

## “Virtual Linguistic Landscapes of Power and Ideology: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Twitter Posts on Kuwaiti Politics”

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## Abstract:

This study examines Twitter's role as a platform for political discourse in Kuwait. The advent of Twitter as a dominant platform for political discourse deserves scholarly investigation, especially in linguistically diverse settings such as Kuwait. This research aims to fill a crucial gap in the existing literature on Virtual Linguistic Landscapes (VLL) by focusing on the interplay of language, power, and ideology within Kuwait's Twitter discourse on politics. Employing a mixed-method approach that integrates Critical Discourse Analysis with qualitative and quantitative data analysis, the study scrutinizes a sample of 116 posts concerning Kuwaiti politics. The results reveal that Arabic remains the predominant language, used primarily in discussions of local political issues and power structures. In contrast, English gains prominence in global and modernity-themed conversations. Additionally, bilingualism and code-switching emerge as significant practices, reflecting the complex ideological landscape of Kuwaiti politics. The study contributes to the academic discourse on VLLs by offering nuanced insights specific to Kuwait's sociopolitical and linguistic context. It also has broader policy implications for fostering an inclusive digital public sphere.

**Keywords:** Sociolinguistics, Virtual linguistic landscape, Discourse analysis, Twitter, Kuwait, Ideology.

## 1. Introduction

Twitter<sup>1</sup> has emerged as a pivotal platform for political discourse in recent years, particularly in the Kuwaiti context (Dashti et al., 2015). The microblogging site serves as a dynamic public square where citizens, politicians, and activists converge to articulate views, disseminate information, and engage in dialogues that significantly influence public opinion. Given its unparalleled reach and immediacy, Twitter has been leveraged as an essential tool for political mobilization, advocacy, and even policy-making (Castanho Silva et al., 2022) & (Haman, 2020). Therefore, the increasing role of Twitter in shaping and reflecting the political climate necessitates scholarly attention, especially concerning the nuanced interplay between language and politics (Jungherr, 2014).

Understanding the linguistic nuances within this cyberspace becomes paramount as they serve as markers that can reveal hidden dimensions of power relations, ideologies, and collective sentiments. Language is more than just a mere tool for communication; it is an intricate system imbued with social, cultural, and political significance (Biber, 1992). This complexity is especially pronounced in a linguistically diverse setting like Kuwait, where conversations often switch between Arabic and English, each carrying its connotations and implications.

In the realm of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the focus has traditionally been on mainstream media, political speeches, and other formal avenues of communication (Hernández, 2017). However, the digital age, epitomized by platforms like Twitter, has expanded the scope of what constitutes a text suitable for critical linguistic inquiry (Jones et al., 2015). This transition calls for reevaluating and

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<sup>1</sup> In July 2023, Twitter underwent a significant rebranding initiative. The social media giant changed its name to "X", a shift that was reflected in its online presence and physical branding. The URL "X.com" now serves as the primary entry point to the platform, replacing the original "Twitter.com". Additionally, the familiar bird logo at the company's headquarters has been replaced by a flashing "X". The rebranding also extends to mobile platforms, with the app now listed as "X" in both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

developing the methodologies and frameworks employed in CDA to accommodate online discourse's fluid and participatory nature.

Against this backdrop, the present research aims to contribute to understanding how Twitter serves as a platform for political discourse in Kuwait. Employing a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative coding through NVivo software and quantitative data tabulation using Excel, this investigation explores the thematic and linguistic patterns in posts related to Kuwaiti politics (Snelson, 2016) & (Thaler, 2017). Specifically, the research analyzes posts' linguistic choices and strategies to articulate political ideologies, project power dynamics, and shape public opinion. By focusing on the specific context of Kuwait, a country with a rich cultural history and complex political landscape, this research enriches our understanding of how digital spaces like Twitter are revolutionizing the way political narratives are constructed, interpreted, and disseminated (Weismueller et al., 2022). The subsequent sections of this paper will outline the methodology employed, present the empirical findings, and offer a CDA that situates these findings within Kuwait's broader socio-political and linguistic context on Twitter.

