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WESTERN CAPE

Semiotic remediation as discourse practice in three Woolworths
branded spaces

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KEYWORDS

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Magister Artium

ABSTRACT

Woolworths is known as one of South Africa's largest retailers with over 400 retail chains across South Africa, while also expanding into other African countries and the Middle East. This study aims to analyse the dialogicality of the different Woolworths texts and semiotic objects across the different sites of advertising through the use of three spaces: the physical space, virtual space and textual space (brochures) to ascertain differences and similarities in the semiotic design features and meaning making across the spaces in the advertising process. Methodologically, the study adopts a three pronged approach to data collection. Firstly, collecting data in the physical space of one Woolworths store in particular, located in Tyger Valley shopping mall using the walking approach. Secondly, while in the physical space, brochures as products of the textual space, were collected as data for the study. Thirdly, in the virtual space materials were collected via means of the screenshot function on a smartphone and laptop. One of the findings is that Woolworths spaces constitute as coherent chains of interconnected activities for meaning making. The virtual and textual spaces hold semiotic material of advertising for that which is made available in the physical space and vice versa. It was also found that semiotic remediation does not only take place within the space itself, but also across spaces. Through exploring the trajectory of the data collected in each of the spaces it was found that there is semiotic mobility of meaning making materials within and across the three spaces. This means that the information has been resemiotised amongst the brochures, often turns out that the same semiotic material is reused across the three spaces. Therefore, it is concluded that the semiotic material in the physical space is connected to the textual space of the brochures, which is in turn connected to that in the virtual space. The virtual space of the online store and the Instagram page are associated to the physical space of the store by advertising their products. In terms of a multisensory/multi-semiotic analysis, the physical space is seen as the most reliable space given that all one's human senses may be used. However, it is worth noting that since the physical space of the store may be out of reach for

some people, the virtual space steps in, making it easier for customers to receive updates on all things related to the brand as opposed to solely relying on the semiotic landscaping within the physical store for information. The textual space provided for Woolworths customers, in the form of brochures, also allows customers to take a part of Woolworths home with them, seeing that the brochure contains detailed information that could not be simply put into the semiotic landscape of the store.



DECLARATION

I declare that *Semiotic remediation as discourse practice in three Woolworths branded spaces* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before, for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Zoe Small

Signed..........

Date9 December 2022.....



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“With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

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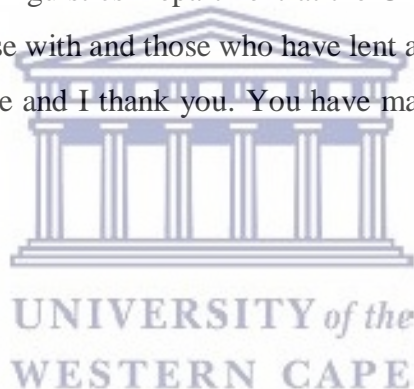


TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEYWORDS.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
DECLARATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of Woolworths.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	2
1.3 Research Aim and Objectives	3
1.4 Research Questions	4
1.5 Significance of study	4
1.6 Chapter Outline.....	5
1.7 Summary	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 Space.....	7
2.2 Spatial Branding.....	9
2.3 Linguistic Landscaping as a means for Advertising	10
2.4 Semiotic Assemblages.....	12
2.5 Commodification of Space	14
2.6 Computer Mediated Communication (CMC).....	15
2.7 Virtualscapes involving social media as a marketing tool.....	17
2.7.1 Instagram	18
2.7.2 YouTube	19
2.8 Summary	21

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	22
3.0 Introduction	22
3.1 A Multimodal Discourse Approach in Analysis	22
3.2 Multisensory analysis of space	24
3.3 Hypermodality	26
3.4 Semiotic Remediation and Resemiotization	27
3.5 Hypermediacy	29
3.6 Summary	30
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY.....	31
4.0 Introduction	31
4.1 Research Design.....	31
4.1.1 Qualitative Research Approach.....	31
4.2 Data Collection	31
4.2.1 Walking Method Approach.....	34
4.3 Data Sampling	38
4.4 Multimodal Data Analysis.....	39
4.5 Ethical Considerations.....	39
4.6 Summary	40
CHAPTER 5: MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE PHYSICAL SPACE AND THE TEXTUAL SPACE.....	41
5.0 Introduction	41
5.1 Physical Space Analysis	42
5.1.1 Mannequins.....	42
5.1.2 Displays of semiotic assemblages	47
5.1.3 Christmas Décor as Linguistic Landscapes.....	55
5.1.4 Navigational Signage.....	60
5.1.5 COVID-19 Linguistic Landscapes	63
5.1.6 A Multisensory Analysis of the Food Market space	69
5.2 Textual Space Analysis	72



5.3	Summary	81
CHAPTER 6: MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE VIRTUAL SPACE.....		82
6.0	Introduction	82
6.1	Woolworths online shopping store.....	82
6.2	Woolworths Instagram page	93
6.3	YouTube	105
6.4	Summary	117
CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....		119
7.0	Introduction	119
7.1	Summary	119
7.2	Conclusion.....	121
REFERENCES.....		122



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Tyger Valley Shopping Mall and surrounding businesses	37
Figure 5.1: Mannequins at entrance	43
Figure 5.2: Men’s mannequins front view	44
Figure 5.3: Men’s mannequins back view	44
Figure 5.4: Children’s mannequins	46
Figure 5.5: School wear railing	47
Figure 5.6: Boys wear view 1	48
Figure 5.7: Boys wear view 2	49
Figure 5.8: Girls wear view 1	50
Figure 5.9: Girls wear view 2	50
Figure 5.10: Glass display of jewellery	52
Figure 5.11: Woolworths jewellery display	52
Figure 5.12: Swarovski display	53
Figure 5.13: Christmas ornaments	57
Figure 5.14: Give a little happy	57
Figure 5.15: Gift boxes in homeware section	58
Figure 5.16: Gift boxes in women’s section	59
Figure 5.17: Please pay here direction	60
Figure 5.18: Please pay here location	62
Figure 5.19: ‘Remember your mask’ signage	64
Figure 5.20: ‘We care about your health and safety’ signage	65
Figure 5.21: Floor signage	68
Figure 5.22: WCafé	70
Figure 5.23: Food Market flower display	71
Figure 5.24: Brochure front view	74
Figure 5.25: Brochure back view	75
Figure 5.26: Application webpage	78
Figure 6.1: Store Departments	83
Figure 6.2: End of online Woolworths home page	85
Figure 6.3: Women’s Touch	86
Figure 6.4: Men’s Touch	87
Figure 6.5: : Dress on Mannequin	90
Figure 6.6: Dress on Model	90
Figure 6.7: Social with Woolies	92
Figure 6.8: Instagram Story Post 1	94

Figure 6.9: Instagram Story Post 2	95
Figure 6.10: Instagram Story Post 3	95
Figure 6.11: Online merchandise	97
Figure 6.12: Feed Post 1	99
Figure 6.13: Feed Post 2	99
Figure 6.14: Comments Section 1	101
Figure 6.15: Comments Section 2	101
Figure 6.16: WCafé announcement	103
Figure 6.17: YouTube video cover	108
Figure 6.18: YouTube video opening frame	109
Figure 6.19: Customer and cashier interaction	111
Figure 6.20: Negative comments on YouTube	114
Figure 6.21: Positive comments on YouTube	114
Figure 6.22: Great customer service comment	115



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study focuses on the use of three possible spaces for branding to occur. The investigation of these three possible spaces are that of the physical space, the virtual space and also the textual space. Each space allows for unique methods of advertising and branding to be utilized. In order to explore the use of branded spaces, one brand in particular has been selected in order to monitor their remediation practices across the three mentioned spaces. Therefore, the Woolworths brand is central to this study as their use of these spaces is focused on in this study. The Woolworths brand exists in more than one space; they are not limited to the physical space. The idea of creating a distinctively recognised site through spatial branding, and repurposing semiotic materials from one space to the other, and whether it is done successfully or not, is what is explored in this study.

This chapter provides information regarding the history of Woolworths. Along with background on the brand, are the problem statement, research aims and objectives, research questions, significance of study and an outline of this study's chapters.

1.1 Background of Woolworths

Woolworths' very first store opened in Cape Town by Max Sonnenberg in 1931 and was established as a family business. Today, Woolworths is known as one of South Africa's largest retailers with over 400 retail chains across South Africa, while also expanding into other African countries and the Middle East (Luiz et al., 2011, cited in Methner, 2013, Methner, Hamann and Nilsson, 2015). According to de Jager (2009) cited in Methner (2013) and Methner, Hamann and Nilsson (2015), Woolworths targets medium to high income consumers as they mainly focus on producing and selling food, clothing and homeware accessories. Luiz, Bowen and Beswick (2011) states that Woolworths believes the key to their success lies in providing customers with high-quality fresh produce food and clothing with a reputation for having more value and quality than other stores'. Therefore, implying that Woolworths have built their brand on quality. In 2004, Dorfling and Stockport (2006) cited in Luiz, Bowen, and Beswick (2011) states that Woolworths' food placed them in the position as a premium brand. While in 2008 and 2010, they received the "International Responsible Retailer of the Year" award from the World Retail Congress (Methner, Hamann and Nilsson, 2015).

Woolworths also has an online shopping website where customers can virtually shop for Woolworths' food, clothing and homeware products. Woolworths is also showcasing their brand on various social media platforms, as well as on sales promotional letters, such as brochures, which can be found and collected in their stores. The physical stores, online store, social media platforms and sales promotion letters can be conceived as different spaces or constituting different practices, and hence requiring and constituting different semiotic affordances (Prior, 2013). Each of these spaces or practices can be conceived as a site of cultural practice (Prior, 2013), forming intersemiotic chains contributing to complementary meaning potentials relating to the Woolworth brand identity.

The Woolworths store located inside of Tyger Valley shopping mall consists of various sections that include, the clothing section, the perfume section, the home décor section, the food section which also contains a Woolworths café. The store consists of one floor that is vast enough to withhold all these various item sections. This specific store will be the focal point for analysing the brand's existence in the physical space.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Prior and Hengst (2010) and Prior (2013) are critical of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) for over-emphasising materialities, screens and structuring of texts and semiotic objects. On the other hand, there is a dearth in studies that pay close attention to "how people make, distribute, or use multimodal texts and objects... focussing especially on practices of multimodal re-mediation and re-purposing" (Prior, 2013: 524-25) across practices/sites and time.

Therefore, the motivation of the study is in how Woolworths brands themselves across the various spaces/sites or practices, ranging from the physical and virtual spaces and the textual (social media platforms and sales promotion brochures). The problem relates to the *design* and semiotic composition of each of the spaces as constituting activities towards building the Woolworths brand. The question is how the embodied and materially, spatially, and temporally organized semiotic materials are used in the composition of advertisement material at each and across the sites/practices. The problem, therefore, also relates to unravelling the producers' intellectual and composing processes designed to keep potential customers engaged to the sites and merchandise for sale.

It is noteworthy at this juncture that Woolworths stores are among the top ranked brands in South Africa. Woolworths is seen as a brand, which has been built on high quality, high prices and trust. How do they semiotize the physical space of their stores to add to their brand's image in terms of the interior and exterior design of the store? How is the placement of the store's products used as a semiotic tool to organise space? This is where semiotic landscapes play a role in the organisation of space. However, it is not just in the physical space in which they have an opportunity to brand themselves. Given their online store website and their page on social media platforms, the layout of these within the virtual space should also be analysed as constituting sites of brand activities. How and what do they contribute to the brand and to support the same images/identities that the physical space (and vice versa) is supplying the public?

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to analyse the dialogicality of the different Woolworth texts and semiotic materials across the different sites/spaces of advertising mentioned above. This involves tracing how semiotic activities are routinely represented and reused across the chains of activity (see Banda and Jimaima 2015; Prior and Hengst 2010) and within the “specialized domains of activity and their associated communicative practices” (Prior 2013: 528), for consumer communicative effect.



The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the different sites of Woolworths advertisement as spaces of multimodal meaning making.
2. To identify the different sites of Woolworths advertisement as constituting ‘coherent’ chains of interconnected activities for meaning making.
3. To explore the trajectory and transformation of repurposed semiotic material for extended meaning across time and space.
4. To unravel the producers’ intellectual and composing processes as *design features* to keep potential customers engaged to the different Woolworths sites and merchandise for sale.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What sites are used by Woolworths as spaces of multimodal meaning in their exercising of branding advertisement?
2. How coherent are Woolworths' advertisements across the different sites?
3. What are the trajectories and transformation of the semiotic materials being repurposed?
4. What are the producers' intellectual and composing processes as *design features* to maintain potential customer engagement towards different Woolworths sites and merchandise?
5. How is Woolworths' brand identity maintained or altered through various domains, i.e. physical space, virtual space and sales promotional letters?
6. How is the Woolworths brand seen from the consumers' perspective?

1.5 Significance of study

The study seeks to project findings on the coherence or incoherence of the repurposing and remediating of branded content from one space to another in order to maintain the same brand identity across these various remediated spaces. Woolworths, as a well-known brand amongst South Africans, serves suitable to the study in researching and exploring their remediation practices across the three mentioned spaces.

Woolworths has often been regarded as a brand for upper class people. Taking into consideration their expected target market, Woolworths requires a brand image that allows them to be easily identifiable and distinguishable amongst other brands to uphold standards and expectations. Acknowledging the brand's existence in more than one space generates the expectancy for the same standards attached to the brand to be upheld irrespective of the space the brand is conducting business in. This has become a motivation to conduct research on Woolworths with regards to their brand image and how it is being marketed to the public. By establishing that Woolworths is a successful brand due to previously mentioned factors, evaluating their brand in terms of space would be necessary to explore their remediation practices in spatial branding.

In terms of spatial branding, the placement and layout of their merchandise inside their physical stores may largely contribute to their brand image, as well as how they market themselves in

the physical space in comparison to the other spaces. The linguistic landscaping found inside the store may play an important role in aiding Woolworths' identity as a unique and recognisable brand. Keeping in mind that Woolworths operates in the virtual space as well, their brand needs to construct the same atmosphere as it does in physical spaces to maintain their already established brand image. With that being said, in the process of exploring the various spaces, in which they make use of to market their brand in terms of spatial branding, it could also be determined if the brand image defers depending on the space used. Conducting this study will also help contribute towards existing knowledge regarding the notion of spatial branding in terms of linguistic landscaping and virtualscapes.

1.6 Chapter Outline

Chapter one introduces the research study through detailed information provided on the background of Woolworths, as well as the statement problem, research aims and objectives, research questions and significance of study.

Chapter two entails existing literature relevant to this research study. The literature includes discussions on space, spatial branding, linguistic landscaping as a means for advertising, semiotic assemblages, commodification of space and computer mediated communication, abbreviated as CMC. Virtualscapes involving social media as marketing tools will be branched out into a discussion focusing on the two social media platforms dealt with in this study, being Instagram and YouTube.

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework for this study, with focus on a multimodal discourse analysis, multisensory analysis, hypermodality, semiotic remediation and resemiotization and hypermediacy.

Chapter four focuses on the methodology. The research design is highlighted here, along with the data collection method, data sampling and data analysis. A brief mention on ethical considerations is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter five presents the findings and analysis of the physical space involved with the Woolworths brand, more specifically the physical space in the selected Woolworths store. Linguistic landscapes (LL) are central to the analysis in this space, while performing a

multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) on the relevant findings. Semiotic remediation is also a key concept in the analysis of the textual space, that is also being presented and investigated in this chapter.

Chapter six investigates the use of the virtual space surrounding the Woolworths brand. Public opinions are formed and are often made known in this space, which answers research question six. This chapter also concentrates on how Woolworths continues to practice semiotic remediation, not only across spaces, but across domains within the same space. Social media platforms, being Instagram and YouTube, as well the Woolworths online shopping website are the sites of focus for data collection and analysis in this chapter. Further exploration will be done in terms of the remediation of semiotic materials across the various spaces of the physical, textual and virtual space through comparisons in order to trace the trajectories of possible coherence and incoherence.

Chapter seven includes a summary of previous chapters to conclude the research study.

1.7 Summary

This chapter has been able to present a background of the study, specifically that of the brand central to this study, Woolworths. This chapter also presents the problem statement, the research aim and objectives, the research questions and the significance of the study, along with a breakdown in description of what each chapter in this study entails.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter contains relevant information from published research studies, in which the aim is to provide an understanding on certain topics and concepts that plays a role in shaping this research study. The information delivered in this chapter contributes valuable existing knowledge to this study. The following concepts and topics are covered in this chapter: Space, Spatial Branding, Linguistic Landscapes, Semiotic Assemblages, Commodification, Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), Virtualscapes, along with background knowledge on Instagram and YouTube as social networking sites.

2.1 Space

Space was traditionally perceived as dead matter, which humans redefine according to certain understandings, as space is a developing construct which takes geography, history, and society into consideration (Canagarajah, 2017). It needs to be acknowledging that space is not dead; it is alive in terms of bodily senses, movement, linguistic landscapes, language and many other contributing factors that substantiate the aliveness and dynamism of space. According to Karrebæk (2017), space is used as a social understanding, as well as a meaning component. To put it plainly, place is seen as space where these social understandings are constructed and reconstructed. Furthermore, “spatiality helps consider how multiple resources mediate and co-construct activities as an ‘assemblage’” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Latour, 2005 cited in Canagarajah, 2017:3). Leeman and Modan (2010) uses an analogy to explain that space as a landscape is not a holder for objects, such as a picnic basket is for food. Space is shaped by the materials held and stored inside its territory. Instead of those stored materials functioning individually, but rather collectively as semiotic assemblages, along with the manifestations of language and language materials, that all act as key elements in constituting social meanings to the space (Leeman and Modan, 2010). In other words, space contains materials which make up that space and determine its social meaning and purpose, and if those materials were to be changed or reconstructed, the space and its social meaning would change along with those materials. Therefore, the placement of materials or assemblages play a role in constructing the space, which can particularly be seen in shops and their geographical location (Karrebæk, 2017).

Hannigan (1998) cited in Leeman and Modan (2010) states that shopping is not considered a chore, but rather a leisure activity, which may also be seen as an entertainment and cultural space. People entering the store have the ability to move freely within the space, but are constrained and influenced by factors of control related to the arrangement and structure of the space (Bernthal, Crockett and Rose, 2005), taking into consideration the arrangement and layout of the space in terms of semiotic assemblages and linguistic landscaping, which may control the journey, trajectory and the experience of the individual moving within the store.

Karrebæk (2017: 457) engages with the notion of space from different perspectives, which then conceptualizes “the socially meaningful space as relational, although the way space becomes meaningful and the specific relations vary”. This study adopts the perspectives mentioned by Karrebæk (2017) which includes the acknowledgement of physical space as a location where social activities take place, how space concerns the placement of objects in the space, while observing stores as space and how they are perceived by the public.

As the focus on space implicates and alludes to that of the physical space in most research studies, including this study, online and textual spaces are also explored. Where literature is involved or referenced in a space, elements such as text; artistic representation, literary art forms often implicated by intertextuality, along with cultural codes and other semiotic artefacts (Škulj, 2004) are often times present in spaces beyond that of just the textual space, which includes that of the physical and virtual space. Pennycook (2018) states that online spaces or environments enable the public to examine the various resources at their disposal drawn from different languages and texts. Online activity as virtual spatial repertoires are not far from the spatial repertoires of offline contexts (Pennycook, 2018), taking into consideration that space includes various sites and not just that of the physical world. Just as the physical space, the virtual space is at often times made public where interaction with semiotics, language, people and other various experiences are present. However, it is important to note that although there are similarities between the spaces, there are also differences, especially concerning the five human senses, which will later be discussed in relation to the idea of a multisensory space. The spaces being dealt with in this study, which also act as different practices each hold different characteristics and values, which will later come to light.

2.2 Spatial Branding

To create equal grounds for an understanding on the notion, the concept of branding firstly needs to be defined. Mafofo and Wittenberg (2019) defines the concept of branding as a means of creating a recognisable and unique identity to activate buying behaviour. To further elaborate, Sammut-Bonnici (2015) claims that the idea of a brand name also contributes to establishing a set of attributes designed to create awareness and identity, and to build the reputation of an organization that helps to differentiate one from competitors. In other words, the idea of branding is seen as a means to easily assist in distinguishing one company or organisation's merchandise or services from their competitors' based on this unique and recognisable identity they should possess. Certain associations will be created and attached to the brand, therefore impacting the reputation of the company or organisation either in a negative or positive sense. The associations made towards the brand name are often times based and determined on what they produce to sell. Mafofo and Wittenberg (2019) state that corporations brand their goods in order to differentiate from other competitors by making use of colourful signage and imaging to give the goods a distinctive and recognisable identity as branded products are considered more of a desire to have rather than necessity. Branded products allow corporations to make high profits out of the difference between the low production costs and the high selling price. People do not only buy products for functional satisfaction and becomes meaning-based as we may believe that we are achieving a particular lifestyle, taking into consideration that these brands contribute towards the construction and maintenance of human identities by helping us define ourselves and allowing us to communicate a sense of belongingness to others (Mafofo and Wittenberg, 2019).

Where space is concerned, branding can be attached to or associated with a particular space, whether existing in the physical, virtual or textual space. Yakhlef (2004) explains that brands as spaces provides customers with direction and orientation in a certain manner. This could specifically be seen when customers take note of the brand's physical store that they are in and later identify the brand through the store's organised space. Pike (2009) simply defines branding as to label, to mark or to burn, and when tying that definition to spatial branding, the space and its arrangement acts as a mark or label that is embedded in the memory. Pike (2009) also states that space is written through branded objects, including merchandise, arranged in the space. The branded space then becomes recognisable and distinguishable through the arrangement of these branded merchandise in order for the trajectory in that space to act as a sort of second nature while navigating themselves through the organised space. It is believed

that “the arrangement of objects in such a space is not meant to be read as codes, but as signals providing direction and ease of physical movement” (Yakhlef, 2004: 243). The arrangement of these objects could be seen as a part of spatial practices. Signs are essentially linked with space, almost as to serve a mark of territory, allowing bodies to “navigate through a sort of object space” (Lash, 2002 cited in Yakhlet, 2004), resulting in a branded space. What also contributes and plays a key role to a space being known and familiarised to its brand, other than the arrangement of semiotics in and around the space, is the layout of the space in terms of architecture and colour that are attractive and appealing to the human sense and the human body (Yakhlet, 2004). Furthermore, Yakhlet (2004) mentions that branded spaces, especially that of department stores are interchangeable. Based on that mention and concerning this study, the Woolworths departmental store selected for this study is interchangeable with other branches, meaning that the arrangement of each store’s space is similar, which is necessary to establish a branded space that is recognized across branches and franchises.

According to Pike (2009), e-branding exists online and often needs to be adapted and localized in terms of language, symbols, colours and the preferences of customers in order to remain heterogeneous and geographically differentiated. Noting that Woolworths operates its brand in the virtual space as well, maintaining a localized brand online is crucial in helping users online differentiate their brand from international brands by making use of the previously mentioned aspects. In relation to this study, the spatial branding of Woolworths will be looked at in terms of the physical space, textual space (brochures) and virtual space.

2.3 Linguistic Landscaping as a means for Advertising

Alvanoudi (2019: 260) states that Linguistic Landscapes are “broadly defined as multilingual and multimodal repertoire or ‘multimodal signage’ that includes semiotic assemblages encompassing verbal and non-verbal communication, imagery, graffiti”. To create a better understanding, Pennycook (2017) cites (Blommaert, 2013) by stating that over time research on linguistic landscapes has somewhat expanded its focus on language appearing on signage in public spaces to include a more contextual understanding of the textual signage in landscape, for instance: its role in association with the space it exists in. To further elaborate on this, Pennycook (2017) cites (Shohamy, 2015) to portray the movement and inclusivity of research conducted on linguistic landscapes by explaining that signs studied by its significance in relation to presence, meaning, interpretation and representation of language, now includes that

of imagery, multisensory involvement, semiotic materials, history, culture, as well as the people interacting and absorbing the linguistic landscapes in the space.

When making a sign visible in a public space, one could argue that majority of the time, that sign is meant to advertise something, whether it's a business related product or service, or if the sign is trying to advertise an idea to the onlooker. Frolova (2014) and Bačík, Fedorko and Šimová (2012) agree that in these present times almost everything is being advertised as advertising plays an important role in everyday life and is known to impact one's thinking as well as one's attitude on certain aspects including oneself and the world (Frolova, 2014). Therefore, emphasising the importance of an advertisement's visibility. Advertisements act as an effective marketing tool and has a significant impact on its operations in a highly competitive business environment (Bačík et al., 2012). Advertisements as signage are a part of the linguistic landscaping of a geographical location in the physical space, such as in Woolworths stores.

