

Social and Human Dimensions of COVID-19: A Linguistic Study in Light of Roland Barthes's Elements of Semiology

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Abstract

SARS-Coronavirus-2 is a new virus infecting people and causing COVID-19 disease which is considered a worldwide pandemic. Out of its serious danger, Arab media and the Ministry of Health try to handle everything about it and identify its clinical signs and symptoms. In this research, the researcher tries to discuss its dangers and the reasons behind its spread in addition to covering its social and human dimensions. She employs semiotics in portraying Arab media depiction of this serious disease. As Arab caricaturists have exploited drawings in shedding light on the sufferings of the whole world upon the spread of this disease, a set of caricatures presented by Arab caricaturists in Arab newspapers and social media will be analyzed, using Roland Barthes' Elements of Semiology which have been developed in 2000 by Robert Seiler. The chosen theory gives the analysis the necessary structure and provides the needed tools for the analysis. The researcher attempts to indicate that we live in a world of signs, and through their denotations we can explore reality.

Keywords: Semiotics, Roland Barthes, Caricatures, COVID-19

مستخلص الدراسة

يعد فايروس سارس كوفيد ٢ فيروس جديد يصيب الناس ويسبب مرض كورونا المستجد. فيعتبر هذا المرض جائحة عالمية. فمن منطلق الخطر الكبير ، تحاول وسائل الإعلام ووزارة الصحة التعامل مع كل ما يتعلق به والتعرف على علاماته وأعراضه السريرية. تحاول الباحثة في هذا البحث مناقشة مخاطره وأسباب انتشاره بالإضافة إلى تغطية أبعاده الاجتماعية والإنسانية. قد تقوم الباحثة بتوظيف السميوطيقا في التصوير الاعلامي العربي لهذا المرض الخطير. بما أن رسامو الكاريكاتير العرب قد استغلوا الرسوم في تسليط الضوء على معاناة العالم كله عند ظهور هذا المرض ، فسيتم تحليل مجموعة من الرسوم الكاريكاتورية التي قدمها رسامو الكاريكاتير العرب في الصحف العربية ووسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وذلك بتوظيف مجموعه من العناصر السميوطيقية التي قدمها رولان بارث وتم تطويرها في عام ٢٠٠٠ بواسطة روبرت سيلر. قد توفر النظرية المختارة البنية والادوات اللازمة للتحليل والدراسة. تحاول الباحثة ايضا أن تشير إلى حقيقته أننا نعيش في عالم من العلامات ، ومن خلال تلك العلامات والدلالات يمكننا استكشاف الواقع.

كلمات مفتاحية: السميوطيقا، رولان بارث، فن الكاريكاتير، فيروس كورونا المستجد

1. Introduction

1.1 COVID-19

COVID-19 is a contagious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that can cause diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), the common cold, and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). This type of coronavirus was discovered after it was identified as a cause of the spread of a disease that began in China in 2019. The virus is now known as severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS COVID 2). The resulting disease is called COVID-19. The World Health Organization has classified coronavirus disease as a worldwide pandemic since March 2020. It has given recommendations on preventing and treating this disease. It also has warned against a tsunami of misinformation in the aftermath of the pandemic as people have been bombarded with false information about COVID-19 since its spread. In addition, massive amounts of information and data have been

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released and shared at a scale that has never been seen before (Hua & Shaw, 2020).

As pandemic is defined as a disease "occurring over a wide geographic area and affecting an exceptionally high proportion of the population" (as cited in Tan et al., 2020, p.4), COVID-19 is considered a worldwide pandemic. Coronavirus has put the whole world in a crisis as this epidemic is expanding, and the worldwide economy has collapsed under worsening financial pressures and various conflicts. Out of its fatal consequences and severe damages all over the world, many scientists have discussed its social and human dimensions. They have called it "the Black Death" (Byrne, 2012). Coronavirus knows no boundaries, affecting the lives of all people from all social and economic backgrounds. Hence, the worldwide response should be latent in working on saving thousands of lives, countries, industries or financial institutions. Any initiative to eradicate this epidemic is represented in enabling governments to resume work for establishing a prosperous world that does not neglect anyone.

The pandemic's social and human dimensions have been extensively studied. In the absence of physical access to media or face-to-face communication, more people have turned to social media and other forms of computer-mediated communication such as forums and blogs to express their opinions on issues concerning the pandemic (Tan et al., 2020, p.19). Arab media has succeeded in portraying a complete image of this pandemic. Arab newspapers, for example, have handled various articles about it, and many caricaturists have exploited their art in explaining everything about this pandemic, including its reasons, types, symptoms, and results. All presidents and officials gave many speeches to make the whole world aware of the size of this crisis, putting many plans and organizational measures to fight it. Many researchers have also covered the crisis effectively through participating in many conferences and presenting research papers to discuss the image of the whole world in light of COVID-19. As Wiederhold (2020) highlights in his study, people have turned to social media to relieve their anxiety as a result of the pandemic.

1.2 Semiotics

Semiotics is the academic study of visual signs and their interpretations (Steve, 2012). It is a way of seeing the world and of understanding how the world where we live has a massive impact on all of us. Hence, its importance is wide-ranging. Semiotics began to become a major approach

to cultural studies in the late 1960s, partly as a result of the work of Roland Barthes. He has presented different elements of semiology, being influenced by the ideas of both Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson. Semiotics dominates our life, especially because we can look at everything in our life as a sign representing something else such as words, images, gestures, scents, tastes and sounds. Hence, semiotics is considered the study of everything that can be used for communication: words, images, traffic signs, flowers, music, medical symptoms, and much more.

Roland Barthes pioneered the study of media in the 1950s. He applied basic sign theory to a wide range of media spectacles and genres, demonstrating how it can be used to depict the implicit meanings embedded in them. He studied signs systems in media to demonstrate how connotative and implicit meanings are conveyed through verbal and nonverbal communication. This system aids in comprehending statements generated by signal classification approaches used in discourse communities (Sari & Yusuf, 2012, p.20). It is necessary to discuss the connotations of the linguistic and visual signs when analyzing any essay or story found in newspapers. These stories contain codes relating to linguistic, photographic, and graphic signs. Readers will easily be able to interpret the chosen work once they have deciphered these codes (Child, 2005, pp. 20 - 21).