### 1.1 Research Problem

Despite the burgeoning interest in Virtual Linguistic Landscapes (VLL), there remains a conspicuous gap in scholarship concerning its manifestation in Kuwait (al-Qenaie & Bin Naser, 2023). Given that Kuwait possesses a unique blend of traditional and modern elements in its socio-political fabric, the absence of research in this arena represents a missed opportunity to understand the nuanced interplay of language, power, and ideology (Ghabra, 1997) & (Alzuabi, 2016). While existing studies have shed light on the sociolinguistic dynamics of online spaces in various Western and even some Middle Eastern contexts, none have explored how these dynamics articulate within Kuwait's digital sphere, particularly in platforms like Twitter, which are hotbeds of political discourse (Alenezi, 2022).

This cavity is especially significant considering Kuwait's complex political landscape involves local traditions, global influences, and diverse ideological undercurrents (Ulrichsen, 2022). The prevalent usage of different languages, dialects, and meta-linguistic elements in Kuwaiti Twitter discourse may serve as a mirror reflecting these complexities, yet no studies have systematically analyzed this (Valentini et al., 2016).

Consequently, this research addresses this critical research gap by thoroughly analyzing the VLL of Twitter discourses concerning Kuwaiti politics. It aims to investigate how language choices act as active mediators of power relations, political biases, and public sentiment, offering a nuanced understanding relevant to the Kuwaiti context (Volk et al., 2007). By doing so, the research also hopes to contribute to the broader academic conversation on VLL by providing insights that could be specific to Arab or Gulf states, thereby enriching the field's understanding of how digital spaces can contribute to ideological polarization or unity (Ivkovic & Lotherington, 2009).

### 1.2 Research Hypotheses

The research posits the following hypotheses that aim to provide a structured framework for empirical inquiry into the intersections of language, power, and ideology within the context of Twitter discourse on Kuwaiti politics (Paia et al., 2015). The hypotheses are informed by the theoretical foundation of CDA and are designed to be tested through both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Amoussou & Allagbe, 2018).

The first hypothesis is the manifestation of power through linguistic choices. Linguistic strategies and rhetorical devices employed in posts about Kuwaiti politics serve as markers that signify underlying power relations within the discourse (Anastassov, 2017). The discourse's use of specific dialects or languages e.g., Arabic versus English, correlates with particular power dynamics, possibly reinforcing or challenging existing hierarchies.

The second hypothesis is the linguistic markers of political bias or ideology (Knoblock, 2014). The posts' lexicon, syntax, and rhetorical strategies indicate the tweeter's political bias or ideological leanings. Also, code-switching between languages serves as a linguistic marker that may indicate affiliations, oppositions, or neutrality concerning specific political ideologies or issues.

The third hypothesis is shaping public opinion. Discourse strategies, including framing and thematic development, influence the collective perception of political matters in Kuwait, thereby shaping public opinion (Bust et al., 2023). Moreover, the prevalence of specific linguistic markers correlates with shifts in public sentiment regarding Kuwaiti politics, as evidenced by metrics such as tweet engagement rates and trending topics (Trunfio & Rossi, 2021).

Another hypothesis is the multidimensional nature of power relations (Chiang, 2015). The intersection of different types of linguistic markers—such as lexicon, syntax, and rhetorical devices—yields a more nuanced representation of power relations within the Kuwaiti political landscape than any single marker alone. Additionally, Linguistic choices in the discourse reflect and construct societal norms and expectations, thus enacting forms of authority and control.

These hypotheses collectively provide a comprehensive roadmap for the ensuing analysis, allowing for a systematic and multidimensional exploration of the complex terrain that constitutes the VLL in Kuwaiti political discourse on Twitter. They are constructed to be mutually informative, so the findings of one can enrich the understanding of others, thereby contributing to a holistic interpretation of the data. Through the rigorous testing of these hypotheses, the research aims to validate or refute the theoretical assumptions underpinning them, thereby adding substantial depth and credibility to sociolinguistics within digital spaces (Chen et al., 2016) and (Soler et al., 2022).