Sharma (2019: 15) mentions how textual signs are at often times attached or linked to "commodities in the material environment of stores" while using Scollon and Scollon (2003: 137) to further state that this instance is referred to as layering when "a sign is attached to another sign in such a way that one is clearly more recent and more temporary". For example, in the store there is a sign giving directions by pointing an arrow towards the women's lingerie sub-section and along the trajectory. Following the direction indicated by the navigational sign, one would see mannequins wearing women's lingerie followed by clothing racks of lingerie placed behind the mannequins. The signs intercept one another and create layers of understanding, as well as social meaning-making processes. If the location of the women's lingerie section has been moved in the opposite direction of its original placement, the navigational sign will be invalid and would have to be altered to accompany and support its new location and placement. This example may also account for the dynamic of space and signage, in which one may not always have the ability to determine which signs or semiotics are permanent or temporary.

However, Philibane (2014) advises researchers that permanent or long-term signage is more convenient to sample. While Philibane (2014) also expresses that temporary signage is an inconvenience to sample and conduct research on, considering that one would be able to observe the changes of the permanent sign during its course of display to the public. This study

acknowledges that in the space being dealt with, not all of the signs in the space, during the period of data sampling, are permanent, taking into consideration the dynamic of space and time, for example, possible ‘on sale’ signage in and outside of the Woolworths stores. Those types of signs are not viewed as permanent, because those merchandise cannot be on sale forever. There is usually a timeframe in which the sale is active. Despite their temporariness, those signs are still valid for acknowledgement and research as they form a part of the linguistic landscaping of that space. This then forms a part of Woolworths’ spatial branding. Another example includes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on linguistic landscaping, which will also later be discussed. Spaces had to be redeveloped and reconstructed with signage promoting new regulations and procedures in compliance with the government’s laws relating to the pandemic. However, they are still effective for sampling and analysis. Although the space and signs may be altered or removed over time, they are still acknowledged and recorded to prove that they once existed in the space.

2.4 Semiotic Assemblages

Pennycook (2017) describes semiotic assemblages as objects that are gathered together in a space and, through this gathering, function together in a new manner. Assemblages can also be understood as the “groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts” (Bennett, 2010a: 23, cited in Pennycook, 2017: 278). According to Sharma (2019), a built environment has semiotic assemblages made up of materials, such as signs concerning linguistic landscapes and other semiotic materials, which has a significant influence on the space. Along with understanding assemblages is the consideration for how semiotic resources and objects, such as linguistic and spatial resources, are brought together to meet in particular moments and places, while portraying human engagement and activity, such as the trajectory, as a part of the semiotic assemblages (Pennycook, 2017; Sharma, 2019; Pennycook and Otsuji, 2017 cited in Banda and Jimaima, 2019). Banda and Jimaima (2019) states that when various assembling artefacts are brought together they become part of the semiotic assemblage. In relation to this study, the assembling artefacts could be the merchandise, linguistic landscaping, colour, etc. that are brought together to form part of the semiotic assemblage.

In the context of this research, especially surrounding the physical space, one’s journey through the space will lead to encounters of semiotic materials and assemblages. Pennycook and Otsuji (2017) cited in Banda and Jimaima (2019:3) emphasises that assembling artefacts draws the

customers to a specific place in the store and how these various artefacts combined with other objects, merchandise and services, act as “constituting material objects in the shops”, in which they are then used to illustrate the notion of semiotic assemblages. As Pennycook (2017) states, these assemblages are temporary, hence why the moment in time of the encounter and presence is significant. The time and placement of assemblages in the relevant spaces could be reliant on an occasion or celebration, such as Christmas. Sharma (2019: 7) expresses how assemblages are formed through signs and artefacts, such as the objects, “the body language and gestures, the movements, and so on”. An example relating to this study is that of a shelf-display of Christmas decorations, gift bags, Christmas signage, etc. placed towards an entrance of the store. The trajectory of a customer is bound to lead them to the display given its placement. However, the materials assembled on that display are viewed as temporary and present only during the Christmas holiday. The following year, during the same time of year, the display of Christmas merchandise may then be relocated to a different place within the space, showing the dynamics of space and time through semiotic assemblages.

A part from the example made by Sharma (2019) regarding the body language, gestures and movements mentioned earlier, interestingly, Pennycook and Otsuji (2017) cited in Banda and Jimaima (2019: 8) states that “the different languages and body representatives can be said to be mobile semiotic assemblages”, in which the space pertaining to the study contains humans journeying throughout the store and are all seen as bodily representatives as mobile semiotic assemblages with a diverseness in terms of race and language. When these mobile semiotic assemblages of people are dissembled, one is able to focus more on an individual’s ethnicity and language inclinations (Banda and Jimaima, 2019). This example of semiotic dissembling could apply to various forms of semiotic artefacts and material in a space that has been assembled to form a communicative goal.

With the notion of semiotic assemblages, there is a multimodal and multisensory nature to the materials or objects that come together in the space (Sharma, 2019; Pennycook, 2017). Taking the same route as this study, Pennycook (2017: 280) points out that the interest of their study lies with the “understanding of the momentary material and semiotic resources that intersect at a given place and time” and not as much in identifying the assemblage. Therefore, more attention will be given towards the meaning, purpose and location behind the selected semiotics that have been assembled in the given space.

2.5 Commodification of Space

To create a mutual understanding of commodification, a description of the concept is noted as the process by which tangible and intangible aspects of material culture are transformed into cultural commodities to be bought, sold and profited from (Aggenbach, 2017). Moreover, businesses make use of this process to sell their products or services. Some products or services could be seen as commodities given that they have been moulded into a cultural commodity. According to Leeman and Modan (2010), companies have commodified cultures and added economic value for their own benefit. Instances relevant to this could be seen during the seasonal celebration of Christmas where companies observe the culture celebrating the holiday and view the holiday as a raw material being commodified with the outcomes resulting in a profit generated circumstance.

Relating to this study, Woolworths produces their products with the sole purpose for it to be sold and profited from, serving their purpose as commodities. As a result, the Woolworths store may be regarded as a commodity in relation to space itself and the manipulation thereof. Following Banda and Jimaima (2019), the space, particularly pertaining to that of a store, can be seen as a commodity that has been reconstructed and made up of semiotic artefacts and semiotic assemblages. Sharma (2019: 7) clarifies that “symbolic signs, images, and other semiotic materials have power to influence the meaning of the built environment”, in which these factors fall under a broader scope of semiotic artefacts, semiotic assemblages and even linguistic landscapes that shapes and moulds the space at hand.

Reverting back to the topic of commodified space, language that is present and visible in the space contributes to the commodification of that space and also contributes towards the idea of cultural commodification, particularly language that is consumed in the form of linguistic landscaping (Leeman and Modan, 2010). Another case of commodification involving the use of space would be that in the virtual world. Online spaces, such as that pertaining to social media and websites are commodities that are constantly being shaped and reshaped as a space. The online space is also a site for cultural commodification to occur, in which it is acknowledgeable to comprehend the vast and various forms that commodification takes on.

2.6 Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)

A part of this research study devotes its attention to Computer Mediated Communication. Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010) describe CMC, the abbreviation for the concept known as Computer Mediated Communication, as predominantly text-based social interaction that is mediated by networked computers or mobile. As opposed to the spoken word, Georgakopoulou (2011: 101) states that “CMC persists as texts on the screen, thus affording users with the opportunity to focus and reflect more on the creation of the messages”. A part from the ‘texts on the screen’ as a form of CMC, Georgakopoulou (2011) also states that older and well-established forms of communication include the telephone and television.

The concept of Computer Mediated Communication makes way for human-to-human interaction via the internet or online space, therefore acknowledging that face-to-face communicative interactions are not present where CMC exists. Surrounding the conversation on Computer Mediated Communication, “there is widespread agreement that online discussion enables interaction which would otherwise be difficult to achieve in face-to-face situations” (Conole and Oliver, 2007 cited in Fitzpatrick and Donnelly, 2010: 4). These situations could relate to the asynchronous nature that may come with some computer mediated interactions, such as interactions in a comments section, which pertains to this study, whereas face-to-face interactions require a more immediate and synchronous response. Synchronous communication or transmission in the form of CMC consists of a fixed time period where communication may take place over a phone call, video call, etc. Asynchronous communication, on the other hand, consists more of what this research study is leaning towards - where communication is free flowing, there is no strict interval in which one has a specific time period to communicate. The CMC environments that holds value to this study are on Instagram and YouTube, particularly the comments section under the relevant posts where communication as an asynchronous flow to it. Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010:9) emphasizes that the context of CMC discussion is of importance as it “is meant in the wider sense of physical embodiment of language”, which is also where pragmatic language is concerned. In instances involving context relating to this research study, the CMC discussion in the comments section would usually be contextualised around what has been posted, such as on Instagram or on YouTube. The post sets the context of its comment section, otherwise the linguistic pragmatic meanings present would more likely be misinterpreted.

Communication taking place in the virtual space could be remediated from the physical space and vice versa, therefore noting that there are qualities of remediation present in CMC, not just where text is concerned, but also in the imagery and videos being posted on platforms in the virtual space. This may also be due to the fact that “CMC is recognised as combining qualities that are typically associated with face-to-face interaction”, in which CMC lacks “visual and paralinguistic cues, physical absence of the addressee, written mode of delivery, etc.” (Georgakopoulou, 2011: 94). These are properties that pertain to absent multisensory functions in these communicative events.

However, with regards to the lack of visual and paralinguistic cues in the virtual space, one’s turn could be indicated by the thread of discussion with regards to turn-taking rules, signalling when it will be the next person’s turn to talk, i.e. once the receiver gets communication from the sender in the form of a text, etc., the text is seen as the cue for turn-taking (Fitzpatrick and Donnelly, 2010:11). This is also an instance of synchronous communication if the responses are immediate and within a certain time frame. Moreover, while there is the absence of visualising the receiver and sender’s facial expression during a communicative event in that of a text-based CMC environment, CMC users have found a means to portray and understand playfulness, humour and wit, which can often be displayed as “communicative artistry and skill on the addresser’s part” due to its controversial interpretation (Georgakopoulou, 2011: 100). This is mainly achieved through capital letters, symbols or emojis that reveal a certain emotion or facial expression to accompany the text, which in turn creates a multimodal text, especially with the presence of emojis. Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010) speaks of how abbreviations and emoticons, including emojis, are a part of the rapid developments of technology regarding linguistic expression.

In today’s time, dated more than 10 years since the study of Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010), abbreviations and emojis are seen in computer mediated conversations on public social media platforms and in private text messages. Emojis and abbreviations are commonly used in CMC where even businesses, such as Woolworths, makes use of these when communicating with customers online, which helps make up for the lack of expression or tone in the space, while abbreviations can be seen as a means to spare time while typing out the message. Emojis and abbreviations continue to play a part in revolutionizing linguistic expression in the CMC environment.

2.7 Virtualscapes involving social media as a marketing tool

More people, especially in western cultures, are finding new ways to connect with like-minded individuals through social media (Wright, Khanfar, Harrington and Kizer, 2010) and are using social media as a tool to expand their social groups on a global scale. A simple means of defining virtualscapes is to state that it allows for virtual exchanges between people. Conrad, Neale and Charles (2010) discuss a virtual 3D environment as a virtualscape in which there is a continuity of logic that has been formed and appears more realistic than in the material world. Virtualscapes apply to social media or even online shopping websites. Social media presents itself in many forms and has significant influence on human communication as “many people have their own personal website where they fill out information about themselves, post pictures of themselves, create their own blogs, and upload their own videos” (Wright, Khanfar, Harrington and Kizer, 2010:76). Photos and videos can be seen as a dominant form of social online currency and a direct form of online self-presentation (Rainie, Brenner, and Purcell, 2012, cited in Kleemans, Daalmans, Carbaat, and Anschutz, 2016). Edosomwan, et al. (2011) describes social media as a daily practice in users’ lives, which also makes it a suitable platform for businesses to make use of in order to grant themselves exposure to the public and to further establish, maintain or expand their brand identity, in which social media can be manipulating into a tool for advertising and marketing purposes.

Khan (2017: 237) states that “the popularity of social media sites has encouraged social interaction and participation on an unprecedented scale”, in which this social interaction and participation may come in different forms of engagement with the content on a certain social media platform. According to Khan (2017), liking content seems to be a common and well-known form of engagement across social media platforms. There are more forms of engagement that are also considered common features of social media, such as that of comments. Muñoz and Towner (2017) states that not all forms of social media interaction are similar, in which writing a comment is more effort and time-consuming than simply just ‘liking’ a post, in which it is widely believed that a post can be considered valuable to viewers when it has a large number of likes and comments. In relation to marketing produced by an account, comments made by the public may motivate or demotivate another person’s buying action, which reflects influence in the virtual space. The comment section may, therefore, serve as an effective function on social media for businesses in particular to learn and understand their target market. The comment section may act as an alternative for the senses which humans cannot use in the virtual space when shopping, i.e. explaining the smell, sound or touch of the

product at hand (Pennycook and Otsuji, 2017:443). Whether the advertisement is in a physical or virtual, it must be effective and serve its purpose well to be effective. Thus, the study will consider the comments of consumers to determine the effectiveness of particular multimodal design features of the advertisements.

2.7.1 Instagram

Instagram, a well-known social media platform for photo and video capturing and sharing, can be labelled as a virtual community in which online communication takes place through computer mediated communication. The platform was originally designed for mobile devices and was later made accessible through a desktop view. Hu, Manikonda and Kambhampati (2014) states that Instagram allows its users to instantly capture and share their life moments through pictures and videos.

Instagram (2013) cited in Hu, et al. (2014) states that between the launch of the Instagram application for mobile devices in the year 2010 and the year 2014, it has attracted more than 150 million active users, with an average of 55 million photos uploaded by users per day, and more than 16 billion photos shared. According to Iqbal (2022), who has collected and compiled data and statistics on Instagram, Instagram has last updated a figure of 1 billion users in 2018 and estimate that the application currently has about 1.41 billion users. Latiff and Safiee (2015) states that Instagram was rated as a convenient social media platform and can be said that everyone has easy access to the application. Therefore, acknowledging the ease in accessibility one may have to any content being posted on the platform.

Instagram has manipulation tools, such as filters, which allows images to be retouched in order to create the 'perfect picture' and make it seem like they have been given a 'professional touch' (Kleemans, Daalmans, Carbaat, and Anschütz, 2016, Latiff and Safiee, 2015). Images and videos can be altered and edited on a third party application before the final product is posted on the user's Instagram account, in which Instagram then also provides further editing options and tools before the image or video is posted. Carah and Shaul (2016) state that Instagram is also interdependent with the smartphone, given portability, along with its built-in features which includes the camera, the touch screen, and the easy accessibility to the internet, and fact that it is a part of the everyday life. According to Hu, et al. (2014), Instagram allows users to post images and videos with captions that includes the use of using hashtags (#) to better describe the image or video being posted, as well as the tag or mention function using the @

symbol followed by the person's user name. Furthermore, Instagram uses specific terms such as the word 'followers' which is when a user is following another Instagram user and, therefore, "Instagram's social network is asymmetric, meaning that if a user A follows B, B need not follow A back." (Hu, et al., 2014: 596). This example is typically seen in users' accounts with a high number of followers, such as accounts of celebrities, influencers, businesses and so forth. Relating to the study, Woolworths as a business/branded account is not obligated to follow all their followers or customers back on their Instagram account. This also creates an idea of admiration, power and hierarchy favouring accounts with a high number of followers and a low number of following.

Carah and Shaul (2016) mentions the habit developed by users to scroll, tap and glance at a flow of images that seems endless, in which users may interact on these images and videos by using the like and comment functions. Both of these activities can be considered forms of engagement on the platform. Relevant to this study, Iqbal (2022) further highlights that fashion accounts made up 25% of all brand interactions on Instagram. Therefore, pointing out the attraction that fashion accounts, such as Woolworths, holds on the platform.

2.7.2 YouTube

This study makes use of YouTube for data analysis. Launched in 2005, YouTube is widely known as a resource for viewing videos, in which the video content is considered diverse and global, accommodating to a "very broad audience of site visitors" that offers music, politics, DIY videos, comedy, celebrity or world news, vlogs, etc. (Khan, 2017: 236) and is known as an audio visual platform primarily for video sharing (Arthurs, Drakopoulou and Gandini, 2018). The platform offers millions of video content that viewers may use for entertainment or educational purposes that are not limited to one specific language, but also creates a virtual multilingual space. Khan (2017: 237) draws a comparison between YouTube and other social media platforms such as Instagram, where YouTube is solely focused on video viewing and, therefore, "offers a unique online atmosphere to visitors". Social media platforms offer different forms of consumption, whether it may solely be a video-based platform, photo-based, text-based, etc. Shao (2012) cited in Khan (2017) states that YouTube may be perceived as a convergence of older entertainment sources. For example, an advertisement that would be aired on television during certain commercial breaks can now be viewed on YouTube at any time of the day through online streaming. Therefore, one can also thus say that YouTube is the remediation of older technology mediums such as the television and the radio. A YouTube

account, where videos are uploaded under is referred to as a YouTube channel which users may subscribe to. This shows connotations towards the television and how one would browse through the channels for something to watch. Some videos posted on YouTube gain popularity which is determined through a large amount of views and are then considered viral videos. Alhabash and McAlister (2014) cited in Khan (2017: 238) states that the “virality of a video is often seen as a measure of online success”, in which YouTube influencers, or their YouTube channel, gains popularity along with the videos that are posted on the platform.

YouTube influencers are established through the high amount of subscribers they have, the amount of views and interactivity their content receives on the platform. Arthurs, Drakopoulou and Gandini (2018) states that YouTube has developed a unique role as a source for popular culture, in which influencers have a helping hand in the promotion and influence of such culture, hence the title ‘influencer’. YouTube influencers are also commonly known as ‘Content Creators’ or ‘YouTubers’ to easily identify the platform they hold such influence on. Interactivity on the influencers’ content, such as views, comments, likes, subscriptions or even sharing the content to other platforms, such as Instagram, had become a portrayal and representation for the influencer’s reputation, in which they rely on such video engagement to maintain their influence and viral status, while also profiting from their video production (Arthurs et al., 2018).

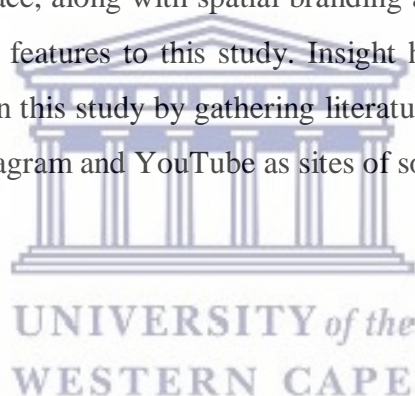
When registered users engage with a video on the platform, they are given the option to like or dislike a video, comment and share a video, as well as upload a video on their YouTube channel (Khan, 2017). YouTube also falls under computer mediated communication as a platform on social media where interactivity also comes in the form of comments. Khan (2017) states that what deems YouTube an interesting site for research is the aspect of social interaction in the comments section. Registered users of YouTube can choose whether to comment on a video, which displays a “multidimensional concept that comprises not only behavioural (actions) but also cognitive (thoughts), and emotional (feelings) aspects” (Hollebeek, 2011 cited in Khan, 2017: 237). Therefore, it can be said that one’s actions, cognitive skills and emotions are remediated from the physical space into the virtual space in the form of text appearing in a comments section which adds value to the video.

When looking at the comments section of a video on YouTube, more so a viral video, one would come across anonymous people commenting and also people commenting under their

real name. As the comments section is a concern in this study, the anonymity of commentators is also considered. Khan (2017: 242) poses the question: “Are users more likely to participate (like, dislike, comment, share, upload) on YouTube if they are anonymous users rather than non-anonymous users?”. As a result, it was found that anonymity increases the chances of user participation, being the like, dislike, comment, share, upload options on YouTube, which may generate this idea that “a user is free from being identified” (Wallace, 1999 cited in Khan, 2017: 244), and, therefore, free to voice their opinion. However, a user registered on the platform with their real name, such as Lasizwe Dambuza, is more likely to engage in sharing and uploading activity (Khan, 2017).

2.8 Summary

To conclude, the aim of this chapter has been met through delivering existing knowledge on each previously mentioned topic or concept to create and develop a better understanding in light of this research study. Space, along with spatial branding and linguistic landscaping has been conceptualised as central features to this study. Insight has been brought towards the virtual space being dealt with in this study by gathering literature on CMC, virtualscapes and background knowledge on Instagram and YouTube as sites of social media.



CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will be focusing on theoretical frameworks relevant for conducting this study. A multimodal discourse approach in analysis will be used, along with complementing concepts of importance, being that of a multisensory analysis and hypermodality. Semiotic remediation and resemiotization are also crucial concepts in understanding and reaching the aim of this study. Hypermediacy will be explored through remediation, as it falls under the double logic of remediation (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). These frameworks will be vital in guiding this study through the analysis of data.

3.1 A Multimodal Discourse Approach in Analysis

The concept of multimodality is widely consulted and discussed in academia. Kress and van Leeuwen define the notion of multimodality as “the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which the modes are combined” (Bargiela- Chiappini et al., 2007: 50). Multimodality “was introduced to highlight the importance of taking into account semiotics other than language-in-use” (Iedema, 2003: 33), while the concept also aids in “recognizing that language is not at all the centre of all communication” (Iedema, 2003: 39). Image, writing, layout, speech, moving image, sound etc. can each be viewed as a socially and culturally resource in order to make meaning and are, therefore, seen as examples of modes where various meanings are made in combination with more than one mode (Bezemer and Kress, 2008; Iedema, 2003). With that being said, multimodality consists of multiple modes used to achieve a specific communicative purpose for meaning making.

This study makes use of a multimodal discourse approach in analysis, which is not viewed as a complex phenomenon by most. Using this phenomenon as a framework for this study would account “not only for language use in business contexts, but also for the non-verbal, visual and sound components of the interaction” (Bargiela- Chiappini et al., 2007: 57). Therefore, it is essential to expand the framework by incorporating additional concepts such as remediation, resemiotization, hypermodality, multisensory analysis; just to name a few, which will all thoroughly be discussed later in this chapter. By using a multimodal approach in analysis, modes can be interpreted as a whole and not in isolation. Bezemer, Diamantopoulou, Jewitt,

Kress and Mavers (2012) state that without the presence of one or the other mode, the sign at hand would be viewed as limited since it is key that meaning-makers use multiple modes to provide meaning when put together and arranged into a multimodal design. With regards to this study, it is important to note that every aspect of a multimodal sign is meant to be intentional, as it has to be recognisable and has to act as a representative of the brand.

Kress (2010) states that where multimodality is concerned, modes can be identified but cannot be used in order to determine the meaning or difference amongst modes where various signage is present. Therefore, social semiotics is introduced. Social semiotics are found in and amongst the various spaces and although they are created and shared under the same brand they have the potential to form new meanings from which they were originally created to make through remediation. When utilizing the multimodal discourse analysis, these modes still need investigation beyond just being able to identify them by understanding and creating communicative interpretations and meaning makings, while still prioritizing the various modes that make up a branded space.

For advertising purposes every mode used plays a role in its effectiveness. Globally, multimodality is present in advertisements and it shows the different communicative modes that are used in an advertisement (Pan, 2015). Furthermore, advertising is becoming more dependent on the use of multiple modes for effective advertising, therefore stating that all elements of multimodality are equally important for advertising (Pan, 2015; Chrenková, Rostášová, Kunertová, 2012). Images and wording on an advertisement are the modes that readers are most likely to remember out of all the modes present on the advertisement, as they generate maximum impact on the reader (Coomber, 2012). However, Mafofo and Wittenberg (2019) state that corporations brand their goods in order to differentiate from other competitors by making use of colourful signage and imaging to give the goods a distinctive and recognisable identity, seeing that branded products are more of a desire to have rather than necessity in life. In which this highlights the importance of multimodality in marketing. This study will make use of a multimodal discourse analysis, which is vital to analysing data, in the form of various modes, found and collected from the three mentioned spaces.

3.2 Multisensory analysis of space

On average, a human has five senses, namely; sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing. By already establishing that this study deals with space, it is typical for a human to involve their senses when entering an environment, whether physical, virtual or textual. Not all five senses are present in each space. Therefore, it is important to note which sense is active or available in each of the mentioned spaces, as well as the benefits attached to each sense, but also the disadvantage on the lack of senses. Therefore, to put it plainly, a multisensory analysis is crucial in order to understand the space being dealt with along with its inhabitants. This study is supported by the ideas of Middleton (2010) in terms of a multisensory evolution of the spaces at hand, in which her research is central to the fact that walking or travelling in a space alludes to activating one's bodily senses. When paying particular attention to the walking method used to collect a selective amount of data for this study, particularly in the physical space, all five human senses are active. In order to determine this, the researcher had to experience this for themselves to provide a thorough analysis of the space, which is addressed in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

Middleton (2010: 577) talks of one's experience and journey whilst walking through a space as there is a certain rhythm to the various space in terms of the path walked and "how these are intimately linked to the bodily senses, and the ways in which these relate to a sense of place". One's body is guided, either consciously or unconsciously, through their senses that have been used to form a rhythm by memory. Certain senses are particularly activated when in contact with certain semiotic materials or artefacts, for example, linguistic landscaping primarily requires the sense of sight in order for its communicative goal to be met. Other senses may also be activated upon contact with landscapes, but it also relies on the circumstance in which the landscape has been placed in. Pennycook (2017) cites Pennycook and Otsuji (2015b) as they suggest linguistic landscaping should involve that of smell. When incorporating this idea with space and memory, one's perspective may alter to see the possibility of associating the landscape with a particular smell or scent. The same idea may apply to the sense of hearing and touch when coming into contact with a particular linguistic landscape. A multisensory analysis not only broadens the concept of linguistic landscaping, but also plays a role where remediation and resemiotization is present across the three focused spaces – which senses are activated in which circumstance depends on the space one is operating and what occupies that space.