Semiotics is a method of deciphering hidden messages in news texts that contain both linguistic and graphic signs. The headlines, lexical choices, and language use are all covered by linguistic signs. Graphic signs adopt photographs and typography or images presented for complementing the story. The language which is used by media is represented in words, photographs or images and is deemed as a system of signs that convey ideas. It has enormous clout in swaying public opinion on a wide range of issues, from politics to social interpretations. It may also control the changes of public opinions (Sari& Yusuf, 2012, p.17). All thorny issues in society are presented through media which is available to many people today, especially with the advent of the internet. During the spread of COVID-19, for example, worldwide media have been able to cover all social and human aspects of it. Web pages which are more popular and accessible to people all over the world have provided solid presentations of signs that all readers can understand.

1.3 The Art of Caricature

Caricature is a representational drawing that exaggerates or distorts the essence of a person or a thing in an attempt to send a certain message or describe something with exaggeration of some characteristics and oversimplification of others. Their satirical use of metaphors produces comic effects. Caricatures can also be insulting despite being drawn for entertainment and humor. Any caricature must strike a balance between telling true stories and employing wild imagination, exaggeration, and humor. As a result, they are able to communicate important messages in a pleasant manner. Caricatures assist us in determining the worth of things and revealing the true faces hidden behind masks, so they are always exploited in illustrating the recent social events in the whole world such as the suffering of the whole world from the ghost of COVID-19. Any caricature is rich in signs with intrinsic meanings. Caricatures also help people understand the nature of social issues and events by transforming complex and opaque social events and situations into quick and vivid depictions. As a result, this type of art provides society with visibly palpable and hyper-ritualized depictions of social events in an attempt to reveal their essence and meaning (Abraham, 2009, p.119).

Caricatures pay more attention to content than to expression, and they are very simplified in the opposite of classical artworks. The art of caricature stimulates the recipient to think through sarcastic and expressive lines, criticizing all surrounding situations. Through the simplicity of this art, it has a great impact since it brings smiles, laughter, and hope. It affects the issues of the local community, and it works to convey the appropriate messages to the readers in a satirical and attractive manner. According to Lynch (1926), all cartoons provide a simplified illustration of people, objects, events and places. The area of semiotics is very significant in the analysis of caricatures as it highlights the existing problem with pictorial imagery. This research provides a semiotic analysis of social cartoons published in Arab newspapers and presented by Arab caricaturists in covering all dimensions of COVID-19. It seeks to depict the effects of this pandemic on the whole world. The researcher argues that humor generated in cartoons conveys strong messages that require an analysis of the interaction between the different signs in caricatures and their social and ideological implications. The linguistic and denoted messages in recent caricatures are accompanied by a sense of salvation, accomplishment, victory, freedom, dignity, and democracy (Al-Momani et al., 2017, p.63).

2. Objectives of the Study

This research has both academic and practical benefits. It provides new insights into the drastic economic effects of COVID-19. It may allow readers to understand the messages encoded in the selected caricatures and thus may contribute to cross-cultural understanding. This research also is based on guidance and recommendations developed by WHO (the World Health Organization) in facing the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the present paper tries to investigate the following topics:

- 1- The role of semiotics in revealing the various consequences of COVID-19 in the whole world and portraying the crisis as a mass communication challenge.
- 2- The role of social media and governments in portraying the crisis, and how related situations or conditions should create clarity and catalyze positive behavioral change.
- 3- Levels of perception and ways of interaction people manifest against COVID-19 pandemic disease.
- 4- The role of semiotic theories in analyzing, illustrating and explaining, and the potential of every sign for multiple meanings
- 5- The role of both humor and satire in giving a delicious flavor to the art of caricature, and how they serve us in understanding the basic idea behind each caricature and in making messages reach our minds in an attractive way.

3. Limitations of the Study

The present study is limited to Arab media depictions of the worldwide crisis, and reveals both human and social dimensions of COVID-19. Although there are many theories of signs in the field of semiotics, this research is restricted to Roland Barthes' elements of semiology developed by Robert Seiler in 2000. Arab media depiction of COVID-19 is represented in cartoons, images, films, talk shows, essays, or videos as portrayed by Arab newspapers or channels, but this research is restricted only to a set of caricatures handled by Arab media as visual signs have more direct meaning than language. Certain caricatures presented by the caricaturist Hamdi Ahmed through his account on Facebook will be analyzed.

4. Review of Literature

This research is not the first which conducts the study of semiotics. There are some researchers who conducted the study of semiotics for different needs of the purpose. Many theories of semiotics have been chosen for the analysis of images, caricatures, and visual representations. In Louise Gylling's (2004) thesis entitled "An Analysis of a Destination's Image and the Language of Tourism," she has identified the image of Singapore in the news tourist brochure. Theories of Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Peirce and Roland Barthes have been chosen for the analysis. In Wendy Winn's (2006) dissertation entitled "Visualizing Science: A Semiotic Analysis of Visual Representations in Ornithology Journals," he has employed elements from Peirce's theory of signs, applying them to visual representations in ornithology journals. The purpose for selecting these samples is "to show the striking difference in how visuals operate semiotically in ornithology texts and how their function has changed over time" (Winn, 2006).

In Ako&Ottoh's (2011) research paper entitled "A Semiotics of Cartoons in two Nigerian Newspapers: The Punch and Guardian," they have explored the semiotics of cartoons using selected samples from the Punch and the Guardian, newspapers based in Nigeria. The study seeks to bridge the gap between semiotics and the act of cartooning. In Al-Momani et al.'s (2017) research paper entitled "A Semiotic Analysis of Political Cartoons in Jordan in light of the Arab Spring," Roland Barthes' denotation and connotation have been employed. Researchers have explained how humor generated in cartoons conveys strong messages that require an analysis of the interaction between the different signs in cartoons and their social and ideological implications.

Much research has also been conducted on presenting COVID- 19 in 2020 as a worldwide pandemic. For example, in Boberg et al.'s (2020) research paper entitled "Pandemic Populism: Facebook Pages of Alternative News Media and the Corona Crisis-- A Computational Content Analysis" the political, economic, and societal effects of COVID-19 have been discussed. In Bolognesi &Wicke's (2020) study entitled " Framing COVID-19: How we conceptualize and discuss the pandemic on Twitter," they have portrayed COVID-19 as an invisible enemy. They also have handled certain topics such as the virus treatment and the effects of social distancing on the population. In Tan et al.'s (2020) research paper entitled "COVID-19

Insights and Linguistic Methods," researchers have discussed how the emergence of COVID-19 affects the world population in many ways, resulting in its own specialized discourse. In Katermina& Yachenko's (2020) research paper entitled "Axiology of COVID-19 as a Linguistic Phenomenon in English Mass Media Discourse," researchers have examined the linguistic phenomenon of COVID-19 on the material of English mass media text.

