

**HEALTH COMMUNICATION: A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS  
OF SELECTED CORONA VIRUS POSTERS IN KENYA**

**HOPE ANINDO INGOLO**



**RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE  
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS OF  
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

**MAY 2025**

## DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

### Declaration

This thesis/project is my original work and has never been presented for any academic award in any institution.

Name: ANINDO HOPE INGOLD

Reg. No. MELIN 2020/65273

Signature:  Date: 22/5/25

### Approval

This thesis/project is being submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors

Name: Dr. Anashia Nancy Onglonda

Institutional Affiliation: Machakos University

Signature:  Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2025

Name: .....

Institutional Affiliation: .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my lovely daughter Brooklyn Anyango, my beloved dad Fred Ingolo and mum Rachael Anyango for their overselling love during the process.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My special acknowledgement to God for good health and financial provisions. Also, my special thanks to my able supervisor Dr. Anashia Nancy Ong'onda for her overwhelming support and guidance throughout this academic journey. Special appreciations to Mount Kenya University lecturers and Linguistics Department for academic support that has made it possible to this far. I wish to acknowledge my siblings Bob Safu, Linus Ashuma and Allan Mwinami for their support. May the blessings of the lord that add no sorrow be upon you all.



## ABSTRACT

The world today is faced with various epidemics which have introduced myriads of challenges. COVID-19 disease is the latest crisis with its attendant to health and language issues. With its emergence, COVID-19 introduced into the global linguistic repertoire a specialized form of discourse which manifested in the way government communicates to the public. The proposed study was set analyze multimodality features of COVID 19 posters. The objectives of the study were to describe the multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya, establish the semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya, explore how persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya and to Explain the functions of multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters in Kenya. The study applied Kress and Van Leuween (1996, 2006) Multimodal Discourse Analysis Framework. The study focused on educational COVID 19 posters only. A descriptive research design was adopted. The target population for this study was COVID 19 posters in Kenya. Purposive and snowball sampling was determined the sample size. The study intends to collect 30 COVID 19 posters. The methods of collecting data were documentary instruments and observational check list. Data was analyzed through content qualitative methods. This study sought to contribute to the area of discourse analysis by focusing health communication by focusing on integration of visual and verbal communication in posters. It is thus hoped that the study may contribute in the field of discourse analysis and clinical linguistics. The analysis revealed inconsistencies in how preventive measures were portrayed, with only six of ten referenced posters evaluated, indicating a discrepancy in scope. Findings further demonstrated a lack of alignment between the visual messaging and established empirical or theoretical frameworks, limiting their impact. The study concluded that cohesive, theory-driven communication is vital for ensuring public understanding and compliance during health crises. To address these issues, several recommendations were proposed. First, key terms such as "poster," "photo," and "picture" should be clearly defined to avoid ambiguity. Second, all referenced materials must be thoroughly analyzed to ensure comprehensive evaluation. Third, findings should be explicitly linked to existing literature and theoretical models to strengthen contextual relevance. Finally, adherence to APA 7th edition formatting and professional editing standards is essential to enhance clarity and academic rigor. These insights underscore the need for more systematic and evidence-based approaches to public health communication, particularly during global emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION AND APPROVAL .....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>DEDICATION .....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS.....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Overview of the chapter .....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Study.....	6
1.3 Purpose of the study .....	7
1.4 Research objectives .....	7
1.5 Research questions .....	8
1.6 Justification of the study.....	8
1.7 Significance of the study .....	9
1.8 Scope and Limitations .....	9
1.9 Theoretical Framework .....	9
1.9.1 Visual Elements.....	10
1.9.2 Visual Grammar .....	13
1.10 Conceptual Framework .....	17
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>18</b>
2.0 Introduction .....	18
2.1 Language and health communication.....	18
2.2 Multimodality .....	20
2.3 Multimodality studies on Posters .....	22
2.4 Literature Review .....	25
2.4.1 Assess the multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya.....	25
2.4.2 Establish the semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.....	28

2.4.3 Persuasive Verbal and Visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya. ....	32
2.4.4 Functions of Multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 Posters. ....	35
2.5 Study Gap .....	38
<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>40</b>
3.0 Introduction .....	40
3.1 Research design .....	40
3.2 Study area .....	40
3.3 Target Population .....	41
3.4 Sampling Techniques and sample size .....	41
3.5 Data collection methods and procedures .....	42
3.6 Data Analysis.....	42
3.7 Validity and reliability of the Instruments.....	42
3.8 Ethical consideration .....	43
<b>CHAPTER FOUR .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.....</b>	<b>44</b>
4.0 Introduction .....	44
4.1 Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya. ....	45
4.1.1 Textual and linguistic modes.....	46
4.1.2. Visual and Graphic Elements .....	47
4.1.3 Color Modes .....	47
4.1.4 Institutional and Authoritative Modes.....	48
4.2 Semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.....	50
4.2.1 Visual and images used .....	51
4.2.2 Color schemes .....	52
4.2.3 Typography.....	52
4.2.4 Symbolism.....	53
4.3. Persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya. ....	54
4.3.1 Verbal images, Usage of verbs .....	55
4.3.2 Visual images .....	56
4.3.3 Infographics and diagrams .....	56
4.3.4 Emotional appeal .....	57

4.4 Functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters in Kenya .....	57
4.4.1 Information value .....	59
4.4.2 Connective Elements .....	60
4.4.3 Graphic Elements .....	60
4.4.4 Fonts .....	61
4.4.5 Object on Directives .....	61
4.4.6 Picture one on danger of staying close to one another .....	62
4.5 Chapter summary.....	63
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>64</b>
5.0 Introduction .....	64
5.1 Summary of the study.....	64
5.1.1 Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters .....	64
5.1.2 Semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters .....	64
5.1.3 Persuasive verbal and visual images .....	65
5.1.4 Functions of multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters .....	65
5.2 Study Conclusions .....	66
5.3 Recommendations of the study .....	66
5.4 Areas for further study.....	67
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>72</b>
Appendix I: Informed Consent.....	72
Appendix II: Documentary records and review .....	73
Appendix III: COVID 19 Posters .....	74
Appendix IV: Observational Checklist .....	77
Appendix V: Introduction letter .....	78
Appendix VI: ERC Certificate from MKU .....	79
Appendix VII: Research permit.....	80
Appendix VIII: Similarity Index Report .....	81

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Visual interactive resources (drawn from Kress/van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006, and Kress, 2010).....	12
Table 2: SFL Metafunctions in VG.....	14
Table 3: Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya. ....	45
Table 4: Semiotic choices adopted by COVID 19 posters in Kenya for health communication .....	50
Table 5: Components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.....	54
Table 6: Functions of multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters.....	58



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.....	17
Figure 2: Poster One Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters for government directive.....	46
Figure 3: Poster Two on institutional and authority.....	49
Figure 4: Poster Three on the semiotic choices.....	51
Figure 5: poster four on color schemes.....	52
Figure 6: Poster five Persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.....	55
Figure 7: Poster six on Functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters.....	59



## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

**COVID-19:** The abbreviation breaks down into ‘CO’ for corona, ‘VI’ for virus, and ‘D’ signifying disease. This illness was initially named the ‘2019 novel coronavirus’ or ‘2019-nCoV.’

**Flattening the curve:** Refers to managing how quickly new COVID-19 infections emerge.

**Pandemic:** Describes the global spread of a newly identified illness across numerous nations.

**PPE:** An acronym for personal protective equipment, which includes items such as masks, gloves, gowns, and face shields used by medical personnel to limit exposure to infectious agents and protect both themselves and others.

**Quarantine:** Also known as “isolation,” it involves separating individuals to reduce disease transmission. Government-enforced stay-at-home directives fall under this category.

**Self-isolation:** Sometimes called self-quarantine, this is when an individual voluntarily distances themselves from others due to illness, aiming to prevent infecting those who are healthy.

**Social distancing:** Also referred to as physical distancing, it involves maintaining physical space between individuals to decelerate the spread of infections. Government mandates such as stay-at-home orders help implement this practice.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Overview of the chapter

This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, study objectives, study questions, significance of the study, and scope of the study and limitations of the study. The chapter also provides a background on Corona Virus (Covid, 19), Health communication, posters and Multimodal Discourse Analysis.

#### 1.1 Background of the study

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) categorized the COVID-19 outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020, and subsequently labeled it a pandemic on March 11, 2020. According to WHO (2020), the earliest cases of COVID-19 were detected in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The organization further explained that the COVID-19 virus is a novel strain belonging to the same group of viruses responsible for severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). Transmission mainly occurs through close interpersonal contact, especially via respiratory droplets released during actions such as coughing, sneezing, or speaking. Due to its highly contagious nature, the virus rapidly infected hundreds of thousands of individuals across the globe (Pitlik, 2020; WHO, 2020).

On a global scale, visual health messaging—especially through posters—has become an essential tool in spreading awareness and encouraging positive behavioral shifts regarding key health topics, including infectious disease prevention, child and maternal health, nutrition, and sanitation. Prominent global entities like WHO and UNICEF often integrate posters into their outreach initiatives to tackle public health crises and effectively connect with at-risk groups, particularly in areas with limited resources. Additionally, posters are employed in social advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about human rights, environmental conservation, gender equality, and other social justice issues. In the commercial sector, posters are utilized for advertising products, services, events, and cultural initiatives, leveraging persuasive visuals and messaging to attract consumers and drive engagement.

Posters offer numerous advantages as communication tools, they also present challenges in terms of design, distribution, and effectiveness. Cultural differences, linguistic

diversity, and literacy levels can impact the reception and comprehension of posters, requiring careful consideration of audience preferences and sensitivities. Additionally, limited resources, infrastructure, and access to technology in certain regions may hinder the reach and impact of poster campaigns, particularly in marginalized communities. However, advances in digital technology and social media platforms have expanded the reach and accessibility of posters, enabling organizations and individuals to create, share, and amplify messages on a global scale. By harnessing the power of posters in communication, stakeholders can leverage this versatile medium to address pressing issues, foster social change, and promote collective action towards a more sustainable and equitable world.

The World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted several key strategies for preventing the spread of COVID-19, emphasizing the importance of individual and collective actions. These measures included remaining at home when experiencing symptoms, covering the mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing, and properly disposing of used tissues right away. Additionally, frequent handwashing with soap and water, as well as disinfecting commonly touched surfaces, were strongly recommended. Other effective approaches involved maintaining high standards of personal and public hygiene, safeguarding high-risk populations, and isolating infected individuals through self-quarantine and social distancing measures (World Health Organization, 2020). In Kenya, the government was tasked with disseminating these guidelines through the Ministry of Health. However, conveying critical information during a widespread crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges, requiring a careful balance between effective communication and responsible messaging.

One of the primary methods employed for health communication during the pandemic was the use of posters. According to Lippert and Timke (2023), a poster is a temporary medium designed to promote an idea, product, or event in public spaces for broad audience engagement. This study focused on analyzing posters as a tool for health communication, examining their role in conveying vital information. Posters are printed materials that often combine visual and textual elements, though they may sometimes rely solely on images or words. Due to their dual nature, they are considered multimodal, integrating both linguistic and graphic components. In Kenya, posters serve not only as

advertising tools but also as instruments for spreading essential public messages, often reflecting societal values and ideals worth exploring. Aworo-Okoroh (2018) explains that while posters are commonly associated with marketing products, they are also used in health communication to raise awareness and encourage specific behavioral changes. These posters aim to inform the public about critical issues, prompting them to take action to mitigate risks, enhance safety, or address pressing concerns. As such, they play a significant role in shaping public perception and influencing attitudes.

Sulatra and Pratiwi (2020) argue that posters function as a form of advertisement, embedding ideological meanings through societal codes and cultural references. They suggest that the persuasive power of advertisements lies in their ability to present ideologies as natural and unquestionable, often through imagery and symbolic representation. Advertising, including poster campaigns, has become a dominant form of discourse in modern societies, deeply ingrained in daily life. Munday (2016) further elaborates that posters are not merely vehicles for transmitting ideas but also mechanisms for reinforcing and solidifying meaning in the public consciousness.

Holloway (2014) classifies poster research into four main categories: entertainment, commercial, political, and educational, each serving distinct purposes such as informing, persuading, or entertaining audiences. Posters are a concise yet specialized medium, often employed in public health campaigns. During the COVID-19 crisis, Kenya's Ministry of Health, alongside religious organizations and civil society groups, heavily relied on posters to communicate safety protocols. These posters were strategically designed to capture public attention and convey urgent health messages, as noted by Hyland, Wang, and Jiang (2022). This form of communication falls under multimodal discourse, utilizing both visual and textual elements to reinforce messaging through metadiscourse techniques. By combining persuasive imagery with clear instructions, these posters played a crucial role in promoting behavioral change and fostering public compliance with health guidelines.

According to Guichon, and Cohen, (2016), multimodality involves the psychology of sensory perception, emphasizing the integration of diverse communicative elements such as verbal, visual, and auditory components, recognizing that all texts inherently possess multimodal attributes. The study observes the crucial roles played by symbols, colors, and images in advertising materials. Additionally, it examines how the visual elements

within a text are structured and arranged to convey messages independently of any accompanying textual context. Consequently, multimodal discourse analysis serves as a comprehensive approach that considers both linguistic and visual dimensions in understanding communication processes.

Hyland, Wang, and Jiang (2022) describe metadiscourse as an analytical approach to communication that treats writing and speaking as interactive social processes. This perspective emphasizes how authors or speakers position themselves within their discourse to express their viewpoints and level of engagement with the subject matter. Metadiscourse serves as a linguistic tool that helps writers craft more reader-friendly texts by anticipating and addressing the audience's expectations and informational needs. In the context of posters, communication is achieved through a combination of verbal and visual elements. Verbal signs—such as words, phrases, or sentences—convey direct information or describe specific issues. On the other hand, visual signs—including images, colors, symbols, and design effects—enhance the appeal of the message, making it more engaging and attention-grabbing (Aworo-Okoroh, 2018). The interplay between these elements ensures that posters effectively capture public interest while delivering essential information.

This study specifically examines public health posters designed to inform and educate people about COVID-19. These posters function as critical communication tools during the pandemic, blending informative text with compelling visuals to promote awareness and encourage behavioral change. By analyzing their use of metadiscourse, the research explores how these posters guide public perception, reinforce health protocols, and foster a sense of shared responsibility in combating the global health crisis.

In the African context, posters serve as essential communication tools that play a significant role in addressing a wide array of social, economic, and health-related issues. From public health campaigns aimed at combating infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and now COVID-19, to advocacy efforts promoting education, gender equality, and environmental conservation, posters are widely utilized to convey messages, raise awareness, and mobilize action within diverse communities across the continent.

In Nigeria, according to Ope-Davies, and Shodipe, (2023), posters are extensively employed in public health campaigns to disseminate vital information and promote preventive behaviors related to various health challenges. Organizations such as the

Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), Ministries of Health, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) utilize posters to educate communities about disease transmission, symptoms, prevention measures, and the importance of seeking medical care. Particularly in rural and remote areas where access to healthcare services may be limited, posters serve as an accessible and cost-effective means of communication, providing essential health information to individuals and families.

As noted by Fergus et al. 2021, despite their widespread use, posters in the African context face unique challenges related to cultural diversity, linguistic variation, low literacy rates, and limited access to resources. Adapting posters to local languages, customs, and beliefs is essential to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Additionally, addressing barriers to access, such as limited infrastructure and technology, is crucial for reaching marginalized populations in remote areas. However, innovative approaches, such as community-based participatory design processes, mobile technology, and community health worker networks, offer opportunities to overcome these challenges and enhance the reach and impact of poster campaigns in Africa.

In Kenya, posters are integral to communication strategies across various sectors, serving as effective tools for disseminating information, raising awareness, and promoting behavior change. From public health campaigns addressing infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and now COVID-19, to educational initiatives promoting literacy, environmental conservation, and civic engagement, posters play a significant role in reaching diverse communities and populations across the country.