### 1.3 Research Questions and Importance of the Research

The primary objective of this research is to explore the intricate relationship between language and politics in the Twitter discourse surrounding Kuwaiti politics (Labonte et al., 2021) and (Al-Rawi et al., 2023). To achieve this aim, the research is organized around pivotal research questions. Firstly, how is power manifested through language in Twitter posts on Kuwaiti politics? This question seeks to identify and analyze the linguistic strategies and rhetorical devices that indicate underlying power relations within the discourse (Al-Salman, 2017). By focusing on these markers, the research aims to decode the layers of meaning that contribute to the construction, reinforcement, or contestation of power dynamics in the Kuwaiti political landscape.

Secondly, what linguistic markers indicate political bias or ideology? This question probes the specific linguistic elements—such as lexicon, syntax, and code-switching—that may signify a particular political bias or ideological stance (Bánhegyi, 2017) and (Al-Gamde & Tenbrink, 2020). The analysis will encompass linguistic markers that could indicate affiliations, oppositions, or neutrality concerning political issues or entities.

Lastly, how does the Twitter discourse shape public opinion on Kuwaiti politics? This question examines the cumulative effect of individual linguistic choices on Kuwait's collective understanding of political matters (Bust et al., 2023). It investigates how discourse strategies, including framing, thematic development, and rhetorical appeals, influence public opinion and possibly induce social change.

These research questions are designed to be interrelated, where the findings from each can inform and complement the others. Together, they provide a comprehensive framework for dissecting the complexity of political discourse on Twitter within the Kuwaiti context, thus allowing for a multidimensional understanding of the VLL in which these interactions occur.

In summary, this research seeks to extend our understanding of the VLL in Kuwaiti politics and make broader scholarly and societal contributions by elucidating the complex interplay of language, power, and ideology in digital spaces.

#### 1.4 Limitations

The research is bound by a specific time frame for data collection, which may not capture the entire temporal range of discursive practices and shifts in political ideologies. As a result, the findings should be understood as temporally situated. Also, the research focuses exclusively on Twitter, thereby potentially excluding other influential social media platforms that could offer alternative insights into the research's research questions. In addition, the research might employ a limited sample size, which may not adequately represent the diversity of voices and opinions in the broader Kuwaiti political discourse.

The complexity of language usage, including Kuwaiti Arabic (KA) dialectal variations, colloquialisms, and other distinctive linguistic phenomena, may challenge categorizing and analyzing linguistic markers. By transparently acknowledging these limitations, this research aims to foster a nuanced understanding of its contributions and possible areas for future research. Recognizing these constraints is also critical for contextualizing the findings, thereby assisting academics and other scholars evaluate the research's implications and utility within their respective domains.

#### 1.5 Terms and Definitions

- **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA):** An analytical approach that explores the relationship between discourse, power, and social practices. It scrutinizes language to understand its role in constructing and negotiating power dynamics and ideologies.
- **Sociolinguistics:** A subfield of linguistics that examines the social and cultural factors affecting language use, structure, and variation.
- **Virtual Linguistic Landscape (VLL):** The online realm in which written or spoken language appears, mainly focusing on the digital spaces where language interacts with social, political, and cultural elements.
- **Linguistic Choices:** The selection of specific languages, dialects, or linguistic features such as lexicon, syntax, or tone for use in communication, often reflective of underlying social or political factors.

- **Power Relations:** The dynamics between individuals or groups defined by their relative social, economic, or political power.
- **Ideology:** A set of beliefs, values, and perspectives that shape how individuals or groups understand and interact with their world.
- **Code-Switching:** The practice of alternating between two or more languages or dialects within a single utterance, sentence, or discourse, often to achieve specific social or rhetorical effects.
- **Political Landscape:** The social and political environment in which events occur, often shaped by power relations, public opinion, and institutional structures.
- **Geopolitical:** The affiliation or alignment of a country, region, or group with more considerable global powers or ideologies, often manifesting in linguistic or discursive practices.
- **Public Sentiment:** The collective feelings, attitudes, or opinions a community expresses, mainly as they manifest in public discourse or behavior.