In Asif et al.'s (2020) study entitled "Linguistic Analysis of Neologism Related to Coronavirus (COVID-19)", researchers have conducted a linguistic analysis of neologism related to Coronavirus (COVID-19), exploring that COVID-19 has emerged as a respiratory infection with significant concern for global public health hazards. In Essam& Abdo's (2021) research paper entitled "How Do Arab Tweeters Perceive the COVID-19 Pandemic?" they have explained how Arab populations reacted to the pandemic on Twitter over twelve weeks since its outbreak. In Robingah's (2020) journal article entitled "Peirce's Semiotics Analysis on Benny's Cartoons Related to COVID-19 Issues," he has analyzed signs contained in Kartun Benny with regard to issues of coronavirus in Indonesia and many countries in the world. In Darryl Imperial's (2020) research paper entitled "Constructing Myths via Art of Controversy: A Semiotic Analysis on Political Cartoons" he has analyzed the different ways of expressing opinions the author utilized in Philippine editorial cartoons, showing how humor in the political cartoons serves to present crucial issues and criticize political leaders and their contemptible practices. Also, in Mutaz Alkhresheh's (2020) journal article entitled "Semiological Discourse Analysis of the Editorial Cartoons of International Newspapers on COVID-19," he has presented the hidden ideological approaches used by the newspaper editors in portraying their cartoons in the respective newspapers. In Aazam et al.'s (2020) research entitled "Discourse of Fear and Economic Crisis: A Multimodal Analysis of Pakistani Newspaper's Political Cartoons of COVID- 19" they have investigated COVID-19 language of fear and phobia in Pakistani newspaper's political cartoons.

5. Theoretical Framework

5.1 Roland Barthes' Elements of Semiology developed by Robert Seiler (2000)

Roland Barthes, as an outstanding semiologist, has presented certain elements of semiology. He adopted Saussure's model to the study of cultural phenomena other than language. For Barthes, anything in culture can send a specific message out of being a sign. Robert Seiler (2000) extended the ideas of two important pioneers: Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes. He has explained that the application of semiotics is getting larger when Barthes developed semiotics to be applied to visual images such as moving pictures, photography, and advertisements. His theory of signs moves around certain elements of semiology presented earlier by Roland Barthes: the signifier and the signified; denotation and connotation; metaphor and metonymy; motivated and unmotivated signs; the axes of language; paradigms and syntagms; and difference.

5.1.1 The Axis of language

Roland Barthes sees language as a pair of axes: the vertical axis and the horizontal axis. As signs are organized into codes by paradigms and syntagms, the vertical axis of language represents the paradigmatic structure, while the horizontal axis represents the syntagmatic structure. The vertical dimension is the selective principle (vocabulary), and the horizontal dimension is the combinative principle (sentences). For example, we might select items (words) from various categories in the vertical dimension and link them in the horizontal dimension to formulate statements. Bradley (2016) explains that although one single sign can carry or communicate meaning in itself, any sequence of signs is considered a syntagmatic relationship. These signs combine together for creating meaning and conveying an idea. Signs that can replace each other can be considered a paradigmatic relationship, changing the meaning with the substitution. Syntagms or words in a sentence form a syntagmatic relationship. In case of changing the order of syntagms in a sentence, the whole meaning of the sentence may change.

5.1.2 The Signifier and the Signified

Ferdinand de Saussure was the first to explain the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The signifier refers to the sign and the signified refers to the something that is signified. The signifier is associated with the expression, while the signified is associated with the content. According to Saussure (1966, p.67), the linguistic sign is a combination of a concept and a sound-image. They are united in the brain by an association bond. The sound-image is the actual expression of the concept, and the concept is the abstract embodiment of the sound-image. He replaced concept and sound-image respectively, by signified and signifier for facilitating the distinction between the two functions of the signs. The signifier is the shape of a word or its phonic aspect, while the signified is the idea or entity that is created in our minds when we hear or read it. The signified differs from the "referent" in that the signified is a "mental concept," while the referent is the "actual object."

5.1.3 Motivated and Unmotivated Signs

The term motivation is related to the concepts of signifier and signified. Motivated signs are iconic signs; they are characterized by a natural relation between signifier and signified. A portrait or a photograph is iconic since the signifier represents the appearance of the signified. A realistic portrait (painting) is highly conventionalized. This means that the signification of the work relies on our experience of the sort of reality it represents. The signified is the determining influence in signs of high motivation, and convention determines the form of the signifier in signs of low motivation. In unmotivated signs, the signifieds relate to their signifiers by convention alone, i.e., by an agreement among the users of these signs. Thus, convention plays a key role in our understanding of any sign. It serves as the social dimension of signs. Symbols are unmotivated signs, for example, in contrast to icons, which are motivated ones. Fiske (1982, p.60) points out that any sign, whether iconic or indexical, relies on convention. It is the social dimension of signs or the agreement among users on how to use signs and respond to them appropriately.

5.1.4 Denotation and connotation

Connotation refers to the sign's socio-cultural or personal associations, whereas denotation refers to the sign's definitional meaning. For example, if we see a snake in any work of art, we can conclude that its denotative

meaning is its literal meaning that we can find in the dictionary. By denotation we mean the common sense or the obvious meaning of the sign. Connotations derive from the sign itself and from the way the society uses and values both the signifier and the signified (Fiske & Hartley 1978, p. 41). What we mean by connotation is what is behind the sign or how we perceive it. It refers to more conventional and associative meanings that clearly vary from one instance to another and thus require the use of codes. It also refers to the interaction that occurs when the sign and the viewer's emotions collide. If denotation refers to what is photographed, connotation refers to how it is photographed (Hall, 1980, pp. 132-133).

5.1.5 Metaphor and metonymy

Metaphor entails a transformation or displacement from signified to signifier, as well as an understanding that such a transformation implies equivalence between these two sign elements. Metaphors, according to Peirce, represent the representative character of an object by resembling a parallelism in another (Johansen, 2002, p.40). The ability of a sign to act as a part that signifies the whole is crucial to metonymy's signification. Metonymy, as universal shorthand, has the ability to reduce redundancy. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) add that in contrast to metaphors, metonyms only require simple associations and do not require the interpretant to make a transpositive leap. Metonyms are based on indexical relationships such as the substitution of cause for effect or the evocation of a portion for the whole such as the use of the White House to represent the US government. Furthermore, a metonymic signifier naturally emphasizes the signified, while a metaphoric signifier emphasizes the signifier (Lodge, 1998).