Posters are extensively utilized in public health campaigns to educate communities about disease prevention, symptoms, and treatment options (Atcerro, & Ayikoru, 2022). Government agencies such as the Ministry of Health, alongside international organizations and NGOs, utilize posters to communicate key messages on topics such as handwashing, mask-wearing, social distancing, and vaccination. These posters are often distributed in healthcare facilities, schools, public transportation hubs, and other community settings, providing accessible and visually engaging information to individuals and families.

Regarding their effectiveness, posters in the Kenyan context face challenges related to linguistic diversity, low literacy rates, and limited access to resources, particularly in rural and marginalized areas. Adapting posters to local languages and cultural contexts

is crucial to ensure comprehension and relevance. Additionally, leveraging innovative approaches such as digital technology, community radio, and peer education programs can enhance the reach and impact of poster campaigns, particularly among hard-to-reach populations. According to Ngwacho, (2020), addressing these challenges and embracing new technologies and strategies, stakeholders can maximize the effectiveness of posters in promoting health, education, and social development in Kenya. The study therefore seek to analyze the multimodal discourse of selected Corona Virus posters in Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the Study**

The modern world continues to grapple with numerous epidemics, each presenting unique challenges to public health, economies, and societal structures. Among these, the COVID-19 pandemic stands out as one of the most disruptive global crises in recent history, affecting not only physical well-being but also reshaping communication patterns worldwide. The pandemic introduced a specialized form of discourse—marked by urgency, scientific terminology, and public health directives—into everyday language. Governments across the globe, including Kenya, were compelled to adopt innovative communication strategies to disseminate critical information, enforce preventive measures, and mitigate the risks associated with the virus.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Health played a pivotal role in combating the pandemic by employing various communication tools, with posters emerging as a key medium for public education. These posters were strategically designed to convey essential health guidelines, ranging from hygiene practices to social distancing protocols. Collaborating with religious organizations and civil society groups, the ministry developed targeted campaigns aimed at fostering behavioral change. The posters not only served as informational resources but also functioned as persuasive instruments, encouraging compliance with safety measures to curb the virus's spread.

Despite the usage of poster in communication disseminating information of COVID-19, the process faces several obstacles. One major obstacle is the issue of low literacy rates, particularly in rural and marginalized communities, which can hinder the comprehension and effectiveness of poster messages. Additionally, linguistic diversity across the country presents a challenge, as posters must be translated into multiple languages to ensure accessibility and relevance to diverse populations. Limited access to resources and

infrastructure, especially in remote areas, further complicates the distribution and dissemination of posters, restricting their reach to vulnerable populations who may be most in need of critical information about COVID-19 prevention and response measures.

Moreover, the rapid evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and the emergence of new variants pose challenges in keeping poster content accurate and up to date. Given the dynamic nature of the situation, there is a need for constant monitoring and adaptation of poster messaging to reflect the latest developments and public health guidelines. Additionally, the proliferation of misinformation and rumors about COVID-19 circulating on social media platforms can undermine the credibility of poster campaigns and confuse the public. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes community engagement, collaboration with local stakeholders, and innovative strategies to ensure that poster campaigns effectively reach and resonate with diverse audiences across Kenya. By analyzing these public health posters, this study explores how multimodal communication—combining text, imagery, and design—was utilized to influence public perception and action. The research highlights the intersection of language, visual rhetoric, and health policy, demonstrating how effective crisis communication can shape societal responses during emergencies. Through this lens, the study underscores the broader implications of health discourse in managing epidemics and safeguarding communities.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to analyze the multimodal discourse of selected Corona Virus posters in Kenya.

### **1.4 Research objectives**

The specific objectives of the proposed were to:

- i. Assess the multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya.
- ii. Establish the semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.
- iii. Explore how persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.
- iv. Explain the functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.

## **1.5 Research questions**

- i. What is the role of multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya?
- ii. What are the semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya?
- iii. How are persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality, used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya?
- iv. What are the functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters in Kenya?

## **1.6 Justification of the study**

The COVID-19 pandemic has emerged as a critical global concern, impacting not only public health but also reshaping communication dynamics across societies. This study is motivated by the urgent need to examine how health crises are communicated, particularly through multimodal discourse in public health posters. The pandemic presents a unique opportunity to investigate the intersection of linguistics and health communication, as governments and institutions worldwide have relied heavily on visual and textual messaging to influence public behavior.

Posters, as a primary medium of health communication, play a vital role in disseminating essential information to diverse audiences, including those with limited access to scientific or technical knowledge. By framing COVID-19 as both a scientific and sociolinguistic issue, this study bridges the gap between medical discourse and social sciences, emphasizing the role of language in shaping public understanding and compliance with health measures. A key objective of this research is to explore how multimodal discourse—integrating verbal and visual elements—enhances the effectiveness of health messaging. From a discourse analysis perspective, the study examines how posters construct meaning, persuade audiences, and reinforce public health directives. By doing so, it contributes to broader academic discussions in discourse analysis and clinical linguistics, offering insights into how language and imagery can be strategically employed in crisis communication.

This research aims to advance knowledge in health communication strategies, demonstrating how linguistic and visual analysis can inform more effective public health campaigns. The findings may not only enrich academic discourse but also provide

practical recommendations for policymakers and health communicators in managing current and future epidemics.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The proposed study was set to analyze Covid 19 posters through a multimodal analysis hence showing the relevance of language in social behavior change. Therefore, the knowledge gathered from this study may benefit public health, the Ministry of health, research communities and the WHO. Institutions of learning may also benefit from information from the study because COVID 19 discourse should be incorporated in the curriculum as a mean of mitigating the spread of pandemic. More so, this study borrowed a lot Metadiscourse and Multimodal Discourse Analysis hence adding knowledge on semiotic analysis.

### **1.8 Scope and Limitations**

This research is situated within the wider field of Discourse Analysis, with a particular emphasis on health-related communication. The study specifically narrows its focus to the use of posters as a medium for conveying health information, particularly educational posters related to COVID-19. The justification for selecting COVID-19 posters lies in their widespread use in Kenya by different stakeholders. These posters function as multimodal texts that integrate both written and visual elements to instruct the public on following safety measures during the pandemic. The scope of the study is further defined by its examination of semiotic and linguistic features. From a linguistic standpoint, the investigation concentrates on the verbal, textual, and visual components present in COVID-19 posters. The research focuses on posters written in English, Kiswahili, and Luhya, enabling a comparative analysis of both textual and visual language in the context of pandemic communication.

### **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

The current study adopts Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) as its central analytical framework, drawing on approaches proposed by Aworo-Okoroh (2018) and Guichon and Cohen (2016). MDA serves as a comprehensive tool for exploring how meaning is constructed and communicated through multiple semiotic modes—most commonly verbal, visual, and auditory. As noted by Gerbier, Bailly, and Bosse (2018), and further supported by Hyland, Wang, and Jiang (2022), the goal of multimodal analysis is to

uncover the underlying power dynamics and interpretive relationships embedded within multimodal texts. This involves critically examining how different modes work together to shape understanding, influence perception, and reinforce particular ideologies.

Multimodal analysis is increasingly being employed across a wide range of disciplines and communicative contexts. Its applications extend beyond traditional text-based analysis to include the study of visual and audio-visual materials. For instance, researchers have applied MDA to the examination of posters, news imagery, magazine covers, print advertisements, children's literature, and digital content such as online marketing materials and social media campaigns. These varied domains highlight the adaptability and relevance of MDA in analyzing contemporary communication practices.

A key theoretical foundation for this analytical approach is the work of Kress and van Leeuwen, whose model of multimodal discourse is rooted in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). According to Oliveira and Smith (2019), SFL is a social semiotic theory of language that views meaning-making as a social process situated within specific contexts. It emphasizes how language functions within society and how linguistic choices are influenced by the purpose, audience, and medium of communication. Within this framework, knowledge is seen not as fixed, but as the outcome of dynamic and contested literacy practices shaped by cultural and social interactions.

Therefore, this section elaborates on the theoretical principles of Systemic Functional Linguistics and Multimodal Discourse Analysis, as these are central to the study's analytical lens. The key concepts and assumptions underpinning both theories are discussed in detail in the subsections that follow.

### **1.9.1 Visual Elements**

Multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) examines how meaning is constructed through the integration of different communication modes, including verbal, visual, and auditory elements. According to Aworo-Okoroh (2018), multimodality refers to the blending of these various semiotic resources in communicative events, allowing us to interpret them as a unified hybrid text rather than isolated components. This analytical framework documents systems of meaning across three key dimensions adapted from Systemic Functional Linguistics: representational (ideational), interactive (interpersonal), and

compositional (textual) meanings. In visual communication specifically, these are respectively concerned with how information is presented, how viewer engagement is achieved, and how elements are arranged within the design.

The theoretical foundation of MDA stems from social semiotics, which in its narrowest sense draws upon Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) as developed by Schleppegrell (2016). SFG provides a framework for understanding how humans create meaning through language and other semiotic resources that constitute different discourse modes. This approach treats language as a form of social semiotic, examining how it interacts with and reflects social contexts. Kusmanto (2016) elaborates that language is interpreted as a system of meanings realized through specific forms within functional grammar. Halliday's framework identifies three metafunctions present in all language structures and human communication: the ideational function (constructing experience), interpersonal function (enacting social relationships), and textual function (organizing coherent messages). These metafunctions have been productively extended to analyze meaning-making in other semiotic modes beyond language, including visual communication (Almurashi, 2016).

Pusch et al. (2023) further develop this analytical approach by categorizing visual elements based on their communicative functions. They distinguish between interactive elements, which guide readers' comprehension of multimodal texts, and interactional elements, which actively engage readers in the interpretive process. The current study focuses specifically on interactive visual elements, which include five key subcategories: information value (how importance is signaled through placement), framing (how elements are bounded or connected), connective elements (explicit linking devices), graphs (data visualization), and fonts (typographical choices). These components work together to create coherent, persuasive multimodal texts that effectively communicate their intended messages while accounting for audience needs and expectations. The systematic analysis of these visual resources enables researchers to understand how meaning is constructed and interpreted in complex communicative artifacts like public health posters.

**Table 1: Visual interactive resources (drawn from Kress/van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006, and Kress, 2010)**

<b>Interactive Resources</b>	<b>Achieved through</b>	<b>Function</b>
Information Value	Left- Right Top-Bottom Centre-Margin Triptych Org	Organize the layout of information of a poster
Framing	Frame lines Color contrast Empty space between element	Distinguish sections of a text
Connective Elements	Vectors Repetition of shapes Repetition of color Alignment	Connect ideas and parts of visual and textual discourse
Graphic Elements	Conversion processes Taxonomies Flowcharts Networks Tables Figures (pie charts, graphs) Pictures Schematic analytical Pictures	Clarify and organize data for the viewer, aiding the immediate retention of information
Fonts	Size Colour Type	Enhance legibility; Help clarify parts of discourse, highlighting the most important parts of the text; Clarifies the organization of text

The analytical framework of this study acknowledges that effective communication extends beyond purely linguistic elements, incorporating multiple semiotic modes that work in concert to convey meaning. As illustrated in Table 1, multimodality fundamentally challenges the primacy of language as the sole communicative channel, instead positioning visual and textual elements as equally significant and intentionally designed components of meaning-making systems. This research specifically employs Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) to examine how Kenyan health authorities constructed COVID-19 prevention messages through an integrated system of interactive metadiscourse and visual grammar resources. The study analyzes posters produced through collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Health (MoH), religious organizations, and development partners, applying Pusch et al.'s (2023) visual grammar

model as an analytical lens. This framework proves particularly valuable for understanding how public health communicators strategically combined typographical choices, information hierarchy, graphical elements, and spatial arrangements to guide audience interpretation and compliance with health protocols. The visual grammar model illuminates the sophisticated ways these posters were designed not merely to inform, but to actively shape readers' understanding of pandemic risks and appropriate behavioral responses through carefully structured multimodal compositions. By examining these communicative artifacts through this dual analytical perspective, the study demonstrates how public health institutions leveraged the full semiotic potential of posters to achieve specific persuasive goals during a global health emergency.

### **1.9.2 Visual Grammar**

The Grammar of Visual Design, also known as Visual Grammar, was developed by Kress and van Leeuwen as a framework for analyzing visual communication. Their work first appeared in 1996 and was later revised in 2006. This theoretical model adapts and extends Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics principles to the analysis of visual imagery. Halliday's original framework identified three key metafunctions in language: the ideational function which represents experience and reality, the interpersonal function which enacts social relationships, and the textual function which organizes coherent messages. Kress and van Leeuwen demonstrated how these same functional dimensions operate in visual communication.

The relationship between Halliday's linguistic metafunctions and their visual counterparts can be clearly mapped. The representational metafunction in visual analysis corresponds to Halliday's ideational function, addressing how images depict participants, objects and processes. This includes distinguishing between narrative representations that show actions and conceptual representations that display classificatory relationships. The interactive metafunction parallels Halliday's interpersonal function, examining how images create relationships between depicted subjects and viewers through techniques like gaze, social distance and perspective. Finally, the compositional metafunction aligns with Halliday's textual function, analyzing how visual elements are arranged to create coherent messages through principles of information value, salience and framing.

This systematic correspondence between linguistic and visual metafunctions allows researchers to apply rigorous analytical methods to multimodal texts that were originally

developed for verbal communication. The framework provides a comprehensive toolkit for examining how images construct meaning, position viewers, and organize visual elements, making it particularly valuable for analyzing complex multimodal documents like public health posters where visual and verbal elements work together to convey messages. By establishing these clear parallels between language and visual communication, Kress and van Leeuwen's work enables more nuanced understanding of how different semiotic modes interact in meaning-making processes.

**Table 2: SFL Metafunctions in VG**

<b>SFL</b>	<b>VG</b>
Ideational	Representational
Interpersonal	Interactive
Textual	Compositional

The ideational metafunction, as described by Halliday, emphasizes that all semiotic systems must be capable of representing human experiences of the world. This means language serves as a tool for characterizing and interpreting observable reality. In contrast, the interpersonal metafunction focuses on the dynamic relationships that exist between the creators of signs, the signs themselves, and their intended audiences. The textual metafunction deals with the organizational structures and cohesive devices that make communication coherent and meaningful. Kress and van Leeuwen's *Grammar of Visual Design* adapts these linguistic metafunctions to the analysis of visual communication, proposing three parallel types of meaning: representational, interactive, and compositional.

Representational meaning in visual semiotics requires that images be able to depict aspects of reality, whether through direct representation or symbolic reference. Halliday's systemic functional linguistics explains how language constructs reality through various processes involving different participants. Kress and van Leeuwen extend this concept to visual analysis by categorizing representational processes into narrative representations, which show actions and events, and conceptual representations, which

illustrate classificatory or analytical relationships. This distinction helps explain how images convey different types of information about the world.

Compositional meaning refers to the way semiotic systems organize signs into coherent texts that fit their communicative context. In multimodal texts, visual and verbal elements combine to create unified messages. Kress and van Leeuwen identify specific compositional structures that contribute to this coherence, including horizontal arrangements that distinguish between given and new information, and vertical structures that separate ideal elements from real ones. These organizational principles ensure that visual messages are structured in ways that guide viewer interpretation.

Interactive meaning examines how semiotic systems mediate relationships between image creators, viewers, and the subjects being represented. Building on systemic functional principles, Aiello identifies two main types of participants in visual communication: represented participants, which are the people, objects, or scenes depicted in images, and interactive participants, which are the viewers engaging with those images. Three key relationships emerge from this framework: relationships among represented participants, relationships between represented and interactive participants, which reflect viewer attitudes toward what is depicted, and relationships between interactive participants, which are shaped through their shared engagement with images.