Whilst Middleton (2010) focuses solely on the senses used during one's walking experience, which pertains solely to interaction of a physical space, the textual space is concerned with the sense of sight. Where the virtual space is concerned, according to Latiff and Safiee (2015), out of the five senses that contribute to a multisensory environment or interaction, only sight and sound can be used when it comes to using social media and using word-of-mouth is undeniably of value in social networking sites. The sense of sound that is heard coming from the device used to enter the virtual space is always a possibility considering the content being dealt with. While the sense of sight is needed to view that which is being displayed on the device and is also seen as the more prevalent human sense to be used in this space.

When obtaining a scent or smell while present and journeying through a space, a smell is often perceived as something that is not paid much attention to, dwelling in the background, as if it is floating unannounced amongst the objects and activities consuming the space, which is not the case if a better understanding were to be generated around the notion of a smellscape (Pennycook, 2017). The 'background' smell can at often times be associated with place, whether it be a pleasant or unpleasant smell, it could always be associated with a place or even an object or activity. To expand on that idea, Pennycook (2017, 279) states that "smells open up a different terrain of semiosis, one that associates meaning with objects, people, affect and places in a different way". Therefore, implying that smell adds meaning and association to a place as it does to people and objects through memory.

Middleton (2010) has found that senses may either intensify or disappear during one's walk or trajectory and that it is possible to identify when and where in the space this occurs. This may specifically apply to the senses of sight, hearing and smell, hence the importance of an organized space. A space could also be "sensorily organised" (Pennycook, 2017: 279), which could be used as a strategic arrangement of attractions implemented by businesses, especially that of shops and restaurants. An example of this could be seen by the somewhat normalized and predictable placement of perfumes and beauty products at the entrance of stores, particularly at clothing and beauty stores. The individuals entering the store are greeted with a pleasant smell which may or may not provoke them to track down the exact source of the scent, potentially resulting in a sale. Using one's sense of smell is prevalent to the physical space, however, it is also possible to activate this sense when in contact with the textual space, for example a sample of a perfume is infused into brochures for customers to smell or even rub off

onto their skin, which then also removes some boundaries for the textual space in terms of a multisensory space.

With regards to the notion of touchscapes, being the sense of touch activated in certain places, situations or interactions, as “smellscapes (Pennycook 2018) make the capacity of the senses central to connecting across time and space” (Sharma, 2019: 16). Touch is linked to memory, as are all of the senses. What is being or has been felt can be memorized and associated to time, place, people, interactions, amongst other abstract notions. Touch is not dealt with as much as the other senses are in this study, the sense of taste even less so. However, all five human senses can be activated and accounted for in shared experiences in the physical space being dealt with, that being the Woolworths store.

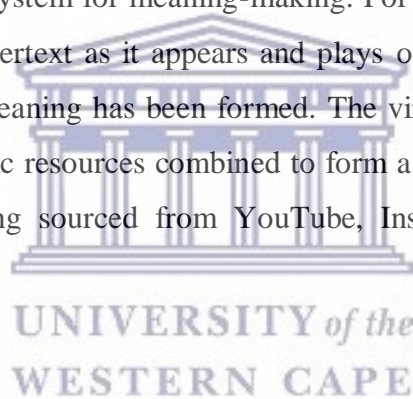
3.3 Hypermodality

Using Lemke (2002: 301) to understand the concept of hypermodality, it is defined as the interaction or rather “the conflation of multimodality and hypertextuality” in hypermedia as the concept shows links amongst “text units, visual elements, and sound units”, which are elements dealt with in a multimodality and which are considered clear modes. It is important to note that the medium, being a computer, smartphone, etc., in which these modes are published plays a central role in distinguishing hypermodes, such as hypertextuality and textuality (Lemke, 2002). Although the technology used as the medium to access the hypertext is different than one would use to access signage and other forms of textuality, the digital platform takes one a different journey or trajectory from the traditional walking method (Lemke, 2002). This is done through links and hyperlinks connected to the hypertexts, as well as other modes present on the platform, such as imagery.

Hypermodality focuses on semiotic resources and materials present on digital platforms, showing how multimodal elements shift from the physical to the virtual space. These resources come in the form of various modes and not just text or rather hypertext, such as image, moving image, colour, sound, etc., that are constructed and combined to interconnect, creating a hypermodal presence (Ulmer, 2016). When looking at a webpage on a digital platform, there are many existing salient features that contain various resources, in which one’s eyes are free to wander on the webpage, but they are also limited to seeing what is being presented on the medium before them (Lemke, 2002).

Based on what was gathered from Lemke (2002), an altered reality seems to be the more desired reality amongst certain individuals, in which one's focus can be rooted in the physical reality, then shifting into virtual reality. Therefore, time and effort is being devoted towards the design features of the digital platform being dealt with to reach the communicative goal. These hypermodal elements serve their purpose in the virtual space and multimodal elements would in the physical space. Lemke (2002: 300) states that in order "to understand the design resources afforded by hypermodality is to consider multiplicative combinations of the presentational, orientational, and organizational resources of each semiotic mode", which includes that of hypertext along with other modes.

Sound, such as music or talking is included as a semiotic resource to interconnect with other resources to help form a hypermodal assemblage (Ulmer, 2016), in which this is not often done where hypertext is not present. When shifting realities, it is easier to witness and understand that the two-dimensional reality holds more opportunity for the inclusion of more modes to operate as an interconnecting system for meaning-making. For example, the sound is in sync with the moving image or hypertext as it appears and plays on the designated medium and through this interconnection meaning has been formed. The virtual data worked with in this study holds an array of semiotic resources combined to form a hypermodal meaning-making practice, specifically that being sourced from YouTube, Instagram and the Woolworths website.



3.4 Semiotic Remediation and Resemiotization

In addition to multimodality, this study is shaped by the notions of semiotic remediation and resemitization. As remediation practices are present throughout this study, so are the repurposing of semiotic materials, hence posing the concept of semiotic remediation as a framework for this study. According to Prior and Hengst (2010), semiotic remediation as a practice draws attention to the diverse ways in which "semiotic performances are re-represented and reused across modes, media, and chains of activity" (Prior, Hengst, Roozen, and Shipka, 2006: 734). Remediation happens when "content has been borrowed, but the medium has not been appropriated or quoted" (Bolter and Grusin, 2000: 44), in which the medium may also play a central role in the remediation or repurposing of materials and media.

Of particular interest, Banda and Jimaima (2015: 3) discuss the notion of remediation as repurposing, which they describe as an analytical tool that can be employed to account for “the recycling and reusing of objects, memory and cultural materialities for sign- and place-making” for new meanings and purposes. Remediation shows aspects of “recycling and layering of mediatized, mediated actions, and remediated practices” (Thurlow and Jaworski, 2014: 459). The repurposing of materials is done so while baring a certain goal in mind. This could be applied to events or materials existing in the physical world, and also on online platforms. Bolter and Grusin (2000) state that remediation does not “replicate the earlier forms but to exploit new meanings that claim ‘to offer an experience that the other forms cannot’” (Banda and Jimaima, 2015: 645). In relation to this study, the “earlier form” as the original practice mentioned by Bolter and Grusin (2000) could relate to the physical space and how that can be remediated into a newer form to create new meaning, such as the virtual and textual space, but more so the virtual space as online shopping is being normalised and some people prefer online rather than the physical. Through remediation, the new practice is dependent on the older practice and cannot exist without it (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). The virtual space as a remediated space also has new experiences and features to offer that the other spaces cannot. While materials are repurposed, the meanings may shift accordingly and this results in resemiotization.

Resemiotization looks at “how meaning shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of practice to the next” (Iedema, 2003:41) and focuses on ways in which meanings shift across different structural phenomena and highlights on meaning making across semiotic modes (Iedema, 2010). Furthermore, resemiotization captures how practices manifest intersemiotic shifts and that it addresses the principle and the possibility of social change itself (Iedema, 2010).

Resemiotization also aids in tracing the analytical means of semiotic materials and the trajectory thereof (Iedema, 2003) in order to observe how meanings have shifted. In relation to Woolworths, the study explores how once these materials are repurposed and resemiotized, serve the purpose that contributes towards building the brand’s identity. Also of interest are, in some cases, once these materials have been repurposed or resemiotized, their meanings change and the brand’s identity obscure. It may also be the case that once meaning has shifted, the effects do not stay at the same level as the original, as that would leave brand identity and meaning open to renegotiation. To support this claim Iedema (2001: 33) states that

“resemiotization transposes meanings from one semiotic mode into one which is different. Each semiotic will have its own specific (systemic) constraints and affordances... produces not exact likenesses, but which represents ‘a multi-channel set of directions’; that is a (semiotic) metaphor”.

In tracing semiotic trajectories across different sites/spaces, it is important to analyse how semiotic material has been repurposed and resemiotized from the physical space to the virtual or textual space and vice versa. In order for semiotic remediation and resemiotization to occur, semiotic materials must be transferred and transformed from one space to fit the other space. However, it will be remembered that there are also certain aspects existing in the physical space, which are difficult to remediate into the virtual space while maintaining the same feel they have in the space they originated from. For example, “face-to-face communication blends talk, gesture, proxemics, and situated use of artifacts and tools, including use of literate and visual materials” (Prior, 2013: 520). The researcher will be mindful of one’s basic interaction skills and senses that are omitted when operating in the virtual space, thus showing the vast differences of experience of senses according to the space one is operating in.

3.5 Hypermediacy

O’Neill (2008:18) defines hypermedia as “the combination of fragmented disparate media elements through connection rather than the seamless integration of elements into one presented reality or space”. Bolter and Grusin (2000) state that hypermediacy is considered a main feature in digital media as majority of internet sites are hypermediated given their arrangement of text, graphics, and video in multiple windows and binding them with various hyperlinks. This implies that hypermediacy allows viewers to interact with the interface (O’Neill, 2008). In cases of social media platforms, central to this study, this may come in the form of using features such as downloading, liking, commenting, etc. Roberts (2017) gives the example of where hypermediacy plays a role in YouTube, where hypertext, graphics and video are present inside the window along with the icons, toolbars and drop-down menus overlapping each other, which makes the medium a mixed space that competes for the attention of the viewer.

The purpose of hypermedia is to focus on the medium instead of the content. O’Neil (2008: 18) states that unlike immediacy, which is a part of the double logic of remediation, “the aim

of hypermedia is to bring the medium itself into focus rather than the content, which remains secondary”, in which the medium is being manipulated. In today’s time there are multiple mediums available to access the internet and its contents. However, the layout and the view of certain content accessed on the internet may differ according to the medium, but it still performs the same purpose that the content was designed to do. Hence the importance of selecting the most applicable medium to use in order to provide a better view and grasp of the content to be access. For example, Instagram is best accessible through one’s smartphone, given the fact that it was originally designed as an application (app) for a smartphone with its launch in the year 2010 (Hu, et al., 2004). The tools and features on the platform are also more suited to make use of for smartphone given the camera option to instantly take a picture and upload it on one’s story or feed, the aspect ratio, also known as the display ratio, of Instagram stories are in 9:16, which is suited for a smartphone’s full screen view as opposed to a computer’s screen which is in 16:9 aspect ratio, as well as the ‘double-tap’ feature to like or ‘heart’ a picture. Whereas on a computer or laptop these features may not be available.

Since the user is aware of the medium in use to a certain extent, “hypermediacy calculatngly reveals the medium to enable the audience experience the medium and the represented objects explicitly”, in which this sort of interaction with hypermediacy is seen as remediation (Mafofo, 2015: 65). This remediation through hypermediacy is seen through various layouts of certain platforms on the internet previously mentioned. These various mediums create remediation.

Following that of Mafofo (2015), an event can be hypermediated by uploading pictures or videos of it on a virtual platform using forms of media, which once again creates a remediated occurrence. The merchandise sold by Woolworths are being hypermediated, along with other semiotic resources. Their brand itself is also being hypermediated, which goes hand-in-hand with how their brand has been remediated across the spaces, ultimately providing the viewer with an experience that exists in a different space (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). The remediation of media is a main strategy used to assist with brand consumption and presentation (Mafofo, 2015), therefore, benefitting from the use or rather manipulation of hypermediacy.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has dealt with the necessary theoretical frameworks needed to conduct this study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methods of research used in order for this study to be conducted. The research design will be made clear through the discussion of the qualitative research approach. The collection of data across the three focused spaces, being the physical, textual and virtual space, will also be discussed. Furthermore, the walking method approach, used to gather data in the physical setting, will be specifically explained in detail with its relation to this study. This chapter will also clarify how data will be sampled from that which has already been collected. The method used for analysing data, being a Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) will also be addressed, as well as the ethical considerations relating to this study.

4.1 Research Design

The research design focuses on a qualitative research approach, in which qualitative data has been collected and used in this study. It is important to note that all relevant data gathered is in relation to the Woolworths brand.

4.1.1 *Qualitative Research Approach*

A qualitative research approach has been used in the gathering of data, which was deemed relevant for research and analysis purposes. A qualitative research approach has particularly been acquired due to the openness for interpretation of data which has been gathered for this study. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) cited in Mcleod (2017), defines a qualitative approach as a multimethod in focus, where researchers use this method to study the relevant data in their natural settings, to interpret it in terms of the meanings people convey towards it. The researcher has adopted this way of thinking by gathering the relevant data across all three sites and studying that which has been collected in their ‘natural setting’, while also interpreting the data in a way that the people/public could relate to.

4.2 Data Collection

The technique used for data collection is that of observation. The collected data has been concentrated on three different spaces, that being the physical, textual and virtual space,

specifically where the Woolworths brand is being marketed. These three mentioned spaces also constitute three data sources to grasp how the repurposing and resemiotizing of certain texts and materials are used for Woolworths' branding and advertising purposes across sites and spaces. Each space contains the relevant data needed in order for this study to be conducted.

Firstly, in the physical space, one Woolworths store, specifically located inside of Tyger Valley shopping mall, has been observed and studied through two visits to the store for data collection. For this study, the physical space selectively included the linguistic landscape, as well as the semiotic material and assemblages inside of the Woolworths store itself. The store is seen as a physical space where brand identity can be developed, allowing the public to familiarise themselves with the Woolworths spatial brand. Following Pennycook (2017) and Pennycook and Otsuji (2017), the study of spatial repertoire of a Bangladeshi shop in Sydney Australia, this study examines the spatial branding in the physical space, particularly the layout and arrangement of semiotic materials and assemblages, as well as the design of the store. This then implemented an approach in data collection that pertained specifically to the physical space, being the walking method approach. In order to analyse the spatial branding of the selected Woolworths store, data has been collected from the store by means of the walking method approach, which will later be expanded on in this chapter.

By using this method of data collection implies that this study has been collecting parts of the required data, specifically that in the physical space, through means of videography. Sections of the video has been remediated into imagery for analysis by making use the screenshot function on a smartphone. To further elaborate on the use of the screenshot function; while watching a video on a smartphone, that video has been paused at a specific time which shows a specific image. During this pause, the screenshot function came into play to remediate the paused image, showing on the video, into a permanent image that is now accessible outside of the video, acting as an image on its own. These images have been deemed relevant for discussion and analysis and have been used for data purposes. The screenshot function has been a predominant tool in this study for data collection.

Secondly, sales promotional letters in the form of brochures are made use of by Woolworths for advertising purposes, to further promote their brand and services. These Woolworths brochures are made available, inside of the physical store, at the public's disposal to take as

they please and has also been collected as another source of data for this study. These brochures form a part of the textual space.

Three brochures have been collected during a store visit while using the walking approach method in the physical space. However, only two of the three brochures have been used as data for analysis. These two selected brochures promote the Woolworths Financial Services through the advertising of their Woolworths credit card, store card and personal loan application process. The third brochure contains the terms and conditions of the Woolworths credit card, store card and loans, which would help customers understand more about what they are applying for. These three brochures were located in the Woolworths food market section at the back of the store at the express till point, where only customers with ten items or less are allowed to pay. There were many other brochures available at the main till points throughout the store, which all contain Woolworths Financial Services related information and advertising. None of the brochures found or seen in the store promote anything other than the Woolworths Financial Services. The brochures have been captured as data via means of photography with the camera on a smartphone. It has been photographed to make it easier for the researcher to include it into the study and also makes the textual space data more accessible at any time and place having the data stored as images on a smartphone device, also taking into account that smartphones have come to form a part of one's daily life and activities.

Thirdly, the virtual space also contains branded content of Woolworths. There are many open possibilities for data collection in this space, given the many platforms on the internet that may contain branded content of Woolworths. However, for this study, the platforms in focus, and that which has been consulted, have been narrowed down to three platforms in this space. The website for the Woolworths online store has been consulted as a part of this space, which is found at *www.woolworths.co.za*. Their social media page on Instagram is another platform in which data have been collected. Woolworths' Instagram page has the handle name of *@woolworths*. Their Instagram page acts as another site for advertising purposes, in which their page also alludes the viewer to their online shopping website where final purchases take place. The last online platform, which has been consulted in this space, is YouTube, which contains videos evolving around the Woolworths brand. These YouTube videos are not content published by the brand themselves, but rather content posted by the public on the brand. One video in particular, performed and uploaded by a social media influencer named Lasiswe Dambuza, has been downloaded from YouTube to serve as relevant data to represent the

public's opinion on the brand. The title of the YouTube video is as follows: *Shoprite VS Woolworths VS Pick N Pay Cashiers During Lockdown Quarantine : Lasizwe*.

Instead of conducting interviews, comments in the comment section under selected posts on Instagram, and under the two selected videos on YouTube have been deemed relevant for this study to receive insights on the public's opinions on the Woolworths brand. The Woolworths online shopping website does not allow users to rate or comment on the items available for purchase, such as on their Instagram page. Data from the virtual space has been collected via means of the screenshot function which allowed the online data to be remediated into imagery that is accessible offline. Data particularly collected from Instagram has been done so through a smartphone, while data collected from the online shopping website and from YouTube has been collected through the computer. The reason for this is due to the Instagram app already being loaded on the researcher's smartphone, making it easier to access the app on the smartphone, seeing that the Instagram app was particularly designed to suit the smartphone rather than the computer.

However, majority of the online shopping website and YouTube data were accessed through the computer as the medium provides the researcher with a better experience in accessing these particular platforms than it would on a smartphone. By using the computer to collect data also facilitated in capturing more content and information in one screenshot due to its wider screen display, having an aspect ratio of 16:9, in relation to the aspect ratio of a smartphone's, being 9:16. Both devices, being the computer and the smartphone allowed for the use of the screenshot function. This function not only made it easier for the researcher to access the online data offline, but also saved time and the mobile data/Wi-Fi it would have required in order to access the data online. Where there are videos collected from the virtual space, such as on Instagram and YouTube, the screenshot function still served its purpose to capture moments in the video. These screenshots then turned into images which represent the video as a whole when discussing it. These images were then stored on both the smartphone and the computer.

4.2.1 Walking Method Approach

The data collected in the physical space required a specific method of data collection and has been done so by using the walking approach method. The bulk of the data collection lies in this method/approach of collection. Stroud and Jegels (2014: 180) cited in Banda and Jimaima

(2015:8) argues that the walking narrative methodology initiates “the complex dynamics of place-making” which involves “individuals identifying themselves with or moving through a particular locale”. Therefore, stating that individuals are able to note and memorise their surroundings while walking through a specific space, which may often be done so consciously or unconsciously, implying that they are able to navigate themselves through the space they are presented with. This method is also seen as “a more intimate way to engage with landscape that can offer privileged insights into both place and self” (Evans and Jones, 2010:850), noting that this study partly focuses on the linguistic landscape presented in the physical space, which plays a role in guiding the individuals in the space that they are in. According to Pink (2007), the walking method or ‘walking with video’ is a simple method meaning to walk whilst video recording research participants during their experience, or to showcase material, or social environments in various manners. As previously mentioned, for this particular research study, the researcher has collected data in the physical space by means of videography to capture data. However, it is important to note that instead of following and video recording research participants, as Pink (2007) describes, the researcher has filmed their own experience while journeying through the store, as there are no research participants for this study.

Seeing that the store has been visited on two separate occasions to collect data while using the walking approach method, the videos contain the researcher’s experience while walking into the Woolworths store, which shows the entrance to the store. The videos also display the researcher’s experience walking around the store, following the specific path laid out by the store. The first store visit that took place on 11 December 2020, which follows the researcher walking the main path beginning at the store entrance and leading straight to the food market at the back of the store, then following the path set out for customers from the food market’s till points to the exit of the store, which is also the entrance. The second visit, which occurred on 28 December 2020, follows the researcher walking through the entire store while following the paths set out by the store for customers to travel through the store. The video containing the second store visit contains most of the relevant data used for this study. It is important to note that throughout the process of making all two videos, there have been no research participants involved.

The linguistic landscape adds to the environment/space of the store. One explores these landscapes through sight, as well as other senses that may play a role. Sight falls a part of the average human being’s five senses, and in order for data to be collected in the physical space,

imagery comes into play. Imagery allows for viewers to tap into the photographer's experience. The function of these images is to allow the viewers to acquire a similar experience to that of the photographer at a particular moment in space and time in which the photo had been taken. For this study, data collection in the physical space consists of the researcher walking through the Woolworths store and documenting the journey and experience through the use of the video recording function on a smartphone. Using one's smartphone device is more practical than that of a video recorder device, as the smartphone is deemed more practical due to its compact size and is most likely more lightweight than a video recorder. A smartphone also attracts less attention in public than a video recorder, as a smartphone device is a part of our daily life which is expected of everyone to own and carry on them wherever they may go. Whereas someone walking and filming with a video recorder in a store may seem out of the ordinary and may attract unnecessary attention which may interrupt the data collection process.

Using the video recording function on the smartphone, instead of simply taking pictures, also somewhat avoids attracting attention as the smartphone tends to make a clicking sound every time a photo is being taken, as well as appearance of the camera's flash, if the camera settings are not adjusted. Another reason why this experience is filmed rather than photographed is due to the ease of being able to walk without constant stops along the journey to capture images inside and around the store, which then also interrupts the journey and the experience. Filming allows the journey to continue without making constant stops along the way, as what the researcher sees is already being documented and captured while walking. It is relevant to note "the importance of the path" (Pink, 2017: 243) whilst walking and video recording to document the journey, landscape, etc. in the physical space. Following the study of Pennycook (2017) and Pennycook and Otsuji (2017), no images of people have been purposefully taken: merchandise and how they are arranged along the 'path' are focused on.

While filming, the researcher made use of the advantages that came with the video recording function. The researcher has taken the opportunity to verbally note what they have heard while walking; describing what they have experienced in terms of smell, sight and sound. This way the researcher was able to associate a specific area in the store with a certain smell or sound, thus making use of their humanly senses, in which all five senses may have been used when walking through the store, making the physical space a multisensory space.

While the walking approach method was in motion during the second store visit to the Woolworths store, the Woolworths brochures as sales promotional letters were collected and used as data that forms part of the textual space.



Figure 4.1: Tyger Valley Shopping Mall and surrounding businesses

Figure 4.1 above portrays a screenshot of a map of Tyger Valley Shopping Mall and other surrounding areas, taken directly from Google Maps. Tyger Valley shopping mall is situated in what is considered a more upper class area. Tyger Valley shopping mall is known to be a predominantly 'white' mall. Although times have changed, the mall is still considered an upper class shopping mall, in an upper class area. The Woolworths store in the Tyger Valley Shopping Mall is seen as one of the elite Woolworths stores in Cape Town.

The store is quite spacious, despite the space existing on just one floor. Along with the size of the store, the variety and range of merchandise, which they stock in-store, should also be greater and wider than smaller spaced Woolworths stores. Tyger Valley's Woolworths store is one of the few Woolworths stores in Cape Town to stock the Country Road, Trenery and Witchery brands, which are labelled as expensive brand names. Given the linguistic landscape and the rest of the interior and exterior designs, it comes across that a lot of construction, time and effort has been put into the Woolworths store to uphold a certain standard laid out by the surrounding community. Due to these specific remarks, Tyger Valley Shopping Mall's Woolworths store intrigued the researcher for this specific study.