5.1.6 Syntagm and Paradigm

Paradigm is a vertical set of units which may be either signs or words from which the appropriate one is chosen. Road signs, for example, come in three shapes: rectangle, circular, and triangular. A road sign is a syntagm or a combination of the chosen symbol and the chosen shape. The horizontal chain into which units are joined according to agreed-upon rules and conventions for forming a meaningful whole is referred to as a syntagm. It is the statement into which the chosen signs are combined or organized. Paradigms and syntagms are central to the organization of every system of signs. The letters of the alphabet are the fundamental vertical paradigms of written English. These can be combined to form terms or words. These

words may be combined to form syntagms such as phrases or sentences (Seiler, 2000). Russell (1981) adds that "the projection of the image is the moment of its transmission to the receiver." The image no longer exists as a single unit. It is part of an image chain and is usually accompanied by a soundtrack. The syntagmatic axis is clearly visible at this point. Each image can still be called a sign, and it must be related to the other signs that accompany it (Amer, 2014).

5.1.7 Difference

Seiler (2000) explains that the concept of "difference" refers to the interaction that exists between the elements at work in any given message. These elements are called rhetorical figures, such as the figures of addition, where the elements are added to a word, sentence, or image, or the figures of suppression, where elements are suppressed, concealed, or excluded. The techniques of addition include repetition of the same element, word, sound or image; similarity of form, as in rhyme or similarity of content, as in comparisons; accumulation which refers to a number of different elements conveying the idea of abundance or profusion, verging on disorder and chaos; and opposition which occurs at the level of form and the level of content.

5.1.8 The Three Orders of Signification

"Barthes has developed a staggered system, creating multilevel meaning that is called the order of signification" (Assegaf, 2017). The first order of signification is the denotative order of signification in which the sign is independent. In the second order, this fundamental interpretation collides with a slew of cultural meanings derived from how the signifier and the signified are valued in culture or society. This is the connotative order of signification. A car sign symbolizes liberation in our culture. Signs of the second order of signification work in two ways: when signs move to the second order of signification, they carry representational meanings. Second, the connotative order of signification can be seen in things like a general's uniform, which represents rank (first-order sign) and the respect we have for him (second-order sign). The connotative meaning of the general's uniform will change if it is tattered by the end of the war film despite the fact that it still denotes rank. As a result, in the connotative order signs indicate attitudes. In the third order of signification, the range of cultural meanings generated in the second order coheres into a cultural picture of the world. A

car is part of the imagery of a technological and materialist society in the third order of signification. The myths that serve as organizing structures are organized into a mythology or ideology. This ideology denotes the broad principles by which a society interprets the facts with which it must contend (Seiler, 2000).

6. Data Analysis

6.1 Caricature One



6.1.1 Axis of Language

In this caricature there are four signs in the vertical axes: three monsters and a creature with a crown-like appearance. These items are selected from the vertical dimension and linked together in the horizontal dimension, formulating an important statement through which the caricaturist tries to send a valuable message to the whole world. Each sign in the vertical axes carries or communicates meaning in itself. These signs combine together for conveying an idea. The caricaturist illustrates that negligence, ignorance, and greediness (what represents the three monsters) are the basic reasons behind the spread of COVID-19 and increasing death rate. All these signs can replace each other, but the meaning with the substitution does not change. For example, another statement can be formed from the presented signs in the vertical dimension, which is "coronavirus succeeded in devastating the whole world with the help of medical negligence, ignorance of people, and the greediness of merchants." Although the order of the two sentences differs, they carry the same meaning. Every sign in this caricature is transmitted to the receiver as a single unit, being a part of an image chain. Each sign sends a message in itself.

6.1.2 Denotation and Connotation

Each sign in this caricature has both a denotative meaning and a connotative meaning. We have three monsters and a creature with a crown-like appearance. This creature stands in front of the three imaginary creatures which are very large and frightening. This is the first order of signification. The connotative meaning, or the real meaning, is that there are many reasons behind the spread of COVID-19 in the whole world, such as unawareness. Lack of awareness of the precautionary measures that must be taken against this cursed disease, people's ignorance and their lack of concern by not wearing masks in the streets and in workplaces, and the lack of constant cleansing of hands, seats, and furniture, in addition to continuous visits and gatherings have led to an increase in the number of injured and deaths. Millions of the population of the Arab world in light of this crisis lost their lives. Selfishness and greed of merchants have increased the famine rate as coronavirus has led to an increase in the unemployment rate. All governments have announced a curfew to prevent the spread of disease, preventing many workers from going out to work. Consequently, the standard of living has decreased, the unemployment rate has increased, and poverty and fatigue have spread.

Moreover, the greed of the owners of private hospitals has led to an increase in the death rate as public hospitals suffer from a lack of advanced medical equipment and supplies. Only the rich have been able to overcome this disease through treatment in private hospitals with huge sums. Conventionalized and associative meanings of this caricature vary from instance to instance as the process of interpretation differs from one to another and depends on the intervention of codes. This is the second order of signification as this basic interpretation collides with a set of cultural meanings derived from how society values both the sign and its denotation. All these signs indicate attitude in the connotative order. The range of cultural meanings generated in the second order coheres in the third order of signification, presenting the cultural picture of the world upon the spread of COVID-19. The general concepts presented and interpreted by each society are included in the third order of signification.

6.1.3 Metaphor and Metonymy

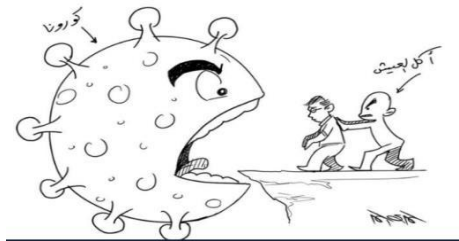
In this caricature we have four metaphors. There is a displacement from signifieds to signifiers, and there is equivalence between the two elements of each sign. Negligence, ignorance, and greediness are presented as dangerous animals, devastating the world and helping COVID-19 put an end to the lives of all people. For the creature with a crown-like appearance, it is considered another metaphor. It represents COVID-19. It is considered an icon to it. COVID-19 is depicted as a crown-shaped predator. The creature with a crown-like appearance naturally emphasizes COVID-19. There is an interaction between all signs in this work of art. These signs or images are called rhetorical figures of addition, as these elements are added to each other to present a complete picture about the risks of this cursed pandemic. There is a similarity in form and content for all signs: ignorance, greed, negligence, and the creature with a crown-like appearance

6.1.4 Signifier and Signified

In this caricature we have four signifiers and four signifieds. They are united in the brain by an association bond. For example, there is an association between ignorance (signified) with its danger and the monster (signifier) which represents it in this caricature. The same applies to the other three signs. The sound-image, or the actual expression of the concept (ignorance, for example), is represented in an abstract embodiment of the sound-image. The caricaturist replaces concept and sound-image respectively by signified and signifier for facilitating the distinction between the two functions of the signs and for sending his message in a pleasant way. Upon seeing each image, there is an idea created in our minds. In this caricature we have four actual objects (three monsters and a creature with a crown-like appearance) and four mental concepts (ignorance, greed, negligence, and COVID-19). All signs in this caricature are of low motivation except the creature with a crown-like appearance as it is an icon. Iconic signs are of high convention. So, this sign is highly motivated in the opposite of the other three signs. The signifieds relate to their signifiers in the other three signs by convention alone. That is to say, three signs in this caricature are symbols, and there is only an icon. There is an agreement amongst the users about the appropriate uses of these signs and their representations.