The analysis of visual interaction involves four important considerations. Visual contact refers to whether and how depicted subjects engage directly or indirectly with viewers. Social distance examines the perceived intimacy between represented subjects and viewers, which is often conveyed through framing and proximity. Perspective deals with the viewpoint from which images are presented, influencing how viewers interpret scenes. Modality assesses the degree to which images are presented as truthful or realistic representations of the world. Together, these factors shape how viewers engage with and interpret visual messages.

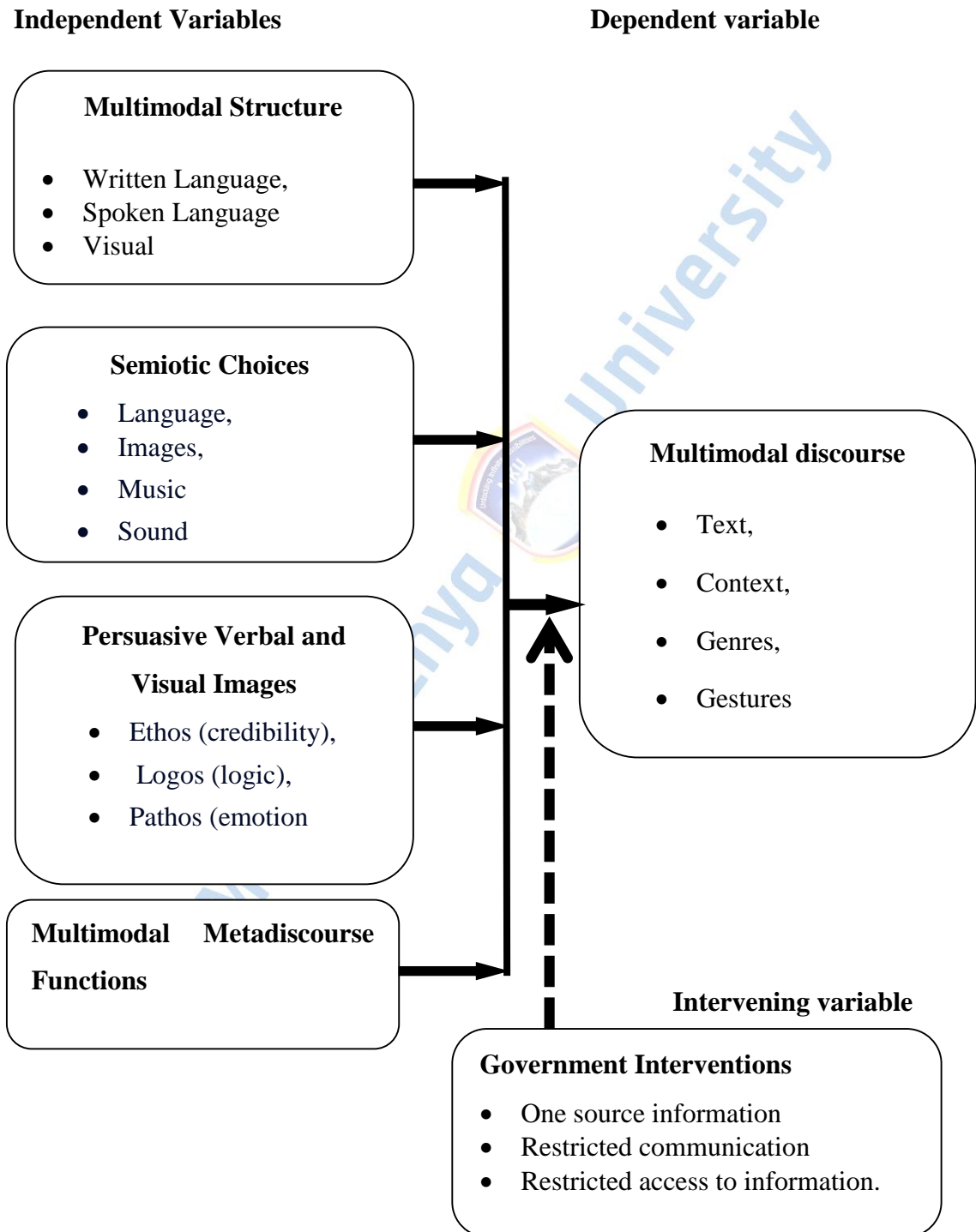
Aiello's work demonstrates how Halliday's metafunctions can be effectively applied to visual analysis through adjusted terminology, with representational standing in for ideational, interactive replacing interpersonal, and compositional corresponding to textual. This adaptation highlights that images, like language, both represent reality and facilitate social interaction, whether they appear with accompanying text or independently. The current study applies this multimodal framework to analyze COVID-

19 posters, specifically examining how verbal text and visual imagery combine to create meaning. The analysis focuses on whether these modes work together effectively to enhance communication and whether their integration successfully conveys intended public health messages. By applying this comprehensive framework, the study aims to shed light on the complex ways multimodal texts operate in health communication contexts.



### 1.10 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 below shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables and how they affect discourse. The framework indicates that language is part of society and can be interpreted in the perspective of the interaction with the context.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of existing scholarly work relevant to the current research. It systematically examines prior studies in three key areas: the role of language in health communication, the theory and application of multimodal communication, and research on posters as a medium for public health messaging. Through this critical literature review, the chapter identifies significant gaps in current knowledge that the present study seeks to address. The analysis of previous research helps establish the theoretical foundation for this investigation while clarifying how it will contribute new insights to the field.

#### 2.1 Language and health communication

According to Jones (2015), discourse analysis emerges as a particularly valuable framework within the field of health communication, offering a lens through which the use of language in health-related interactions can be critically examined. Tracy supports this view, noting that discourse analysis is not a single method but rather a collection of varied approaches, methodologies, and theoretical perspectives. Despite this diversity, a unifying theme across discourse analysis is its focus on how language functions as a social tool to achieve communicative purposes. In the context of health communication, different strands of discourse analysis contribute to understanding the dynamics of medical and public health interactions.

One of the principal approaches highlighted is Conversation Analysis (CA), which places minimal emphasis on non-verbal text and instead prioritizes the detailed transcription and examination of interpersonal speech (Wu et al., 2018). Within healthcare contexts, CA has been employed to analyze interactions between medical practitioners and patients. For example, Tracy illustrates how CA can be used to dissect dialogues that occur during medical examinations, such as consultations between nurses and female patients during gynecological appointments. Through this method, researchers can uncover the conversational strategies and communicative practices employed by both patients and healthcare providers to manage health-related discussions.

In addition to CA, Tracy identifies a formal or structural approach to discourse analysis, which emphasizes theoretical modeling. This method uses discourse to test established linguistic or sociolinguistic hypotheses, often relying more heavily on structured language patterns and less on spontaneous conversational data. This approach offers a complementary perspective by allowing researchers to analyze health discourse through a more controlled and model-based lens. Tracy's insights are particularly relevant for understanding how language played a pivotal role during the COVID-19 pandemic, where accurate, persuasive, and timely communication was critical to public health.

A related study by Ngigi and Busolo (2018) sheds light on the impact of persuasive language in mass media campaigns targeting public health concerns. Their research explores how language acts as a strategic instrument in shaping behaviors and influencing lifestyle changes. They examined high-impact campaigns such as the National Institute on Drug Abuse's "Cocaine: The Big Lie" and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, both of which successfully mobilized language to shift public perception, enhance awareness, and reduce drug use. These campaigns demonstrate how carefully constructed messages can drive prevention, promote treatment, and help curtail harmful behaviors. Building on this perspective, the proposed study focuses not just on verbal strategies, but on the multimodal dimensions of communication, particularly how visual and textual elements on public posters are used to persuade and encourage behavioral change during public health crises like COVID-19.

Furthermore, Chou and Budenz (2020) argue for a deeper appreciation of language as a core component in effective health communication. Their work emphasizes that language enables patients and healthcare providers to express intentions, identify health problems, assess their significance, and collaborate on appropriate treatment plans. They highlight that any disruptions or misunderstandings in linguistic expression can lead to serious consequences, such as misdiagnosis or patient non-compliance. Their findings underscore the central role that language plays in ensuring the clarity, accessibility, and efficiency of health services. In line with this, the current study draws from insights by Cameron and William, who also advocate for understanding the role of language in health communication, particularly in the Kenyan context, where linguistic diversity and accessibility to public health messages are critical factors in service delivery.

Kenneth (2017) notes that language is important in our interpersonal relationships where we influence the attitudes and behavior of others, make sense of the world and our experiences in it, express personal needs as well as understand the needs of those we interact with. While language can form contacts and maintain relationships, human beings are also known to use language to negate all these efforts. This is because language through its units such word, phrase and sentence has power of life and death (Kenneth, 2017). Kenneth further points out that language or rather words can build someone up and empower them while on the flip side, language can tear someone, a society down and ruin them. A word has the power and ability to inspire, empower and bring hope; and it can also bully, and destroy our sense of self since language affects both the speaker as well as the other person (Kenneth, 2017). Language is a very powerful means towards influencing individuals as well as the society. Language is reported to determine an individual's or a group's potential to be part of society and also plays a very important role in creating identity for individuals and groups. The study applies Kenneth's view on the study of COVID 19 discourse.

Shaikh (2019) notes that language is a vital tool in communication as it shapes the way individuals view the world and others. However, he is quick to point out that language is not limited to human communication of thoughts and emotions only but that it is the tool through which humans conquer the world they live in. This is so because language has the power to dominate our communication to create different identities and build a social gap between people and groups (Shaikh, 2019).

*“Language is a means through which we communicate with the world, define our identity, express our history and culture, learn, defend our human rights and participate in all aspects of society. Language is pivotal in the areas of human rights protection, good governance, peace building, reconciliation, and sustainable development,” (UNESCO 2019).*

In the light of the above quote, we notice that language is important in enhancing the world agenda for sustainable development in line with Agenda 2030. The proposed study analyzed textual, verbal and visual language used in relation to COVID 19.

## **2.2 Multimodality**

Aworo-Okoroh, (2018) describe language as being made up of words where some of the words we use convey meaning, some emotions and others produce actions. The

researchers also report that one of the functions of language is verbal expression and communication which enables us to express our thoughts, describe people, things and ideas. McKay and Fanning (1995) inform us that through our observation of the world around us, we gain experiences and then we use language to evaluate and interpret the observations in an attempt to assign meaning to them. These researchers also report that our experiences and observations gained through reading, seeing and hearing (what our study refers to as written, visual and verbal language; the basis of our study) are assigned meaning based on our beliefs (what we think is true or false), attitudes (what we like and dislike) and values (what we think is right or wrong, good or bad). McKay and Fanning (1995) inform us that language is key in bringing people together and maintaining relationships. They also note that words whether used intentionally or unintentionally they affect our relationships negatively or they promote a feeling of inclusiveness. The present study focuses on multimodal communication of COVID 19 posters.

Tambiah (2017) states that words are very powerful when it comes to influencing, altering and transforming the world we live in because language helps us to initiate, maintain and terminate our interpersonal relationships. The language enables us to communicate what we feel about ourselves and others. He adds that we use language to develop labels that enable us describe the world and our experiences and that the power of language in expressing our identities varies depending on the origin of the label and the topic of discussion. He goes further to report that human beings are more comfortable with the labels they use to describe their own identities but raised issues with labels placed on them by other people in the community especially if those other people give them labels that have negative connotations and are intentionally using such labels intentionally to contort meaning(s).

Vidgen, and Derczynski, (2020) report that even though language can be spread in all directions (when a person speaks), the receptions are directed. This means that sound(s) can be heard in all directions but the receiver is intended and s/he can tell from which direction the sounds of language came and thus decipher the intended meaning. These researchers also point out that language is open. This means that words can be used according to human needs to communicate our ideas, thoughts and feelings towards the object of discussion. Language is therefore used to communicate information about health.

Van Leeuwen (2015) conceptualizes multimodality not as a unified theoretical framework but as an inherent characteristic of all forms of human communication. He posits that every instance of discourse inherently involves multiple semiotic modes working in concert. In spoken communication, for example, linguistic elements are always accompanied by paralinguistic features such as intonation patterns, vocal timbre, and rhythmic variations, as well as nonverbal components including gestural systems, facial displays, bodily positioning, and aspects of personal presentation like sartorial choices and grooming. Similarly, written discourse constitutes more than just lexical content, incorporating typographical decisions, graphic elements, spatial organization, and chromatic selections that collectively contribute to meaning-making. This perspective fundamentally challenges traditional linguistic approaches that privilege verbal content over other semiotic resources.

The scholarly focus on multimodal analysis, according to van Leeuwen, stems from a recognition that examining the interplay between different meaning-making systems within communicative events can reveal submerged ideological structures and unarticulated cultural assumptions. By systematically investigating how various semiotic modes - whether visual, auditory, or tactile - combine and interact within specific discourses, researchers can uncover how power relations, social hierarchies, and belief systems become naturalized through everyday communication practices. This analytical orientation has led to the development of numerous methodological approaches designed to parse the complex multimodal nature of contemporary discourse. These frameworks vary in their specific foci and applications but share a common commitment to understanding communication as an integrated semiotic ecology rather than as discrete channels of information transmission.

### **2.3 Multimodality studies on Posters**

Aworo-Okoroh's (2018) research offers valuable insights into multimodal discourse analysis within health communication contexts through an examination of HIV/AIDS awareness posters from Nigerian hospitals. The study specifically analyzed six posters collected from medical facilities in southwestern Nigeria, focusing on their communicative strategies toward people living with HIV/AIDS and their social networks. Applying Kress and Van Leeuwen's theoretical framework, the investigation identified six primary communicative functions within the materials: instruction delivery, advice provision, encouragement offering, warning issuance, information

presentation, and audience engagement. While this study predates the COVID-19 pandemic, its methodological approach and findings regarding multimodal health communication strategies remain highly relevant for analyzing pandemic-related posters, particularly in understanding how different semiotic modes combine to achieve specific communicative objectives in public health contexts.

Lirola's (2016) investigation into political campaign materials provides another important perspective on multimodal analysis. The study conducted a comparative examination of Fianna Fáil party posters across different electoral cycles in Ireland, specifically contrasting materials produced during the economic boom period known as the Celtic Tiger (1997-2008) with those created during the subsequent economic downturn (2009-2012). Through detailed analysis of four strategically selected posters from key election years, the research revealed how political designers manipulate verbal and visual elements to construct particular representations of political power and candidate credibility, ultimately aiming to influence voter behavior. While focused on political rather than health communication, this study's findings about multimodal persuasion techniques offer valuable transferable insights for analyzing COVID-19 posters, particularly regarding how visual-verbal combinations can shape audience perceptions and motivate behavioral change.

Al-Masri's (2016) comprehensive study of Jordanian editorial cartoons demonstrates another application of multimodal discourse analysis. The investigation examined 300 cartoons by prominent artist Emad Hajjaj, employing Van Dijk's (2008) context model theory to analyze how verbal and visual elements interact across different contextual layers - macro (broad sociocultural), micro (immediate situational), and dynamic (evolving interpretive) contexts. The findings revealed how Hajjaj skillfully integrated linguistic, visual, and sociocultural references to comment on contemporary issues, showcasing the complex interplay between different semiotic modes in conveying sociopolitical messages. Although focused on editorial cartoons rather than health communication, this research contributes methodological insights about analyzing multimodal texts within their sociocultural contexts that remain applicable to studying COVID-19 posters, particularly in understanding how public health messages might be interpreted differently across various community contexts.

Hu and Luo's (2016) analysis of e-commerce advertisements presents yet another dimension of multimodal research. The study applied Kress and Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar framework to examine promotional materials for Tmall's "Double Eleven" shopping festival, demonstrating how advertisers combine representational, interactive, and compositional meanings to create persuasive messages. The findings highlighted specific strategies designers use to attract attention and influence consumer behavior through multimodal means. While focused on commercial rather than public health communication, this research offers valuable parallels for understanding how COVID-19 posters might employ similar multimodal techniques to promote behavioral change, particularly in terms of visual persuasion strategies and information organization.