## 2. Literature Review

CDA has emerged as a prominent tool for examining the intricate relationships between language, power, and ideology within political discourse. Originating from the works of scholars like Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak, CDA facilitates the scrutiny of not just the textual elements but also the sociopolitical contexts that produce and are produced by these texts.

Fairclough's three-dimensional model, comprising text, discursive practice, and social practice, has been extensively employed to research political narratives. His framework offers the advantage of examining language at multiple levels, thereby facilitating a nuanced understanding of how power structures are manifested and maintained. Research such as KhosraviNik's (2010) research on the media's portrayal of refugees and migrants illustrates how Fairclough's model can decode hidden ideologies within political discourses.

Teun A. van Dijk, another seminal figure in the CDA field, brings a socio-cognitive dimension that focuses on mental representations as a link between social structures and discourse. His approach has been beneficial for deciphering how political ideologies become internalized through language. Studies such as Carvalho's (2008) analysis of climate change discourse have showcased the utility of van Dijk's approach in capturing the interplay between individual cognition and broader societal beliefs.

Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach offers another avenue for exploring political language, concentrating on the historical dimensions that influence current discourses. Research like Krzyżanowski's (2011) research on the European Union's institutional discourse employs Wodak's method to trace the historical antecedents of modern political dialogues and their consequent impacts on policy and public opinion.

As social media platforms like Twitter have become pivotal arenas for political engagement, the application of CDA to these virtual spaces has gained prominence. Studies such as Graham et al.'s (2013) examination of political hashtags highlight the complexities of digital political discourse, including issues of hegemony, counter-hegemony, and the democratizing potential of online spaces.



While research on Western political landscapes is abundant, studies focused on Middle Eastern contexts, including Kuwait, are comparatively less frequent but steadily increasing. Teti's (2012) work on the Arab Spring, for instance, shows the importance of understanding local linguistic and cultural nuances when applying CDA methodologies to non-Western political environments.

In summary, the existing body of literature underscores the efficacy of CDA as an analytical tool for examining political texts. It offers both methodological diversity and a range of contexts, thus providing a solid foundation for this research. The current research aims to contribute to this growing body of work by exploring the specific context of Twitter-based political discourse in Kuwait, incorporating the established methodologies while also addressing the unique socio-political dynamics of the region.

## 2.1 Politics in Social Media

Social media platforms, most notably Twitter, have become increasingly significant in shaping Kuwait's political conversations and public opinion. Given its democratic form of governance in contrast to other Gulf states, Kuwait provides an intriguing milieu for examining the interplay between politics, language, and digital platforms.

Studies such as Alnajjar's (2000) research posit that the democratic attributes of Kuwait's political system have created a space where public discourse on political topics is vibrant and, in many ways, encouraged digital platforms like Twitter to offer an accessible and interactive medium that amplifies these discourses, facilitating both participation and polarization (Reuters, 2021).

Due to its brevity and real-time nature, Twitter has been identified as the most influential platform for political communication in Kuwait. Research by Kittredge (2019) emphasizes the unique affordances of Twitter, such as hashtags and reposts, which enable the proliferation of political narratives and facilitate community formation around shared ideologies or grievances.

Studies like that of Alenezi (2023) have explored the complex linguistic landscape of Kuwaiti Twitter, focusing on how language choice, code-switching, and other linguistic markers serve to construct identities and express political affiliations. The usage of Arabic, for instance, has been found to carry significant cultural and national implications, often employed for more localized discussions and representing specific sociopolitical stances.

There is also emerging research on how gender plays a role in shaping political discourse on Twitter. Al-Dashti et al. (2015) found that female Twitter users in Kuwait are increasingly influential in political discussions, challenging traditionally male-dominated spaces and adding nuanced perspectives to political dialogues.