Throughout this simple drawing, the caricaturist reflects some social dimensions of COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a dramatic loss of human life around the world, posing an unprecedented threat to public health, food systems, and the workplace. The pandemic's economic and social consequences are devastating: tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty, and the number of undernourished people could rise to around 132 million by the end of the year. Millions of companies face an existential threat. Nearly millions of inhabitants are at risk of losing their livelihoods in days of curfew. Out of inability to earn an income during lockdowns, many are unable to feed themselves and their families. For most, no income means no food. Hence, addressing underlying food security and malnutrition challenges, tackling rural poverty through more and better jobs in the rural economy, extending social protection to all, facilitating safe migration pathways and promoting the formalization of the informal economy should be put into consideration (WHO, 2020).

6.2 Caricature Two



6.2.1 Axis of Language

Caricature two is a simplified work of art, presenting one of the social dimensions of COVID-19. In this caricature we have three signs: two men and a creature with a crown-like appearance. The three signs exist in the vertical axes, and they are combined together in the horizontal axes for forming a complete painting concerning the worldwide pandemic and its fatal effect on the worldwide economy. The three associated signs are all members of some defining category in which each sign is significantly different despite being related. They form a meaningful whole or a chain. Each sign is one paradigm (an image), helping in shaping the preferred meaning of the whole work of art. They are synchronic and syntopic out of existing in the same time and at the same space. Also, each sign can be considered a shot or scene in itself, carrying multiple meanings. One can

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make considerable analytical use of these signs in relation to mass media texts. They can be analyzed in terms of the social systems which give rise to texts (Buxton, 1990, p. 12).

Each sign in the vertical axes carries or communicates meaning in itself. The caricaturist illustrates that the pursuit of livelihood is the main reason behind going out, the spread of COVID-19, and the increasing death rate. What is formed in the horizontal axes is the image of all individuals who have to go out and work in pursuit of livelihood in the presence of COVID-19. The spread of COVID-19 has led to the emergence of new decisions against the interest of the citizen in the whole world. The World Health Organization has advised citizens to stay at home in order to avoid infection and the spread of the epidemic and to avoid an increase in the death rate, but this has led to a decrease in the standard of living and the spread of unemployment in addition to the spread of poverty, famine and crime. Paterfamilias had to go out to work and seek his livelihood, but most of the citizens became prey within the mouth of COVID-19. Actually, this led to increasing death rate. Although governments and ministries of health all over the world have advised citizens to stay at home, the vast majority has been forced to go out and overcome unemployment.

6.2.2 Denotation and Connotation

Each sign in this caricature has both a literal meaning and a real one. It appears that a creature with a crown-like appearance tries to devour an individual pushed by another one. This is the first order of signification. The connotative meaning, or the real meaning, is that workers are exposed to danger, starvation, poverty and death in light of the pandemic. This is the second order of signification since this basic interpretation collides with a set of cultural meanings derived from how society values both the sign and its denotation. The general concepts presented and interpreted by each society are included in the third order of signification. The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) asserted that with the beginning of the government's precautionary measures related to coronavirus such as closing schools, companies, and stores, the unemployment rate increased during the period from the end of March until the end of April 2020. Hence, many workers had to fight for saving money. They went out despite being exposed to danger in pursuit of money and saving the lives of their children.

To avoid the dangers of going out, some institutions suggested distance

working, and this had both negative and positive dimensions. It has led to avoiding danger, but at the same time the worldwide economy has been devastated. Distance working could increase job satisfaction, enhance workers' commitment to the organization, and even slightly improve their performance. It can also reduce stress and tension associated with work due to a reduced need for transportation. Other benefits include lower transportation costs and more freedom in addition to working independently. However, there are downsides to working remotely, including social and professional isolation in addition to reducing opportunities for information sharing. The lack of physical separation between the professional and family domains can lead to the bad effect of work duties on family obligations. Many workers also had to work beyond the official hours to demonstrate their dedication to the work, leading to burnout. The ability to constantly communicate with electronic work systems can also make employees feel that their shift is endless or that they are unable to take a break from thinking about work at the end of the day. Consequently, many workers had to refuse distance working and go out for work with the presence of this fatal disease. The connotative meaning in this caricature aims at illustrating these facts and indicating the deterioration of economic conditions in the whole world in light of this pandemic.

6.2.3 Metaphor and Metonymy

In this caricature we have two metaphors and one metonymy. First, pursuit of livelihood is depicted as a person, pushing people towards COVID-19. In this metaphor, the caricaturist illustrates the reason behind refusing quarantine and going out despite the spread of the pandemic. Despite living in a world full of frustration in facing this rampant pandemic, it has become impossible for people to remain in their homes under domestic quarantine. This has resulted in an economic collapse that affects the family and the government. Out of not producing a vaccine till now, people have to coexist. Hence, the responsibility of the state is transferred to individuals to oblige them to take precautionary measures, to wear masks, and to maintain safe distances. The desire to return to work is sweeping the whole world. There are demonstrations in many European countries and in America in order to return back to work and fight quarantine. They see working as the main solution for fighting crises. The world began to move to coexist with the emerging coronavirus by lifting isolation measures, starting with economic sectors. A large number of

countries decided to allow their citizens to resume part of their normal lives, provided that social distancing and prevention measures are taken.

For the creature with a crown-like appearance, it is considered another metaphor. It represents COVID-19. It is considered an icon to it. There is a straightforward association and an iconic relationship between both the sign and its object (the signifier and the signified). COVID-19 in this caricature is depicted as a monster, trying to swallow individuals. The last sign in this caricature is the person pushed by the other towards COVID-19. This sign can be considered a metonymy as this sign acts as a part and it represents a whole community. There is an interaction between all signs in this work of art. These signs are rhetorical figures of addition as they are added to each other to present a complete picture of the risks of this cursed pandemic. There is a similarity in form and content for all signs.

