirements of conceptual and word order alignment, institutional oversight and access to professional translation services or vetted templates (*Departures* > المغادرون, "Keep a safe distance > حافظ على مسافة آمنة"). They are characterized by greater use of literal and conceptual translation strategies and reflect institutional preference for clarity and formality.

Additionally, as regulatory and safety signs, Top-down LLs are used to instruct, warn, or prohibit. They are more prevalent and are better translated in English-Arabic LL due to institutional control. They require high precision and clarity. Errors here are most critical and can compromise safety. Faulty LLs as "No Entry > ممر ممنوع" is misleading and اسمبلي بواننت fails to communicate emergency function. LLs in this category are best served by conceptual translation and standardized terminology are more suitable for the translation of regulatory and safety LLs (*No Entry* > ممنوع الدخول, *Assembly Point* > نقطة التجمع).

By contrast, regulatory LLs may contain syntactic or semantic errors that could compromise safety or clarity (*Don't littering*). Instructional and regulatory LLs often contain syntactic and lexical errors, which can hinder clarity and safety. Religious and cultural signs are mostly transliterated (المسجد النبوي , شهداء أحد), but some suffer from phonetic distortion or inconsistent romanization.

Regarding, informational LLs, they are used to guide or inform (*Arrivals, Prayer Room*). These are generally more accurate in top-down signs. Errors often involve literal translation or partial translation (*Prayer Lounge* > الصلاة) and lack specificity. The use of conceptual and explanatory strategies improves clarity. *Admission and Billing* > التوزيع وحسابات المرضى is a good example of conceptual adaptation.

In addition, educational, directional, and safety-related LLs are accurately translated, due to their public importance and institutional origin. Medical signs are relatively accurate but still need a lot of improvement, given the potential consequences of miscommunication in the healthcare contexts. Religious and cultural signs are more prominent in Arabic>English LL, reflecting local cultural identity.

On the other hand, bottom-up LLs prevail in commercial (shops, cafes, private clinics, storefronts, menus), tourism (hotel signs), and cultural (transliterated brands) contexts. Commercial and promotional LLs are used to advertise or label products and services and reflect the visibility of business brands in public space. These have high numbers of errors, and the lowest accuracy rate, due to the nature and commercial pressure to translate quickly or creatively. They are characterized by variation, creativity, inconsistency and the frequent use of transliteration (*Par King for Parking*), partial translation, and hybrid forms, suggesting a focus on branding over accuracy. Transliteration reflects the challenge of rendering Arabic proper nouns and compound names into English. They are more prone to grammatical, syntactic, semantic and orthographic errors due to informal translation practices. They show a higher error rate than top-down, with nearly two-thirds containing translation issues. This reflects informal DIY (do it yourself) translation practices, without linguistic revision. They are usually created by individuals or small businesses without linguistic oversight. Translators might rely on machine translation, transliteration, or phonetic spelling as "اسمبلي بواننت", "Par King", "Quat altariq rent a cars". Some might contain inconsistent terminology and multiple translations for the same concept and reflect lack of access to standardized bilingual resources. Errors often stem from linguistic incompetence, not contextual misunderstanding. Translators know the function (car rental, safety) but lack the correct equivalents. Errors often stem from branding priorities and/or lack of linguistic review. This leads to semantic distortion and cultural mismatch. Promotional signs (تنزيلات *downloads*) show semantic mismatches, often due to literal translation.

3.12 Error Gravity in Bilingual Linguistic Landscape Translation: Which Errors Matter Most?

The types of linguistic and translation errors in the Arabic-English and English-Arabic LLs in the sample indicate that not all translation errors are equally serious. The semantic and functional inconsistencies are not random; they are patterned and explainable. Error gravity depends on (i) the purpose of the sign (safety vs. advertising); (ii) the origin of the sign (top-down vs. bottom-up); and (iii) their impact on comprehension, safety, or public image. Error gravity can be high, moderate and low. High-gravity errors include semantic errors that are the most serious errors especially in institutional, Instructional, and procedural signs, as they distort or obscure the intended meaning of the LL. They are especially critical in regulatory and safety LLs, where misinterpretation can lead to confusion or harm (*No Entry* > ممر ممنوع (misleading), *Muster Point* > اسمبلي بواننت (functionally opaque); or when the translation fails to convey the intended communicative function of the LL (*Literature only* > للمطبوعات "فقط" (interpreted as a genre label), *Care For Life* > نهتم بالحياة (a vague slogan). Examples of moderate-gravity errors are