Studies like Dhiman (2023) have flagged the ethical concerns related to anonymity, misinformation, and the potential for harassment on Twitter. These challenges necessitate a more cautious and rigorous approach when researching political discourse on digital platforms in Kuwait.

In sum, the current literature on Kuwaiti politics in social media underscores the critical role that platforms like Twitter play in shaping political dialogue. The interactive and real-time nature of the platform, coupled with Kuwait's specific sociopolitical landscape, makes it an invaluable case research for understanding the nexus of politics, language, and digital media. This research aims to extend this

understanding by employing CDA to scrutinize how language on Twitter reflects and shapes political ideologies and power relations in the Kuwaiti context.

### 3. Methodology

Given the centrality of Twitter as a platform for political discourse in Kuwait, this research employs a qualitative research design to provide an in-depth analysis of posts relating to Kuwaiti politics (Isani, 2021). Selection criteria for the Twitter posts include their relevance to Kuwaiti politics, the frequency of political posts, and their linguistic complexity, which offers richer material for analysis. The data will be coded thematically using NVivo software, with initial coding categories derived from the research questions and theoretical frameworks. Further coding iterations will refine these categories to ensure that emergent themes are also captured (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018) and (Almaiah & Al Mulhem, 2020).

#### 3.1 Data Collection

Data collection will follow strict ethical guidelines to protect the identities and privacy of Twitter users. The procedure involves collecting posts randomly, focusing on keywords related to Kuwaiti politics, data extract from posts, and applying the analysis, then, all posts were destroyed for privacy and safety concerns.

#### 3.2 Analytical Tools

CDA is the cornerstone for the data analysis, discursive practice will be analyzed by reviewing intertextual elements in shaping dominant discourses. The social practice dimension will place the posts in a broader socio-political context, thereby analyzing how they contribute to the perpetuation or subversion of power structures and ideologies in Kuwaiti politics.

### 4. Results

The linguistic landscape within a sample of 116 Kuwaiti Twitter posts illuminates multiple facets of language use. Figure 1 shows that Mono Arabic posts were predominant, constituting 51.67% of the sample. This high proportion underscores the enduring importance of Arabic as the principal linguistic medium among Kuwaiti Twitter users, reflecting its intrinsic cultural and social significance within this virtual space (Albahli, 2022).

Although less prevalent, Mono English posts comprise 5.83% of the sample. Despite their lesser frequency, these posts indicate the inroads that English, as a global lingua franca, has made into Kuwait's online discourse (Crystal, 2003). The role of English in the sample may align with broader themes of globalization and modernity, testifying to its status as a language of international discourse within the Kuwaiti virtual context (Kim et al. 2015).

Further adding complexity to the linguistic landscape are bilingual and code-switching posts, which together account for 39.17% of the sample. Bilingual posts from 29.17%, while posts featuring code-



switching make up the remaining 10%. The prevalence of these mixed-language strategies highlights the intricate interplay between Arabic and English in the digital lexicon of Kuwaiti Twitter users, functioning as expressive strategies that accommodate a range of social and cultural identities (Falk, 2014).