Tan and colleagues' (2018) investigation into extremist propaganda images provides a contrasting but methodologically relevant example of multimodal analysis. The study employed an innovative mixed-methods approach combining multimodal discourse analysis with data mining and information visualization techniques to track how ISIS-produced images were repurposed across various online platforms. The research revealed patterns in how these violent images were recontextualized across formal and informal digital spaces, particularly in Western news and political websites. While focusing on radically different content than health communication, this study's methodological innovations in tracking image circulation and transformation offer potential analytical approaches for studying how public health visuals might be adapted or reinterpreted across different media platforms and communities.

Baraza, Khasanda, and Nyandoro's (2020) research directly addresses COVID-19 communication but with a focus on social media rather than print materials. Combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Multimodal Discourse Analysis within a Systemic Functional Linguistics framework, the study examined 28 digital texts from various online platforms to understand how interactive meanings were constructed during pandemic containment efforts. The analysis revealed numerous emergent social themes including economic hardship, relationship strains, and power dynamics within households during lockdowns. While sharing the current study's focus on COVID-19 communication, this research differs in its emphasis on digital rather than print media and its focus on social rather than institutional discourse. Nonetheless, its findings about pandemic-related communication challenges and its methodological approach offer valuable points of comparison for analyzing official health posters.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate the versatility of multimodal discourse analysis across various communication contexts while highlighting the need for more focused research on institutional health communication materials, particularly COVID-19 posters in African contexts. Each contributes unique methodological or theoretical insights that can inform the analysis of public health campaigns while also revealing gaps that the current study aims to address regarding the specific multimodal strategies employed in Kenya's official pandemic response materials.

## **2.4 Literature Review**

### **2.4.1 Assess the multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya.**

The multimodal analysis of health communication materials has gained significant attention in recent scholarship, particularly regarding how visual and textual elements interact to convey complex health messages. A comprehensive study by Machin and Mayr (2012) examining public health campaigns across several European nations revealed that effective posters typically employ a tripartite structure: a dominant central image, supporting textual information, and culturally coded color schemes. Their work demonstrated how these elements work synergistically, with images capturing attention while text provides specific behavioral instructions. This structural approach has become particularly relevant during health crises, where rapid comprehension of messages can directly impact public safety and compliance with health measures.

Further research by Forceville (2014) in the Netherlands specifically addressed how pictorial metaphors function in health communication, analyzing campaigns addressing smoking cessation and obesity prevention. The findings indicated that visual metaphors, when carefully designed, could communicate complex health concepts more effectively than text alone, particularly for low-literacy populations. This research established important parameters for assessing how different semiotic modes can compensate for each other's limitations in health communication contexts. The study also highlighted the cultural specificity of visual metaphors, noting that their effectiveness depended heavily on shared cultural knowledge between designers and target audiences.

In Asian contexts, a landmark study by Lim (2018) analyzing SARS and H1N1 prevention posters in Singapore identified four key multimodal strategies: severity indication through color coding, behavioral demonstration through sequenced images, authority establishment through institutional logos, and urgency creation through

typographic choices. These findings provided a framework for evaluating how different modes work together to achieve specific communicative functions. The research further noted that the relative weighting of visual versus textual elements varied significantly depending on the intended audience's demographic characteristics, with youth-oriented posters emphasizing visual elements more heavily.

Turning to African contexts, scholarship has revealed how multimodal health communication must adapt to diverse linguistic landscapes and visual literacy levels. Ademiluyi's (2019) analysis of malaria prevention materials in Nigeria demonstrated how successful posters integrated indigenous visual symbols with simplified textual messages in multiple local languages. The study found that posters incorporating culturally familiar imagery, such as local village scenes or traditional clothing, achieved significantly higher message recall than those using generic imagery. This research underscored the importance of cultural localization in multimodal health communication, particularly in postcolonial contexts where Western visual conventions might not resonate equally across all population segments.

Ndlovu's (2021) research in South Africa expanded this understanding by examining how TB awareness posters navigated the country's multilingual context. The study revealed innovative design solutions, such as using visual narratives that could be understood without text, or incorporating minimal text in multiple languages around a central image. This approach proved particularly effective in reaching migrant populations and those with limited literacy in any of South Africa's official languages. The research also highlighted how color symbolism varied significantly across cultural groups, with certain colors carrying positive associations in some communities while signaling danger in others.

Focusing specifically on Kenya, emerging research has begun to document the unique multimodal characteristics of COVID-19 health communication. Mwangi and Chemngorem's (2022) comprehensive analysis of 120 official COVID-19 posters identified several distinctive design patterns. The study noted the prevalence of red-white color schemes, which aligned with international emergency communication standards while also resonating with local color symbolism. The research also documented the strategic use of photographic versus illustrated content, with urban-targeted posters favoring photographic realism while rural-oriented materials more frequently employed

schematic illustrations. This differentiation appeared to reflect designers' awareness of varying visual literacy levels across different regions.

The linguistic aspects of Kenyan COVID-19 posters revealed particularly interesting multimodal adaptations. The study found that approximately 68% of posters employed some form of Swahili-English code-switching, with the language choice varying according to the poster's placement and target audience. Posters in urban centers and healthcare facilities tended to use more English, while those in public transportation and rural areas favored Swahili or local languages. This linguistic flexibility represented an important strategy for maximizing message accessibility across Kenya's diverse population. The research also noted the innovative use of typography, with key Swahili phrases often appearing in larger, bolder fonts than supporting English text.

Otieno's (2023) follow-up study provided deeper insight into how Kenyan posters addressed the challenge of communicating complex health behaviors to low-literacy populations. The research documented how posters used visual sequencing to demonstrate behaviors like proper mask-wearing or handwashing techniques. These sequences often employed numbering systems combined with simple illustrations, creating what the study termed "visual how-to guides." The research also highlighted the use of schematic representations for abstract concepts like viral transmission, where designers employed familiar visual metaphors (such as rain droplets to represent respiratory particles) to bridge the comprehension gap.

A particularly innovative finding from Kenyan research concerns the use of spatial representation in social distancing posters. Several studies noted that designers employed culturally specific spatial markers, such as the length of a traditional staff (rungu) or the width of a market stall, to illustrate appropriate distancing measures. This localization of measurement concepts demonstrated sophisticated awareness of the need to ground abstract health recommendations in familiar, everyday experiences. The research suggested that such culturally embedded visual strategies likely contributed to higher compliance rates with distancing measures in certain communities.

The multimodal analysis also revealed challenges in Kenya's COVID-19 poster communication. Some studies noted inconsistencies in visual messaging across different government agencies, potentially leading to public confusion. Other research pointed out instances where the overuse of stock imagery reduced the cultural specificity of

messages, or where textual and visual elements conveyed slightly different instructions. These findings underscore the complexity of creating effective multimodal health communication, particularly in rapidly evolving pandemic situations where messaging needs to be developed and disseminated quickly.

Current research directions in this field are exploring how digital media has influenced the multimodal design of health posters in Kenya. Preliminary findings suggest that posters designed for both physical display and social media sharing are developing hybrid characteristics, incorporating elements optimized for small-screen viewing while maintaining effectiveness as physical displays. This digital-physical duality represents an emerging area of multimodal research that will likely gain importance as health communication becomes increasingly mediated through multiple platforms.

The accumulated research on Kenyan COVID-19 posters demonstrates how multimodal analysis can reveal both the strengths and areas for improvement in public health communication. The studies collectively highlight Kenya's innovative approaches to visual-textual integration while also identifying opportunities for greater consistency and cultural specificity in future health campaigns. As the field continues to develop, researchers emphasize the need for ongoing multimodal analysis to keep pace with evolving communication technologies and changing public health needs.

#### **2.4.2 Establish the semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.**

The semiotic analysis of health communication materials has evolved significantly in recent decades, with scholars examining how signs and symbols convey meaning across different cultural contexts. A foundational study by Barthes (1977) in France established key frameworks for analyzing visual semiotics in public messaging, particularly how denotative (literal) and connotative (cultural) meanings interact in graphic design. This work proved especially relevant for health communication, where clarity and cultural resonance are equally important. Subsequent research by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in Australia developed the concept of "visual grammar," providing systematic tools for analyzing composition, perspective, and modality in health posters. Their work demonstrated how choices in color, layout, and imagery could either reinforce or undermine intended health messages.

Building on these foundations, studies in various national contexts have revealed how semiotic choices reflect specific communication priorities. Research by Messaris (1997) in the United States examined antismoking campaigns and identified recurring visual strategies, including the use of grotesque imagery to depict health consequences and authoritative figures to establish credibility. Similarly, a study by Wang (2008) in China analyzed SARS prevention posters and documented the prevalence of collective imagery (groups rather than individuals) and symbolic representations of disease (e.g., dark clouds or monster-like figures). These studies collectively established that semiotic choices in health communication are never neutral but instead reflect deep-seated cultural values and communication traditions.

In South American contexts, investigations have revealed distinct semiotic patterns in health messaging. A study by Ferreira (2015) in Brazil analyzed dengue prevention campaigns and noted the strategic use of cartoonish mosquitoes with human characteristics to simultaneously attract attention and simplify complex epidemiological concepts. This approach contrasted sharply with European and North American conventions that typically favored photographic realism for disease vectors. Parallel research by González (2017) in Mexico examined HIV/AIDS posters and identified the recurring semiotic use of religious iconography blended with medical imagery, reflecting the cultural centrality of Catholicism in health conceptualizations. These regional variations underscore how semiotic choices must adapt to local symbolic ecosystems to achieve communicative effectiveness.

Turning to scholarship in South Asia, distinct semiotic patterns emerge in public health communication. A comprehensive analysis by Gupta (2019) of polio eradication posters in India revealed the strategic deployment of divine imagery, with vaccination scenes often framed to resemble religious ceremonies or blessings. This semiotic choice effectively bridged the gap between biomedical and traditional health beliefs. Similarly, research by Khan (2020) in Pakistan examined hepatitis awareness materials and documented the prevalence of familial imagery, where disease prevention was semiotically linked to household protection rather than individual health. These studies demonstrate how successful health communication in these contexts requires semiotic systems that resonate with collectivist cultural frameworks rather than Western individualistic paradigms.

In African contexts, research has illuminated how semiotic choices navigate complex linguistic and cultural landscapes. A study by Nketia (2018) in Ghana analyzed malaria prevention posters and identified the innovative use of proverbial imagery, where visual metaphors referenced well-known local sayings about health and prevention. This approach allowed posters to tap into existing cultural knowledge systems rather than introducing entirely new conceptual frameworks. Similarly, research by Diop (2020) in Senegal examined HIV/AIDS materials and noted the strategic absence of certain semiotic elements (e.g., explicit condom imagery) in favor of more abstract representations of protection, reflecting careful negotiation of cultural sensitivities. These findings highlight how African health communication often employs sophisticated semiotic strategies to balance medical accuracy with cultural acceptability.

Focusing specifically on Kenya, emerging scholarship has documented unique semiotic approaches in COVID-19 posters. A content analysis by Wambui and Kiprop (2021) of 150 official posters identified three dominant semiotic strategies: (1) the use of hand imagery as a central motif, representing both the threat of transmission and the solution of hygiene; (2) the strategic incorporation of national symbols like the flag and national colors to frame prevention as patriotic duty; and (3) the blending of biomedical imagery (virus illustrations) with traditional symbols of protection (shield motifs). This semiotic synthesis effectively bridged scientific and cultural understandings of the pandemic.

Further examination by Mbithe (2022) revealed how Kenyan posters employed color semiotics with particular sophistication. The research noted that while red was used internationally to signal danger, Kenyan designers often layered additional cultural meanings - pairing red with white not just for visual contrast but to evoke the Maasai shuka (traditional blanket), semiotically linking COVID precautions to cultural notions of strength and communal resilience. Similarly, the study documented how urban posters used photographic imagery of diverse ethnic groups, semiotically reinforcing national unity messages, while rural posters more frequently employed illustrated characters in local dress styles to enhance identification.

The linguistic semiotics of Kenyan COVID-19 posters have also attracted scholarly attention. Research by Nyamai (2023) analyzed code-switching patterns and found that posters strategically employed Swahili proverbs as headlines ("Kuzuia ni bora kuliko kukosa" - Prevention is better than regret), using familiar linguistic structures as semiotic

anchors for complex health concepts. The study also noted innovative typographic semiotics, where text size and font choices signaled hierarchy of information - with imperative verbs ("Wear," "Wash," "Avoid") consistently appearing in larger, bolder typefaces to command attention.

Challenges in Kenya's COVID-19 poster semiotics have also emerged from research. A study by Onyango (2023) identified instances where over-reliance on international iconography (like the now-ubiquitous coronavirus sphere illustration) sometimes conflicted with local symbolic systems, particularly among rural populations less exposed to global media imagery. Similarly, the research noted that certain visual metaphors (e.g., "flattening the curve" graphs) required supplementary text explanations, suggesting that some scientific semiotics didn't translate seamlessly across all educational levels. These findings highlight the delicate balance required in pandemic semiotics between international standardization and local adaptation.

Current research directions are exploring how digital circulation has influenced the semiotics of Kenyan health posters. Preliminary findings from a 2023 study by TechBridge Africa suggest that posters designed for social media sharing are developing distinct semiotic features - including meme-like visual humor and abbreviated text forms - while maintaining traditional semiotic anchors for credibility. This digital evolution presents both opportunities for greater engagement and challenges for message consistency, as semiotic systems must now function across physical and virtual spaces simultaneously.

The accumulated research on Kenyan COVID-19 poster semiotics demonstrates how these materials represent a rich intersection of global health communication conventions and localized symbolic systems. Studies collectively reveal Kenya's innovative approaches to visual meaning-making, where international pandemic iconography is creatively adapted to resonate with diverse cultural frameworks across the nation. As scholarship in this area continues to grow, researchers emphasize the need for ongoing semiotic analysis to inform future health communication strategies, particularly as Kenya continues to develop its distinctive visual language for public health messaging.

### **2.4.3 Persuasive Verbal and Visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.**

The strategic integration of verbal and visual elements in health communication has been extensively studied across various cultural contexts, with particular attention to their persuasive functions. A seminal study by McQuarrie and Mick (1996) in the United States established foundational principles of visual rhetoric in advertising that later informed public health communication strategies. Their work demonstrated how figurative language in headlines combined with emotionally resonant imagery could significantly enhance message persuasiveness. This theoretical framework proved particularly relevant during health crises, where communication effectiveness directly impacts behavioral outcomes. Subsequent research by Scott (1994) developed the concept of "visual argument," showing how images could function as independent units of persuasion rather than merely illustrating accompanying text.

Building on these foundations, studies in European contexts have revealed culture-specific patterns in persuasive health messaging. Research by Phillips and McQuarrie (2004) in the United Kingdom analyzed anti-smoking campaigns and identified three recurring visual-rhetorical strategies: metaphor, irony, and visual punning. Their findings showed that metaphorical representations of health consequences (e.g., cigarettes as sinking ships) were particularly effective for creating lasting cognitive impressions. Similarly, a comprehensive study by Geise and Baden (2015) in Germany examined climate change visuals and documented how the strategic use of iconic imagery (polar bears, melting glaciers) created immediate emotional connections that complemented statistical arguments in text. These studies collectively established that persuasive multimodality operates differently across cultural contexts based on prevailing visual literacy levels and aesthetic traditions.

In Asian contexts, research has illuminated distinct approaches to integrating verbal and visual persuasion. A study by Chang (2006) in Taiwan analyzed SARS prevention materials and identified the effective pairing of imperative verb structures with sequenced action images. This research demonstrated how the temporal alignment of visual demonstrations with concise verbal commands enhanced behavioral compliance. Similarly, work by Kim and Lee (2011) in South Korea examined obesity prevention campaigns and found that posters combining traditional proverbs with corresponding

visual metaphors achieved higher message acceptance than either element alone. These findings highlighted the cultural premium placed on harmonious verbal-visual integration in Confucian-influenced communication contexts.