grammatical errors that occur in top-down, formal contexts, informational, and directional signs and affect the credibility and clarity of the LL, particularly in top-down contexts where formal correctness is expected (يمنع دخول الأشخاص الغير مصرح لهم) (incorrect use of "الغير") & "Quat altariq rent a cars" (plural error). Syntactic Errors disrupt sentence structure and may obstruct comprehension, especially for non-native readers. Low-Gravity errors are orthographic errors that involve spelling, spacing, or capitalization issues in bottom-up, commercial signs Brand names, and informal signs. They rarely block comprehension but reduce the sign's professionalism (*Ciub street* instead of *Club Street* & *Par King* instead of *Parking*). Some transliteration errors occur when the translator lacks the correct equivalent and resorts to phonetic transcription. While acceptable in brand names, they are problematic in functional or safety contexts (اسميلي بواننت for "Emergency Assembly Point" & فيول for (Fuel)).

4. Discussion

Findings of the current study are consistent with findings of prior foreign and Arabic studies on linguistic landscapes and shop signs in some Arab countries. The current study found high error rates in the translation of Arabic LLs to English and English LLs to Arabic. Top-down LLs were significantly more accurate than bottom-up LLs in both datasets. Studies by Guo (2012) and Mohebbi & Firoozkahi (2021) reported similar high error rates in public signs, especially in bottom-up contexts. Gu & Almanna (2024) found that institutional signs in Dubai were more accurate due to professional translation, while commercial signs often relied on transliteration or informal translation. Likewise, Finzel (2012) and Briki & Chebli (2022) noted that top-down signage tends to be more linguistically accurate due to regulatory oversight.

Regarding error types, this study reported that semantic errors, syntactic and grammatical errors, transliteration and literal word-for-word translation were the most common in LLs in the sample. Other studies in the literature as Alotaibi & Alamri (2022) and Al-Athwary (2014) observed widespread transliteration in Saudi Arabian and Yemeni shop signs, often resulting in unintelligible English. Amenador & Wang (2020) and Shi (2014) emphasized semantic and syntactic errors in Chinese-English signs due to literal translation and lack of functional equivalence. Al-Kharabsheh et al. (2008) and Retno Wulandari (2011) documented humorous or confusing translations caused by syntactic and lexical mismatches.

Thirdly, the current study demonstrated that top-down LLs (official, institutional, or government-produced) constituted 54% of the Arabic-English sample, compared to 46% of the English-Arabic sample. On the contrary, bottom-up LLs (businesses, or communities) constituted 41% of the Arabic-English LL sample, compared to 59% of the English-Arabic sample. About half of the Arabic-English and English-Arabic LL is commercial/promotional (52% & 58% respectively), followed by directional geographic (10% & 13%), and safety/regulatory (5% & 13%). Directional, safety, regulatory and institutional signs were more accurate, whereas promotional signs were the most common and most error-prone in both datasets whereas. These findings are partially consistent with findings of prior studies. Briki & Chebli (2022) and Alomoush (2015) highlighted the creative, multilingual nature of bottom-up signage, often at the expense of linguistic accuracy. Gu & Almanna (2024) and Song (2020) noted that top-down signs are more standardized and regulated, while bottom-up signs reflect market-driven translanguaging. Ong et al. (2013) described hybrid forms like "Frenglish" in Singaporean shop signs. Arabinglish. Kourdis (2009) and Zaini et al. (2021) found that advertising signs often prioritize creativity over clarity, leading to semantic distortion. Parthama et al. (2018) and Zhao & Zou (2019) reported that instructional and regulatory signs tend to be more accurate due to their functional necessity. Mehria et al. (2019) observed that commercial signs often mix scripts and languages, resulting in hybrid forms that confuse rather than clarify.

Moreover, religious and culturally significant signs were more accurately translated, especially in Arabic-English LLs. Some LLs used creative or poetic language in translation. In this respect, Al-Athwary (2017) and Alomoush (2021) concluded that signs reflect local identity, often blending Arabic and English in novel ways. Abdulwahid (2017) and Al-Sofi et al. (2025) emphasized the role of cultural sensitivity in bilingual signage in Saudi Arabia. Xiaoqiong (2016) and Radtke & Yuan (2011) discussed how cultural values shape translation choices, sometimes leading to indirect or metaphorical renderings.