6.2.4 Signifier and Signified

In this caricature we have three signifiers and three signifieds. Like any sign, there is an association bond between them. For example, there is a link between pursuit of livelihood (signified) and the keenness of the person to push people to epidemic (signifier). The same applies to the other two signs. The actual expression of the concept, (pursuit for livelihood, for example), is represented in an abstract embodiment of the sound-image. Coronavirus and communities are the other two signifieds, being represented in their signifiers (a monster and a person pushed towards pandemic respectively). Upon seeing each image, there is an idea created in our minds. All signs in this caricature are of low motivation except the creature with a crown-like appearance as it is an icon. This sign is highly motivated in the opposite of the other two symbolic signs.

6.3 Caricature Three



6.3.1 Axis of Language

This caricature is another caricature reflecting the social consequences of COVID-19. It is a creative work of art, handling Children's fear for their elderly parents who suffer from incurable diseases in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are three signs in this caricature: an old woman, two children, and a creature with a crown-like appearance. These signs are major elements in the vertical axes of language. They are combined together, forming a complete image in the horizontal axes. The three signs shape the preferred meaning of this caricature. The text formed in the syntagmatic axis is "COVID-19 threat to the life of the aged." Through these simple signs, a complete image is formed in our minds. One's interpretation of the whole image becomes clear by linking this image to other images in the surrounding context. Getting at the idea behind this caricature depends on understanding the current events in the whole world. The World Health Organization in Alghad Newspaper (April 26, 2020) asserts that the threat of exposure to coronavirus increases gradually with age. It threatens those who are above 40 years. Those who are above 70 years are recommended to observe strict quarantine.

A study published in The Lancet on March 31, 2020, estimated the case fatality rate (CFR) for individuals in China aged 60 to 69 years at approximately 4%, compared to a CFR of 1.4% among the overall infected population. The mortality rate was observed to increase substantially with age, rising to 8.6% for individuals in their seventies and reaching 13.4% for those aged 80 and above. Similarly, the proportion of patients requiring hospitalization demonstrated a marked increase with age: 4.3% for individuals in their forties, 11.8% for those in their sixties, and 18.4% among individuals in their eighties—equivalent to nearly one in five infected individuals in that age group (Verity, et al., 2020).

6.3.2 Denotation and Connotation

The three signs have both denotative and connotative meanings. It seems that a creature with a crown-like appearance tries to swallow an old woman, while her children try strongly to protect her. This is the first order of signification. However, there is a hidden meaning presented by Hamdi Ahmed where visual discourse is employed. This caricature moves around "the influence of COVID-19 on the aged who suffer from incurable diseases." This is the second order of signification. This basic interpretation

collides with a slew of cultural meanings derived from how culture or society values both the signifier and the signified. That is to say, the interpretation of one sign differs from one society to another, depending on certain codes. The three signs acquire their full ideological value at the connotative meaning where their association fluidity can be better utilized. Their ideological value is strongly fixed as it has become so fully universal and natural.

One of the hidden meanings in this caricature is illustrating the role of sons in making their parents, who are aged, aware of the great danger of coronavirus. This is one of the connotative meanings or the second order of signification. Sons, upon the spread of COVID-19, always advise their parents to follow the Ministry of Public Health's instructions by keeping physical distancing, staying at home, and avoiding gatherings. Also, they begin to avoid welcoming visitors, family members and friends, including young children. Although children may not get sick, they may be carriers of viruses. Maintaining distance from others - at least two meters between oneself and anyone around him/her is recommended. Avoiding physical contact with others, refraining from kissing, shaking hands, or hugging is also recommended. The aged are recommended to clean surfaces and adhere to strict hand-washing protocols and procedures by asking them to wear masks and avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth. Personal hygiene is also extremely recommended during the virus outbreak.

6.3.3 Metaphor and Metonymy

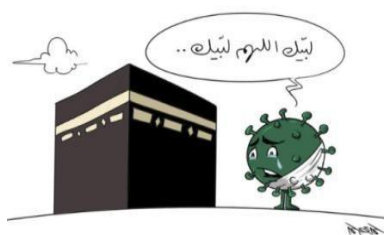
In this caricature we have one main metaphor. The creature with a crown-like appearance is depicted as a monster in its trial to swallow and attack an old woman. The two elements of this metaphor are equal not because they are the same, but for the sake of comparison or symbolism. This creature represents COVID-19. It is considered an icon to it. Another sign in this caricature is the old woman. This sign can be considered a metonymy, as this sign acts as a part and it represents a whole community. It represents all the aged who are exposed to danger with the presence of COVID-19. The last sign is the boy and the girl who try to pull the hand of their mother towards them and protect her from COVID-19. They also represent all youth who try to rescue the lives of their parents from the danger of this pandemic. So, this symbol may also be considered a metonymy. There is an interaction between the three signs in this work of art. Like all previous caricatures, these signs are rhetorical figures of

addition, as they are added to each other to present a complete picture about the risks of this cursed pandemic. There is a similarity in form and content for all signs.

6.3.4 Signifier and Signified

In this caricature we have three signifiers and three signifieds. Like any sign, there is an association bond between them. For example, there is a link between covid-19 (the signified) and the brutality of the creature with a crown-like appearance (the signifier). The same applies to the other two signs. The actual expression of the concept, (COVID-19, for example), is represented in an abstract embodiment of the sound-image. The aged and the youth are the other two signifieds, being represented in their signifiers (an old woman and two young people respectively). Upon seeing each image, there is an idea created in our minds. The bond between all signifiers and signifieds shows the main message behind this caricature. Older adults are at the highest risk of facing COVID-19. For example, people in their 50s are at higher risk for severe illness than people in their 40s. Furthermore, coronavirus becomes more dangerous for the elderly who suffer from chronic diseases such as blood pressure, diabetes, and heart diseases. All signs in this caricature are of low motivation except the creature with a crown-like appearance as it is an icon. This sign is highly motivated in the opposite of the other two symbolic signs.

6.4 Caricature Four



6.4.1 Axis of Language

This caricature is one of the caricatures which reflect the human dimensions of COVID-19. It is a creative work of art, handling the situation of the Arab and Islamic nations in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are two signs in this caricature: the image of the Holy Kaaba and a creature with a crown-like appearance. These two signs are major elements in the paradigmatic or vertical axes of language. They are combined together,

forming a complete image in the horizontal or syntagmatic axes. The two associated signs or paradigms are members of some defining category, shaping the preferred meaning of a text. This association helps in forming a particular text or a complete image for the viewer. The text formed in the syntagmatic axis is "COVID-19 cries out of being responsible for preventing the Hajj and Umrah in 2020." Hence, through these two simple signs, a complete image is formed in our minds. These two interacting signs have formed a meaningful whole or a chain. This combination is made within a framework of rules and conventions (both explicit and implicit). Syntagmatic relationships are spatial in paintings (Silverman, 1983, p. 106). One's interpretation of this complete image as an individual shot taken by the caricaturist depends on both paradigmatic analysis (comparing it with the use of alternative kinds of shots) and syntagmatic analysis (comparing it with preceding and following shots). That is to say, vision will be fully clarified by linking this image or this artwork to other images in the surrounding context. Getting at the idea behind this caricature depends on understanding the current events in the whole world.