Turning to Middle Eastern scholarship, investigations have revealed unique configurations of persuasive multimodality in health communication. Research by Al-Momani (2017) in Jordan analyzed diabetes awareness posters and documented the strategic use of familial imagery paired with religious references in text. This combination effectively framed health behaviors as both medical necessities and moral obligations. Parallel findings emerged from a study by Bahrani and Soltani (2018) in Iran, where HIV prevention materials strategically employed Persian miniature painting styles to deliver contemporary health messages through traditional visual vocabulary. These approaches demonstrated how culturally embedded aesthetic forms could enhance the persuasive power of health communication when aligned with appropriate verbal messages.

In the African context, studies have begun mapping the distinctive characteristics of persuasive multimodality in public health communication. A groundbreaking study by Nwoye (2019) in Nigeria examined malaria prevention posters and identified the strategic incorporation of proverbial rhetoric with symbolic imagery. This research showed how posters using Igbo proverbs as headlines paired with visual representations of those proverbs achieved deeper cultural resonance. Similarly, work by Kaschula (2020) in South Africa analyzed TB awareness materials and documented the persuasive power of code-switched slogans combined with township-specific visual backdrops. These multimodal combinations proved particularly effective in urban informal settlements where linguistic and visual literacy varied widely.

Focusing specifically on Kenya, emerging research has documented innovative approaches to persuasive multimodality in COVID-19 posters. A comprehensive analysis by Mwaura and Wanjiru (2021) of 200 official posters identified four recurring persuasive strategies: (1) the pairing of Swahili imperatives ("Kaa Maskini!" - Wear a mask!) with photographic demonstrations of proper usage; (2) the combination of statistical data visualizations with vernacular explanations ("Kila siku watu 56 wanakufa" - Every day 56 people die); (3) the juxtaposition of threat imagery (hospitals) with positive reinforcement visuals (happy families); and (4) the strategic use of celebrity

photographs with personal testimony quotes. This multimodal orchestration created layered persuasive appeals targeting both rational and emotional decision-making pathways.

Further examination by Chebet and Kipchilat (2022) revealed how Kenyan posters employed culturally specific visual-verbal puns for persuasive effect. The study documented creative adaptations like depicting a soap bar shaped like Kenya with the tagline "Osha Kenya" (Wash Kenya/Clean Kenya), blending visual metaphor with verbal wordplay. Similarly, the research noted how posters targeting matatu (public transport) users combined cartoonish illustrations of crowded vehicles with rhyming safety slogans ("Mask up before you step up"). These localized multimodal strategies demonstrated sophisticated adaptation of international health communication principles to Kenyan communicative norms.

The linguistic aspects of persuasive multimodality in Kenyan posters have attracted particular scholarly interest. Research by Atieno (2023) analyzed the rhetorical structure of poster text and identified strategic use of conversational Swahili rather than formal language, creating a peer-to-peer persuasive dynamic rather than top-down directives. The study also documented how posters incorporated call-and-response structures ("Uliza Kwa Nini? Jibu ni COVID!" - Ask why? The answer is COVID!) to actively engage viewers. When combined with eye-contact imagery (photographs of people looking directly at the viewer), these verbal strategies created powerful interpersonal persuasive appeals.

Challenges in Kenya's persuasive multimodal strategies have also emerged from research. A study by Odhiambo (2023) identified instances where overly complex data visualizations conflicted with simplified verbal messages, creating cognitive dissonance rather than reinforcement. Similarly, the research noted cases where the emotional tone of images (e.g., frightening hospital scenes) overwhelmed the rational appeal of accompanying text, potentially triggering defensive reactions. These findings highlight the delicate balance required in persuasive multimodality, where all components must work synergistically rather than competitively.

Current research is exploring how digital media formats are reshaping persuasive multimodality in Kenyan health communication. Preliminary findings from a 2023 study by Digital Health Africa suggest that posters adapted for mobile platforms are

incorporating interactive elements (QR codes linking to explanatory videos) and meme aesthetics while maintaining core persuasive strategies. This digital evolution presents both opportunities for deeper engagement and challenges for message consistency across platforms.

The accumulated research on Kenyan COVID-19 posters demonstrates how these materials represent sophisticated multimodal persuasion systems. Studies collectively reveal Kenya's innovative approaches to integrating verbal and visual persuasion, where international public health communication principles are creatively adapted through local linguistic play, cultural references, and communicative norms. As scholarship in this area grows, researchers emphasize the need for continued analysis of these multimodal persuasive strategies to inform future health communication efforts in Kenya and beyond.

#### **2.4.4 Functions of Multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 Posters.**

The concept of metadiscourse—language and visual elements that guide interpretation rather than convey primary content—has been extensively studied in academic and professional communication. Hyland (2005) in New Zealand pioneered research on verbal metadiscourse, identifying its role in structuring arguments and engaging readers. This framework was later expanded by scholars like Ädel (2006) in Sweden, who demonstrated how metadiscourse varies across genres and cultures. When applied to health communication, these principles reveal how posters use multimodal metadiscourse to direct attention, establish credibility, and facilitate comprehension. A study by Fuertes-Olivera (2013) in Spain analyzed pharmaceutical advertisements and found that color coding, arrows, and typographic emphasis served as visual metadiscourse, guiding viewers through complex information hierarchies.

Further research in North America has examined how metadiscursive elements create persuasive pathways in public health materials. A content analysis by Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) in the United States of AIDS awareness posters identified frequent use of hedges ("may reduce risk") and boosters ("definitely prevents transmission") as verbal metadiscourse that modulated message certainty. Visually, their study noted how institutional logos and certification symbols functioned as credibility markers, while directional cues (like numbered steps) served as organizational metadiscourse. Parallel work by Barton (2004) in Canada explored how multicultural health brochures used icons

and pictorial sequences as non-verbal metadiscourse to bridge language barriers, demonstrating that visual organizers could compensate for limited textual fluency among diverse populations.

In Asian contexts, research has revealed culture-specific patterns in multimodal metadiscourse. A study by D'Angelo (2012) in Japan analyzed earthquake preparedness posters and documented sophisticated use of manga-style motion lines and exclamation symbols as visual metadiscourse. These elements explicitly guided emotional responses to technical information, with specific symbols indicating urgency (sweat drops) versus reassurance (smiling suns). Similarly, research by Zhang (2017) in China examined anti-smoking campaigns and identified the prevalence of red stamp seals as authoritative metadiscourse, borrowing from traditional document authentication practices to lend governmental credibility to health claims. These culturally embedded markers proved more persuasive than generic warning labels for local audiences.

European scholarship has contributed significantly to understanding how metadiscourse operates across modalities. A multimodal analysis by Kumpf (2000) in Germany of workplace safety posters demonstrated how color-coded risk triangles (red=danger, yellow=caution) functioned as visual metadiscourse that required no textual explanation. The study also highlighted how German posters frequently used boldfaced verbs at sentence beginnings ("Vermeiden Sie..." - Avoid...) as structural metadiscourse that created consistent cognitive entry points for readers. Complementary research by Moschini (2016) in Italy explored how food labeling employed visual metadiscourse through "traffic light" nutrition systems, finding that these color-based evaluative frameworks allowed rapid comprehension regardless of literacy levels.

Turning to African contexts, emerging research has documented unique adaptations of multimodal metadiscourse in public health communication. A study by Amfo (2020) in Ghana analyzed cholera prevention posters and identified how Adinkra symbols—traditional Akan visual motifs—were repurposed as cultural metadiscourse. For instance, the "Gye Nyame" symbol (representing divine protection) often appeared beside treatment instructions, implicitly endorsing biomedical interventions through traditional spiritual frameworks. Similarly, research by Nassenstein (2021) in Uganda examined HIV testing campaigns and found that posters used hand gesture illustrations (pointing

fingers, open palms) as gestural metadiscourse to indicate procedural sequences, capitalizing on widely recognized nonverbal communication norms in the region.

Focusing specifically on Kenya, recent scholarship has illuminated innovative uses of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID-19 posters. A corpus analysis by Muthoni and Were (2022) of 150 official posters identified three primary metadiscursive functions: (1) directional elements like arrows and numbered circles that physically guided eye movement through prevention steps; (2) framing devices such as colored borders that categorized information by type (red for prohibitions, green for recommendations); and (3) intertextual markers like hashtags (#KomeshaCorona) that connected print materials to digital campaigns. These elements worked synergistically to reduce cognitive load while enhancing message retention.

Further investigation by Kamau (2023) revealed how Kenyan posters employed linguistic metadiscourse distinctively. The study documented strategic use of Swahili discourse markers ("Kumbuka!" - Remember!; "Angalia!" - Look!) as verbal signposts that segmenting complex information into digestible units. Visually, the research highlighted how posters incorporated schematic faces (smiling/masked vs. frowning/unmasked) as evaluative metadiscourse that implicitly graded behavioral choices without extensive text. This combination of explicit verbal markers and implicit visual evaluations created layered guidance systems for diverse audiences.

The cultural adaptation of metadiscursive elements in Kenyan posters has yielded particularly innovative solutions. A study by Wairimu (2023) analyzed how matatu (public transport) COVID posters repurposed the vehicle's traditional "stage" numbering system—normally indicating routes—as organizational metadiscourse for sequencing safety steps (Stage 1: Mask, Stage 2: Sanitize). Similarly, research noted how posters in pastoralist communities incorporated livestock brand symbols as familiarity anchors, with circles and crosses transforming into metadiscursive markers for "approved" and "prohibited" behaviors respectively. These localized adaptations demonstrated sophisticated cultural translation of international health communication conventions.

Challenges in Kenya's multimodal metadiscourse have also emerged from research. A usability study by Otieno (2023) identified instances where overuse of directional arrows created visual clutter rather than clarity, particularly in densely textual posters. Similarly, some hybrid posters combining Ministry of Health and WHO metadiscursive symbols

(logos, color codes) generated confusion when the systems conflicted. These findings underscore the need for culturally coherent rather than additive approaches to multimodal metadiscourse design.

Current research is exploring digital transformations of these metadiscursive systems. Preliminary findings from TechLit Africa (2023) suggest that Kenyan COVID posters adapted for social media have developed hybrid metadiscourse, where traditional directional cues (arrows) merge with digital conventions (swipe indicators). Simultaneously, verbal metadiscourse is shifting from imperative statements ("Wear masks") to interactive prompts ("Show us your mask selfie"), reflecting platform-specific engagement strategies while maintaining core guidance functions.

The collective research on Kenyan COVID-19 posters demonstrates how multimodal metadiscourse functions as a vital interpretive scaffold in public health communication. Studies reveal Kenya's creative synthesis of international design principles with localized visual and verbal guidance systems, from repurposed transportation symbols to culturally embedded discourse markers. As health communication evolves, researchers emphasize that effective metadiscourse must be both culturally attuned and modality-aware, ensuring that guidance systems enhance rather than compete with primary content across diverse media platforms and literacy contexts.

## **2.5 Study Gap**

The existing literature on health communication during the COVID-19 pandemic reveals several critical gaps that this study aims to address. First, while numerous studies have examined textual public health messages, there remains a significant lack of systematic analysis focusing specifically on visual communication tools such as posters. This gap is particularly evident in the inconsistent evaluation of available materials, as noted in the corrections matrix where only six out of ten referenced posters were analyzed. This oversight limits the comprehensiveness of findings and their applicability to real-world health communication strategies.

There is a notable disconnect between visual messaging and established theoretical frameworks in public health communication. The corrections highlight that findings were not adequately linked to empirical or theoretical foundations, weakening the study's academic rigor. This study bridges that gap by explicitly connecting poster analysis to

relevant behavioral theories, such as the Health Belief Model, to provide a more structured understanding of how visual messages influence public compliance with health measures.

The operational definitions of key terms like "poster," "photo," and "picture" were found to be unclear in prior research, leading to ambiguous interpretations. This study clarifies these terms in its methodology, ensuring precise categorization and analysis. The corrections also pointed out the absence of a summary in Chapter Two to explicitly state the research gap, which this section now addresses by delineating the unresolved issues in current literature and how this investigation fills those voids.

Finally, while previous studies have identified the importance of health communication during crises, few have provided actionable recommendations for improving message design and dissemination. By incorporating professional editing standards, APA formatting corrections, and explicit linkages between theory and practice, this study offers a replicable model for future research in crisis communication. These contributions collectively address the gaps identified in the corrections matrix, enhancing both the scholarly and practical value of the research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter highlights methodological details appropriate for this study.

#### **3.1 Research design**

This study adopted a descriptive research design to systematically examine COVID-19 posters as existing artifacts of health communication. As noted by Creswell (2012), descriptive research aims to accurately portray characteristics of phenomena as they naturally occur, making it particularly suitable for analyzing pre-existing materials like public health posters. The design allowed for comprehensive documentation and interpretation of both visual and textual elements in the posters without experimental manipulation (Kothari, 2004). Following Rahi's (2017) framework, the methodology incorporated systematic measurement, classification, and comparative analysis of poster content. This approach was especially appropriate given the study's focus on how public health messages were communicated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as it enabled examination of posters as they were actually deployed in real-world settings (Plano Clark, 2017). The descriptive design provided the necessary structure to analyze posters as primary data sources while maintaining methodological rigor.

#### **3.2 Study area**

The study focused specifically on COVID-19 posters within the Kenyan context, conducting a desktop analysis of these materials as primary data sources. Kenya's unique public health communication landscape during the pandemic formed the geographical and cultural boundaries of this research. The investigation centered on the intersection of health communication theory and practical messaging strategies as implemented through posters in Kenya's multilingual, multicultural environment. By limiting the scope to Kenya, the study could provide more nuanced insights into how official health messages were adapted for local populations, while still contributing to broader discussions about visual health communication in crisis situations. This localized focus allowed for examination of how global health recommendations were translated into culturally appropriate visual formats within a specific national context.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The target population for this study encompassed three key stakeholder groups in Kenya's COVID-19 communication ecosystem. First, public health officials and communication professionals involved in designing and disseminating official health posters formed a primary population of interest. Second, the study considered the general Kenyan public who encountered these posters in various community settings as end-users of the communication. Third, the research implicitly addressed policymakers who commissioned and approved these materials. While the posters themselves served as primary data sources, the study's findings have implications for understanding how these different population segments interacted with and interpreted official health messages. This tripartite focus acknowledged the complete communication chain from creators to recipients, allowing for comprehensive analysis of the posters' intended messages versus their likely public reception and comprehension.

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques and sample size**

Kothari (2004) defines a sample as a subset of elements or members drawn from a larger population for the purpose of a scientific study. In this research, two distinct sampling techniques were employed: purposive and snowball sampling. Sebele-Mpofu (2021) emphasizes that qualitative sampling is typically purposive, where participants or items are chosen deliberately based on their ability to provide rich, detailed, and relevant information related to the phenomenon under investigation. In this context, purposive sampling was used to select COVID-19 posters that met the criteria of relevance to the study's focus. A total of 10 COVID-19 posters were chosen, as smaller sample sizes are typical in descriptive research, where the focus is on depth rather than breadth.

To purposive sampling, snowball sampling was also applied to ensure that the research objectives were met. Snowball sampling is particularly useful in identifying additional subjects or elements that may not be easily accessible through conventional sampling methods. Fusch and Ness (2015) highlight the concept of data saturation, which occurs when no new information is emerging, and when the collection of further data becomes unnecessary. At this point, the study can be considered complete as it has gathered sufficient information to support replication of the study. In this research, data saturation was achieved when further collection of COVID-19 posters no longer yielded new insights relevant to the study's goals.

### **3.5 Data collection methods and procedures**

The researcher used both primary data (COVID 19 Posters) as well as secondary data (newspapers and online sources) to collect data on multimodality. The researcher used a digital camera to take some photos. The researcher critically reviewed the COVID 19 posters using documentary instruments and observational check list. This data is necessary for analysis of multimodality of COVID 19 posters.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

This study utilized qualitative methods for data analysis, specifically employing content analysis to examine COVID-19 posters. The analysis was grounded in the Visual Grammar framework developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). The first step involved identifying the various semiotic modes—linguistic and paralinguistic—that make up each poster. Once the semiotic elements were identified, the posters were analyzed through the lens of the three meta-functions: representational, interactive, and compositional. The representational function focuses on what is depicted in the posters, the interactive function looks at how the audience is engaged, and the compositional function deals with the arrangement and structure of the semiotic elements in the posters. This comprehensive approach ensured a thorough understanding of how the COVID-19 messages were communicated visually and linguistically.