As for the factors contributing to translation accuracy of the LLs in the current study, they can be summarized in the following:

The DIY (Do It Yourself) strategy which refers to translations that are created by non-professionals (shop owners, employees, or individuals without formal training or institutional oversight). DIY translators may lack access to bilingual dictionaries, standardized terminology, or professional editing. They are unregulated and improvised, often relying on intuition, phonetic spelling or machine translation, or AI. They tend to be faulty, especially in grammar, semantics, and cultural appropriateness. DIY translations often result in transliteration (اسميلي بواننت), partial translation (*WARNING ... electricity*), or awkward phrasing (*Par King*), stacked errors where a single phrase may have grammatical, lexical, and semantic errors simultaneously). Certain errors occur, not due to ambiguity or complexity, but due to lack of linguistic competence or resources. Complex source phrases and long or technical phrases in LL as (*Baby Bassinet to be Removed and Stowed for Taxi, Take Off, Landing and Turbulent Weather*) which is translated as *يجب إزالة* سرير الأطفال وتخزينه في & تستعمل حمالة الأطفال أثناء الإقلاع أو الهبوط أو خلال المطبات الهوائية* (المطبات الهوائية) (*سيارات الأجرة (السير على المدرج) والإقلاع والهبوط والطقس* المضطرب (المطبات الهوائية)*) are more prone to multiple errors because

of incorrect word choice, misinterpretation of meaning, poor sentence structure, and failure to match the communicative function of the LL. Cultural and linguistic mismatch in some English phrases containing idioms or metaphors do not translate directly (*Live Station*, تنزيلات, *slow down*, *care for life*). Arabic equivalents often miss the connotative meaning, resulting in semantic and conceptual errors. Lack of standardized glossaries. Translators may invent or approximate terms, leading to multiple layered errors. Dependence of literal, word-for-word translation causes most errors (lexical, syntactic, pragmatic).

The factors contributing to errors in LL translation are similar to those reported by a number of prior studies. socio-political neglect, colonial language hierarchies and lack of standardization (Briki & Chebli, 2022); ad-hoc translation practices, overreliance on machine translation, lack of cultural awareness, and unqualified translators (Ahmed Al-Sofi et al., 2025); low translator training, direct calquing from Arabic without cultural adaptation, lack of bilingual style guides and ad-hoc translations (Al-Kharabsheh, 2008; Al-Kharabsheh et al., 2008); informal adaptation of foreign words, lack of standard transliteration and globalization pressures (Mehria et al., 2019); prestige of English leading to hybrid forms and, hybridization trends (Qudeisat & Rababah, 2021); unqualified translators, translator incompetence, carelessness, and socio-cultural interference between Kurdish, Arabic, and English and cultural dissonance in translations (Abdulwahid, 2017); informal translation practices, low translator proficiency, ad-hoc practices, low translator proficiency and informal translation practices (Al-Athwary, 2014 & 2017); limited language proficiency of business owners (Amer & Obeidat, 2014); top-down policy vs. street-level practices, and pragmatic failures (e.g., culturally inappropriate phrasing) (Farran & Hortobágyi, 2020); and global branding pressures over linguistic accuracy (Alotaibi & Alamri, 2022; Gu & Almanna, 2024).

Furthermore, the high percentage of transliterated words, use of English words but in Arabic script, in the LLs in the current study reflects Arab preference for prestige and global appeal, brand recognition, cultural positioning as a marketing strategy and to balance local identity with global appeal. Some business owners feel that English conveys modernity, luxury, and cosmopolitanism, especially in Riyadh. For example, international hotel chains maintain their English names for brand consistency and global recognition. Even when Arabic elements are added (e.g., *Dar Al-Eman Intercontinental*), the English brand remains prominent. In Makkah and Madinah, Arabic names are often spiritual or historical (e.g., *Al-Furqan*, *Al-Hijra*), but in Riyadh, English or hybrid names dominate, reflecting a shift toward secular, commercial branding. Hotel owners perceive English as more marketable to local elites and international tourists. Names like *Plaza*, *Palace*, *Tower*, and *Royale* are added in hotel names to evoke grandeur and sophistication. Many hotels combine Arabic and English elements (e.g., *Al-Fahd Crown*, *Coral Al-Hamra*) to balance local identity with global appeal (Al-Jarf, 2021a; Al-Jarf, 2016; Al-Jarf, 2011a; Al-Jarf, 2011b; Al-Jarf, 2008; Al-Jarf, 2005).