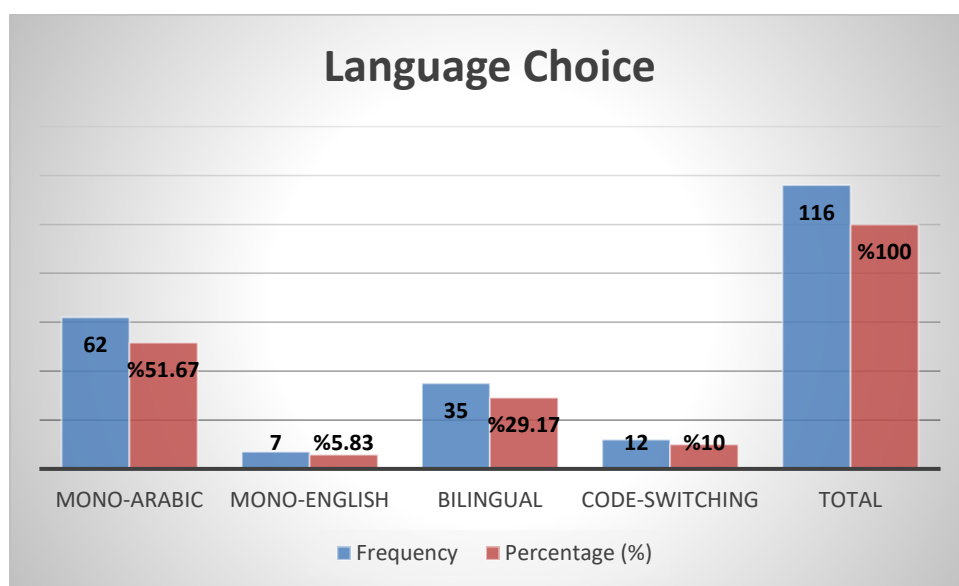


Figure 1: Language Choice

#### 4.5.1 The Primacy of Arabic and Power Relations

Table 1 shows the prominence of Arabic in 51.67% of the posts reaffirms its role as a powerful linguistic tool in local political dialogues and narratives. This prevalence suggests that Arabic is a primary means for questioning or sustaining existing political power structures, especially in discussions that delve into topics with local political significance (Rashid, 2020), and (Iveson, 2017).

Category	Description	Number
Global Issues	Posts discussing global issues in Arabic.	3
Local Political Issue	Posts discussing local political matters in Arabic.	21
Local Social Issue	Posts discussing local social issues in Arabic.	7

Local	Social-Political	Issue	Posts discussing local social and political issues in Arabic.	6
	Social	Expectations and Norms	Posts highlighting social norms and expectations in Arabic.	19
Political		Awareness	Posts aimed at increasing or expressing political awareness in Arabic.	6

**Table 1: Mono Arabic**

#### 4.5.2 English, Modernity, and Global Political Discourse

The presence of English posts in Table 2, which constitute 5.83% of the sample, indicates its role in shaping discussions framed by notions of modernity and global awareness (Crystal, 2003). Though not as numerically significant as Arabic, English's usage in themes related to lifestyle, interests, and humor could be read as an ideological choice, signaling alignment with global or perhaps Western perspectives of progress and modernity (Hayat & Albader, 2022).

Category			Description	Number
Global		Issue	Posts discussing global issues in English.	2
Local	Social	Issue	Posts discussing local social issues in English.	1
	Social	Expectations and Norms	Posts highlighting social norms and expectations in English.	4

**Table 2: Mono English**

#### 4.5.3 Bilingualism, Code-Switching, and Ideological Complexity

Table 3 shows the significant rates of bilingual and code-switching posts—29.17% and 10%, respectively—point to the ideological complexity and pluralism that define Kuwaiti Twitter discourse. These linguistic strategies often apply to discussions on local socio-political issues and political awareness, reflecting the ongoing negotiation between local traditions and global influences (Kaposi, 2014).

In summary, the linguistic landscape of Kuwaiti Twitter discourse is intricately bound to underlying power dynamics and ideological frameworks. Arabic is the leading medium for discussing local power structures and political ideologies. Conversely, English aligns more with global themes and notions of modernity. The prevalence of bilingualism and code-switching further illuminate the multifaceted ideological orientations that are evident among Kuwaiti Twitter users. Thus, these findings

provide a nuanced understanding of how language mirrors and shapes the intricate dynamics of Kuwaiti politics.

Category	Description	Number
Local Social-Political issue (Bilingual)	Posts discussing local social and political issues in both languages.	18
Political Awareness (Bilingual)	Posts aimed at increasing or expressing political awareness in both languages.	17
Local Political Issue (Code-Switching)	Posts discussing local political matters while code-switching between languages.	4
Local Social-Political Issues (Code-Switch)	Posts discussing local social and political issues while code-switching between languages.	4
Social Expectations and Norms Argument (Code-Switching)	Posts highlighting social norms and expectations while code-switching between languages.	4

**Table 3: Bilingualism and Code-Switching**

## 5. Discussion

The overwhelming presence of Arabic, comprising 51.67% of the corpus, is a linguistic manifestation of localized power relations within the Kuwaiti Twitter sphere. Arabic is not merely a communicative medium but a powerful tool that frames political narratives and dialogues (Gonzalez-Dogan, 2022). Discussions involving local politics, culture, and social norms predominantly unfold in Arabic, establishing it as a significant vehicle for sustaining or questioning existing power dynamics. The preeminence of Arabic in these sectors cannot be separated from its inherent power as a linguistic choice, effectively solidifying its cultural, social, and political hegemony within the localized context.