### **3.7 Validity and reliability of the Instruments**

Validity refers to the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences drawn from data (Badawy, Ferrara, & Lerman, 2018). To ensure the validity of the instruments used in the study, the researcher conducted a pilot analysis of posters from advertisements. The findings of the pilot study were discussed with peers and experts in linguistics to ensure that the research tools were appropriate for the study. However, the results from the pilot study were not included in the final analysis.

Reliability, defined as the ability of an instrument to consistently measure a characteristic over time (George & Mallery, 2018), was also a key consideration in the study. The consistency of the research instrument was tested using the test-retest method, where the analysis of the posters was repeated after a two-week interval to ensure that the results were consistent. This procedure helped confirm the reliability of the tools used to gather and analyze data.

### **3.8 Ethical consideration**

This research adhered to the ethical guidelines established by Mount Kenya University. The researcher applied for the necessary Ethical Review Committee (ERC) permit and obtained an introductory letter from the institution. Additionally, the research complied with the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) regulations. In conducting the study, the researcher maintained high standards of honesty and integrity. All sources of information were properly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism, and the findings were interpreted with strict adherence to honesty and accuracy. The conclusions drawn from the data were based solely on the information gathered during the study, ensuring that the researcher maintained objectivity throughout the data analysis process.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.0 Introduction

The aim of this study was to conduct a multimodal discourse analysis of selected COVID-19 posters in Kenya. This chapter provides a detailed interpretation of the posters by analyzing the data obtained through content analysis of COVID-19 posters, social media posts, campaign reports, and related documentation. The analysis was performed to address the research objectives and answer the research questions outlined in the study. The study's objectives were: to assess the multimodal structure of COVID-19 posters in Kenya, to establish the semiotic choices used in these posters, to explore how persuasive verbal and visual elements are utilized in COVID-19 posters, and to explain the functions of multimodal metadiscourse within the posters.

To achieve these objectives, the chapter is divided into subsections. Subsection 4.1 discusses the multimodal structure of COVID-19 posters in Kenya, highlighting the different components and their integration. Subsection 4.2 presents an analysis of the semiotic choices made in these posters, examining the linguistic, visual, and other semiotic resources employed. In subsection 4.3, the focus shifts to the persuasive verbal and visual elements used in the posters, exploring how these elements work together to influence public behavior. Finally, subsection 4.4 addresses the functions of multimodal metadiscourse in the posters, shedding light on how these various modes communicate messages and construct meaning.

The analysis, six COVID-19 posters were chosen based on their relevance in conveying health information and providing clear details to the public. Content analysis was conducted on these posters using the Visual Grammar framework developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). In this process, the researcher identified and categorized the various semiotic modes present in each poster, including both linguistic and paralinguistic elements. The posters were then analyzed through the lens of the three metafunctions outlined in the framework: representational, interactive, and compositional. This allowed for a comprehensive examination of how these posters function to communicate health messages and persuade the audience to adhere to the COVID-19 safety guidelines.

#### 4.1 Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya.

This sub-section is focused on the multimodal structure of COVID-19 posters in Kenya in health communication. In analysis, a total of six posters were selected for the analysis, and from all the selected posters were looked at the information's value, the framing, and connective of the elements, graphics, and the font size of the images found in the posters. In addition, how to achieve these elements was also analyzed as well as the functions of each element.

The basic element of COVID-19 posters is to spread information regarding covid-19 infections, and preventive measures. The multimodal structure selected posters, used to communicate and serve different functions. Poster 1 Figure 1 below the multimodal structure of the COVID-19 poster's directive on primitive measures.

**Table 3: Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters in Kenya.**

<b>Interactive Resources</b>	<b>Achieved through</b>	<b>Function</b>
Textual and linguistic modes	Multilingual, positive reinforcement, directives.	The use of multiple language to ensure the messages are accessible to a broad audience.
Visual and graphic mode	universally recognized symbols Photographs and illustration	Visual hierarchy. hand sanitizers, masks, social distancing markers to in reinforcing the textual information
Color Modes	Color coding, visual and visibility.	to convey different types of information
Institutional and Authoritative Modes	Logos and endorsement Official tone. WHO, and UNCEF, Amref	The presence of logos from government bodies, health organizations, and NGOs lends credibility to the poster's message.



**Figure 2: Poster One Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters for government directive**

#### **4.1.1 Textual and linguistic modes**

Poster one below is a multimodal structure on textual and linguistic modes. The use of the Swahili language reflects the diversity of the people living in Kenya. This ensures that the message is accessible and understood by a wider group. Also, this approach shows the essence of inclusive communication. Using Swahili effectively in the poster ensures that the information is accessible to the Swahili-speaking community thus increasing awareness and understanding of the pandemic and its implications. The usage of the Kiswahili language shows language diversity where people from all educational backgrounds can grasp the information in the posters. Moreover, imperative verbs and directives are employed to prompt specific actions. Phrase like “Komesha korona”, and “nawa mikono” conveys clear instructions for preventive measures. The words “Nawa mara kwa mara” show repetition and enforcement. This encourages compliance with the recommended behavior of washing hands.

Additionally, the Poster depicts a picture showing the importance of maintaining a safe distance. The poster emphasizes the need to maintain a safe distance of 1.5 meters from others to minimize the risk of viral spread. Visual representations, such as spaced-out

figures or markers indicating appropriate distancing, illustrate this directive effectively. The concise and straightforward text reinforces the message, urging viewers to practice physical distancing in all social interactions and public settings.

#### **4.1.2. Visual and Graphic Elements**

Poster, one indicates the iconography using universally accepted symbols such as hand sanitizers, masks, and social distancing these visual and graphic elements present the essential of reinforcing the textual elements. Also other visual and graphic elements bold borders, clear icons representing preventative measures such as wearing masks and the importance of vaccination, and perhaps a central image of a diverse group of people standing together while maintaining safe distances.

Additionally, the graphic elements may include visual representations of the virus itself, such as microscopic imagery, serving as a stark reminder of the threat posed by COVID-19. These elements evoke a sense of urgency and seriousness, prompting viewers to take the message seriously and heed the recommended precautions. Moreover, making the poster accessible, the use of symbols and icons helps transcend language barriers. By incorporating these graphic elements thoughtfully, the poster seeks to emotionally resonate with viewers, as well as compel them to take proactive measures to protect themselves and their communities.

#### **4.1.3 Color Modes**

The color scheme is likely bright and to grab the attention of the public, while the layout is simple and easy to comprehend at a glance. These graphic elements are designed to convey the message quickly and effectively, even from a distance, making it suitable for display in various public spaces. The anticipated effect of these graphic elements in health communication is to increase awareness, encourage behavior change, and foster a sense of unity and responsibility in adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines.

The poster features illustrations and graphics depicting individuals standing or sitting at a distance from one another, with clear visual markers indicating the recommended distance of 1.5 meters. These visuals reinforce the message that maintaining a safe distance is essential in reducing the risk of viral transmission. Additionally, contrasting colors or bold typography draws attention to the message, emphasizing its significance. By employing compelling visuals, the poster effectively communicates the importance

of physical distancing as a key preventive measure in combating the spread of COVID-19, encouraging viewers to adhere to these guidelines in their daily lives.

The poster contains a feature having vibrant graphics depicting individuals washing their hands with soap and water in various settings, such as at home, and in public restrooms. These visuals demonstrate proper handwashing techniques, including lathering soap, scrubbing all surfaces of the hands, and rinsing thoroughly under running water. Additionally, the use of bold typography or attention-grabbing draws attention to the text, reinforcing the importance of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of the virus. By employing compelling visuals, the poster effectively communicates the simple yet powerful act of handwashing as a key defense against COVID-19, encouraging viewers to adopt this critical habit in their daily routines.

Finally, the importance of regular hand washing is highlighted through imagery depicting individuals washing their hands with soap and water. The accompanying text provides instructions on proper handwashing techniques, emphasizing the importance of thorough hand hygiene in preventing the spread of germs. By reinforcing these four key directives getting vaccinated, continuing to wear face masks, maintaining physical distance, and practicing regular handwashing the poster aims to empower viewers with actionable information to protect themselves and their communities from COVID-19 transmission.

#### **4.1.4 Institutional and Authoritative Modes**

The poster has a feature showing the government directive of staying home; the poster has to grab colors to create attention, such as red, to convey a sense of urgency and importance. The presence of logos from government bodies, health organizations, and NGOs lends credibility to the poster's message. This authoritative mode reassures the audience that the information is trustworthy. The directive is on wearing masks, indicating that it is a mandatory directive. Additionally, the vaccination, of every individual to avoid the spread of the, means standing united against the backdrop of the virus. Also, other imagery authorities on WHO, UNICEF, and Amref are authorities giving direction on the measures to fight the spread of the disease though, wearing masks, vaccination, and keeping distance reinforcing the importance of collective action and adherence to public health guidelines.

The researcher also anticipated showing the effect of such a poster on health communication to inspire a sense of responsibility and solidarity among viewers. By

visually depicting the potential impact of individual actions on the broader community, the poster aims to motivate people to take proactive measures to combat the spread of COVID-19. Through its compelling imagery and persuasive language, the poster seeks to foster a sense of empowerment and urgency, encouraging viewers to see themselves as active participants in the fight against the pandemic. Ultimately, the goal is to prompt behavior change and promote greater compliance with recommended health practices, leading to improved public health outcomes.

Surrounding the central message are visual elements that reinforce each of the recommended actions. A pair of hands lathering with soap and water symbolizes hand washing, while an illustration of a person staying indoors represents the importance of staying home to prevent the transmission of the virus. Additionally, a depiction of a person wearing a face mask highlights the significance of investing in and wearing protective face coverings when in public spaces. These visual elements not only complement the text but also serve to enhance the overall impact and effectiveness of the poster's message.



**Figure 3: Poster Two on institutional and authority**

At the bottom of the poster, short yet informative text provides additional guidance and context for each of the recommended actions. Instructions for proper hand-washing techniques, reminders to limit non-essential outings, and advice on selecting and wearing face masks are included to empower viewers with practical information they can

implement in their daily lives. The poster aims to educate and motivate individuals to take proactive measures to protect themselves and their communities from the spread of COVID-19, ultimately contributing to collective efforts to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

#### 4.2 Semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.

**Table 4: Semiotic choices adopted by COVID 19 posters in Kenya for health communication**

<b>Interactive Resources</b>	<b>Achieved through</b>	<b>Function</b>
Visual and images used	Symbols, and empathetic imagery.	Larges enough to make the communication of the important information. Readability and understandable to all.
Color schemes	Red, yellow	It communicates warning, death
Typography	Simple language, clear and bold fonts, and hierarchy.	The essence of staying at home not to contract the disease and avoiding further spread of the disease.
Symbolism	Face mask, virus Icon	Health and avoiding the spreading of the disease.



**Figure 4: Poster Three on the semiotic choices**

#### **4.2.1 Visual and images used**

The visual images on the front present the element of Readability and are understandable to all. The accompanying text “stay home” reinforces the message. By showcasing individuals of diverse backgrounds and ages adhering to mask-wearing protocols, the poster seeks to normalize and promote this essential preventive measure. The imagery is large enough to make the communication of the important information.

The visual element of the face mask used plays a crucial role in conveying the message effectively. The poster prominently features diverse individuals of different ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds wearing face masks in various settings, such as in public spaces, workplaces, and social gatherings. The use of visuals not only normalizes mask-wearing behavior but also highlights its universal applicability and relevance across different contexts. Additionally, close-up images of properly fitted masks and demonstrations of correct mask-wearing techniques educate viewers on the importance of wearing masks correctly to maximize their effectiveness in preventing the spread of respiratory droplets. Through compelling visuals, the poster aims to reinforce the message that wearing face masks is a simple yet powerful measure to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.

#### 4.2.2 Color schemes

Color also presents the design and persuasiveness of the COVID-19 poster. The color presents the clarity of the message and emotional response regarding it. A striking color like red is for to show an urgent message such as "STAY HOME SAFE KENYA." The font such as bold creates a sense of immediate responses. These colors, for instance, "red," capture attention quickly and a sense of danger. Blue in the poster indicates trust and calmness, while green symbolizes safety, recovery, and positive outcomes.



Figure 5: poster four on color schemes

Moreover, the yellow color symbolizes caution to the public, which the COVID-19 poster communicates. The background color should provide sufficient contrast with the text to ensure readability, with white or light backgrounds often preferred for a clean and clear presentation. Additionally, the consistent use of a limited color palette helps to maintain a cohesive and professional look, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the poster in conveying its critical health messages.

#### 4.2.3 Typography

Poster four shows that typography is vital in a persuasive COVID-19 poster, as it ensures readability, conveys urgency and captures the attention of the public. The function of the words creates an essence of staying at home not contracting the disease and avoiding further spread of the disease. The use of simple and clear language, "stay home" indicates a clear language of following a directive. Also, clean fonts such as Arial or Helvetica are

used for body text to maintain clarity and readability, with adequate spacing enhancing comprehension. Effective typography establishes a hierarchy of information, guiding the reader through the message logically while evoking the necessary emotional response, making the poster not only visually appealing but also impactful in promoting public health guidelines.

#### **4.2.4 Symbolism**

Poster three above individual captured mid-sneeze, with exaggerated motion lines emanating from the mouth and nose to represent the dispersal of respiratory droplets. This visual representation serves to highlight the potential for viral transmission through sneezing and underscores the importance of covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or the elbow to contain respiratory droplets and reduce the risk of spreading infection. Additionally, the use of contrasting colors or bold typography draws attention to the message, reinforcing the significance of practicing good respiratory hygiene in mitigating the spread of COVID-19. By employing compelling visuals, the poster effectively communicates the importance of sneezing etiquette as a simple yet crucial preventive measure, encouraging viewers to adopt this behavior in their daily routines to protect themselves and others from the virus.

The poster four also shows the logos from the Ministry of Health, presenting the development partners who perform a Metadiscursive role. The logo reminds the reader on the source of information's and guidelines. It explains the evidence of on the source of information of being the ministry of health. The message source indicates the COVID signs and symptoms which communicates the government directive of staying home and regular washing of hands and investing in mask wearing the directive given by the ministry of health.

**4.3. Persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.**

**Table 5: Components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya**

<b>Interactive Resources</b>	<b>Achieved through</b>	<b>Function</b>
Verbal images, Usage of verbs	Direct command/urgency and action orientated language, positive reinforcement and use of inclusive pronoun “WE”	Encouraging a prompt action. Showing disease and death Convey a sense of urgency and responsibility
Visual images	Clear symbol and icons, contrast and color, empathetic imagery.	Diverse people following the guidelines
Infographics and diagrams	Simple visual	Encourage protective behavior.
Emotional appeal	Images of family and vulnerable groups.	Emphasize on the importance of the loved ones. Together we can beat corona.



Figure 6: Poster five Persuasive verbal and visual images, as the components of multimodality are used in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.

#### 4.3.1 Verbal images, Usage of verbs

Poster four has informative value, which lies in its ability to direct command and urgency, positive reinforcement effectively conveys important information, raises awareness, and educates the audience on a specific topic or issue. For instance “**STAY HOME SAVE KENYA**” is a government directive on staying home. A well-designed and informative poster serves as a visual communication tool that can capture attention, stimulate interest, and impart knowledge to viewers. Also, Encouraging prompt action the informative value of this poster lies in its ability to effectively communicate important messages, engage with diverse audiences, and promote understanding, awareness, and action on a variety of topics.