5. Recommendations

To improve the linguistic and translation accuracy of Arabic-English and English-Arabic LLs, prior studies recommended proofreading for clarity, bilingual style guides and professionalization of translation services (Al-Kharabsheh, 2008); municipal review processes (Abdulwahid, 2017); professional translator involvement (Al-Athwary, 2014 & 2017); standardization frameworks (Ahmed Al-Sofi et al., 2025); standardized transliteration (Mehria et al., 2019); translation training for businesses and local-global identity balance (Qudeisat & Rababah, 2021); cultural-linguistic alignment and stressing brand identity in translations (Alotaibi & Alamri, 2022); localization to reduce errors (Farran & Hortobágyi 2020); and native language representation (Briki & Chebli, 2022).

Additionally, the dilemma of linguistic accuracy, functional clarity, and cultural adaptation requires standardized bilingual signage policies, especially in public safety and institutional contexts, avoiding literal translations, adapting idioms and concepts culturally (*Slow Down* > *خفف السرعة*), reviewing grammatical consistency to ensure Arabic gender and number agreements, adapting word order in bottom-up LLs especially in compounds to match the natural Arabic structure (*فوكس سينما* instead of *سينما فوكس*), limiting transliteration by demanding the use of native Arabic terms where possible (*مقهى* instead of *كافيه*), verifying translations against actual usage by native speakers in daily communication (*Prayer Lounge* should include *المصلى*), standardizing translations in to-down LLs for consistency (e.g., government-approved glossaries), using standardized Arabic equivalents and requiring translators to use official, institutionally approved equivalents (*Assembly Point* > *نقطة تجمع*). To reduce variation and improve accuracy in top-down signage, functional approaches as Skopos, equivalence are recommended for clarity, human review and post-editing of machine and AI translations, and cultural substitution in which culturally specific references are replaced with locally meaningful equivalents for enhancing cultural accessibility together with standardization and professional training.

Furthermore, Al-Jarf (2024c) recommended the transliteration of international brand names (*Debenhams*, *Samsung*), but translating generic or descriptive names (*Dr Nutrition* > *دكتور التغذية*); using partial translation for compound names (*Caribou Café* > *مقهى كاريبو*); ensuring consistency in transliteration across all shop branches; correcting word order in Arabic compounds; transcribing vowels, diphthongs, and consonants accurately. In another study, Al-Jarf (2023d) advised LL translators to avoid

incongruous compound elements (*Operation Falafel*); correct word order and definite article usage in Arabic signs, avoid unnatural blending and splitting of compound name (أكسس و ريز for Accessories), abstain from adding English plural markers to Arabic words (ملهمن), and using judgment tests with native speakers to assess intelligibility and acceptability of the translation. In a third study, Al-Jarf (2022a) suggested policies as avoiding inaccurate vowel and consonant transliterations. Transliterations should not be based on English pronunciation, if the name is French, Italian, etc. they should avoid inconsistent spellings of the same name across locations, ensure grapheme sequences fit Arabic phonology and orthography, and use decoding tests to assess intelligibility among Arabic speakers who are unfamiliar with English. Additionally, Al-Jarf (2022b) proposed strategies like educating shop owners on the value of Arabic equivalents, encouraging translation of foreign shop names where appropriate, addressing sociocultural and promotional biases that favor English, and developing naming policies to protect Arabic language visibility.

Finally, this study advocates promoting awareness of the impact of LLs among stakeholders and how LLs shape perceptions of professionalism, safety, inclusivity and highlighting examples of translation errors that lead to confusion or reputational harm. Applied linguistics researchers can be involved in evaluating and improving LLs, using real-world LL data, as in the current study, to inform policy and curriculum development. To implement quality control in public LLs translation. Municipalities and institutions should review and approve translations before installing and introducing a "linguistic audit" process for public-facing LLs in public areas. Machine translation should be used with human post-editing. Community workshops on basic translation principles and common LL linguistic and translation pitfalls can be conducted to train business owners and staff. Quick-reference glossaries for sectors like food, retail, and hospitality can be provided. Partnerships between municipalities and translation departments at local universities should be promoted. Incentives or subsidies for small businesses should be offered in order to encourage the use of professional translators. A bilingual LLs manual with standardized translations of common terms and phrases should be created and cultural notes and examples of correct vs. incorrect translations can be included. Implementing these strategies fully and gradually will improve the translation accuracy of LLs from English to Arabic and Arabic to English in the future.

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