The map shown in Figure 4.1 also indicates more or less where the Woolworths store is situated inside of the mall. Although the map does not accurately display the many levels and floors that Tyger Valley Shopping Mall has, it is still clear to see on which side of the mall one would find the store. It is precisely located in between entrance nine and ten of the shopping mall. People who do not know where exactly the Woolworths store is situated inside of the mall, may also make use of Google Maps on their smartphone device to locate the store and possibly direct them to the store.

As seen in Figure 4.1, not all the stores inside of Tyger Valley shopping mall are displayed or mentioned there. Having visited Tyger Valley Shopping Mall prior to the study, the researcher has already been acquainted with the location of the Woolworths store and, therefore, did not require Google Maps before the data collection took place.

4.3 Data Sampling

The amount of data available for collection was vast. Therefore, specific and relevant contributing data needed to be sampled from the vast collection of that found in the physical space, virtual space and textual space as well. As previously stated, the data used in the study for analysis and discussion have been transformed into imagery. Through the vast availability of data, that which has been collected needs to be narrowed down according to relevancy. The research objectives and questions were kept in mind when sampling the data. The data sampled across the various spaces also needed to distinctively portray the Woolworths' brand through the material laid out across the various sites for the public.

In the physical space, the three videos made whilst using the walking method approach contains a vast availability of data that has been collected in their natural setting. The sampling of data, from that which has been seen on the video, occurred by using the screenshot function to allow images as the product of remediation from a specific video when it was put on pause.

While in the virtual space, the data exists online. Content on YouTube and Instagram tend to remain available to the public unless removed by the owner of the account that posted the content, whereas the content on the Woolworths online store is dynamic as the site's content and virtualscapes are constantly updated to help the brand and site remain current. The sampled data from the online store and from their Instagram page are compared. In order for the data

comparison to be made, data on both platforms needed to be sampled within a certain time frame to specifically avoid losing the data on the online website. The YouTube video presenting the Woolworths brand was selected due to the amount of views it received, which resulted in its popularity. The reason for the success of the video may be due to how much the public could relate to the content in the video. There are also public comments under the YouTube video, in which only a selected few have been sampled, which state a person's view or experience with the Woolworths brand. The same has been applied when comments were sampled on Instagram as data.

As for data sampling in the textual space, the two brochures selected for analysis, were seen nowhere else in the store, besides in the Woolworths food market section of the store. These brochures also stood out from the rest of the brochures surrounding it, given their bright salient colours, while the other brochures were all plain with a white background and dull colour fonts, such as the terms and conditions brochure, which were not appealing or eye catching. These two selected brochures came across as almost hidden in the store, as they were specifically located at the last teller in the corner of the Woolworths Food Market, which was closed at the time of data collection. However, the brochures containing their terms and conditions on the credit card, store card and loans were seen at more till points around the store.

4.4 Multimodal Data Analysis

Accounting for the type of data gathered in the various spaces, containing linguistic landscapes and virtualscapes, as well as semiotic assemblages and materials, have been particularly analysed by using a Multimodal Discourse Analysis. This approach in analysis allows interpretation to take place freely. In addition to using a Multimodal Discourse analysis, the researcher also turned to multisensory and semiotic remediation as secondary tools for analysis.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

This research study is dealing with linguistic landscaping, semiotic assemblages and materials, sales promotional letters and online data, which has been made public. Therefore, this study did not require an ethical statement to conduct research. The POPI Act (Protection of Personal Information) has been taken into consideration, however, it does not apply to this study.

Zampatim (2019:3) presents that open data is published under an “open license” that allows anyone to gain access to the data and use it for whichever purpose, which then does not require permission or special access. Whereas closed or shared data would require permission to be used. As previously mentioned, there were no research participants for this study, which would most likely be regarded as shared data. However, the data used and gathered have been regarded as open data, seeing that the data from all three spaces were easily accessible to the public and did not require special access or permission to be collected for this study. This includes online data taken from Instagram, YouTube and the online shopping website, and is open to the public to view, interact and share however they please. The comments made in the virtual space are available for the public to view and do not require special access to see or read. When commenting, one does so publicly for anyone to see, read and respond on it, whether directly or indirectly. One’s thoughts then become remediated as they shift into the public space from a private or interpersonal space.

The Woolworths store in Tyger Valley is also regarded as a public area with open data, as anyone is free to enter the store and do not require special access or permission upon entry. Also, anyone could take pictures inside or outside of the store, whether it be a selfie or a picture of a Woolworths product, without being questioned as it seems a part of everyday life, just as the physical space of the Woolworths store does not fall under the category of an unconventional space. Video recording during the store visits were also not aimed at customers, but focused on the linguistic landscape, materials and the interior and exterior of the store itself. Brochures are also available for the customers to take as they please without any permission or consent required. With the reasons provided, ethical statements are not deemed necessary for the collection or sampling of the data for this study.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, the research design has been made clear by using a qualitative research approach for this study. The data collection process across the three spaces has been discussed, with specific focus on the walking method approach used to gather data in the physical setting via means of videography, as the bulk of the data collection lies in this method. Clarification is provided on how data has been sampled from that which has already been collected in each space. The method used for analysing data is through a Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA), with assistance from semiotic remediation and a multisensory analysis. The ethical considerations have been addressed, clarifying that an ethical statement was not required in order for this study to be conducted.

CHAPTER 5: MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE PHYSICAL SPACE AND THE TEXTUAL SPACE

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses mainly on the findings in the physical space. The physical space being dealt with in this study is limited to one domain in particular; being the Woolworths store located inside of Tyger Valley Shopping Mall. The store is seen as a space made up of multiple semiotic materials relating to the Woolworths brand, which have been assembled and arranged into different sections. The Woolworths store is also seen as a built environment, noting that what once was a vacant space has been transformed, reimagined and reconstructed into a space that not only promotes brand image, but also allows people to familiarise themselves with the given space.

The merchandise is the initial attraction to the store, but through linguistic landscapes announcing new information, more attention in the form of potential customers will be brought to the store. Signs allude to the semiotics within the store, and contribute and promote the brand's identity and image in the process. Signage also plays an important role when navigating through a vast and dynamic space. Through linguistic landscapes the brand has been able to be identified, even outside of the store and in various spaces. If the brand's logo and signage had to be placed amongst that of other brands', it needs to be identifiable. Through coherence and intertextuality amongst the store's linguistic landscaping, Woolworths is somewhat preparing the public to get acquainted and familiarize themselves with the identity of the brand.

This chapter will specifically look at the physical path of the Woolworths store, acknowledging the arrangement of semiotic materials, artefacts and assemblages. More specifically the space will be analysed through their use of mannequins, the brand's displays as indicators of merchandise, Christmas décor as linguistic landscapes, the labelling of semiotic materials and assemblages, navigational signage, and COVID-19 linguistic landscapes. A multisensory analysis of the space will be performed as well, taking note of the senses that come into use during the journey. This chapter will also consist of an investigation of the textual space that shall be focused on two brochures that were gathered while in the space of the store. These two brochures, act as constructs of the textual space and their relationship to the other spaces will be examined.

5.1 Physical Space Analysis

The store itself is made up of different sections of merchandise and linguistic landscaping. While in the space of the store, there are a “variety of goods, people and languages that may come together at any moment” (Pennycook and Otsuji, 2017: 436). Noting that the space is ever growing and ever changing.

Whilst journeying through the store, one subconsciously memorizes the order and layout of the path, which includes the placement of these sections along the path. Various semiotic patterns have been noticed throughout the journey in the store.

5.1.1 Mannequins

Through observation, it is clear to see that Woolworths arranged a path which allows customers to be exposed to each section of the store as they journey on it, i.e. the men’s wear section, homeware section, kid’s wear section, women’s section, the Food Market and the WCafé. This path is indicated by the grouping of darker coloured floor tiling, which will be seen in upcoming figures. These sections are not necessarily announced through linguistic landscapes, but is more likely to be determined and distinguished through semiotic assemblages, noting where materials are located within the store in order to determine each department’s location.

Mannequins are often placed in certain sections of the store to aid in representing the department that the customers come across, as well as showcasing some of the merchandise located in that department. However, in some departments, such as in the Food Market and the homeware section, mannequins do not play a role in identifying the department. This is where one’s discretion would be needed to allow certain semiotic material to act as signifiers, i.e. the assembling of cutlery, bedding, vases, etc., is believed to make up the homeware department.



Figure 5.1: Mannequins at entrance

Figure 5.1 shows an image of two mannequins placed inside of the store at the entrance, displaying Woolworths' garments on the body of both mannequins. These garments are also seen on the clothing rail in the figure. Bickle, Burnsed and Edwards (2015) cites D'Innocenzio (2014) and Fister (2009) in their ideal belief that mannequins provide customers with an image of the merchandise on a human body, which then also influences customers' intentions to purchase the displayed merchandise on these mannequins. Furthermore, Menon et al. (2016: 2009) state that past studies have shown that "the presence of a mannequin affects purchase intention and willingness to pay, store entry decision, and consumers' imagination in seeing themselves in the clothing displayed". The presence of the mannequins seen at the entrance could also be somewhat alluring as the garments they are displaying play a role of attracting customers to the store. The store provides customers with these displays of mannequins to help visualise the clothing on a body, which in turn benefits the brand. Therefore, D'Innocenzio (2014) states that mannequins are referred to as the "quintessential silent sales people" and their role is considered financially valuable to the business and their brand (Bickle et al., 2015: 26). Mannequins, as displays, are relied on to draw consumers into the store and motivate them to interact with the products that would lead to purchasing (Huddleston, Behe, Minahan and Fernandez, 2015).

Noting the angle in which this image was taken, the back view of these mannequins seen in Figure 5.1, in which this image was captured while the research was walking towards the exit of the store. The mannequins are facing towards the entrance of the store as they are aimed at attracting the attention of those entering the store; those who are still yet to explore the space.

As for the customers who are exiting the space, it is automatically assumed that they have finished their journey through the space, as well as their shopping experience for the time being. Therefore, the store deems it fitting that those who are exiting the building, would less likely be bothered with the merchandise portrayed on the mannequins. The placement of the mannequins in this manner reveals the brand's or producer's intellectual processes to keep customers engaged and interested.



Figure 5.2: Men's mannequins front view

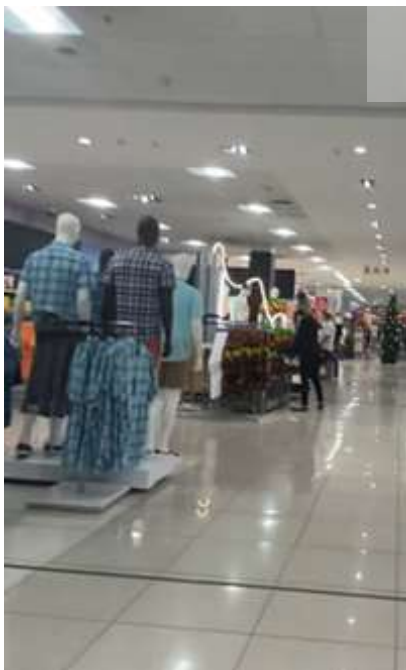


Figure 5.3: Men's mannequins back view



Another example of the placement of mannequins facing towards the path taken when entering the store is seen in Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3 above. Figure 5.2 shows four male mannequins placed in the men's wear section, close to the store entrance. Figure 5.3 shows the back view of the mannequins that are seen in Figure 5.2. The precise placement of the mannequins ensures that the display does not stand on the darker coloured floor tiles, being the path. It is also clear to see the indication of the main path through coloured tiles by noting that the darker coloured floor tiles indicate the main path and also act as an indication for the placement of materials as they do not cross over onto the darker tiles. Therefore, signifying that the lighter coloured floor tiles are meant for the placement and arrangement of semiotic materials. Figure 5.3 gives a view of a clear path as well, which helps make the assumption that the path for walking is meant to be clear and visible. Two of the mannequins seen in Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3 are black, while the other two are white. This may have been done so in order to portray more than one race. On the other hand, Woolworths' main brand colours are black and white, which may also be a possible motive behind the colour choices of the mannequins, showing that the mannequins are branded semiotic materials.

The contrasting views of Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3 help illustrate an idea of the target for the display of mannequins. The mannequins are faced towards the entrance, just as that in Figure 5.1. Figure 5.1, Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3 show no obstacles blocking the full view of the mannequins from the front. However, the back view is obstructed by the clothing rails displaying the same clothing pieces that are seen on the mannequins. The trend seems to be that the clothing seen on the mannequins are located on clothing rails nearby the mannequins displaying it.

These four mannequins are displaying merchandise belonging to the men's wear section. The mannequins are facing the main path leading straight from the entrance to the Food Market, which can clearly be seen in Figure 5.3. The placement of the mannequins in that position could be to indicate the men's wear section on the left hand side of the store upon entry. Once turning into the men's wear section on the path, the mannequins will then be behind the customer, resulting in it being out of sight. However, in an instance where the customer turns around to exit the men's wear section, they would be walking towards the exit with the mannequins back faced towards them. The path through the men's wear section is also often taken when walking towards the exit of the store, possibly from till points, in which one is located within the men's section, as well as the till point area located in the Food Market section, which then allows

customers to walk through the men's wear section upon their exit. The customer is then exposed to the back of the mannequin with the obstruction of the clothing rail from the view seen in Figure 5.3. The shirt on the mannequin in the second row, on the right, in Figure 5.2, is displayed behind the four mannequins, on a clothing rail, which is also facing towards the path leading into the men's wear section. This shows that the placement and direction in which these mannequins are placed is planned and positioned according to the path and how the customers journey through it.



Figure 5.4: Children's mannequins



The mannequins seen in Figure 5.4 represent a unisex section for children's school wear, which is located just before the baby wear, and after the men's wear section on the path. The school wear seen on the mannequins in Figure 5.4 is stored in the space behind it, showing close proximity placement towards the mannequins once again. As previously mentioned, mannequins act as an indication and representation of the assembled and arranged materials in a particular division. The mannequins represent the kids wear section, almost to act as a distinction between the men's wear and the kids wear.

Given Figure 5.4 above, it is evident that the mannequins appearing in the store range in age, but do not range in size. To further elaborate, the male mannequins come in the size of a male child and an adult male, while the female mannequins exist in the form of a female child and an adult female. These mannequins have one blueprint to each form in which the genders are

meant to embody. The mannequins seen in the store do not represent the average customer of the brand (Bickle, Burnsed and Edwards, 2015). Embodying and representing the brand's customers in the form of mannequins would ultimately make it easier for them to picture the garment on their own body, and ultimately influence purchasing in a positive manner.

5.1.2 *Displays of semiotic assemblages*



Figure 5.5: School wear railing UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE

School wear, seen in Figure 5.5 above, is being advertised. Any other sort of merchandise could have been placed on these clothing rails for exposure and possible sale increases of that particular merchandise, but school wear was in seasonal demand following the reopening of schools in the year to come. Figure 5.5 is seen on the path once a bend is taken from the view seen in Figure 5.4. Standing in the location of Figure 5.5, one cannot see the mannequins in Figure 5.4. Figure 5.4 and Figure 5.5 both demonstrate an indication of repurposing; the school wear could be displayed on mannequins and on clothing rails. The placement of school wear on both sides, before and after the bend, is to act as a certainty that customers in the kids wear section will come into contact with the school wear merchandise, even though they may not take the bend further into the kids wear section. However, as time passes, the clothing rails of school wear will most likely be removed or replaced, as well as the clothing on the mannequins seen in previous figures, also demonstrating that space is ever changing. This allows the brand

to reconstruct the space according to their liking and to their benefit, which can also be seen as a part of the design features used to keep potential customers engaged with their materials.

Despite the previous mention of the store maintaining a clear path for customers to journey on, Figure 5.5 is a case in which the main path does not display a clean slate and has been obstructed by materials, such as that of the store's merchandise. The space provided for the path in the store is adequate enough for large movements, i.e. free movement of trollies, prams, etc. Where there are obstructions dividing the path, such as in Figure 5.5, it becomes a confined and somewhat restricted space for movement, especially if travelling with a trolley or pram. As seen in Figure 5.5, the path is split into two due to the placement of the display, in which the narrow-spaced split path is more clear to see. This is also done so purposefully with the intention to draw attention towards the merchandise, in which the obstruction acts as a display. Along with the obstruction, the kids wear section prioritizes the marketing of school wear, which is seen as an appropriate section to do so and does not appear in other sections, considering that it would seem out of place or all over the place as structured organising of the store seems to be a present characteristic of the brand. By placing the school wear merchandise in more sections and departments other than the kids wear section would be a clear indication that the brand is eager to increase their sales on that specific stock.



Figure 5.6: Boys wear view 1



Figure 5.7: Boys wear view 2

In the kids wear section, it is clear to see a form of gender representation through semiotic assembling, which is ultimately based on that of material culture. The boys and girls wear are found on opposite sides of the path. The separation of the children's wear according to gender generates a somewhat easier position for customers to spot clear, distinct differences between the two areas, despite any clear signage indicating which area of merchandise holds the girls wear and which holds the boys wear. The area used to display the boys wear is much different in overall appearance in comparison to that of the girls'. This is mainly distinguishable through the colour of the clothing, other merchandise and the semiotic assembling of these colour coded merchandise. Through this it has become more distinguishable in identifying which area is which, without any written discourse/signage stating the obvious.

The wall poster of the boy in Figure 5.7 is a clear indicator for the boys wear area, but despite the presence of that wall poster, the colour and design of the clothing plays an important role in distinguishing the area from that of the girls. The colours of the clothing seen in the boys wear section are somewhat dull in comparison to that of the girls clothing. The monochrome effect can be seen in the arrangement of the red, orange and yellow t-shirts seen in Figure 5.6, creating a sort of well rounded and thoughtful look for the display. It is clear that the main colours that appears in Figure 5.6 and Figure 5.7 for the boys clothing are red and blue, which are stereotypically described as 'boy colours'.



Figure 5.8: Girls wear view 1



Figure 5.9: Girls wear view 2

When looking at the girls wear in Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9 above; bright, radiant colours are seen. The girls clothing also appears to mostly have bright pink clothing, as seen in Figure 5.8, which is deemed as a stereotypical colour to indicate femininity, as well as the pink pillar in Figure 5.9. The colour pink “is strongly associated with girls and almost taboo for boys... while blue is often associated with boys, it is completely acceptable for girls as well” as adults and

children are made aware of this ideology (LoBue and DeLoache, 2011: 658). The brand seems to be embracing this ideology considering the lack of pink clothing and merchandise seen from the view of Figure 5.6 and Figure 5.7. Through the opposite displays of genders in colour, it seems that there is a fixed blueprint for the girls clothing and for the boys clothing in order for the girls to build or maintain their feminine appearance and for boys to build or maintain a masculine appearance.

The merchandise on display are arranged and grouped according to designs of the same sort, which are then divided and sorted by colour. The arrangement of merchandise is also according to product similarity, which is mostly practiced throughout the store, to ensure that products of the same kind and design are found in the same area within the space. Items that are deemed unisex in the kids wear section does not fall under the girls wear nor the boys wear, but has a separate area of display, that being the area of school wear as previously seen in Figure 5.4.

Through the display and separation of the girls wear from the boys wear in the kids section, it is noticeable that semiotic assemblages play a role in identifying a certain section of the store without the use of signage. Through the semiotic assembling of materials, customers are provided with a better understanding of how merchandise and other semiotics within the space are arranged and are more easily located. However, according to LoBue and DeLoache (2011: 664), “there is some research that suggests that perhaps girls’ preference for pink would in fact decrease with age”. This could perhaps account for why the women’s section is not decorated in pink linguistic landscapes and other pink semiotic materials and merchandise, but rather present a range of colour choices and styles that do not conspire strictly to gender stereotypical colours, which may be seen in Figure 5.1. This could also be a means to distinguish the various sections, through colour.

Woolworths adopts these gender stereotyped behaviours into their space. They also do not break away from these norms, nor challenge them to create or aspire towards a more established and unique brand identity, especially for their kids wear. The space delivers what is expected of them from a society that values gender stereotypical means of thinking as the brand creates and uplifts distinctive gender appearances in terms of masculinity and femininity in children, in which LoBue and DeLoache (2011) states that children are aware of these dressing patterns from a very young age as they decide to express their identity based on colour.



Figure 5.10: Glass display of jewellery



Figure 5.11: Woolworths jewellery display



Figure 5.12: Swarovski display

All of the women's accessories found in the store are not assembled together, whereas one would most likely expect it to be. The merchandise seen in Figure 5.10 is the Woolworths branded jewellery, which is identifiable through the black tags with the brand's logo on it. Figure 5.12 portrays the stand displaying their collection of Swarovski jewellery. Swarovski also has their own store inside of Tyger Valley shopping mall, located on the same level as the Woolworths store. The Swarovski name on the board is also meant to act as an indicator for the merchandise populating the display. Customers "tend to gaze at information with greater importance to their choice" (Orquin and Loose, 2013 cited in Menon et al., 2016: 5009). With this being established, the information given on the signage seen in Figure 5.11 and Figure 5.12 are meant to attract the attention of customers, but also create a clear understanding as to what is being displayed, i.e. the Swarovski branded jewellery.

The Country Road section in both the men and women's sections, inside of the store, have their own separate display of expensive branded accessories. The merchandise seen in Figure 5.10 is that of the Witchery brand and is, therefore, not located in the women's accessories section along with the jewellery seen in Figure 5.11 and Figure 5.12, which indicates that Woolworths regards the Witchery branded merchandise as having a higher status as opposed to the rest of the jewellery on display amongst all the women's accessories.

The more expensive brands stocked inside of the Woolworths store have their own visible subsection within both the women's and men's section. Allenby and Gintner (1995) cited in Huddleston, Behe, Minahan and Fernandez (2015) states that effective displays, a part from other marketing materials, plays a role in catching the attention of a customer, and also reduces the focus or influence on the price when purchasing. The glass case as a semiotic material used for display purposes results in constructing the merchandise to seem more expensive than that in the other displays found within the store.

The display is acting as a silent salesperson promoting the merchandise (Huddleston, Behe, Minahan and Fernandez, 2015; D'Innocenzio, 2014 cited in Bickle et al., 2015). The Witchery jewellery is presented to appear more precious and desirable through its glass display, but without the display the merchandise may not be perceived in the same light. The glass case also prevents customers from interacting with the merchandise, i.e. touching it, and it prevents cases of theft too, which invites one to assume that the materials are more expensive given its security. The eye catching display would require of the customer to request help from staff members in order to gain access to the merchandise, if interested, in which it would then be possible to use the sense of touch to feel the merchandise as one is only limited to the sense of sight in this case. On the other hand, the customer may view this as too much effort to interact with the merchandise and simply just admire it through the glass case instead.

The arrangement and execution of the merchandise seen in the Witchery glass case display is much neater than that in Figure 5.11 and Figure 5.12. Figure 5.10 portrays the practice of organised placement. However, the jewellery being somewhat elevated on multiple marble boards result in the headbands to appear out of place. Despite the downgrade in the design of display, Figure 5.11 and Figure 5.12 allows customers to interact more freely with the merchandise, which also allows customers to have the power to rearrange the display, i.e. not placing the merchandise in the exact place it was found. The display in Figure 5.12 appears to be more neatly arranged than that in Figure 5.11. The packaging of the Swarovski jewellery is more eye-catching than that of the Woolworths branded jewellery, as each piece is displayed in an opened box which seems well presented. These white jewellery boxes match with the white sign above the stand, giving a well-rounded, coherent and cohesive look to the display. In Figure 5.11, the appearance of the Woolworths branded jewellery, especially that of the earrings on display, appears messy and unstructured in comparison to that in Figure 5.10 and Figure 5.12. The black Woolworths tags attached to each jewellery piece contrasts with the

colour of the white sign above it, and does not give off the same effect as the Swarovski stand. Through this technique, the brand is elevating third party branded merchandise above their own; showing how another brand has supremacy in an already established branded space.

The sign in Figure 5.11 announces the starting price of the earrings, while the Swarovski stand does not. The announcement of price could be making up for the lack of attractiveness in which the display portrays. This could be done with hopes that the price would be the attraction, as Nórdfalt (2011) found that disorganised displays tend to be an indicator of cheaper merchandise (Huddleston et al., 2015). This then clarifies the lack of effort put into the appearance of the display, seen in Figure 5.11. It could, therefore, be said that the difference in displays, arrangement, execution and also placement in the store plays an important role in identifying and distinguishing the worth of merchandise according to the brand.

5.1.3 Christmas Décor as Linguistic Landscapes

The space of the Woolworths store houses many objects of material culture, which includes Christmas décor. Amendments had to be made to the space of the Woolworths store to adjust it in order to suit the occasion and accompany customers celebrating the holiday. According to Burrell (2012: 55-56), Christmas is a “highly ritualized celebration” where certain materials and artefacts contribute as a part of the celebration, in which various spaces, public and private, such as shops and other outlets are decorated “to anticipate the arrival of the holiday”. The presence of Christmas décor inside of the store could not be overlooked whilst in the space. The store is decorated in materials related to or associated with the Christian holiday, which is noticeable in previously analysed figures in this chapter. The merchandise in the store then comes into contact with globalised materials, being that attached and associated with Christmas (Pennycook and Otsuji, 2017).