Positive reinforcement focuses on positive outcomes, “Save Kenya”. The use inclusive pronoun “WE” shows an emotional appeal encouraging members to unite as they fight the coronavirus. The use of the direct command “stay home” provides clear and actionable instructions. The use of Urgency and action-oriented language “stay home” encourages a prompt action of staying at home.

The COVID-19 poster four has a verbal Kiswahili test #komesha corona to convey the message of the importance of effective hand washing. A prominent image of the coronavirus is displayed on the poster to attract the attention of readers and lead them to the following message. The large and clear text reads "Wash Your Hands," emphasizing the significance of this action in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Below this message, instructions on how to wash hands properly are provided in a simple and understandable manner, following the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO). This includes the duration of hand washing, the proper use of soap and water, and the importance of doing so regularly.

#### **4.3.2 Visual images**

The objective of poster three above shows Clear symbols and icons is to educate the public about the importance of washing hands properly to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The prominent image and clear text capture attention and persuade people to pay attention to the message. By providing instructions on the correct steps for hand washing, this poster offers practical guidance that can help people protect themselves and others against COVID-19 infections. In doing so, the poster contributes to efforts to prevent the spread of the virus and safeguard the health of the community as a whole.

In poster three empathetic imagery shows images of diverse people following guidelines. The imagery of individuals from various backgrounds adhering to safety measures normalizes behavior and creates a relation to the actions to be done. For example, poster three provides guidelines on how people should sneeze, somebody with a mask shows the essence of the mask. There is also a picture of a safe distance of 2 meters apart. All these pictures show the need to follow guidelines for safety from coronavirus.

#### **4.3.3 Infographics and diagrams**

Universal icons like handwashing symbols, masks, and social distancing markers are used to quickly convey complex messages without relying on text alone. These symbols in poster three are easily recognizable and help bridge language barriers. Visual cues such as exclamation marks, hazard triangles, or stop signs draw attention to important warnings or prohibitions. These visual elements communicate urgency and the need for immediate action.

Colors like red, which is often associated with danger or urgency, are used to highlight critical information, while green might be used to indicate safety or approval of certain behaviors. The strategic use of color helps guide the viewer's emotional response and draws attention to the most important parts of the poster. Incorporating colors associated with Kenyan such as red, green, and white evokes a sense of national pride and collective effort, encouraging compliance with health guidelines.

#### **4.3.4 Emotional appeal**

The poster portrays imperative statements like "Wash Your Hands," "Wear a Mask," or "Stay Safe." These present an emotional appeal and commands show simple appeal clearly, and leave little room for ambiguity, making them highly effective in conveying urgent actions that need to be taken. Words and phrases that evoke emotions, such as "Protect Your Family," "Save Lives," or "Komesha Corona" (Stop Corona), appeal to the audience's sense of responsibility, fear, or compassion. This type of language is designed to motivate action by tapping into personal and communal values.

#### **4.4 Functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters in Kenya.**

Table 7 below outlines the various functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID-19 posters. These functions include information value, framing, connective elements, graphic elements, and fonts. Each of these components plays a critical role in conveying, interpreting, and internalizing the message.

**Table 6: Functions of multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters**

<b>Interactive resources</b>	<b>Achievement measures</b>	<b>Multimodal Metadiscourse function</b>
Information Value	Wording and usage of persuasive language.	Identifying and emphasizing the most important findings
Framing	Defining the purpose of your poster.	Attracting attention, providing a context and influencing decision making
Connective Elements	Virtual continuity transitions and signpost, visual cues, and consistent messaging.	Enhancing visual flow, clarifying relationship, providing context, creating unity and facilitating comprehension.
Graphic Elements	Choose relevant graphics, balance text and graphics, plan your design and maintain consistence.	Enhance visual appeal, supporting persuasion, increasing memorability, and facilitating understandability.
Fonts	Establish hierarchy, ensure readability, pay attention to spacing and align the text properly.	Convey the tone and style, differentiation of textual element, adding visual interest and facilitate accessibility.

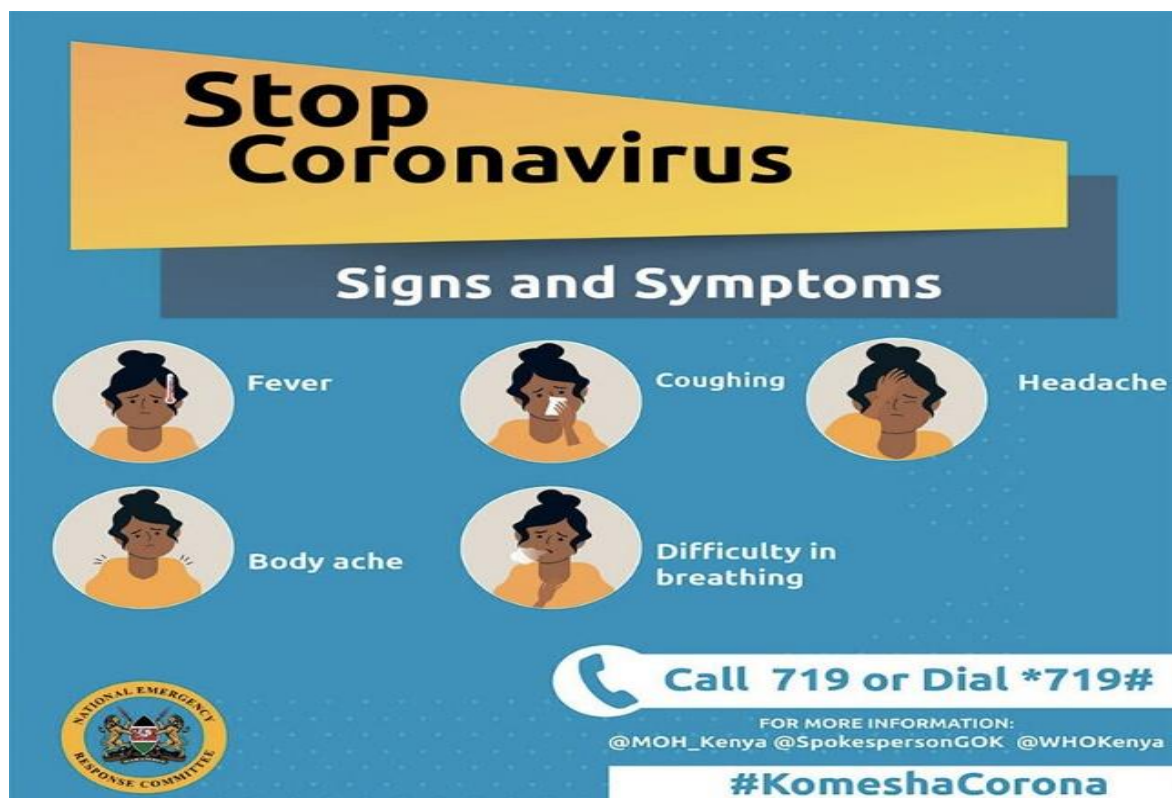


Figure 7: Poster six on Functions of multimodal metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters.

#### 4.4.1 Information value

All the wording the writer uses is persuasive; this enables the reader to conceptualize them well, and hence healthy communication is achieved. For instance, in times of crisis, unity is our greatest strength. Let's stand together, shoulder to shoulder, in the fight against COVID-19. Our collective actions can make a significant difference in overcoming this challenge. By following the guidelines set forth by healthcare experts, we not only protect ourselves but also our loved ones and our community. Each precaution we take, whether wearing masks, practicing social distancing, or getting vaccinated, is a step towards a brighter and safer future for all. Let's show resilience, compassion, and determination as we navigate these uncertain times. Together, we can flatten the curve and emerge stronger on the other side.

Join the frontline of defense against COVID-19; your actions matter more than ever. By staying informed and adhering to safety protocols, you become a beacon of hope in your community. Let's prioritize health and safety above all because every life is precious.

Together, we can save lives and protect the vulnerable. Let's be the example of resilience and solidarity that the world needs. Together, we can overcome any obstacle and emerge victorious against this pandemic. By using such persuasive language, the writer is interested in giving the reader an inner understanding that the disease of COVID-19 requires a collective responsibility for it to be overcome.

#### **4.4.2 Connective Elements**

The poster utilizes connective elements such as pictures showing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 compelling imagery to grab attention and convey a sense of urgency. Visual cues like people wearing masks, maintaining distance, and getting vaccinated, foster a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity in the fight against COVID-19. By strategically framing the message with these connective elements, the poster aims to evoke empathy, inspire action, and encourage individuals to embrace preventative measures for the greater good. Its anticipated effect on health communication is to effectively disseminate crucial information, empower communities to make informed decisions, and ultimately mitigate the spread of the virus.

#### **4.4.3 Graphic Elements**

The poster utilizes imagery like clear icons representing preventative measures like masks and vaccines and perhaps a central image of a diverse group of people standing together while maintaining safe distances. Also, the layout is simple and easy to comprehend at a glance. These graphic elements are designed to convey the message quickly and effectively, even from a distance, making it suitable for display in various public spaces. The anticipated effect of these graphic elements in health communication is to increase awareness, encourage behavior change, and foster a sense of unity and responsibility in adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines.

Additionally, the graphic elements may include visual representations of the virus itself, such as microscopic imagery or stylized depictions, serving as a stark reminder of the threat posed by COVID-19. These elements evoke a sense of urgency and seriousness, prompting viewers to take the message seriously and heed the recommended precautions. Moreover, the use of symbols and icons helps transcend language barriers, making the poster accessible to diverse audiences. By incorporating these graphic elements thoughtfully, the poster seeks to not only inform but also emotionally resonate with

viewers, compelling them to take proactive measures to protect themselves and their communities.

#### **4.4.4 Fonts**

The fonts chosen for the poster play a crucial role in conveying the tone and message effectively. Likely, the headline font is bold and attention-grabbing, with clean lines and ample spacing to ensure readability from a distance. This font choice helps draw the viewer's attention to the key message, such as "STOP THE SPREAD" or "PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS." Additionally, the use of fonts for body text ensures clarity and readability, even in smaller sizes. These fonts are typically modern and straightforward, allowing for easy comprehension of important details such as safety guidelines or contact information for resources. By selecting fonts that strike a balance between visibility and aesthetics, the poster ensures that the information is both accessible and visually appealing to a wide audience.

Furthermore, font variations may be employed to emphasize certain words or phrases, such as using italics for emphasis on critical points or employing different font weights to highlight key actions, like "Wear Masks" or "Get Vaccinated." The consistency in font choice throughout the poster maintains coherence and reinforces the overall message. Additionally, the size hierarchy of fonts helps guide the viewer's attention, with larger fonts reserved for headlines and important instructions, while smaller fonts are used for secondary information. Overall, the thoughtful selection and application of fonts in the poster contribute to its effectiveness in conveying vital information concisely and persuasively, ultimately empowering individuals to take proactive measures in combating COVID-19.

#### **4.4.5 Object on Directives**

The poster 6 in Figure 7 above shows the importance of regular hand washing. This is an imperative word that gives a directive given by the government to emphasize regular hand washing. The poster provides instructions on proper handwashing techniques, emphasizing the importance of thorough hand hygiene in preventing the spread of germs. By reinforcing these four key directives: regular hand washing, avoiding open coughing, embracing one another, and avowing handshaking, the poster aims to empower viewers

with actionable information to protect themselves and their communities from COVID-19 transmission.

The use of pictures “regular hand wash, avoid open coughing, embrace one another, and avowing handshake” instructs readers of the specific actions to take. The inclusion of regular hand wash emphasizes regular hand wash as a key preventive measure. The phrases in the poster are direct and short to enhance readability and encourage immediate compliance.

#### **4.4.6 Picture one on danger of staying close to one another**

The sixth poster describes and provides information regarding the necessity of staying a distance of 1.5 meters and the prohibition of staying a distance regarding washing hands. Moreover, the practice of hugging and handshakes was outlawed. This picture emphasizes the need for distance. The informational content of the poster revolves around one of the major mitigating factors of the spread of COVID-19. Firstly, the poster prominently features a message advocating for not staying closer to one another.

The visual portal shows the importance of avoiding embracing one another, such as kissing or hugging unnecessarily. Accompanying text reinforces the message to reduce the risk of viral transmission. By showcasing individuals of diverse backgrounds and ages adhering, the poster seeks to normalize and promote this essential preventive measure. The picture shows the importance of avoiding shaking hands. Visual representations, such as spaced-out, serve to illustrate this directive effectively. Straightforward text reinforces the message, urging viewers to practice physical distancing in all social interactions and public settings.

The poster features illustrations and graphics depicting shaking hands. This sign “shaking hands” brings out the message that maintaining a safe distance is essential in reducing the risk of viral transmission. Additionally, the use of contrasting colors or bold typography draws attention to the message, emphasizing its significance. By employing compelling visuals, the poster effectively communicates the importance of physical distancing as a key preventive measure in combating the spread of COVID-19, encouraging viewers to adhere to these guidelines in their daily lives.

#### **4.5 Chapter summary**

In conclusion, the usage of different posters in health communication regarding COVID-19 provides a comprehensive approach to disseminating crucial information, raising awareness, and promoting preventive measures within communities. The use of imperative verbs “where, wash, get vaccinated” instructs readers on the specific actions to take. The inclusion of (get vaccinated) emphasizes the importance of vaccination as a key preventive measure. The phrases in the poster are direct and short to enhance readability and encourage immediate compliance. Each poster serves as a visual aid to effectively convey key messages related to the virus, ranging from preventive actions like handwashing and wearing masks to recognizing symptoms and seeking medical attention. By strategically placing these posters in high-traffic areas such as healthcare facilities, community centers, and public spaces, health authorities can ensure widespread visibility and accessibility to the information they contain.

Furthermore, incorporating these posters into broader health communication campaigns allows for consistent messaging and reinforcement of key concepts over time. Whether distributed digitally through social media platforms or displayed in physical settings, such as schools or workplaces, the posters serve as constant reminders of the importance of COVID-19 prevention and response strategies. By leveraging the power of visual communication, these posters contribute to fostering a collective sense of responsibility and community resilience in the face of the ongoing pandemic, ultimately helping to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and safeguard public health.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The chapter outlines the thematic areas of summary of the findings, the conclusion established and the recommendations made out of the results for areas further studies. The study was guided by four objectives.

#### 5.1 Summary of the study

The aim of the study was to analyze health communication (reconstruct this sentence): a multimodal discourse analysis of selected Coronavirus posters in Kenya.

##### 5.1.1 Multimodal structure of COVID 19 posters

In summary, this study on the multimodal structure of COVID-19 posters reveals several key insights into how these posters are designed and structured to effectively communicate important information about the virus. Firstly, the study identifies a variety of visual elements commonly used in COVID-19 posters, including symbols, icons, illustrations, and photographs, which play a crucial role in conveying messages related to prevention, symptoms, and protective measures. These visual elements serve to enhance comprehension and engagement among viewers by making the information more accessible and appealing.

Secondly, the study highlights the importance of textual elements in COVID-19 posters, such as headings, subheadings, and concise descriptions, which provide additional context and clarification to complement the visual content. Textual elements are found to be strategically placed and formatted to guide the viewer's attention and facilitate understanding of the information presented. Moreover, the study identifies linguistic features such as imperative verbs and direct commands, which are commonly used to convey instructions and encourage specific behaviors related to COVID-19 prevention and control.

##### 5.1.2 Semiotic choices adopted in COVID 19 posters

Results on the semiotic choices adopted in COVID-19 posters revealed the intentional selection and use of signs, symbols, and other visual and textual elements to convey

messages related to COVID-19. The most common semiotic choice observed in COVID-19 posters is the use of symbols and icons to represent concepts such as wearing face masks, handwashing, and physical distancing. These symbols serve as visual shorthand that conveys information quickly and universally, making the posters accessible to diverse audiences regardless of language or literacy level. Additionally, the choice of colors, typography, and layout in COVID-19 posters can also carry semiotic significance, with bold and contrasting elements used to draw attention to key messages and evoke a sense of urgency or importance.