6.4.2 Denotation and Connotation

The two signs in this caricature have both denotative and connotative meanings. The creature with a crown-like appearance cries in front of the Holy Kaaba, making a pilgrimage. This is the first order of signification. However, there is a hidden meaning presented by Hamdi Ahmed where visual discourse is employed. This caricature moves around "the influence of preventing Hajj out of COVID-19." This is the second order of signification. COVID-19 is portrayed as a soldier of God's soldiers crying and asking Almighty Allah to get rid of this plague. This reflects the effect of preventing Hajj which is one of the pillars of Islam on the whole world. The connotative meaning is related to the more conventionalized and associative meanings which may vary from instance to instance. That is to say, the interpretation of one sign differs from one society to another, depending on certain codes. The two signs acquire their full ideological value at the connotative meaning where their association fluidity can be better utilized and transformed. Their ideological value is strongly fixed as it has become so fully universal and natural.

The socio-cultural or personal association of this simplified work of art presents one of the human dimensions of COVID-19 as connotations derive from the way the society uses and values both the sign and its

representations. Upon the spread of COVID-19, the dreams of millions of people concerning visiting the Sacred House of God and performing the rituals of Hajj have come to an end. The Tawaf plate has been closed in order to take precautionary measures against the dreaded virus. In Makkah, pilgrims were provided with a set of tools and supplies, including medical Ihram, sterile stones, masks, a carpet and an umbrella. The pilgrims also had to be tested for the new coronavirus before their arrival in Makkah, and they also had to quarantine after the Hajj. The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has set up many health facilities and mobile clinics in addition to equipped ambulances to meet the needs of pilgrims who would be required to adhere to social distancing. The authorities also would prevent pilgrims from touching the building which was covered with a black cloth embroidered with gold. Officials in Saudi Arabia had no security concerns regarding their organizational plans. The only danger they tried to prevent in 2020 was the threat of the pandemic and how they could secure the safety of pilgrims to perform their rituals. Hence, they divided the Tawaf plate into several paths. The authorities announced that only about 1,000 pilgrims residing in the Kingdom would be allowed to perform the rituals.

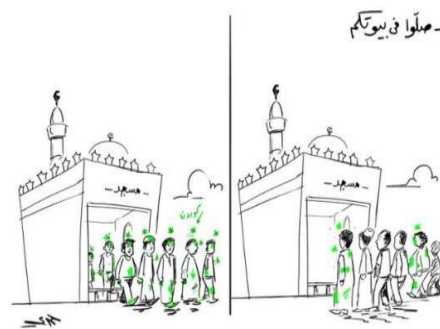
6.4.3 Metaphor and Metonymy

In this caricature we have a metaphor or a personification. The creature with a crown-like appearance that represents COVID-19 is depicted as a person crying and making a pilgrimage. There is a displacement from COVID-19 to the creature with a crown-like appearance. COVID-19 is depicted as a person responsible for preventing the hajj. The unfamiliar is expressed (tenor) in terms of the familiar (the vehicle). Although the tenor and the vehicle are normally unrelated, we can get at the relationship between them by looking at the whole work of art or the context. For the second image, it is an icon of the Holy Kaaba. It is a metonymy, representing one of the rituals of Islam, which is the pilgrimage to the Sacred House of God. The image of Kaaba invokes the notion of worship in general. This metonymy is based on contiguity: it does not require an imaginative leap. It seems more natural than metaphor. The image of Kaaba represents reality, and any attempt to represent reality involves metonymy. Like the previous caricature, there is an interaction between the two signs. These signs are called rhetorical figures of addition as they are added to each other to present a complete picture about one of the human dimensions of this worldwide pandemic.

6.4.4 Signifier and Signified

In this caricature we have two signifiers and two signifieds. They are linked together by a nexus. For example, there is an association between Kaaba itself (the signified) and its image (the signifier) which represents it. The same applies to the other sign (the creature with a crown-like appearance). The actual expression of the concept (COVID-19) is represented in an abstract embodiment of its image. They are replaced respectively for helping the caricaturist send his message in a pleasant way. Upon seeing each image, there is an idea created in our minds. There are two actual objects (the image of Kaaba and a creature with a crown-like appearance) and two mental ones (Hajj and COVID-19). The two signs in the opposite of the previous one are of high motivation out of being icons. Throughout this simple drawing, the caricaturist reflects some human dimensions of COVID-19. WHO recommended reducing the number of pilgrims in 2020 to avoid infection or increase the death rate, and this led to a collapse in the whole world. The risk of respiratory virus transmission increases during the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages due to overcrowding; pilgrims gather in sacred crowded places where rituals take place, as what happens during tawaaf or within the housing structures. The Hajj's over-density tends to amplify the spread of transmission even when the reproduction rate of an outbreak is low (Hoang et al., 2020).

6.5 Caricature Five



6.5.1 Axis of Language

The last caricature is another one reflecting the human or religious dimensions of COVID-19. It reflects the way the virus spreads or how infection is transmitted from one infected person to another. It also depicts the condition of Muslims before and after entering mosques. In this

caricature we have three signs: two groups of prayers and a mosque. These signs are organized into codes by paradigms and by syntagms. The three signs that exist in the vertical axes are combined together in the horizontal axes for forming a complete painting concerning preventing Muslims from praying in mosques to avoid the spread of the virus. The three associated signs form a meaningful whole or a chain. Each sign in the vertical axes carries or communicates meaning in itself. What is formed in the horizontal axes is the image of all prayers after going out from mosques in the presence of COVID-19. The World Health Organization has advised citizens to stay at home in order to avoid infection and to avoid an increase in the death rate, but this has led to the grief of all Muslims whose hearts are attached to mosques.

Through this caricature, Hamdi Ahmed shows that one of the most important human dimensions of the new coronavirus is preventing Muslims from performing prayers in mosques which leads to disintegration between all Muslims. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Trusts has prohibited praying in mosques in order to avoid the spread of infection among worshippers. When Muslims have returned to mosques again, the Ministry of Health has put some procedures that must be followed inside mosques such as adhering to distancing among worshippers, wearing masks and not using the tools of the other because the new coronavirus is transmitted quickly from one person to another through breathing and touching surfaces infected with the virus. This caricature portrays the number of injured people before and after leaving the mosque; it indicates an increase in numbers of the injured after leaving the mosque.