The various forms of Christmas décor are viewed as objects for display and for linguistic landscape purposes, which will be removed over time - particularly once the Christmas season is over along with the urgency to buy Christmas gifts. In the following year, around Christmas season, the space will once again be decorated in artefacts indicating a celebration or anticipating of the holiday. This portrays the material culture of Christmas, which includes the decorations that are recognisable and associated with the holiday. Decorated Christmas trees are usually considered the most evident semiotic artefact used as an indication of the holiday as they have remained somewhat constant with the signifying of Christmas via a decorated tree

throughout generations. However, Burrell (2012: 58) suggests that Christmas traditions “will change over time, open to different outside influences as new material cultures flow in”, which may be a result of combining both new and old elements of celebration. Through time the various forms of décor used in the space will change and may not remain constant each year as new forms of material culture influence the space and the public. The mobility of these commodities as linguistic landscapes acting as décor allows the space and the brand image to be easily adaptable to change.

Bartunek and Do (2011: 796) argue that “commercial Christmas has been sacralized and has come to dominate religious celebration”. In other words, celebrating Christmas has developed into means of commerce for gift giving purposes, benefiting businesses and their brand in their commercial activities. Christmas is celebrated through seasonal foods and gift giving, which are considered two main key elements of the holiday, in which the spaces of Woolworths supplies, in which Carrier (1993) states that it is a ritual where commodities are converted into gifts (Burrell, 2012). Although the Christmas holiday was originally intended to be celebrated for the birth of Jesus Christ, celebration is often done so in relation to money and commerce. Bartunek and Do (2011: 795) also states that “Jensen (1996, p. 80) argued that the world’s preparation [for Christmas] is fundamentally about commerce”, in which gift giving has become the norm for the celebration of the holiday. Gift giving is the norm for Christmas time, but in order to give, money often needs to be spent benefiting organisations in the process. Christmas has been turned into a commodity by businesses as a resource to commerce and may be done so through small gestures of using Christmas décor in and around the store environment. Bird (2007) states that by the late 19th century, strategies have been developed to make Christmas shopping more enjoyable for customers and more profitable for brand owners (Bartunek and Do, 2011). These strategies involved dressing the store with Christmas decorations. These strategies can also particularly be seen in Woolworths’ use in physical space, taking advantage of the holiday and the space to increase their sales.

The Christmas décor shows the brand’s support towards the Christian religion in the celebration of Christmas, but makes no direct correlation to Christian terminology in their linguistic landscapes, i.e. meaning Jesus, using a cross for symbolic meaning, etc. By taking this route organisations may feel that they are being more inclusive to other religions who also celebrate the holiday and partake in the festivities. However, businesses do often see Christmas as a time to increase their sales, showing how the business benefits from the religion and the beliefs

attached to it. The Christmas décor could also be repurposed as a reminder for customers to shop for Christmas gifts.



Figure 5.13: Christmas ornaments



Figure 5.14: Give a little happy



The signage seen in Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 above has been placed throughout the store, becoming quite redundant with the statement ‘Give a little happy’. The duplicated signage is found to be located in multiple sections in the store to act as a part of the store’s Christmas décor and also as a sort of reminder focused towards customers to shop for Christmas gifts. However, this particular type of duplicate signage is not seen in the Food Market. The placements of these signs are found at certain displays. The signs are placed at displays of merchandise, which could be indicators that are approving specific merchandise worthy as Christmas gift ideas for purchase, as seen in Figure 5.14, being the plain coloured t-shirts found in the women’s wear section. Figure 5.13 portrays the written signage placed at a shelf displaying Christmas ornaments, decorations and related merchandise, which also ties in with Christmas shopping. Christmas season is also deemed a suitable time of year for customers to buy Christmas décor and for businesses to increase their sales on Christmas décor merchandise.

The textual signage is in red to attract attention, but is also seen as a colour representative of the Christmas holiday. The red signs do not clash with the ‘on sale’ signage that is indicated in yellow, which can be seen in the background of Figure 5.14; the yellow signs placed on top of the clothing rails to indicate sale items. The word play of the written sign seen in Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 saying ‘Give a little happy’ could be viewed as an indirect, yet politer manner of directly saying ‘buy a gift’, as the emotions one experiences when receiving a gift is usually that of being happy. The tone of the signage also seems less harsh and aggressive towards the reader, but the sign is still viewed as a command.



Figure 5.15: Gift boxes in homeware section



Figure 5.16: Gift boxes in women's section

Gift boxes as Christmas décor have also been placed around the store. Just as the verbal signage seen in Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14, the placement of these gift boxes act as non-verbal signage and indicators of what the brand deems or rather suggests as Christmas gift worthy materials. The boxes are bright red in colour which allows these to be noticeable amongst the merchandise they are placed on display with and is, therefore, easily spotted. Figure 5.15 exhibits the gift boxes placed in the homeware section of the store and Figure 5.16 shows the placement of the boxes in the women's wear section, particularly where the women's accessories are located. Both Figure 5.15 and Figure 5.16 show the gift boxes on the display tables amongst the merchandise as a part of the semiotic assembling of materials. The semiotic assemblages portray the ability of these gift boxes to be linked with the merchandise and add new meanings to the display by indicating and signifying gift worthy merchandise.

As the gift boxes have been repurposed to bare new meaning and purpose, being for the use of attracting attention and indicating gift worthy merchandise for Christmas, as opposed to verbal signage such as the 'Give a little happy' signs around the store. The gift boxes could also be seen as semiotic material remediated from the verbal signage, seeing that they serve the same function with the exception that the gift boxes bare more of a hidden meaning than that of the verbal signage. The symbolic meaning of the gift boxes is to represent gifts and the joy that often comes with receiving it. The gift boxes, as non-verbal signage, could be verbalising some sort of meaning that creates an instance of intertextuality with the signage seen in Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14. To elaborate on what intertextuality is, it is defined as "the ways in which

texts and ways of talking refer to and build on other texts and discourses” (Johnstone, 2008: 164). Noting that intertextuality involves texts, the gift box contains no textual discourse, but its meaning is understood by the public. The gift boxes are a symbolic representation of gift giving, but has the ability to be open to interpretation. The gift boxes have to be placed on a surface whereas the verbal signage is placed as a stand amongst merchandise, which consumes less space than the gift boxes. Therefore, the gift box could also serve the purpose of a space filler.

The temporary signage acting as space fillers will eventually be removed to suit the dynamics of time and space, knowing that space needs to change as time does. It could therefore also be argued that space develops to suit time, given that these Christmas decorations were present in the space to accompany the Christmas season. When the time period of the holiday has passed, the space will then be redeveloped and possibly allow new signage to emerge to create new possibilities and new associations with space.

5.1.4 Navigational Signage

While following the path in a vast space, one could misjudge direction or location. To help guide or usher customers along the path, Woolworths has made use of navigational signage.



Figure 5.17: Please pay here direction

Navigational signage, such as that seen in Figure 5.17 above, usually appears when the path splits into two or more ways. This category of signage relates to the navigational signs seen on

the roads, where they are more commonly spotted, as they serve the function of guiding people to their choice of destination. Although the designs of the navigational signs in store differ from that on the road, they have been altered, or rather remediated in design according to jurisdiction that applies to majority of the store's signs that can evidently be associated with the brand. The signage in the Woolworths store serves the same purpose. It guides customers along the path to what could be considered hotspots, such as till points, or areas in the store that are not well sighted along the path, such as the women's fitting rooms. These signs form a navigation system throughout the store. The direction in which the arrows are pointed at indicates the trajectory to the declared destination.

Figure 5.17 portrays various signs hanging from the ceiling of the store, located in the women's shoe area in the women's section. These signs are examples of navigational signage as semiotic assemblages being grouped within close proximity. These emergency signs need to withhold and maintain their original form in order for it to be understood. These signs are not limited to the space of the Woolworths store and can be understood if placed in another space as they fall under a narrow scope of material culture, where one has come to learn the urgency of these specific semiotics and the meanings attached to them. Once a symbol or colour changes then so does the meaning as they are globally understood with the same communicative purpose.

The design of the 'Please pay here' sign is different to that of the emergency signs containing colours and symbols that have been familiarized over time, as this sign is designed to pertain particularly to Woolworths. The sign has a different design in comparison to the emergency signage. The colours vary, as well as the verbalisation of the signs. The emergency signs make use of symbols, whereas the other makes use of text. Its presence does not have the same impact as the emergency signs and is seen to be customised to suit the branded space it is operating in.

Additionally, a trait and purpose shared amongst the signs, seen in Figure 5.17, is that they indicate location. Despite the difference in the mentioning of location, i.e. symbols and text, the indication of direction is done so with the use of arrows. The emergency signs make use of a clear arrow, whilst the Woolworths sign entrusts the use of a closing angle bracket to indicate direction to the right.



Figure 5.18: Please pay here location

Figure 5.18 portrays the till point area, or the ‘please pay here’ area as the end result of the navigational signage seen in Figure 5.17. When walking towards the sign seen in Figure 5.17 on the path, one cannot see the till point area in Figure 5.18, which eventually appearing to the right of the path, as it is somewhat hidden. Seeing the navigational sign from a distance would be helpful towards travellers who are unfamiliar with the setting and location of certain sections and areas within the store. Those who have familiarized themselves with the space would most likely disregard the navigational signage.

The till point area in the women’s section is surrounded by different semiotic assemblages. The assembling of the women’s gift sets on the rack, at the till points, in Figure 5.18, seeing that the till point is located in the women’s section. The assembling of materials and merchandise at till points are circumstantial and relies on location.

Intertextuality and resemiotization is at play here regarding the Woolworths sign seen in Figure 5.17 and the sign seen in Figure 5.18. Johnstone (2008: 164) states that “texts can bear intertextual traces of other texts in many ways, ranging from the most direct repetition to the most indirect allusion”. These two signs are examples of direct repetition. The ‘please pay here’ sign, in Figure 5.17, acts as navigational signage that alludes to a location that has been labelled ‘please pay here’ on a bigger sign. The signs depend on and allude to each other, perhaps the sign in Figure 5.17 even more so, but the two signs are interlinked through text and design,

allowing the communicative goal to be met. The two signs also interconnect to form an understanding and to portray coherence within the store.

5.1.5 COVID-19 Linguistic Landscapes

Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the brand has managed to keep their stores functional. This space has been occupied and not dormant during the pandemic. During South Africa's level one lockdown regulations and restrictions, Woolworths Food Market was open and functioning to the public. As time progressed and lockdown level regulations became less strict, the rest of the Woolworths store merchandise became available for purchase. Showing that time and space is ever changing through these restricted and unrestricted areas within the space. During the time in which the data was collected at the store, the lockdown level regulations allowed Woolworths to sell all their merchandise to the public, but had to be done so in a safe environment amidst the spread of the virus. In order for Woolworths to ensure this safe environment, they needed to implement measures in line with the regulations of the implemented lockdown level and with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

COVID-19 linguistic landscapes were found in and outside of the Woolworths store. These linguistic landscapes are also an indication of how the space has been transformed to suit the circumstance of the pandemic while also accommodating customers with regards to their health and safety. It also shows how the space is able to adjust according to events and circumstances, creating this dynamic aura. The time and placement of these assemblages in terms of linguistic landscapes are temporary yet relevant in the space. As Pennycook (2017) states, these assemblages are temporary, hence why the moment in time of the encounter and presence is significant.

The COVID-19 pandemic signage plays a role in shaping the environment and helps ensure customers that the store is maintaining a safe space in terms of one's health through their linguistic landscapes. A prominent design feature detected in most pandemic related landscapes throughout the store is colour. The background of these signs are black with text and symbols appearing in white. These colours are also related to Woolworths' brand identity, being white and black. Specifically looking at the Woolworths logo, it is white text appearing on a black background. Through this the brand is showing their concern, but also expressing somewhat originality in the design and layout of the sign to create branded material, which will be

explored in the figures to follow with specific focus on the multimodal aspects appearing on the signs.



Figure 5.19: ‘Remember your mask’ signage

Looking at Figure 5.19, the sign is placed on a stand to the left hand side of the store entrance. Given the length of the text appearing on this sign, one would have to be stationary in front of it in order to read the entire text. The sign is clearly meant to be read, but given its length and the placement of the sign, many people would disregard it. However, one could walk past the sign, without coming to a halt and will still be able to read the phrase ‘Remember your mask’ at first glance. This phrase that appears to be acting as the heading or title of the sign itself, seems to be the most vital bit of information that appears there, as it is what customers will more likely read upon first glance in comparison to the texts beneath that. It is the text appearing in the finer font that would require customers to stop at the entrance in order for it to be read, in which by doing so they may then be blocking a part of the entrance.

It is also a sign that merely consists of textual discourse, except for the Woolworths logo appearing in the bottom left corner, but despite its presence in the sign, the sign is not very attractive to form a desire to read the message printed on there. The message displayed on the sign in Figure 5.19 could also be seen as a sort of ‘terms and conditions’ to be granted entry

into the store. Seeing that the sign is remediated from the lockdown regulations, people could already be familiar with these regulations and, therefore, do not see the need to stop and read the message. The store also does not make it mandatory for customers to read the sign before or upon entry, given that the sign is placed out of people's way and those entering from the right hand side of the store would not be in contact with this sign.

Before the pandemic, one would not be required to wear a face mask. The sign in Figure 5.19 also proves that the space of the store is influenced and affected by circumstances happening outside of it. Ensuring that it is not a free standing space. It is open to influences that also contribute to the dynamics of the space and its contents.



Figure 5.20: ‘We care about your health and safety’ signage

Shifting the focus to Figure 5.20 above, there is a stand seen situated on the right hand side of the entrance into the Food Market, which is in front of the Woolworths Café shop. It also exhibits COVID-19 pandemic related signage. This signage makes use of limited multimodal features that includes imagery amidst the text, making it more eye-catching and easier to read than that in Figure 5.19, especially while waiting in the line at the café. Alongside the stand is

a table holding a customer entry book, a bottle of sanitizer and a smaller stand containing a somewhat simplified version of the message on the bigger stand, along with information around the virtual expansion of the Woolworths Café. The café is in a confined space that is located within the Food Market inside of the Woolworths store. The purpose of this sign may be to remind customers of the COVID-19 health regulations and restrictions given that they are entering a somewhat different space or rather separated space from the Woolworths store while still in the branded space.

To explore the textual mode appearing on this sign in Figure 5.20; the phrase at the top of the sign: ‘We care about your health and safety’ is a means for expressing the attentiveness Woolworths has towards their customers’ health and safety during the pandemic by implying that they would not allow certain factors to implicate it. This may also refer to the quality of their products and service, while also portraying compliance towards the COVID-19 regulations. This particular phrase is also seen on the sign appearing in Figure 5.19, just below the ‘Remember your mask’ phrase, but in a slightly bigger font than the rest of the text to emphasize its significance. A possible reason for the ‘Remember your mask’ phrase not appearing in the sign at Figure 5.20, may be due to the fact that one would already be expected to wear a mask once inside of the store, whilst the removal of one’s mask while sitting down and drinking or eating inside of the café would only be allowed in that particular location within the store.

The phrase at the bottom of the sign saying ‘Together we can make a difference’ is a play on words, as the Woolworths slogan is ‘the difference’. Through this phrase, they may be implying that they cannot be the difference alone, everyone needs to work together to stop the spread of COVID-19. The Woolworths slogan has been adjusted to suit the pandemic and sign itself. Signage seen in Figure 5.19 also had the same phrase at the bottom of the sign, showing a connection between the two signs as they both serve the same function and carry similar messages across. The replacement of the ‘o’ in the word ‘together’ with the South African flag holds the only splash of colour in the signage, as well as that in Figure 5.19, and is symbolic towards the unity of the country and also to show locality.

Also comparing the bigger stand in Figure 5.20 to that in Figure 5.19, it is more eye-catching and easier to read, given that there are symbols as quick indicators of what the text is saying, so that onlookers do not have to read the whole text, but can rather understand and interpret

through these provided symbols. These symbols carry the importance of the message and have been copied and pasted onto the sign placed on the table. At first glance of the symbols, one would immediately understand that this is a sign relating to the pandemic, given the symbol of the spray bottle to indicate hand sanitizer, the symbol of two people with a horizontal line between them to indicate social distancing and the mask to indicate that the wearing of a mask is necessary. The mask symbol alludes to the intertextuality of the phrase: ‘Remember your mask’. However, the emphasis of the mask was stressed more in the sign in Figure 5.19, which could be due to the sign being placed at the store entrance, while the sign at Figure 5.20 is already placed inside of the store, and in order to get into the store one has to wear a mask, which needed to be established at the entrance. The mask symbol in the sign at Figure 5.20 could act as a mere reminder or could be indicating the basic requirements to ‘health and safety’ stated in the heading of the sign.

Given the discussion of visual similarities and differences between the signs in Figure 5.19 and Figure 5.20, the notions of remediation and intertextuality are present as the COVID-19 pandemic signage act as remediated forms of the official lockdown regulations issued by the South African government. The signs are similar, but not entirely, in which an interconnection is formed between each of the signs. That seen in Figure 5.19 and Figure 5.20, do not clearly state that they are related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but through certain keywords, such as ‘mask’, ‘health’, ‘safety’, etc., it is recognisable to be signage pertaining to the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, there were no signs stressing the importance of health, safety and masks, in which it has become prominent and repetitive in the space at the time of data collection. Although the signs are meant to be eye-catching, they are not placed directly on the path to disrupt it or cause an obstruction, as previously seen in Figure 5.5. Instead they are placed at entrances as a reminder of what the space is requiring of one during their journey. This also adds to the argument of the placement of particular merchandise displays on the path, as the pandemic signage would not bring the brand any income from purchases or commerce, and therefore is not seen as beneficial enough to be disrupting the path.

A different sighting of linguistic landscaping has been found on the path in the form of floor signage or floor stickers. This form could be seen as an effective method of saving space, avoiding the use of stands or other means of displays, but also as an effective method of catching attention on a clear path. These signs form a part of the store’s interior design features added in light of the pandemic.



Figure 5.21: Floor signage

Figure 5.21 above shows the queuing area leading up to the till points, specifically the express till points, in the Food Market. There are various displays of merchandise and linguistic landscapes seen in Figure 5.21, which customers are mainly exposed to while queuing to pay for merchandise. The placement of displays at the till points are tactical. A part of the linguistic landscaping, seen in Figure 5.21, are COVID-19 related floor signage in the form of stickers stating 'please support social distancing'. This specific sign is also seen on the floor upon entrance to the store, leading into the store itself, and is therefore, placed on the path as well. These stickers are also particularly placed in such a manner that people approaching it will be able to read it as they are walking. However, this placement only seems aimed at those who may come into close contact with one another in a confined space, such as while waiting in line. Hence, there is no concern for customers to be exposed to it upon entry into the store. Following Banda and Jimaima (2015), the conditions of the floor stickers do not seem to be implicated, given that the signs are placed in a position to be damaged as they are constantly walked over, yet seem fairly well maintained given their non-permanent status.

The two floor stickers appearing in Figure 5.21 are far spread out from each other, which could imply that they act as markers for where each customer should stand when queuing. The customer would most likely have to use their own discretion here. According to the signage

seen in Figure 5.20, customers need to ‘keep 1.5m between yourself and others’, in which the distance between the two stickers are then assumed to be 1.5 meters apart, which ultimately leads to the support of social distancing and portrays intertextuality alluding to the coherence between their signage relating to the same topic, being the pandemic. Another aspect marking intertextuality is the choice in colours used to design the COVID-19 signage, as well as majority of the signage seen in the store. The continued use of white text on black background plays a role in distinguishing their brand from others’, whilst contributing to their branded space.

5.1.6 A Multisensory Analysis of the Food Market space

While travelling in the space of the Woolworths store, it is important to note that one is not travelling alone. There are other travellers along the journey with their own routes, trajectories, destinations and experiences. Experiences vary from person to person, such as in the instance of using one’s five human senses. These senses consist of sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. The Woolworths store is a space where all five senses can be active, making it a multisensory space.

The space allows for the sense of vision to be the most activated sense, given the many sights in the store containing semiotic materials, such as the linguistic landscapes inside and outside of the store, merchandise as semiotic assemblages, the interior and exterior décor. The sense of sight is what most attracts a customer to the merchandise. Through sight, one is able to read and interpret the linguistic landscapes of the store and identify attractive materials the brand has to offer. Through sight, the differentiation between the various divisions in the store become clear.

Majority of the store’s merchandise allows for the sense of touch to be activated. Customers tend to touch the merchandise they are interested in, i.e. feeling the material of clothing items. However, there are cases where customers are restricted to use the sense of touch, especially during the time of the pandemic, as the virus could be transmitted through touch so they removed certain items, such as the perfume testers in the perfume section. There is also the case with the glass display previously seen in Figure 5.10, which prevents customers from having the freedom to touch the merchandise, and which is also done so purposefully with a certain goal in mind.

Smell is another sense that leads a customer to a certain area, such as in the beauty division where perfume is being stored. The smell of perfume upon entrance to the store could be intentional and well planned, as customers are greeted with a pleasant smell. However, reflecting on the researcher's experience; the most prominent area of smellscape in the store is in the Food Market. As Pennycook (2017) states that smells allows one to associate meaning with objects, people and places, in which one may then associate the smell of caffeine in this space with WCafé hot drinks and food, the staff serving the food and the location of this section in the store, as well as associating the connection between the smell and the noise that comes with the terrain. The “interconnectedness of local and global objects, people and linguistic resources reconfigures the scope of the interaction from the local to wider connections across suburb, city and processes of globalization” (Pennycook and Otsuji, 2017:438).



Figure 5.22: WCafé

Upon entry of the Woolworths Food Market, the Woolworths Café is on the right, seen in Figure 5.22. One could immediately smell the blend of coffee beans and realise that a café is nearby. The smell of the coffee greets you upon entry, which may tempt one to sit down and order from their menu, allowing one to indulge in the smell a bit longer while seated. The smellscape of coffee may appear familiar to travellers within the store, which may motivate them to buy from the café. Despite the placement of the café in a somewhat hidden corner in the Food Market, the smell of the coffee is still striking. The smell of caffeinated drinks, as smellscape, in that specific location falls a part of the linguistic landscapes of the space

(Pennycook, 2017). The windows in the café also allows those seated in the area to look outside into the Food Market and also into the main sections of the store. The windows also ensure that the space is not closed off from the rest of the store and its movements/activities, nor for anyone to feel claustrophobic.

During the researcher's experience when encountering this section of the store, there were no noises that indicate a hot beverage is being made. However, the clattering of utensils, especially that of glassware and cutlery, could be heard, which could be associated with the noises usually associated with the kitchen. The music, which is a contributor to the ambience of the space, that is heard in the main section of the store, could not be heard at this point while in the Food Market. This could also be the store accompanying those who are seated and communicating with one another inside of the café. This is also the only area in the store where the sense of taste, involving the branded merchandise, is activated, but it is also the only area where tasting is permitted, given the COVID-19 rules to always wear a mask while inside of the store.

There is also no direct signage stating that this is a Woolworths café, nor the name of the café, besides the sign seen on the table in Figure 5.20, which is hardly noticeable. The listing of prices is made available in Figure 5.22 and is hanging above what seems to be their ordering station and till point, specifically for the café. Imagination could be used here as one's senses could play the primary role in identifying this space as a café.



Figure 5.23: Food Market flower display

As seen in Figure 5.23 above, the entrance to the Food Market also greets customers with the display of flower arrangements, as a part of their merchandise, creating visually satisfying scenery. The flower arrangement display allows customers to freely interact with the bouquets in which they could see the flowers, smell them and also feel their texture, which are often factors that influence buying power when it comes to bouquets. The smell of the coffee is dominant and more superior than that of the flower display. One's sense of smell can therefore only capture the smell of the coffee in the area. However, when putting one's nose close to or against the flowers, the smell of the flowers would then more likely be overruled by the coffee smell. Almost similar to a clash of odours. The role of smell could be playing an important role in this space given that the physical space is also the only space that allows the sense of smell to be activated.

It is clear that this study follows that of Pennycook and Otsuji (2017:435), as they focus on how objects become “part of hybrid assemblages: concretions, settings and flow”. The Woolworths store allows for these hybrid assemblages to exist, such as assembling the produce section, with the flower bouquets and the café within close proximity to one another. Extending the range of semiotic assemblages even further throughout the store, one would notice the various types of merchandise available within the branded space. Therefore, as a multisensory space, one's senses are often deactivate in one area of the space and are then reactivated when in another, given the semiotic consequences of these material objects (Pennycook and Otsuji, 2017:435).



5.2 Textual Space Analysis

The textual space being dealt with in this study is limited to that of one domain containing semiotics which have been organised according to the site they exist in. Noting that space is not just made up of objects and boundaries, it is important to understand the meanings attached to the objects, boundaries and material culture in that particular space, in order for meaning making to occur. The textual space, being mobile and dynamic, allows for meaning making to occur. Škulj (2004: 30) describes the space as “an ongoing event of cultural tradition and the individual mode of entering into the text, both factors are involved in an ever changing platform of circumstances”.