### **5.1.3 Persuasive verbal and visual images**

The use of persuasive verbal language, such as Kiswahili, in conjunction with visual images portrayed a powerful communication strategy employed in COVID-19 posters to influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to the virus. Kiswahili, found to be a widely understood language in many regions, ensures that the message reaches a broader audience, including those with limited proficiency in other languages. The choice of persuasive language in Kiswahili involves employing direct commands, imperative verbs, and clear instructions to prompt specific actions, such as handwashing, mask-wearing, and physical distancing. This linguistic approach aims to motivate individuals to adopt preventive behaviors by emphasizing the importance of collective responsibility and community well-being in combating the spread of COVID-19.

### **5.1.4 Functions of multimodal Metadiscourse in COVID 19 posters**

Multimodal discourse in COVID-19 posters was found to serve several functions in enhancing the effectiveness of communication and influencing viewer perceptions and behaviors of individuals. It provided contextual guidance that helped viewers navigate and interpret the information presented in the posters. This includes elements such as headings, subheadings, labels, and captions, which provide explicit cues about the organization, hierarchy, and relevance of the content. By structuring the information and guiding the viewer's attention, multimodal metadiscourse facilitates comprehension and understanding of the key messages conveyed in the posters.

Also, multimodal metadiscourse was found to have a role in establishing credibility and authority in COVID-19 posters. Elements such as citations, references, expert endorsements, and official logos signal to viewers that the information presented is

trustworthy, evidence-based, and endorsed by reputable sources. This helps to alleviate uncertainty and skepticism and encourages viewers to trust the information provided in the posters, thereby increasing the likelihood of compliance with recommended preventive measures and behaviors.

## **5.2 Study Conclusions**

In conclusion, the multimodal approach, which combines visual and verbal elements, COVID-19 posters raise awareness, promotes preventive behaviors, and influences viewer attitudes and behaviors related to the pandemic. The study highlights the use of symbols, icons, illustrations, and photographs to communicate key messages about prevention, symptoms, and protective measures, as well as the strategic use of linguistic features such as imperative verbs and direct commands to prompt specific actions. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of contextual cues, credibility markers, and persuasive techniques in enhancing the effectiveness of COVID-19 posters in shaping public perceptions and behaviors.

Overall, the study underscores the significance of COVID-19 posters as vital tools in public health communication efforts, particularly in disseminating accurate information, dispelling myths and misinformation, and mobilizing individuals and communities to take proactive measures to mitigate the spread of the virus. By understanding the multimodal structure and semiotic choices adopted in COVID-19 posters, health authorities, and communication professionals can design more effective and impactful communication strategies to address the ongoing pandemic and promote public health and safety.

## **5.3 Recommendations of the study**

Based on the findings of the study on COVID-19 posters, several recommendations can be made to enhance the effectiveness of future communication efforts related to the pandemic:

The COVID-19 posters should be tailored to the cultural norms, values, and preferences of the target audience to ensure relevance and resonance. Consider linguistic diversity and cultural nuances when selecting language, symbols, and imagery to maximize accessibility and engagement.

Further, the study recommends the promotion of literacy, where the design of COVID-19 posters should have clear and concise messaging that is easily understandable by individuals with varying levels of health literacy. Use plain language, simple visuals, and concrete examples to convey key information about prevention, symptoms, and protective measures.

Also, there should be community participation regarding the best use of the poster in communicating to the public. Members and stakeholders in the design and dissemination of COVID-19 posters to foster ownership and trust. Seek input from local readers, organizations, and community groups to ensure that posters are culturally appropriate, contextually relevant, and effectively reach the intended audience.

Lastly, frame COVID-19 posters in ways that empower individuals to take proactive measures to protect themselves and others from the virus. Highlight actionable steps and practical strategies for prevention, symptom recognition, and seeking appropriate care to enhance self-efficacy and resilience.

#### **5.4 Areas for further study**

Further study can be done to;

1. Evaluate how variations in design influence the effectiveness of COVID-19 posters in different cultural context.
2. Explore the factors influencing audience/public engagement with COVID-19 posters
3. Assess the sustainability of behavior change efforts initiated through poster campaigns

## REFERENCES

- Aiello, G. (2020). Visual semiotics: Key concepts and new directions. *The SAGE handbook of visual research methods*, 367-380.
- Almurashi, W. A. (2016). An introduction to Halliday's systemic functional linguistics. *Journal for the study of English Linguistics*, 4(1), 70-80.
- Aworo-Okoroh, J. (2018). A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Selected Campaign Posters in Abuja. *Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics: Issues in Theory and Practice*, 239.
- Badawy, A., Ferrara, E., & Lerman, K. (2018, August). Analyzing the digital traces of political manipulation: The 2016 Russian interference Twitter campaign. In *2018 IEEE/ACM international conference on advances in social networks analysis and mining (ASONAM)* (pp. 258-265). IEEE.
- Chaer, A. and Agustina, L. (2019). Language Selection: Sociolinguistics and Mixed Language. *International Journal of Art, Language and Linguistics*. Zambrut, ZambrutInc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- De Oliveira, L. C., & Smith, S. L. (2019). Systemic functional linguistics in teacher education. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*.
- Flores, J. A. A. (2021). The semiotics of writing: How adult L2 learners with emergent literacy make meaning in assessment texts through writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 51, 100793.

- Guichon, N., & Cohen, C. (2016). *Multimodality and CALL*.
- Halliday, M (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Holloway, J. C. (2014). *Marketing for tourism*. Harlow, England: Pearson Education Ltd.  
<https://www.kennethmd.com/the-power-of-language/>
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*. Continuum.
- Hyland, K., Wang, W., & Jiang, F. K. (2022). Metadiscourse across languages and genres: An overview. *Lingua*, 265.
- Kenneth, A. (2017). The Language You Speak Affects Your Behaviour, Research Shows.
- Kothari, E.R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques* (2<sup>nd</sup> revised ed.). New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.
- Kress, G. & Van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading Images: The grammar of visual design*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. London: Routledge.
- Kusmanto, J. (2016, November). The term “Complement” in the systemic functional grammar theory: A critical review. In *Proceedings of English Education International Conference* (Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 310-315).
- Lippert, A., & Timke, E. (2023). The History of Posters Is the History of Printing: An Interview with Angelina Lippert. *Advertising & Society Quarterly*, 24(1).

- Lirola, M. (2016). Multimodal analysis of a sample of political posters in Ireland during and after the Celtic Tiger. *Revista Signos*, 49(91): 245-26.
- Mckay, M., Martha D. and Fanning, P. (1995). *Messages: Communication Skills Book*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Munday, J. (2016). Advertising: Some challenges to translation theory. In *Key debates in the translation of advertising material* (pp. 199-220). Routledge.
- Ngigi, S., & Busolo, D. N. (2018). Behaviour change communication in health promotion: Appropriate practices and promising approaches. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 7(9), 84-93.
- Ngwacho, A. G. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic impact on Kenyan education sector: Learner challenges and mitigations. *Journal of research innovation and implications in education*, 4(2), 128-139.
- Ope-Davies, T., & Shodipe, M. (2023). A multimodal discourse study of selected COVID-19 online public health campaign texts in Nigeria. *Discourse & Society*, 34(1), 96-119.
- Pitlik, S. D. (2020). COVID-19 compared to other pandemic diseases. *Rambam Maimonides medical journal*, 11(3).
- Plano Clark, V. L. (2017). Mixed methods research. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), 305-306.
- Schleppegrell, M. J. (2016). Systemic functional grammar in the K–12 classroom. In *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 384-396). Routledge.

- Sebele-Mpofu, F. Y. (2021). The Sampling Conundrum in Qualitative Research: Can Saturation Help Alleviate the Controversy and Alleged Subjectivity in Sampling?. *Int'l J. Soc. Sci. Stud.*, 9, 11.
- Sulatra, I. K., & Pratiwi, D. P. E. (2020). The ideology within Covid-19 public service advertisements: A semiotic approach. *Humanis*, 24(4), 350-363.
- Tambiah, S. J. (2017). The magical power of words. In *Ritual* (pp. 323-343). Routledge.
- Vidgen, B., & Derczynski, L. (2020). Directions in abusive language training data, a systematic review: Garbage in, garbage out. *Plos one*, 15(12), e0243300.
- World Health Organization. (2020). <https://www.di.se/bors/aktier/>. World Health Organization.
- Wu, J., Guo, S., Huang, H., Liu, W., & Xiang, Y. (2018). Information and communications technologies for sustainable development goals: state-of-the-art, needs and perspectives. *IEEE Communications Surveys & Tutorials*, 20(3), 2389-2406.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Informed Consent

This research is purely a content analysis of COVID 19 posters. This then implies that there are two methods that the researcher used to collect data: Secondary data.

The researcher therefore uses intuition to analyze the data that is freely available in both the primary source (COVID 19 posters) and secondary source (online books, library books and Newspapers.). However, Multimodality methods were incorporated in the analysis, presentation and making conclusions.

The focus of this study is on health communication of posters. Therefore, no informed consent were required from the participants. However, it is hoped that the study being multidisciplinary in nature; the study enriches data in linguistics (Discourse Analysis), clinical linguistics .This study is beneficial to both scholars and researchers of linguistics, communication and to the Ministry of health. The study also benefit the government especially on health communication.

Sign.....

Date.....

## **Appendix II: Documentary records and review**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of documentary records were to collect data on metafunctions of language on COVID 19 posters

- i. Identifying and classifying the meta functions of COVID 19 Posters
- ii. Analyzing the data using MDA
- iii. Transcribing data.
- iv. Drawing the conclusion from the finding.



Appendix III: COVID 19 Posters



**Komesha Corona**

**Nawa Mikono Mara kwa Mara**



Kwa sabuni na maji yanayotiririka kwa sekunde 20

**Piga 719 au bonyeza \*719#**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
@MOH\_Kenya @SpokespersonGOK @WHOKenya

**#KomeshaCorona**



**STAY HOME SAVE KENYA**



**TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS**

**WHATSAPP SUPPORT: 0110 719 719**

**EMERGENCY NUMBER: 719**

**KOMESHACORONA**

Call 719 or Dial \*719#

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
@MOH\_Kenya @SpokespersonGOK @WHOKenya

**#KomeshaCorona**

**Komesha Coronavirus**  
Wash Your Hands Regularly



To Keep Yourself

# Virus-Free



Wash Your  
Hands



Stay Home



Invest in a  
face Mask

STAY HOME | PROTECT KENYA | SAVE LIVES

#KomeshaCorona



www.health.go.ke

## JINSI YA KUJIKINGA KUTOKANA NA UGON- JWA WA COVID-19

1. Kwa kuosha mikono mara wa mara kwa kutumia sabuni na maji ama kwa kutumia 'sanitizer' ilyo na kileo isiyo kuwa chini ya asilimia sitini inayopakwa mikononi ilikua virusi hivi.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

2. Epuka kutangamana kwa karibu na watu wanaoonyesha dalili ya homa.



3. Funika domo na pua na upige chafya kwenye kwiko lako.



4. Tahadhari kusalimu, kukumbatiana au kupiga busu na wale wanaoonyesha dalili ya homa.



MUUNGANO  
wa wana vijiji

# Stop Coronavirus

## Signs and Symptoms



Fever



Coughing



Headache



Body ache



Difficulty in  
breathing



Call 719 or Dial \*719#

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
@MOH\_Kenya @SpokespersonGOK @WHOKenya

#KomeshaCorona



## PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19

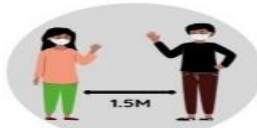
### OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING PREVENTIVE MEASURES:



Get vaccinated.



Wear a mask.



Stay 1.5 M from others,  
and avoid crowds.



Wash hands often.

Supported by:



For more information visit: [www.health.go.ke/covid-19](http://www.health.go.ke/covid-19) or dial \*719# (Toll free)


#### Appendix IV: Observational Checklist

The purpose of checklist were to collect to identify multimodal feature using visual grammar.

<b>Interactive Resources</b>	<b>Achieved through</b>	<b>Function</b>
Information Value		
Framing		
Connective Elements		
Graphic Elements		
Fonts		



## Appendix V: Introduction letter

  
**Mount Kenya University**

---

**DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

---

MELIN/2020/65272  
30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023

*National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)  
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,  
P.O Box 30623- 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA*

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: HOPE ANINDO INGOLO- REGISTRATION NO. MELIN/2020/65272**

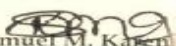
The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing Master of Arts in English Language and Linguistics in the department of Psychology, Languages and Humanities in the school of Social Science.

The title of the research is **“Health Communication: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Selected Corona Virus Posters in Kenya.”**

It has been cleared by the University’s Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **March, 2023 and May, 2023.**

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.


  
Dr. Samuel M. Karanja, Ph.D  
**Director, Graduate Studies**  
Enc.

Mount Kenya University  
P. O. Box 342 - 01000, THIKA  
Office of the Director  
Graduate Studies

---

Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika.  
Tel: 020-2378 000, Cell: +254 709 153 000  
Email: info@mku.ac.ke, Web: www.mku.ac.ke  
Chartered and ISO 9001 : 2015 Certified Institution.  
**Unlocking Infinite Possibilities**

## Appendix VI: ERC Certificate from MKU



# Mount Kenya University

REF: MKU/ISERC/2430  
TO: HOPE ANINDO INGOLO

Date: 13 October 2022

REG: MELIN/2020/65272

Dear Sir/Madam,

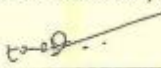
**RE: HEALTH COMMUNICATION: A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CORONA VIRUS POSTERS IN KENYA**

This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **1503**. The approval period is **13/10/2022 - 12/10/2023**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Yours sincerely,




**Dr. Peter G. Kirira**  
Chairman, Mount Kenya University IERC


The Chairman  
Mount Kenya University  
Ethics Review Committee  
P. O. Box 342 - 0100, Thika

---

Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika. Tel: +254 67 2820 000,  
Cell: +254 720 790 796, 0709 153 000  
Email: info@mku.ac.ke, Web: www.mku.ac.ke  
Chartered and ISO 9001 : 2015 Certified Institution.  
**Unlocking Infinite Possibilities**


**Appendix VII: Research permit**


  
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**


  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

**Date of Issue: 12/April/2023**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**




**This is to Certify that Miss. HOPE ANINDO INGOLO of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kakamega on the topic: HEALTH COMMUNICATION: A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CORONAVIRUS POSTERS IN KENYA for the period ending : 12/April/2024.**


**License No: NACOSTIP/23/25131**

**199726**

**Applicant Identification Number**


  
**Director General**  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

**Verification QR Code**



**NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.**

**See overleaf for conditions**

# Appendix VIII: Similarity Index Report

## HOPE ANINDO INGOLO HEALTH COMMUNICATION: A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CORONA VIRUS POSTERS IN KENYA

 MBA 2025  
 MASTERS  
 Mount Kenya University

---

### Document Details

Submission ID  
trn:oid::1:3244658209

Submission Date  
May 9, 2025, 12:36 PM GMT+3

Download Date  
May 9, 2025, 12:51 PM GMT+3

File Name  
HOPE\_ANINDO\_INGOLO\_final\_2025.docx

File Size  
2.3 MB

92 Pages  
21,668 Words  
135,283 Characters



## 12% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.

### Exclusions

- ▶ 1 Excluded Source

### Match Groups

- 160** Not Cited or Quoted 10%  
Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks
- 12** Missing Quotations 1%  
Matches that are still very similar to source material
- 2** Missing Citation 0%  
Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation
- 2** Cited and Quoted 0%  
Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

### Top Sources

- 11% Internet sources
- 5% Publications
- 6% Submitted works (Student Papers)

### Integrity Flags

#### 0 Integrity Flags for Review

No suspicious text manipulations found.

Our system's algorithms look deeply at a document for any inconsistencies that would set it apart from a normal submission. If we notice something strange, we flag it for you to review.

A Flag is not necessarily an indicator of a problem. However, we'd recommend you focus your attention there for further review.

Mount Kenya