Conversely, deploying English in 5.83% of posts signals an alignment with global discourses. While numerically inferior to Arabic, the ideological weight it carries is profound. English posts frequently pertain to lifestyle and modernity, thus implicitly codifying the language with global, often Western-centric notions of progress and civilization (Hasanova, 2010), and (Mo, 2019). This raises crucial questions: To what extent is the preference for English a subtle endorsement of a Western

conceptualization of modernity? What does this tell us about the dynamics of soft power and how it plays out linguistically in a local-global nexus?

The intricate interplay of bilingualism and code-switching, constituting 39.17% of the posts, serves as a site for the complex negotiation of multiple ideological viewpoints. This linguistic hybridity articulates an ideological hybridity, forming a porous space where distinct socio-political ideologies co-exist and interact (McKee & McKee, 2020). Within this space, code-switching becomes an ideological act wherein speakers strategically navigate between languages to establish common ground or delineate ideological boundaries (Bailey, 2022), and (Albirini, 2011). In contrast to monolingual posts, bilingual and code-switched posts introduce an added layer of complexity, often involving topics that demand a nuanced understanding of both local and global ideological currents. This suggests a strategic linguistic balancing act that accommodates the ideological tensions inherent within Kuwaiti society, which is itself an amalgamation of local traditions and global influences (Alshehri, 2023).

In summary, the linguistic choices observed in Kuwaiti Twitter discourse are neither random nor neutral. They serve as a critical microcosm of broader sociopolitical ideologies and power structures. The prevalence of Arabic in discussions about local issues reveals its role as a hegemonic force that shapes and dictates the contours of internal power dynamics. The presence of English, though less frequent, provides an alternative linguistic arena for negotiating global influences and identities. Meanwhile, the extensive use of bilingualism and code-switching illustrates the complicated interplay of competing ideologies, serving as a barometer for the shifting power relations within Kuwaiti society. These observations add a crucial layer to our understanding of how linguistic landscapes operate as ideological battlegrounds. They offer insights into how language functions not merely as a tool for communication but as a potent instrument for establishing, negotiating, and contesting power and ideology (Fairclough, 2001).

## 6. Recommendations for Future Research

Given the intricate relationship between language, politics, and ideology unveiled in this research, several avenues for future research become readily apparent. These proposed directions aim to deepen the understanding of Kuwait's dynamic linguistic landscape and potentially similar socio-political contexts.

This research offers a snapshot of the Kuwaiti Twitter discourse; however, a longitudinal analysis examining linguistic choices over an extended period, particularly during significant political events, would provide insights into the temporality of language, power, and ideology. Such research could reveal how the language of politics evolves in response to transformative moments, thereby providing a dynamic understanding of language as a tool for political action.

While Twitter provides a rich data source, other social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and local forums may exhibit different linguistic and thematic patterns. Comparative research across platforms, or even within subgroups of varying political affiliations on Twitter, could elucidate how each platform or political group utilizes language differently for ideological ends.

Gender and socioeconomic factors often intersect with language choices and political affiliations. Future research could explore how these variables influence the linguistic strategies employed in discussing politics. Such research would add another layer of complexity to understanding language as a medium of power and ideology. Since much of today's social media discourse also

includes non-textual elements like images and videos, exploring how these modalities interact with textual content in shaping political messages and ideologies could provide a more holistic view of the VLL.