Despite the vast limitations to the textual space, including objects and domains, the textual space exists through, but is generally not limited to, sales promotional letters. The space of text “implies both space in literature and literature in space” Škulj (2004: 21). The collection of semiotic material specifically being dealt with in this space is bound to that of two Woolworths brochures. The brochures gathered were found in the physical space, specifically the Woolworths store, and, therefore, through the physical space, the textual space was made available. These two brochures are an example of semiotic artefacts that have been assembled in the public space, as they have been grouped and assembled with other materials of its sort, being other brochures. Following the findings of Pennycook and Otsuji (2017), the placement of the brochures, as assembling artefacts, are contributing factors drawing the attention of customers towards the till points, noting that the brochures were only found or seen at till points inside of the store. Brochures are meant to be read, and given their arrangement within the store, it can only be done so while the customer is stationary, such as at the till point while waiting for the cashier to ring up their items. This could then incite action to take a brochure from the display.

Zhou (1997: 114) describes brochures as “a unique medium of communication and marketing, not only in terms of their content, format, and design, but also in terms of their varied means of distribution”, while also acknowledging the various mediums available to issue brochures to the public, such as via email, hand-outs and placing them on display. Brochures as sales promotional letters, making up the textual space being dealt with, are seen as mobile entities that also allows for remediation and resemiotization to occur. It is seen as a space that may be transported through time and place. A possible instance to mention of its ability to travel through time and place is the issuing of a brochure to be relevant for a certain period of time, and once this time period has passed, the brochure will most likely still exist in the space it was issued in, or it could be transported amongst spaces and, therefore also transcends through time. Prior (2013: 108) states that, amongst other multimodal electronic and printed texts, brochures are now far more heavily influenced by graphic design than ever before. Brochures can be viewed as a category or domain that creates a platform for potential marketing and advertising to take place and, therefore, need to be eye catching in order to draw the attention of the potential customer. When comparing other semiotic materials relating to the textual space, such as textual signage within the store acting as a part of the linguistic landscape, it is not portable, it is purely stationary until it has been moved or removed. Therefore, noting that all that belongs to the textual space has the ability to transcend through space and time.

When accessing the textual space, the human senses of sight and touch particularly come into play. When coming across these brochures, one would only use sight as a sense towards these brochures. Once the brochure is physically picked up from the display, it then becomes a multisensory space as at least two senses are then at use, being sight and touch. One is able to feel the brochure, to know and understand that by the texture the brochure consists of one page, instead of when holding the 'Terms and Conditions' brochure, one is easily able to tell that it is in the form of a booklet, consisting of a few pages. One is also able to tell the size, thickness and feel of the brochure through touch. Sight allows one to read, with access to the imagery, colour, font and font size of the brochures, while also allowing the user to distinguish one brochure from the other, in which the same applies to touch in some aspects. The texture amongst brochures may vary as well.



Figure 5.24: Brochure front view

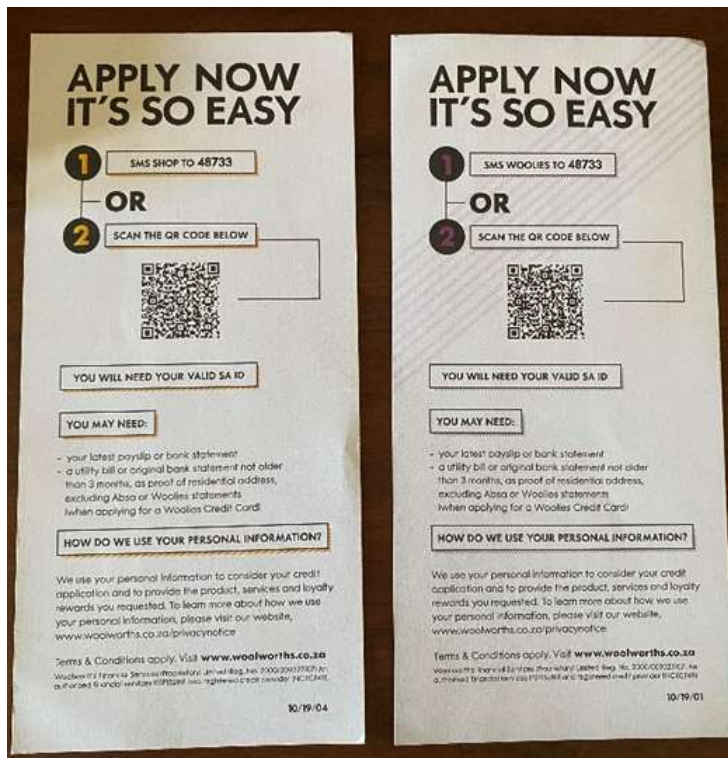


Figure 5.25: Brochure back view

Looking at Figure 5.24, which contains an image of two collected brochures found at a till point in the food section of the store. These brochures are made available to further promote the Woolworths brand, or the extension thereof, noting the possibility that some customers may not be aware of their financial services. These brochures are making the Woolworths credit card, store card and personal loan services known to the public, while also encouraging customers to apply for these accounts.

Figure 5.25 shows the back view of the two brochures seen in Figure 5.24. When looking at Figure 5.25, this view of the brochures, the information seen there is a copy of each other, with regards to text, text spacing, font and font size, the only difference is seen in the choice of colour used for the numbering and in the shadowing of the text boxes. When looking at the brochures from the view given in Figure 5.24, they differ in terms of colour, font size, image size and spacing. However, the difference in the use of dominant colours on each brochure is the most distinguishable feature of the two. Looking at Figure 5.24, the brochure on the left has a dominant background colour that is of a gradient showing orange emerging into yellow, whilst the other brochure is black with purple diagonal stripes as the background. The orange and yellow brochure is not a reflection of Woolworths' prominent use of colours, however, the black brochure is the closest to the portrayal of the brand.

At first glance it is clear to see that there are three cards stacked up on one another. It is not clear to see which card is the credit card and which card is the store card, and taking out a loan would not require any kind of card. Specifically focusing on the image in Figure 5.24, The details on the black card, being the only card that one could get a clear view of, says ‘black credit card’ in the top right corner. Despite the marketing of these three services, the marketing of the credit card seems to be prioritized above the rest. Johnson (2020) defines a credit card as a means in which individuals make use of to purchase goods and services in a fast and convenient manner, but the credit card is also seen as an instrument of debt. Bernthal, Crockett and Rose (2005: 137) states that by gaining debt and not complying with the regulations that come with credit card usage could result in “an undesirable lifestyle space”. To further expand, Johnson (2020) states that credit cards could accumulate big balances that could also accumulate hefty interest costs on the money spent. The interest on these balances are how Woolworths benefits from credit card usage, hence the priority of marketing the credit cards above the store card and personal loan. Owning a credit card and keeping a good credit score generally plays an important role when applying for a personal loan (Johnson, 2020), being one of the application options. Applying for a Woolworths credit card and maintaining a good credit score could also be a gateway to a successful personal loan application, hence the prioritising of the marketing of the credit card. Today, credit card practices are forming “a part of material culture, as the use of these cards have become a lifestyle” (Bernthal et al., 2005: 137). They further state that in past generations, the working and middle classes had less accessibility to credit cards, implying that the upper class had the upper hand to the accessibility and availability of credit cards. This could also relate to Woolworths’ reputation as being a company that mainly caters and sells for the middle to upper class community.

Returning to the image of the black credit card in Figure 5.24, from a multimodal perspective, it appears to look like a certified bank card issued to bank account holders. The brochure containing the Woolworths Terms and Conditions provides information that is applicable to the physical and virtual space involving the Woolworths brand, stating that the customer will receive a credit limit, as well as a PIN for the credit card. The black credit card also contains a card chip, card number, expiration date, card holder name and the word ‘Visa’ in the bottom right corner. Johnson (2020) clarifies that the stating of the word ‘Visa’ on the card is to indicate payment network facilitating the transferring of funds between the credit card holder and the business. The silver card seen at the bottom of the stacked cards, is missing the word ‘Visa’ in

the bottom right corner, as well as the missing square appearing on the right side of the first two cards. Also, where the customer's name appears at the bottom of the first two stacked cards, the card number appears at the bottom of the silver card. This clearly indicates that the card appearing at the bottom is not a credit card, but is rather the Woolworths store card, which is one of the application options. This also indicates that the silver Woolworths credit card does not appear or is not marketed on the brochure. According to the Woolworths' Terms and Conditions (2020), specifically on credit card, store card and loans, the colour coded credit cards serve a significant purpose.

The silver credit card allows customers to get 1% back towards their WVouchers on the purchases they've made at Woolworths, whereas the gold credit card allows 2% back and the black credit cards allows 3% back. The black credit card is stacked at the top of the cards and can be viewed as the elite and highest value credit card to own as a credit card holder. The specific choice of the black card to be ranked as the highest value could be based on the brand colour of Woolworths. These credit cards may also be used outside of Woolworths, where each credit card constitutes different amounts of percentages back on the customer's 'outside of Woolworths' purchases, with the black credit card still reigning as the highest value credit card. Despite there being three Woolworths credit cards to choose from, only the two elite credit cards, being the black and gold credit card, appear on the brochure. The order of the stacked cards seems to appear in the order of highest value according to the Woolworths. When looking at Figure 5.24, the reason for their choice in the brochures' dominant use of colours may be connected to their black and gold credit cards, which look and act as bank cards. This adds to the upper class image that Woolworths needs to maintain in order to withhold the high standard expected of them from public. Johnson (2020) states that when one uses one's credit card, they are in actual fact borrowing money from a bank, which in this case, the bank is Woolworths. Therefore, it can be said that Woolworths is acting as a bank towards the public, given that they are not only issuing credit cards, but also granting personal loans.

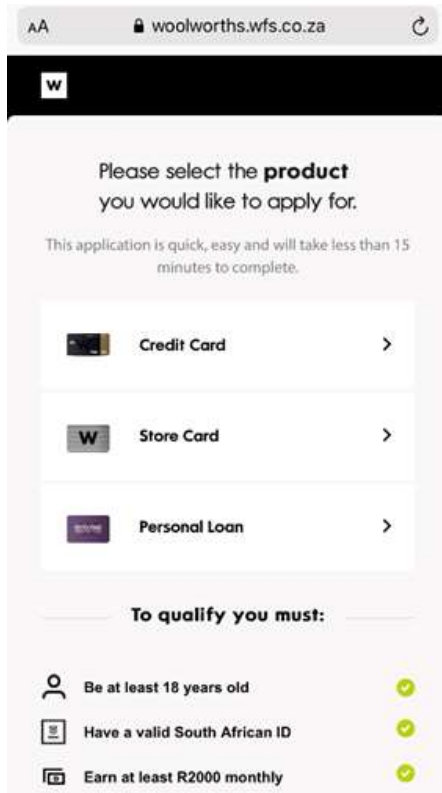


Figure 5.26: Application webpage

When using a smartphone to read the QR code provided on each brochure, as seen in Figure 5.25, the code virtually directs the user to what is seen in Figure 5.26. A QR code is defined by Shin, Jung and Chang (2012: 1417) as a 2D code that “consists of black modules arranged in a square pattern on a white background”. Furthermore, once the QR code has been decoded through a smartphone, in which it was designed to be read through the smartphone’s camera, the information could be in the form of text, URL or other data. When looking at the QR code, one would immediately associate it with a camera as it can only be scanned via a camera on a smartphone or via a QR reader app. The medium in which one needs to access the QR is significant, as the hypermedia event involving a smartphone and a camera is required. The QR code is the most salient feature once the brochure is turned over, seen in Figure 5.25. The QR codes on each of the Woolworths brochures leads to the same URL, being www.woolworths.wfs.co.za, as seen in Figure 5.26, which contains the actual application forms for the option of the cards and loan.

This shows the link between the brand’s use of the textual space and virtual space, resulting in intertextuality. Intertextuality is present when looking at the text seen in Figure 5.25 which shapes the text seen in Figure 5.26, seeing that it adds meaning and context to the website. The

text in Figure 5.25 also provides information that somewhat adds to the text at the bottom in Figure 5.26 with regards to what customers need in order to successfully apply, along with other information. In this instance, the textual space alludes to the virtual space, which creates some sort of bridge between the two spaces.

The QR code is not the only source on the brochure making a reference towards the virtual space. As seen in Figure 5.25, below the ‘How do we use your personal information?’ textbox, the brochure refers to the virtual space by mentioning www.woolworths.co.za/privacynotice, as well as the Woolworths online shopping website for the terms and conditions. There is also the numerical code on the brochure, in which one could SMS as an alternative application option, which would then not lead to a website. The alternative option of the SMS is evident in the case where one does not have a smartphone or a QR code reader. Shin, Jung and Chang (2012) states that some smartphone users are unable to attain QR code reading software on their device. Keeping this in mind shows that Woolworths wants to ensure a smooth application process for a friendly user experience, despite the vagueness behind the SMS option in the brochure, the process behind it and whether there are costs involved. However, both application options make it evident that the path from the textual space, being the brochures, leads straight to the virtual space with a smartphone as the medium.

Meaning making shifts as one step alludes to the next. It is clear that resemiotization is also at play here. The instructions shown on these brochures, in the textual space, are then resemiotized into the virtual space through the options of the SMS number and the QR code for the application to be successful. Application for these cards or loan cannot be done on the given brochure. One’s application is redirected from the textual space to virtual space through resemiotization. There is also no mention of the application existing in the physical space, or rather outside of the virtual space by applying in store rather than online. The resemiotization of the application process exists between the two spaces, unless there is a case where the customer enquires about the application process in store to a Woolworths staff member and they guide the customer to the application on their website. Once the customer’s application process is completed and is deemed successful, resemiotization from the virtual space into the physical space could also occur where the credit card, store card or loan may be used for in store purchases. One could assume that the application process has been remediated from the physical space, where one would apply in person, involving face-to-face contact with Woolworths’ employees at a Woolworths store.

The images of the cards on the brochures have been repurposed from the physical space by using inactive cards. That which is meant to exist in the physical space has been remediated into the textual space for advertising purposes. Semiotic remediation takes place when the credit cards and store card have been photographed and placed as images on the brochures to give the reader a better look at the appearance of these cards. What may have been word of mouth communication has also been remediated into textual space as sales promotional letters.

Looking closely at Figure 5.26, when accessing the virtual space, all three application options are available, which may portray coherence between the two spaces and how the textual space is remediated into the virtual space. The front of the brochure mentioning the credit card, store card and loan, has also been remediated into the virtual space, but in a more organised manner. Looking further at hypermodal aspects, it is clear to see the use of colour in Figure 5.26, being black, white and a touch of green, which are prominent colours used to identify the Woolworths brand. The difference between the three application options also become clear, as well as the images of the cards, such as in the instance of a clearer view of the Woolworths store card. In Figure 5.26, only the black and gold credit cards are shown next to the credit card option, despite there being three credit cards available. When looking at Figure 5.26, there are only two cards, being the black and the gold card, appearing as an image next to the 'credit card' option, while the silver card appears as an image next to store card. At first glance it is not noticeable on the brochure, but once redirected to the website, seen in Figure 5.26, it is much more noticeable. Woolworths may only promote the black and gold credit cards with hopes to increase the amount of applicants for those two specific credit cards. Just as in the brochures, this shows the eagerness of the brand for the applicants to apply for the higher levelled credit cards.

These brochures would not be successful in terms of its communicative goal if the QR code was not working due to the website page not being available anymore or if the SMS number is deemed invalid, which would most likely happen despite the ability for the brochure to travel through time, the contents on the brochure may not, considering that the virtual space is an ever changing space. It could therefore be said that the brochures are reliant on the virtual space in order to achieve its communicative goal.

5.3 Summary

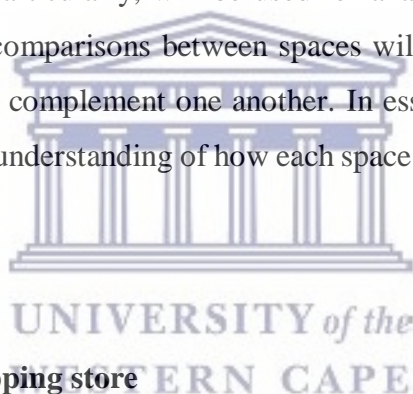
The linguistic landscapes, including mannequins, displays, décor and signage, help identify the space as that belonging to the Woolworths brand, ultimately resulting in a branded space. Specific semiotic materials that have been discussed in this chapter are clearly recognisable with the brand and their image which aids in portraying coherence among the signage in terms of the design and how they interconnect and allude to one another. The signs found in the store are multidimensional and the placements thereof are found on the ceiling of the store, on the floor, on the walls, on merchandise displays, on stands and so forth. The interior design of the store, especially the construction of the path, generates evident occurrences for travellers to come into contact with the store's signage. While linguistic landscapes are not the only evidence of indication or aid for travellers to navigate themselves through the space of the store, the semiotic assemblages of merchandise and other materials help influence one's trajectory by also using their discretion to associate these assemblages with certain sections offered by the brand. The space is also seen as multisensory where all one's senses may be used, which also allows the brand to use that to their advantage in the marketing of certain merchandise. These ideas all contribute to the activating of one's spatial awareness, whether consciously or subconsciously. Allowing travellers to become somewhat acquainted with the space, the construction thereof and what it is consumed with.

Nevertheless, the textual space is reliant on other spaces in order to make meaning. As seen in the analysis of the two brochures, the textual space is reliant on the virtual space in order for its communicative goal and purpose to be met. The textual space draws meaning from materials existing in other spaces. Although, the space does carry the potential and means to bring across the brand's image to the public. The space of store and the space of the brochures differ entirely. The brochures, or rather the textual space, exists within the physical space where remediation occurs within the space itself. The remediation practices, along with intertextuality, occur in the written discourse on various signage, as well as the remediation of other linguistic landscapes from outside influences of material culture mentioned and discussed throughout the chapter, where semiotics have been repurposed to add value in meaning beneficial to the brand, i.e. the Christmas décor, mannequins, and so forth. It is clear that remediation across the two spaces, as well as within the physical space itself is evident in the portrayal of the brand.

CHAPTER 6: MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE VIRTUAL SPACE

6.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to present the findings of that which have been collected and sampled in the virtual space, which will then be analysed and compared to content found in the physical and textual space, while also comparing the content across domains within the virtual space itself. The particular findings in the virtual space will consist of materials taken from the Woolworths online shopping website, the official Instagram page of Woolworths and a YouTube video containing Woolworths related content. Remediation practices come into play in the process of transferring semiotic materials and knowledge across the mentioned spaces and sites. Adami (2014: 224) states that “online environments foster remediation to an unprecedented extent”, in which this may apply to certain semiotic materials being linked to one another across sites and domains within the virtual space, and may also include semiotic materials being remediated and transformed across spaces, such as the three spaces being dealt with in this study. These practices, that of remediation particularly, will be used for analysis purposes throughout the chapter. The relevancy of the comparisons between spaces will rely on the findings of each space and how they contrast or complement one another. In essence, these findings, analysis and comparisons will create an understanding of how each space may operate as a working unit under the same brand identity.



6.1 Woolworths online shopping store

Remediating a business from the physical space to the virtual space is practiced by many well-known branded companies, including Woolworths. By having an online business, the store would then sell their merchandise online where the customer places an order via the internet in which they would have to ensure a stable internet connection on their end for this action to be successful (Kacen, Hess and Chiang, 2013). There are certain advantages and disadvantages that this space is accompanied with. According to Kacen, Hess and Chiang (2013), advantages of online shopping include an easier means of finding and locating merchandise stocked by the store, along with information surrounding the merchandise, while also eliminating the need to travel for these merchandise if delivered to the customer’s doorstep. Ultimately, offering a more time saving method of shopping. Furthermore, the disadvantages of this method of shopping may include “shipping and handling charges, exchange-refund policy for returns... and uncertainty about getting the right item” (Kacen, Hess and Chiang, 2013: 2). These

disadvantages may drive some customers away from using the space to purchase merchandise from, in which they may prefer the older means of shopping, being that in the physical space.

The Woolworths online shopping website has been consulted as a site where semiotic remediation is used and performed as discourse practice in the virtual space. Their online shopping website needs to constantly be updated in order to keep up with the trends and dynamics of the modern world. Through observation, the researcher has found that the website is being updated on a weekly basis to promote their merchandise and other services, mainly through the use of imagery and other virtualscapes.

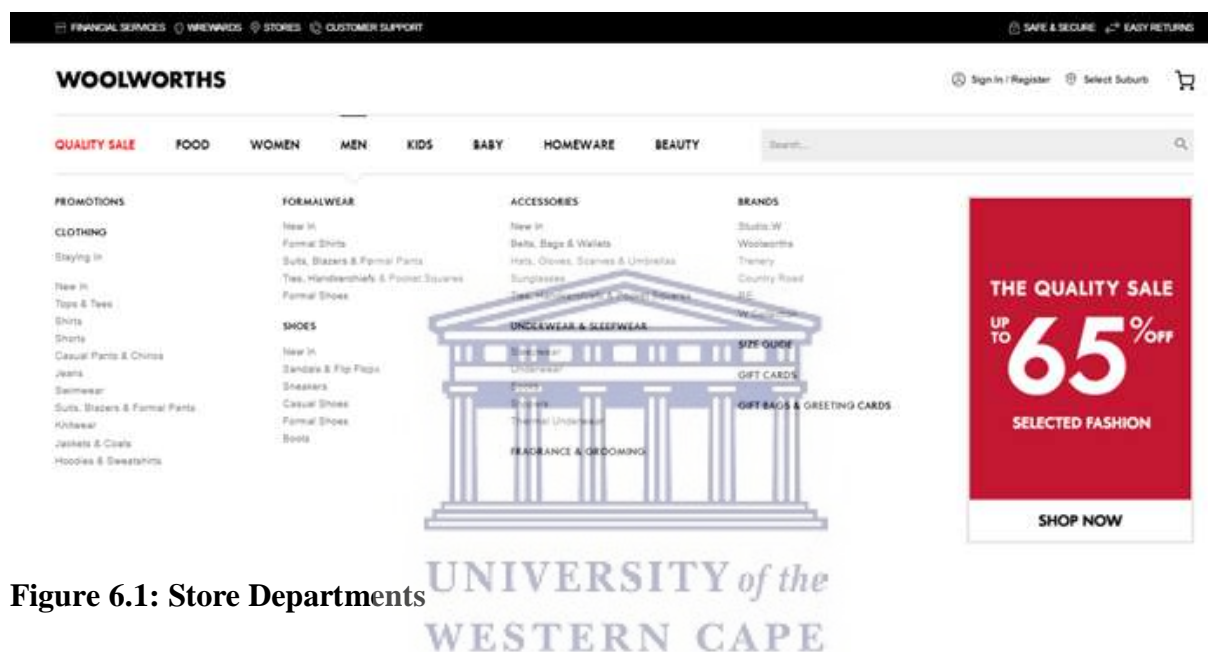


Figure 6.1: Store Departments

Figure 6.1 above displays a list of all the departments under the brand, along with sub-departments seen specifically under the men's department, with the appearance of The Quality Sale promotion in the image on the right attached with a hyperlink in the words "Shop Now". Woolworths makes use of the opportunity and platform provided by the virtual space to advertise. At the time of data collection, 'The Quality Sale' was happening. However, the sale items within the store were not as easily located through signage or displays. The promotion of this sale is seen in Figure 6.1 above, being the red box on the right. The word 'quality' in the name may relate to the brand's belief in marketing and producing quality merchandise. Luiz, Bowen and Beswick (2011) states that Woolworths believes the key to their success lies in providing customers with high-quality merchandise with a reputation for having more value and quality than other stores'. Hence the play on words used by the brand in this case. The

‘Quality Sale’ in red the dropdown list is a temporary option made available to suit the period in which the sale is happening, while also making it easier for customers to navigate through the sale merchandise. The image is also a reminder to customers browsing the online store that there is a sale taking place and can be seen as a means to keep customers engaged with the sale merchandise. The bright red background of the image cannot be missed on the minimalistic all-white webpage, as the image, acting as an advertisement, has the most salient features on the screen. The overall visual impact of the layout and design seen in Figure 6.1 is not very attractive in terms of colour and imagery, but does convey the brand’s identity clearly. Visual impact can be defined “as the degree to which the site’s design grabs attention, is attractive, and conveys a clear, unique image” which also focuses on salient elements with the “ability to direct attention to specific elements onscreen” as the visual impact involves the experience of the website (Demangeot and Broderick, 2006: 339).