6.5.2 Denotation and Connotation

This caricature displays the religious dimension of the coronavirus by presenting two pictures regarding the spread of the virus and the extent of infection resulting from failure to adhere to precautionary measures and safe spacing between individuals. The apparent literal meaning is the presence of two pictures of worshippers before and after entering the mosque. The picture reflects the increase in the number of prayers infected with the virus after leaving the mosque. The denotative meaning is "increasing the dirt of worshippers' clothes after leaving the mosque." But there is a real and hidden meaning behind this simple work of art which is the speed of the spread of infection caused by coronavirus. This caricature reflects the stages of the virus's development, spread, and severity. WHO

(2021) states:

When a virus is widely circulating in a population and causing many infections, the likelihood of the virus mutating increases. The more opportunities a virus has to spread, the more it replicates and the more opportunities it has to undergo changes. Most viral mutations have little to no impact on the virus's ability to cause infections and disease. But depending on where the changes are located in the virus's genetic material, they may affect a virus's properties, such as transmission or severity.

The literal meaning is increasing the size of dirt in the clothes of a large number of worshippers after leaving the mosque, but what is hidden is "an increase in the number of people infected with coronavirus after leaving the mosque and coming in contact with each other." This is the second order of signification. The third order of signification is included in the cultural picture of the world. The whole world witnesses the fatal effects resulting from this global epidemic and how it spreads with lightning speed.

6.5.3 Metaphor and Metonymy

In this caricature we have more than one metonymy in which a part represents a whole. All metonyms are based on indexical relationships as in the replacement of cause for effect or the evocation of a portion for the whole as in the use of the mosque in this caricature. It represents all worship places. Also, the two groups of people in this caricature are metonyms, representing in general all prayers before and after entering mosques or worship places. This caricature does not only illustrate the danger of gathering in mosques or places of worship, but also it refers to the risk of gatherings in any public place. Any decision to change a planned international gathering should be based on a careful assessment of the risks. All countries with community transmission should seriously consider postponing or reducing mass gatherings that bring people together and have the potential to amplify disease and support the recommended best practice of physical distancing. All rhetorical figures in this caricature are figures of addition as all signs are added to each other to form a complete image. The techniques of addition include repetition of the same images or signs, similarity of form and of content as in the comparison between the two sides of the caricature, and opposition, which is obvious in the two sides of the caricature. There is a clear opposition between the drawing on the right side and the one on the left. The whole image moves around increasing the number of the injured out of gatherings.

6.5.4 Signifier and Signified

In this caricature we have four signifiers and four signified, and there is an association bond between them. For example, there is a link between worship places or gathering places (signified) and the mosque where prayers go in and go out (signifier). The same applies to the other two signs. People before being infected and others after being infected are the other two signifieds, being represented in their signifiers (prayers who go into the mosque in the drawing on the left side and others who go out on the right side). Upon seeing each image, there is an idea created in our minds. The green spots (the signifier) represent infection with COVID-19 (the signified). There is an indexical relationship between them, so this sign also is of high motivation.

7. Conclusion (Summary and Implication)

This research has attempted to explore the role of semiotics in revealing the various consequences of COVID-19 as a worldwide pandemic. It also has indicated the role of semiotics in analyzing and revealing facts. Through analysis, it becomes clear that we live in a world in which reality is hidden behind signs; semiotics can only be applied to the thing which has a meaning; both humor and satire give a delicious flavor to the art of caricature and help in conveying messages in a pleasant way; caricature is an interesting work of art because it deals with a variety of topics concerning the society and environment; caricaturists aim at amusing and illuminating the public opinion about the issues represented in the drawings of their caricatures, and caricature can be a good source of revealing social issues concerning the social and human dimensions of the worldwide pandemic. The analysis in this paper depends on verbal and nonverbal signifiers as well as the visual aspects of the caricatures.

The analysis reveals both the cultural and ideological message underlying the drawings of the caricatures. Through applying Roland Barthes's elements of semiology which is effective in the analysis of images to a set of caricatures concerning both social and human dimensions of COVID-19, it becomes obvious that social dimensions of COVID-19 are represented in spreading negligence, ignorance, and greediness which are themselves considered main reasons behind the spread of the pandemic; increasing death rates out of pursuit behind livelihood and not avoiding the dangers of infection; and the risks of coronavirus on the aged who suffer

from chronic diseases. Human or religious dimensions are represented in fear of Muslims and others from gathering in places of worship or performing Hajj and Umrah and entering mosques in order not to be infected with the virus.

8. Recommendations and Suggestions

At the end of this research paper, a full caption to COVID-19 is recommended in all mass media, which do not turn a blind eye to this pandemic, such as journals, magazines, and newspapers. Both social and human dimensions of COVID-19 can be revealed by analyzing images, articles, and speeches. Other caricatures presented by famous caricaturists such as Mai Ibrahim who presented many caricatures in an initiative entitled "Together for Life" can be analyzed, using other theories of signs or other theories outside the field of semiotics. Not only should Arab media depictions of this worldwide pandemic be revealed, but also worldwide media handling of coronavirus should be looked upon as a means for making all people aware of the size of the crisis. Not only has worldwide media handled caricatures, articles and videos about social and human dimensions of COVID-19, but also it has handled a large number of images, speeches, talk shows, and films around it. It is possible in another research to apply Peirce's Theory of the Sign to some expressive images since this theory denotes that each word denotes something more than its literal meaning. Jakobson's Theory of Communication can also be applied to speeches presented by distinguished officials about the disease.

From another side, other theories in semiotics can be applied to all these samples. For example, Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of the linguistic sign and the other of Charles Morris can be applied by another researcher to the chosen caricatures as all these theories stress that everything in this world can be considered a sign, and this sign should have a denotation. Another researcher can choose other theories outside the field of semiotics to be applied to certain articles and speeches around COVID-19. For example, in the field of critical discourse analysis, he/she can apply either the theory of Dell Hymes or Van Dijk to these samples. Moreover, a researcher can use social semiotics in media depiction of COVID-19 as social semiotics examines semiotic practices specific to a culture and community for making various kinds of texts and meanings in various situational contexts and contexts of culturally meaningful activity. The researcher can combine several kinds of physical media in communicating and making meaning

from voice and printed texts to mass media images, music, movies, computer web content, and digital multimedia.

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