Lastly, given that the globalization of social media makes national boundaries increasingly permeable, comparative studies involving multiple countries could shed light on how similar linguistic phenomena manifest in different socio-political environments. By exploring these avenues, subsequent studies can contribute further to the growing body of literature that seeks to illuminate how language is a powerful instrument for constructing and negotiating political realities and ideological orientations.

## 7. Conclusion

The overarching aim of this research was to scrutinize the complex intertwining of language, power, and ideology in the sphere of Twitter discourse on Kuwaiti politics. The research has demonstrated that linguistic choices are not merely decorative or functional; they are performative acts that engage with, reflect, and construct socio-political realities (Bruffee, 1986). Power relations emerge as multifaceted constructs, informed and directed by various linguistic markers that challenge or reinforce existing hierarchies (Fairclough, 2001). Ideological leanings, likewise, find their expression in the lexicon, syntax, and rhetorical devices employed, contributing to the cultivation of public opinion (Prasad Gyawali, 2020).

The implications of these findings are manifold. On an academic level, they contribute to an enriched understanding of VLLs, particularly in a Kuwaiti context, adding depth to the discourse on digital spaces and identity formation (Ivkovic, Lotherington, 2009). From a policy perspective, recognizing the mechanics of power and ideology in Twitter discourse can guide future strategies that aim to foster an inclusive and equitable digital public sphere.

Nonetheless, it is vital to acknowledge the limitations of the research. The research is constrained by its focus on Twitter, which, while influential, is only one facet of Kuwait's diverse social media landscape. The extent to which these findings can be generalized to other platforms or socio-political contexts remains an open question. Moreover, the research did not delve into the impact of external factors like the global political climate or intra-regional dynamics, which could significantly influence the linguistic choices made by Twitter users.

In conclusion, this research elucidates the complex role of language as an active mediator of power and ideology within the Twitter discourse on Kuwaiti politics. While not without limitations, the research serves as a steppingstone for future academic endeavors and has practical implications for understanding how digital platforms can impact societal dynamics.

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## "المشهد اللغوي الافتراضي للسلطة والأيدولوجية: تحليل نقدي لخطاب منشورات تويتر حول السياسة الكويتية"

إعداد الباحث:

عبدالعزیز عبدالله العنزي

أستاذ اللغة الإنجليزية وباحث في اللغويات الاجتماعية

تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية وباحث في علم اللغة الاجتماعي

ماجستير في اللغويات من جامعة نيوكاسل – المملكة المتحدة

### ملخص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة دور تويتر كمنصة للحوار السياسي في دولة الكويت وتسعى لسد فجوة هامة في الأدبيات العلمية المتعلقة بالمناظر اللغوية الافتراضية من خلال التركيز على التفاعل بين اللغة والسلطة والأيدولوجيا ضمن نقاشات تويتر الكويتية حول السياسة. تستخدم الدراسة نهجاً متعدد الأساليب يدمج بين تحليل الخطاب النقدي وبين تحليل البيانات النوعية والكمية، حيث تقوم بفحص عينة من 116 تغريدة تتعلق بالسياسة الكويتية. تكشف النتائج عن استمرار اللغة العربية كلغة مهيمنة، تُستخدم بشكل أساسي في مناقشات قضايا سياسية محلية وهياكل السلطة. في المقابل، تكتسب اللغة الإنجليزية أهمية في المحادثات التي تتناول القضايا العالمية وموضوعات الحدثة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تظهر ظاهرتا التناحية اللغوية والتحويل اللغوي كممارسات مهمة، تعكس المشهد الأيدولوجي المعقد للسياسة الكويتية. تُسهم الدراسة في الحوار العلمي حول المناظر اللغوية الافتراضية عن طريق تقديم رؤى دقيقة تخص السياق الاجتماعي والسياسي واللغوي للكويت. لديها أيضاً تأثيرات سياسية أوسع نطاقاً من أجل تعزيز المشاركة في المجال العام الرقمي.

**الكلمات الدالة:** اللغويات الاجتماعية، المناظر اللغوية الافتراضية، تحليل خطاب، تويتر، الكويت، ايدولوجيا