Woolworths’ departments, such as Food, Women, Kids, Baby, Homeware and Beauty are present on the drop-down list next to the search bar in Figure 6.1. Figure 6.1 shows that the men’s department has been selected. The sub-departments and their listings in the men’s sections, in which customers can see exactly what stock of merchandise Woolworths holds, are meant to narrow down the customer’s options if they are in search of something specific, in which the search bar option is also valid for. Remediation practices are at play here. The brand’s range of merchandise has been repurposed to allow accessibility to it from a different space. In the physical space, it would not be possible to be able to access every single item for purchase, and if it is, then it would be time consuming, which is one of the advantages of shopping in the virtual store; time-sparing and easily accessible. One would have to search the store to see if they have stock of the merchandise they desire, relying on discretion and familiarity of the store’s spatial layout. The store groups semiotic assemblages that are considered of similar categories together, making it somewhat easier to locate the desired merchandise in the physical space. Demangeot and Broderick (2006: 333) states that customers enter the online space for merchandise and “the ways available to them to perceive or interact with products must contribute to the overall experience” in the virtual space. Online shopping websites do require some skill to navigate oneself through the space successfully, but does not allow for as much experience as one would receive whilst in the physical store and would require as the online space perceived with as many senses as in the physical space (Demangeot and Broderick, 2006). Nonetheless, it is evident that the virtual space makes navigation easier than the physical space.

The physical space consists of a trajectory being led by a paved path to get to the customer's desired category of merchandise, whereas in the virtual space, everything is at the palm of the customer's hand with just one click. No physical mobility is required. In a sense, the navigation through the online store is reminiscent of the paved path in-store. Therefore, implying that the path has been transformed and remediated to suit the virtual space of the online store in the form of hyperlinks creating instances of intertextuality where one page proceeds to the next by keeping a certain goal in mind whilst virtually travelling towards the end result. Just as in the physical store, the online store has been manipulated and designed according to the brand's liking. Just as the physical path was paved, the hyperlinks have been designed to direct the customer to their desired location in the virtual sense, creating a unique virtual trajectory for each customer.

GET THE CARD



Figure 6.2: End of online Woolworths home page

The options for selection presented in the black bar seen at the top of Figure 6.1 show a correlation between this space and the brochures discussed in the analysis of the textual space, pertaining to 'Financial Services', displaying easy access to these services in the virtual space. Also looking at the the information given on the brochures, the financial services offered by Woolworths is tightly linked to the virtual space. Therefore, directing customers to engage with their online platform to conduct this interaction with the brand.

When scrolling to the bottom of the Woolworths home page, more options and services are presented to the customer, one of which is the option to make use of their financial services, as seen in Figure 6.2 above, being the 'GET THE CARD' hyperlink. The colour of the Woolworths cards seen in Figure 6.2 helps the hyperlink to stand out from the white background, drawing attention to it. This service is related to that being advertised in the

brochures previously seen in Figure 5.24. The same images of the cards listed individually, as previously seen in Figure 5.26, appears exactly the same in Figure 6.2, except that each individual card is placed next to one another. Only the black credit card was chosen to appear in the hyperlink, seen in Figure 6.2, noting that Woolworths is marketing that specific card to be of the highest value and relevance.

As previously stated, the textual space, being the brochures, is reliant on the other two spaces in order to create effective meaning making, seeing that it was being advertised in the physical space of the store, but it is more reliant on that of the virtual space in order to result in a successful communicative goal. Seeing that the brochures were found in store; the virtual space, particularly focusing on the online store, is capable of transforming and remediating what is made available in the physical space. The textual contents on the back of the brochures, seen in Figure 5.25, have not been included on the online store as the brochure's purpose was to direct the customer to the virtual space, as previously seen in Figure 5.26.



Figure 6.3: Women's Touch



Figure 6.4: Men's Touch

Despite the ease and comfort that may come with the transition and remediation of semiotics from one space into another, the virtual space is limiting, taking into account that certain human senses cannot be used, making exceptions for the sense of sight and, pertaining to specific contexts, the sense of hearing. The Woolworths physical store is a multisensory space where all of one's human senses may be used when journeying through the store, but more commonly activated when inspecting merchandise to purchase. As observed by Demangeot and Broderick (2006: 338), "shopping online cannot provide a real experience of the products (at least not until the technology enables us to use the same four senses as offline)". In the virtual space, the inspection of products is not a possible action for the customer to achieve, whilst the privilege of selecting the best item of the batch has been withdrawn.

Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 were seen on the home page of the online store. Figure 6.3 portrays a woman wearing clothing from a category labelled with the hyperlink: 'Shop Shirts & Blouses', while Figure 6.4 portrays a man wearing clothing that represents a category under 'Shop Chinos'. A similarity between these two Figures is that in both virtualscapes appearing on the home screen, the brand is substituting the sense of touch with written discourse, knowing that the sense of touch, amongst other senses such as taste, smell and at often times, hearing, cannot be used in the virtual space. In Figure 6.3, it speaks of 'Soft Touch Tops', while Figure 6.4 mentions 'in a peached finish for a soft touch', in which the brand takes an opportunity to describe the nature of their merchandise to online shopping customers and compiles the

merchandise of the same feel in texture of material in the same category. Here the brand is somewhat substituting the customer's senses with theirs. This may also be an opportunity to manipulate customers knowing that they would not be able to determine for themselves whether or not the material of the clothing is 'soft', unless the customers resemiotize from the virtual space to the physical space by taking the initiative to find the item in-store to inspect and evaluate for themselves. The option to then inspect the item in store becomes costly in terms of time and transport. However, in both Figure 6.3 and 6.4, the word 'soft touch' may be ambiguous in its interpretation. While it could relate to the sense of touch, it may also relate to the sense of sight. In terms of sight, one may combine colours to create an ensemble that that does not clash in terms of colour, but rather compliments one another. Once again, the brand is acting as an advisor towards its customers while using their merchandise as advisory material.

Although the chinos are being marketed in Figure 6.4, the cover image of the man at the beach does not focus on the pants he is wearing, but it is rather somewhat cut off in the image. The shirt he is seen wearing for the 'peached finish' is a more salient semiotic in this instance. The image is not very attractive in terms of marketing the merchandise at hand. Demangeot and Broderick (2006) state that there are authors who argue that virtual experiences tend to be powerful given the vivid qualities of the computer-mediated space. Allowing the image in Figure 6.4 to theatre an experience outside of the branded space. Moreover, the background, being the beach, does create a relaxed atmosphere. Considering that the man in Figure 6.4 is wearing chinos and a shirt to the beach, which is not the conventional clothing items worn in that setting, it does evoke a sense of comfortability in the clothing he is wearing. In the physical space of the store, the garments cannot be showcased outside of the store. The virtual space allows for wider opportunities to showcase the garments in settings outside of the store and on human models instead of mannequins.

Redirecting to the image of the woman in Figure 6.3, she is dressed and styled in all white to look wealthy and expensive, which to some, may be appealing and desirable to the eye. White is often seen as a colour that cannot hide dirt spots, but rather exposes it. In essence, white clothing often has to be well maintained in order to keep its original colour. White is also associated with wealth and purity, which also happens to be one of Woolworths' signature colours. This may add to the idea that by wearing Woolworths branded clothing, you are seen as wealthy, expensive and desirable. This also attracts customers to shop the category with the

intent to find the clothing items that the woman is seen wearing or to find what the rest of the category has to offer.

Along with the presence of the woman dressed in white, is the appearance of the words ‘workwear faves’ in the text box at the bottom of the image, seen in Figure 6.3. By stating that the category is related to ‘workwear’ could also suggest which potential occasion customers could wear the clothing pieces to. In this instance, it would be to one’s place of work. The text implies that the blouses or shirts that fall under this category are labelled as favourites to wear at work, but there is no clarification as to whether it is a section of clothing favoured by the customers or by the Woolworths brand. By establishing that this is an expensive and desirable look, this may be aimed at a specific target market. The clothes, or rather the blouse, that the woman is wearing in Figure 6.3 is meant to represent the category her image is used for. Not all jobs require formal wear to the workplace, as blouses and shirts are seen as formal wear. The woman’s ensemble seems more suited and catered towards those who are positioned in a higher paygrade job, which once again reflects the commonly shared opinion that only wealthy people shop at Woolworths.

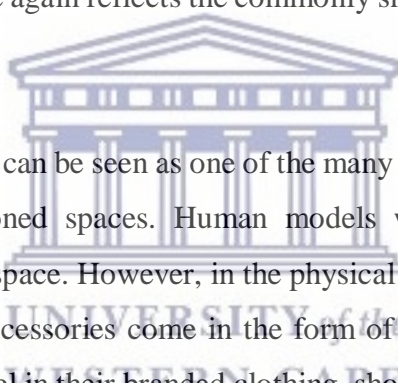


Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 above can be seen as one of the many examples to follow of semiotic remediation across the mentioned spaces. Human models wearing Woolworths branded clothing are seen in this virtual space. However, in the physical space, the models wearing and showcasing the clothing and accessories come in the form of mannequins. Using images of humans as commodities to model in their branded clothing, showing the customer the clothing on an actual body, allowing them to see the movement of the items in various poses and positions. Whereas the mannequins in the store are all stationary and stiffly positioned in the same pose, as previously seen in Figure 5.1, Figure 5.2, Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4.

A clearer view on the remediation of human models to mannequins can be seen in the Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6 below. While in the physical space of the store, a women’s dress was seen on display on a mannequin in an area of the store where the Witchery branded clothing was on display, specifically located within the women’s section. While scanning through the data collected from the store visit, the researcher took the initiative to compare the dress on the mannequin, seen in Figure 6.6, from how it was found in the store to how it appears and how it is presented in the virtual space by accessing the Woolworths online store on their smartphone.



Figure 6.5: : Dress on Mannequin

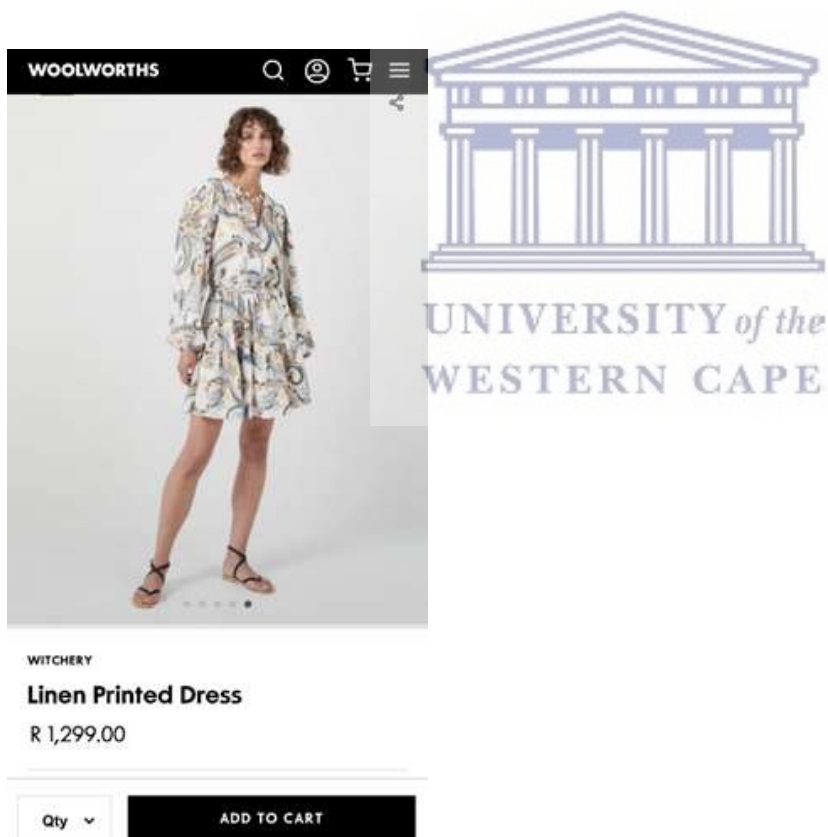


Figure 6.6: Dress on Model

To further the discussion on the women's garment, Figure 6.5 was seen inside of the store while journeying along the path. The actual dress was found on the clothing rail just behind the

mannequin display in the store, making it easily located from where it is displayed on the mannequin. The colour also plays a clear role in the assembling of semiotics, particularly alluding to the merchandise seen on the clothing rails behind the mannequins in Figure 6.5. Blue is the dominant colour in this instance. The white dress on the mannequin stands out amongst the blue coloured clothing around it. The placement of the mannequin displaying the dress is meant to be the eye-catcher or the focus, seeing that it is foreshadowing the only other mannequin surrounding it, along with the garments the other mannequin is displaying.

Looking at Figure 6.6, the garment looks different on the model wearing it. The style of the dress appears differently in the virtual space. In Figure 6.5, the dress looks shorter, the sleeves are pushed up and it is slim fitted on the mannequin. In Figure 6.6, the model is striking a different pose, in which the dress appears loosely fitted. The garment on the model shows the sleeves in full length while being paired with sandals, while the mannequin in Figure 6.5 wears heels. It is clear that two different stylists were at work here; the stylist of the mannequin was indifferent to the stylist of the model, showing also how the garment can be styled in different ways. However, with the garment existing and being marketed in two spaces at once, not all customers will see how the garment is displayed on the mannequin in Figure 6.5, as well as the garment being displayed on the model in Figure 6.6. Therefore, the space may affect how one view's the garment.

With regards to remediation practices, the dress could be added to the cart and be ready for purchase at the touch of the screen, after selecting one's size. Whereas in the physical space, one would need to locate the garment first and then search for the correct size, which is not always available in store. If a customer is looking for a specific size of the garment while in store, the online store is still accessible from that environment, meaning that the customer could ultimately purchase the item online if their size is not made available in store. Evidently adding to the advantages that the virtual space offers towards both the brand and their customers. This would then also save the customer time and transportation costs to travel to another Woolworths store and search for the item there.

When adding an item to the virtual cart, it is easily removable with just the click of a button. In the physical space one would add their items to their trolley or basket and may at often times travel back to the railing or storage rack where the item was found to return it, or other times the customer would just place the item anywhere it seems convenient in the store to avoid the

trip back. The removal of items from the cart in the online space is much more simple than that in the physical space. Before final purchase, one can see the exact amount due online, whilst in the physical space one would either have to calculate the total price of all their items themselves or will be calculated at the till points when paying. The virtual cart travels with the customer along the trajectory in the space as one browses through the website; it automatically follows the customer as they browse. On the other hand, in the store the customer will have to physically push a trolley, carry a cart or carry the items in their hand as they journey through the store.

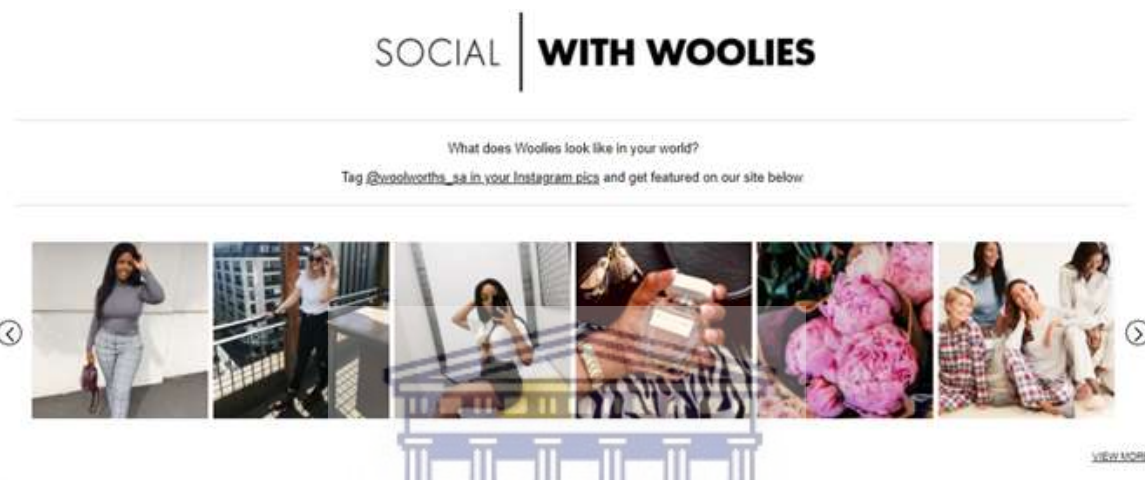


Figure 6.7: Social with Woolies

Figure 6.7 displays a section of a webpage found when clicked on the women's category. What is seen in Figure 6.7 appears at bottom of the women's home page. This creates a direct reference to the Woolworths Instagram page and encourages customers to post wearing or posing with their merchandise to be featured on their online store. It could be viewed as the brand rewarding the customer for purchasing their merchandise and advertising it on their personal Instagram account. Almost like an unconscious exchange between Woolworths and the customer. The customer promotes the Woolworths brand on their page to their followers and in return, Woolworths might feature that customer on their online store to create this illusion that they appear as a model for the brand. When clicking the "view more" hyperlink in Figure 6.7, the posts made on Instagram are just shown in a larger view to what is seen in Figure 6.7. However, the images seen in Figure 6.7 that are being uploaded onto the online store from Instagram are mainly women and merchandise that fall under that department, in which this activity or exchange may appeal more to women than it does to men and children.

The phrase ‘What does Woolworths look like in your world?’ stated in Figure 6.7 proves that the brand is acknowledging the various perspectives the public may have on them, which is also seen in the conflicting views under the YouTube video that is yet to be discussed later in this chapter. The brand wants to see what customers do with the merchandise they have purchased, how they style it, how they view it, etc. Moreover, the customer’s positive review on their purchased goods could lead to more purchases from customers.

The online shopping website does allude to their Instagram page and encourages customers to follow or view their Instagram account more than their other social media accounts mentioned. Showing coherence between the various sites in the space and encouraging customers to interact with the brand on social media, being Instagram.

6.2 Woolworths Instagram page

As previously established, Instagram as a social media platform is used by Woolworths to further market their brand and act as a communication means between them and the public. They have connected their online store to their official Instagram page, making it easier for viewers of their page to transgress from their page, or from selected posts on their page, directly to their online store where final purchases are made. The trajectory from one domain/platform to the next shows how the domains are connected within the space to form coherence and meaning.

Following the research of Adami (2014), discussing the mediums within the virtual space for crossposting, the content posted or uploaded on the online Woolworths store is then also posted on their Instagram page. Although the paper is focused around the crossposting of text, this research extends to further forms of media, such as imagery and videos as a part of crossposting in the virtual space. Media in the form of imagery is often crossposted by Woolworths, however, this may include text as well. Adami (2014:226) also acknowledges that remediation is involved in the concept of crossposting, as “the medium and site of display” shifts. Woolworths makes use of crossposting within the same platform, using both methods of posting provided by Instagram, that being on the feed posts and story posts. This way the communicative goal is more successful as it may reach more people. Those who do not see the feed post may see the story post and vice versa.

A study conducted by Manikonda, Meduri, and Kambhampati (2016), found that Instagram users are more likely to post positive content that is “lighthearted, happy and personal” than to post negative content (Muñoz and Towner, 2017). Seeing that Woolworths is a business, posting content that is relevant to their brand, the Woolworths content can be viewed as positive content, in which they are promoting their brand and merchandise, but they can also be viewed in a negative manner. In the images used by Woolworths, in the upcoming figures and past figures, one can notice a trend. The images are of high quality and creates an expensive look. The models’ skin seems to have a glowing effect in these images while showing only smooth, radiant skin. This also contributes to an unrealistic, yet desired appearance. The choice in models also adds to this expensive look, which may ultimately have a negative impact on some viewers trying to attain it.

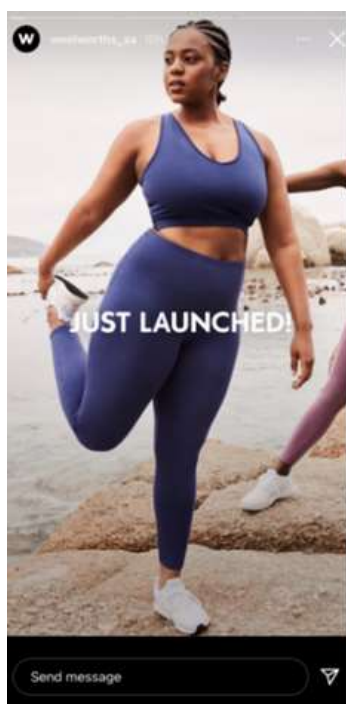


Figure 6.8: Instagram Story Post 1



Figure 6.9: Instagram Story Post 2



Figure 6.10: Instagram Story Post 3



When posting on one's Instagram Story, the account holder is then able to see exactly who and how many accounts viewed the post. Figure 6.8, Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10 portrays a thread of story posts that were posted directly after one another in the same order of appearance. Figure 6.8 was uploaded first in which Woolworths was alerting their followers that new merchandise has been made available for purchase on their website. Looking at the woman in

this image and what she is wearing, one would think that the new merchandise for sale is the clothing she is seen wearing. Hence, the woman wearing the matching blue set of clothing may act as the indication to what has been launched. Looking at the text phrase ‘Just Launched’ could be seen as inviting, as this would spark an interest in the viewer which could lead them to wonder what exactly is meant by this phrase. Figure 6.8 is the first post of the thread that a person would see when viewing Woolworths’ Story. The first post is meant to spark interest in the viewer, to make them want to view the next post in the sequence, being Figure 6.9.

In Figure 6.9, the brand then makes it clear that ‘The Activewear Collection’ is what has ‘Just Launched’ through the use of textual discourse. At this point, viewers are able to see that the collection comes in two more different colours, besides blue that was shown in Figure 6.8. Through the thread of the story uploads, it seems evident that the brand favours the blue activewear set more than the other available colours, such as that appearing in Figure 6.9. The activewear set appears alone in Figure 6.8 as the opening story upload to the thread and then appears again in Figure 6.10 as the closing story to the thread, where a hyperlink has been attached to the story through the ‘see more’ option, knowing that the last image the viewer has in their mind before following the link is the blueactive wear set. The blue set was also posted on their feed in two separate feed posts, which will later be discussed, whereas the green and pink set, has only been posted once on a completely separate post on their feed. This also adds to the idea that Woolworths is favouring the blue set above the other colours, in which they may be indirectly communicating their opinions on the merchandise. However, by only providing the link to the merchandise on the online store, there is also no mention of the availability of merchandise in-store.

The images seen in Figure 6.8, Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10 were taken at the beach, similar to that of the image seen in Figure 6.4. The facial expressions of the models do not portray any emotion, as do the models seen in the previous figures in this chapter, which portray a serious atmosphere around the images, along with one of the brand’s aesthetic elements, other than presenting clothing in a monochrome fashion and, as it seems, having photoshoots at the beach. According to Demangeot and Broderick (2006: 329), “aesthetic elements are the most extensively mentioned experiential elements of online shopping environments”. In which these elements ultimately aid in developing a brand’s identity to make it more recognisable. These elements are concerned with “the site's visual appeal and relates to the use of colours, fonts, graphics, images, etc.” (Demangeot and Broderick, 2006: 329).

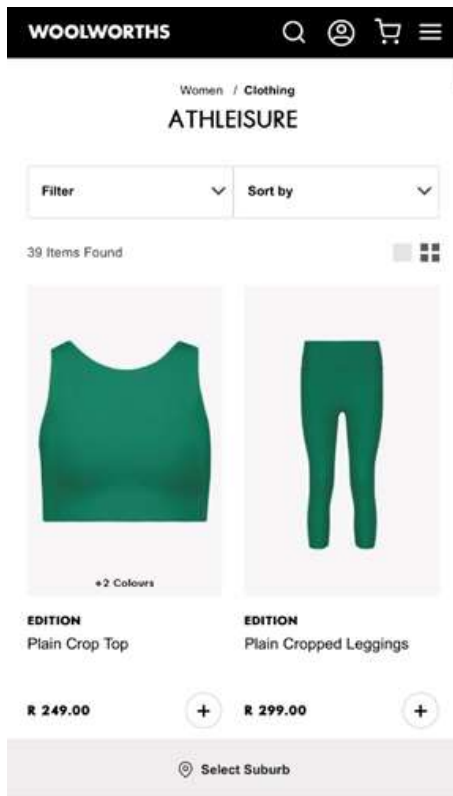


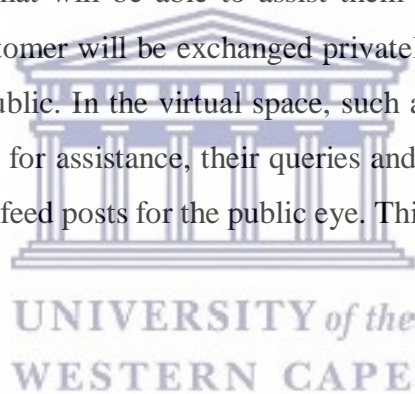
Figure 6.11: Online merchandise

Figure 6.11 above is what the viewer will be redirected to once they have clicked on the hyperlink titled 'see more' in Figure 6.10. Figure 6.11 displays the activewear collection on Woolworths' online store. The trajectory leading to the online store resulted in the viewer watching each Instagram Story in the thread until the last one, seen in Figure 6.10. Figure 6.11 shows the very top of the webpage once the online store has been loaded after clicking the hyperlink. It is very noticeable that the green clothing, in Figure 6.11, is seen in a different shade of green in comparison to that shown on the Instagram Story, seen in Figure 6.10. Through further investigation it was found that there was no other green clothing under the sub-department of Women's Athleisure clothing. The clothing appearing Figure 6.9 appears to resemble that of a washed out green colour, but when accessing the online store, the green activewear set appears to be more of a bottle green colour. The sense of sight is often played with in this space. Images are allowed to be altered to appear a certain way in which it appeals to the audience. After clicking the hyperlink in Figure 6.10, to view the activewear sets online, it then becomes clear that a filter has been applied to the image in Figure 6.9. The images appearing in Figure 6.8 and Figure 6.10 most likely have the same filter applied to maintain coherence amongst the appearance of the images in the thread. The sense of sight is then

compromised in this space as one would only be able to determine the true colour when visiting the physical store to search for the item.

Figure 6.11 also does not show any models or mannequins embodying the clothing. Instead the clothing is free standing. A customer browsing the online store and finding the collection online, without coming into contact with the collection on Instagram, would not be able to see how the clothing would appear on a human body. Also, that same customer may not have seen the posts of the women in the clothing on Instagram.

Subsequent to the example given by Fitzpatrick and Donnelly (2010:8) regarding the “nature of the online dialogue between student/student or student/tutor” that has taken place outside of the formal learning space, an online conversation held in the comments section under a post on Woolworths’ Instagram page between Woolworths and a customer can be seen as an event that has been remediated and resemiotized. In the physical space of the store, the customer will directly consult an employee that will be able to assist them where needed. The discourse between the employee and customer will be exchanged privately rather than publicly despite the ironic nature of being in public. In the virtual space, such as on social media, customers often openly display their need for assistance, their queries and thoughts involving the brand in the form of comments under feed posts for the public eye. This can be seen in the upcoming figures for discussion.



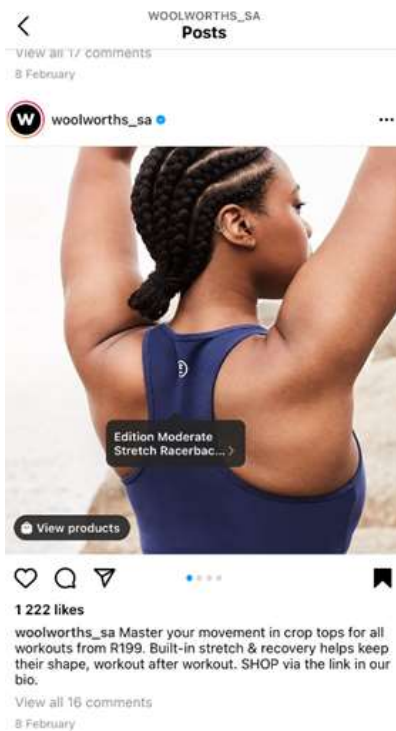


Figure 6.12: Feed Post 1

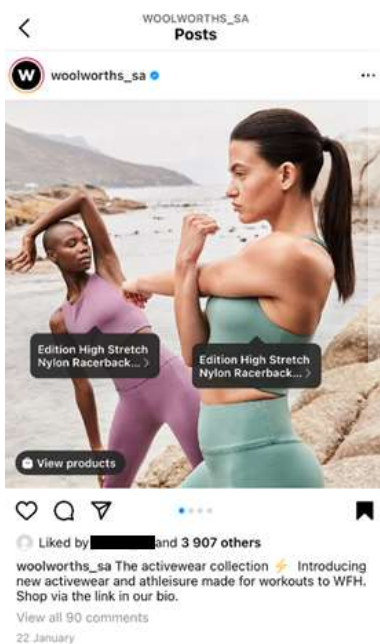


Figure 6.13: Feed Post 2



Regarding the notion of crossposting (Adami, 2014), within the same site, Woolworths makes use of this on Instagram by posting what has been on their story as a feed post to reach larger audiences, with the same hyperlink attached to that in Figure 6.10. This is seen in Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13 above. Figure 6.12 is the same image in 6.10 and Figure 6.13 is the same image

that appears in Figure 6.9. The images have been crossposted from their Instagram story to their feed post. However, the story post along with the hyperlink attached to it will expire after 24 hours, whilst the feed post will remain visible until the user of the account deletes it. The feed posts also have hyperlinks leading to the webpage on the online store of the respective clothing items. These hyperlinks are presented in the form of black tags with the description of the clothing item it is tagged on. This is seen on the posts in both Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13. Figure 6.13 is posted on a separate occasion to that in Figure 6.12. Figure 6.12 was posted 17 days after Figure 6.13, in which this may act as a second post to remind customers of the merchandise, or to update those who has not yet seen the first post made on the merchandise.

The caption under each post is different. It is clear that Figure 6.13 was posted when the collection became available to the public for purchase, given the statement made in the caption: ‘introducing new activewear and athleisure made for workouts’. This is also where a connection between the two titles of the same clothing are made, being activewear and athleisure, providing coherence amongst the sites. It is clear that the collection is being introduced to the public on their Instagram account. The caption in Figure 6.12 includes the starting price for the merchandise falling under the collection being ‘R199’, along with a description of the material used where stated ‘built-in stretch & recovery helps keep their shape’. The positive description of the merchandise acts as a convincing factor that is expected to play a role in sales as it assures the customer that the material of the clothing items will not stretch out over time. Both captions in Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13 end with the phrase ‘shop via the link in our bio’. They are alerting the public that the collection of merchandise is available for purchase on their online store through a hyperlink leading directly to the webpage where one can further view the collection. It is not made clear at this point if the merchandise is available to be bought in store.

It is very clear that these posts act as advertisements. When comparing these advertisements to that existing in the physical space, the advertisements existing in store allude to merchandise in the store that are at times located within close proximity to the sign, and at other times require the customer to search for the location of the merchandise in the store. The virtual space provides direct access to the merchandise being advertised without the disturbance of creating a trajectory that results in a search.

As seen in Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13, there are comments made under both posts. These comments show that the public is interacting with the brand and reacting to their announcements made in the form of Instagram posts. This online platform allows for communication to flow more easily and for interaction to be evident, whether in the form of likes, comments or shares. Figure 6.14 and Figure 6.15 below portray a few comments extracted from the comments section under the post seen in Figure 6.12.

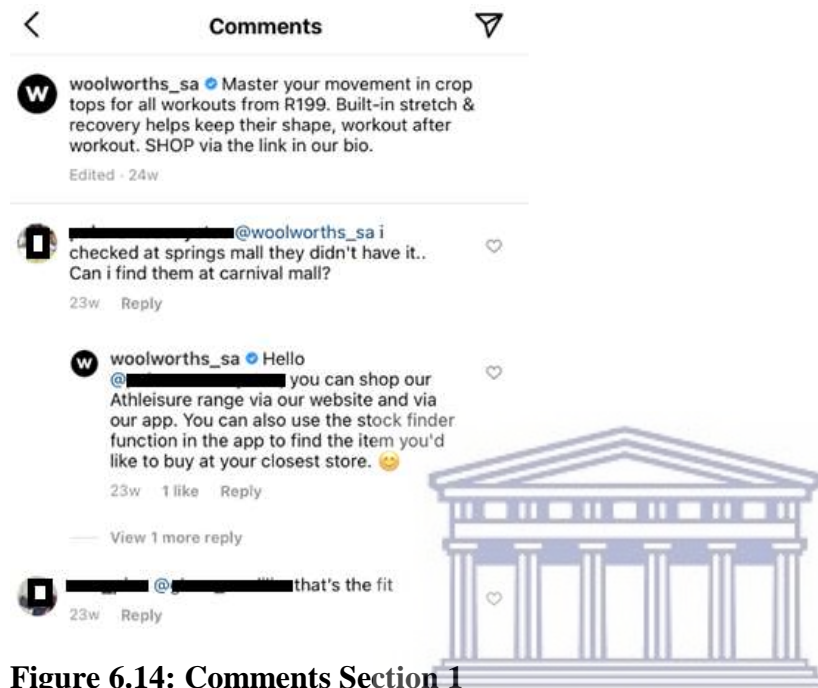


Figure 6.14: Comments Section 1



Figure 6.15: Comments Section 2

Furthermore, it is believed that through continuous advertising, the brand sells, therefore, it is said that in order to stay competitive, brands need advertising. Hence, the repetitive posting and crossposting of the athleisure clothing seen in the previous figures. This may result in more user engagement, which is beneficial for the brand. For instance, Carah and Shaul (2016) suggests that branding on Instagram relies on users' active participation. This practice of users' active participation may come in the form of comments. Looking at Figure 6.14 and Figure 6.15, there are various contexts of mention in the comments section. While majority of the comments seen in these are praising the merchandise being advertised in the post in the form of heart eyed emojis or textual discourse where users express their 'love' for the merchandise. In addition to that, the comments section also consists of queries being made directly to Woolworths. This is seen in the first comment under the post in Figure 6.14 where a user asked if the merchandise is available at a specific store, because it was not available in another. This is where the mystery of whether the merchandise is available in store has been solved, in which the Woolworths Instagram account holder publicly replied to the user stating that the merchandise is prevalent to the online space. This also confirms that not all merchandise is remediated from the physical space into the virtual space of the online store. It also confirms that this particular set of merchandise does not solely start off in the physical space of the store and is then remediated to be portrayed and sold online. The clothing being dealt with only exists for purchase in the physical space. The customers that do not interact with the brand online will most likely not be aware of the collection that has been released. In the brand's reply to the user's query in Figure 6.14, they are also promoting or advising the download and use of their app by stating that there is a feature, called "the stock finder" function, that the app provides in which the online store does not. By not making this function available on the online store, the brand is increasing the likeability for customers to download this app to further consume the advantage of time sparing shopping.

The comments section is also used for direct complaints lodged to the business, seen in Figure 6.15, in which the user states: "I have been waiting 2 months for my refund that you guys have decided to hold onto". The Woolworths Instagram account holder(s) seems to publicly assist those who express their need for assistance in the comments section. Just as there as employees assisting customers in-store, there are employees of the brand assisting customers on their virtual platforms. The person replying to customers on the Instagram page is representing the Woolworths brand and their image. Whatever the account holder posts are directly linked to the brand, that includes their tone and grammar in discourse when engaging with customers in

any sort of manner on the platform. The complaint, identified in Figure 6.15, also negatively affects the brand's image, which is why a response is deemed appropriate to reflect readiness and urgency to assist and resolve any complaints, while also making an effort to correct any negative image the customer may have created for the brand. By enforcing this action, it then reflects a positive response to the public and creates an image that portrays a brand who is concerned with their customers' experiences. This platform allows them to publicize and promote this image.

The comments section can be seen as a vital source for promoting and marketing to occur. This is specifically seen in the discussion on the Woolworths app promotion, as well as customers referring others to the merchandise, as seen in Figure 6.14 where the user comments: "that's the fit". This user may have discussed the merchandise with the user being tagged and may or may not result in a purchase of the clothing. Recognition through referral on social media, is a means for promotion and marketing that the online space has remediated from word of mouth that exists in the physical space. Interaction between two or more customers on this platform may also promote a positive image for the brand and their popularity.

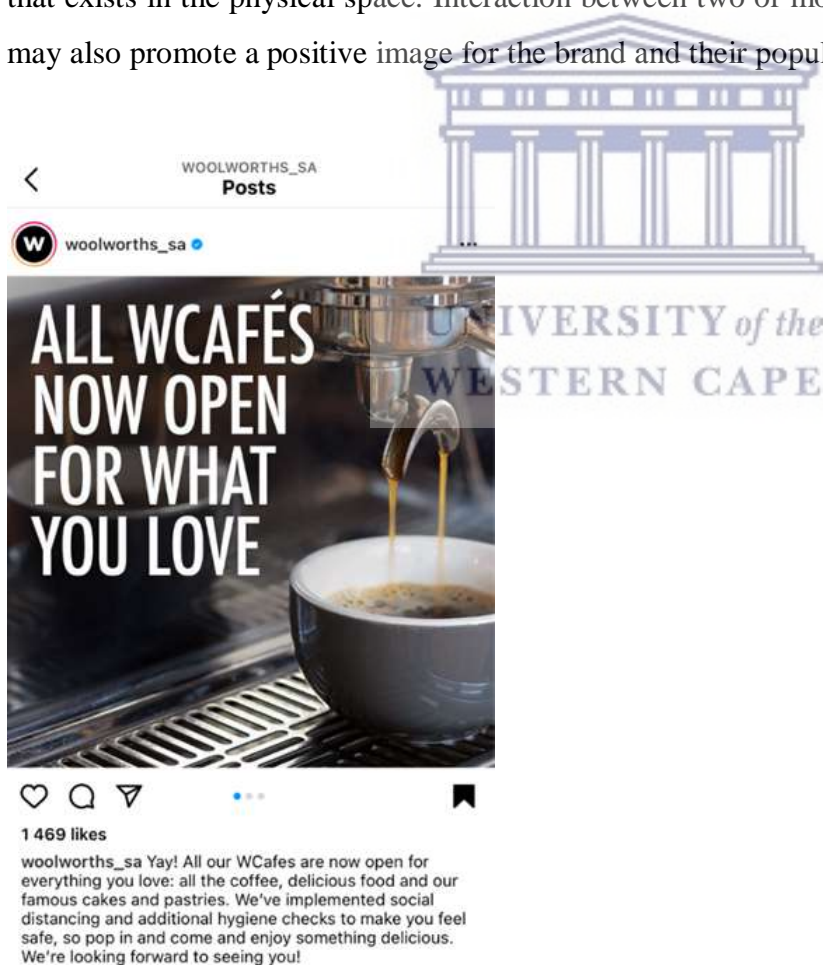


Figure 6.16: WCafé announcement

Through previous figures relating to the Woolworths Instagram page, more specifically relating to the athleisure wear, it is clear to see that their posts may act as advertisements and announcements. Figure 6.16 above is a post on the Woolworths feed page announcing the reopening of their WCafé amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The post consists of three multimodal images, but the first image will be the focal point, given that it directly states the communicative purpose for the post. The first image is also the first of the three images that the viewer will see. It is entirely up to the viewer of the post to initiate further action by swiping to see the other two images. The first image also contains various modes which contribute towards a multimodal advertisement that is attractive to the eye, whilst the caption directly below the post contains the relevant bits of information surrounding the opening of the WCafé. The image of the coffee being poured into a mug from a coffee machine is the main association or direct link to the WCafé. It may also be reminiscent of a multisensory space, as previously discussed around Figure 5.22, that being the smell of coffee and the sound of the coffee machine making coffee and other related products, as well as all the sounds of tableware and people conversing with one another at the café. Although one cannot experience these instances by looking at an image online, it may still activate the remembrance of past experiences in the space.

The phrase on the image: ‘All WCafés Now Open For What You Love’, which is the announcement phrase on the image. The phrase is quite broad as ‘All WCafés Now Open’ implies that all their café branches are operational and not only a select few. The phrase also assumes that viewers are familiar with the menu at their café, focusing on the mention of ‘For What You Love’, which could then also ultimately lead to the idea that the post is specifically targeted at regular customers who know what they love to order from the coffee shop. This includes stating what they would be selling in the caption, being ‘coffee, delicious food and our famous cakes and pastries’ to act as a broad overview and generalisation of the menu at the café, as well as acting to inform the public what they are able to sell during the time period. The caption promotes a tone of excitement and is inviting to the reader, as they use phrases such as ‘Yay!’ and ‘We’re looking forward to seeing you!’, which also reflects the brand’s eagerness towards the opening of their café, while also awakening excitement in the reader.

Instead of alluding to another site within the virtual space, the post seen in Figure 6.16 above is strictly alluding to an action or activity that pertains strictly to the physical space. Although food items could be bought on their online store, the WCafé does not operate online and would

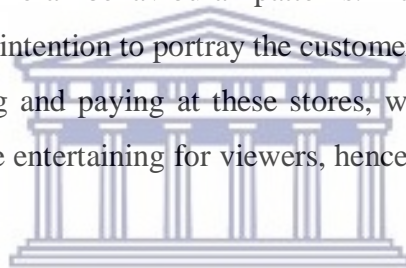
require the physical presence of the customer at a WCafé branch. The ‘seeing you’ phrase in the caption could also imply that to purchase the food items from the café, the customer would have to be seen in the flesh by those serving the food items.

6.3 YouTube

While watching videos, it may evoke a certain emotion from the viewer. For example, a horror movie at often times evokes fear and panic, while a comedy movie or skit evokes laughter and joy. In this case, the YouTube video is meant to evoke laughter, joy and happiness from the viewer, at often times also leaving them wanting more. YouTube, seen as a site of display, holds a vast array of videos ranging from comedy to entertainment to politics to gaming, etc. (Arthurs, Drakopoulou and Gandini, 2018). A YouTuber in particular, Lasizwe Dambuza, has identified his niche, being comedy relative to a South African context, in which South Africans are expected to grasp its meaning and somewhat relate to it. A part of Lasizwe’s niche is the portrayal of him as a woman, in which he embodies this role by dressing up as a woman; wearing wigs, dresses and altering his voice to replicate that of a woman’s. His influencer status as a YouTuber allows him to influence the opinions of his followers and the public. This type of influence can also be found in his videos. With that being said, the content seen in the video used for this study can be viewed as influential.

The virtual space allows for communication to flow more swiftly and, at often times, to reach a large audience. The public, as individual thinkers, each have various and often contradicting opinions on the Woolworths brand, as they do with many other brands. However, there is a general public opinion that has been formed on a larger scale of the brand image, which has been shaped through a common public experience and interaction with the Woolworths brand. Lasizwe has done a few skits on comparing various locally well-known South African grocery stores through the portrayal of each brand’s cashiers. There are at least three separate videos on his YouTube channel, titled *Lasizwe Dambuza*, in which he indirectly compares Woolworths, Shoprite and Pick ’n Pay cashiers with one another. An experience and interaction with the Woolworths brand in the physical space can be seen in the parody video posted on YouTube, under the title: *Shoprite VS Woolworths VS Pick N Pay Cashiers During Lockdown Quarantine : Lasizwe*, which has surpassed one million views on the platform.

This video re-enacts the experience of the customer and cashier at the till points of three different well-known local grocery stores by showcasing a generalised personality type of each brand's cashiers, acting as a reflection of the brand itself. The re-enactment in each scene can be seen as a story being told to the viewer. However, the face of the customers in the video are kept out of the frame, but one is able to hear their voices and the various accents that accompany each customer at each grocery store. Following Arthurs, Drakopoulou and Gandini (2018), they mention the camera angle; the perspective at which the camera is placed is not at the customer's perspective, but rather closer to the perspective of another cashier. The angle at which the video was shot captures what is needed for the audience to see and what they should not see, such as the customer's identity in each scenario. This could also have been done with the intention of creating a point-of-view (POV) video to provide the viewers with the sensation and imagination of being present during each encounter, while also placing the focus on the cashier. The actor playing the role of the cashier in each scenario, being Lasizwe himself, also allows viewers to differentiate between specific details and characteristics between each grocer brand through their customer service and general behavioural patterns. Each portrayal is meant to be distinctive, yet similar with the intention to portray the customer service one could most likely expect to receive when visiting and paying at these stores, while also adding the aspect of humour to make the video more entertaining for viewers, hence the disclaimer noting that this video is a parody.



The content provided in the video may be subjective, as Lasizwe could be building on his own unique experiences with the brands or combining many similar experiences to form one final product, as the viewers may have their own opinions towards each franchise. In order for the audience to gather which franchise is being represented by which cashier in the video, the re-enactment of the experience needs to be one that is precise and distinguishable in detail and one that is shared by many. The comments section under the video has been left open for viewers to leave remarks; whether it is directed at the dialogue, the accents, the humour, the pandemic or related to the grocery store brands and their services. Comments made publicly under the video that are focused on Woolworths are looked at in order to pinpoint the various opinions the public has towards the brand and how that may tie in with the brand image that Woolworths created for themselves in the virtual space, as well as in the physical space.

Although the video presents interactions that one can only experience in the physical space, through imitation and replication, the idea has been shifted and remediated into the virtual

space where the video can reach a larger audience and possibly ushers the influence of the video to form a consensus of each brand's image. This video shows how the physical space can be manipulated and reinvented to suit the dynamic of the virtual space. Although the video does not show the journey or trajectory through the mentioned stores, it shows stationed scenes at till points.

Looking at the video, the re-enactments of the various experiences are done so in a house with the use of certain semiotic materials that assist in creating the sensation and environment of not only the Woolworths till points, but also that of Pick n Pay and Shoprite. The reserved space within the house has been re-organised in such a way that it resembles a till point in a physical store and in a way that viewers are able to recognise the set-up as well. The actor and most likely the producer, being Lasizwe, has familiarised himself with the space surrounding the cashiers in the store, as well as their mannerisms according to which environment and grocery store brand they are employed at. However, these environments have formed a part of material culture and plays a part in an everyday-life scenario involving one's shopping experience. Each semiotic material used needs to play a role in forming clear distinguishable qualities and features between the three brands in the video. The use of semiotic materials also plays a central role as clear indicators of each brand.

One object is often repurposed in order to symbolize another, i.e. the television intended to symbolize the monitor to ring up the customer's grocery items at the cashier's station. The portrayal of the television has been repurposed to appear as the cashier's monitor used to ring up the customer's groceries. The concept of repurposing also expands into the semiotics of colour coordinated clothing, wigs and make-up, particularly seen in Figure 6.17 below, as well as the embodiment of different mannerisms and personalities, is present in order to help the viewer distinguish between the three different brands, particularly when each scenario has ended and when a new scenario has begun. In order to create distinguishable identities between the brands, Lasizwe points out well-known attributes attached or associated with each brand through the embodiment of their cashiers.



Figure 6.17: YouTube video cover

The above Figure 6.17 is the cover photo for the video, which is what one will see before clicking on the video to watch it. In this cover photo, it is clear to see that the picture has been spilt into three ways to include each brand's cashier in the cover. One can also see that this video is done in context of the COVID-19 pandemic, given that Woolworths and Pick 'n Pay cashiers are wearing protective face wear associated with the pandemic; the Woolworths cashier is wearing a face shield, while the Pick 'n Pay cashier is wearing a blue disposable face mask. However, the Shoprite cashier in this cover is not wearing any protective face wear, which paints the cashier or brand as going against the safety procedures outlined by the government. Throughout the video and the scenes of the three different types of cashiers, they managed to maintain the focus on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lasizwe, portrays himself as an embodied semiotic as he has clearly colour coded his ensembles for each character, making sure that the Woolworths cashier is wearing black clothing, the Shoprite cashier is wearing red clothing, while the Pick 'n Pay cashier is wearing blue clothing, including the blue disposable face mask. If he had to wear the blue face mask with any of the other two outfits, it would clash with the ensemble and break the colour coding meant to be associated with each brand. Each character is wearing warm clothing, which could indicate that this video might have taken place on a cold weatherly day, seeing that this video was uploaded during the South African Autumn season. To extend the idea of strict colour coding in this cover photo, Lasizwe included images of the customer reward cards belonging to each brand, while each card predominantly consists of the colour most associated with the brand. These reward cards are also mainly needed and used at the till points and may have been used in a creative manner to indicate the till points. Through the presence of this cover photo

and the semiotics portrayed in it, it may be clear to the viewer what the contents of video may entail without reading the title attached to the video.

The Woolworths scenario also has the shortest amount of screen time in comparison to the other scenarios, being frame 0:00-01:22 of the video. However, the other scenarios involve more dialogue and hold more humorous content. This may have been done purposefully to show how quickly the service is provided, whilst Pick n Pay and Shoprite cashiers take a longer period of time to complete the service. It is also at these two scenarios that bares most of the humour in the video, as it starts off with the Woolworths scenario that seems somewhat professional, maintaining a social boundary between the customer and the cashier, and what may seem to be the general depiction of the service a customer would or should receive at the till points in store. The Woolworths scene begins with the automated voice calling the next customer to the till point, in which the other scenarios do not include this idea and is therefore accurate in this sense towards the physical space experiences. Out of the three scenarios, the Woolworths cashier is the only cashier seen sanitizing the counter before the customer approaches, implying that Woolworths has trained their staff to act strictly and accordingly towards the pandemic safety regulations, which has been emphasized throughout their store, previously seen in Figure 5.19, Figure 5.20 and Figure 5.21. This also portrays Woolworths as the more advanced store brand of the three which then ultimately creates an even more distinctive standard and customer experience. Placing the Woolworths scenario in the first scene can be viewed as a standard that has been set amongst grocery stores and their customer service, acting as the desired customer service experience.



Figure 6.18: YouTube video opening frame

The frame captured from the YouTube video, seen in Figure 6.18 above, represents a scene where the customer interacts with the Woolworths' cashier. This frame is also the opening scene of the video itself. The video starts off with a possible re-enactment of an experience between a customer and a cashier working at a till point in a Woolworths store. Before the customer and the cashier create a dialogue, there is a part of the Woolworths scene, from frame 0:00-0:08, where the camera focuses on the environment or rather the set-up of the environment in order to allow the audience to comprehend and associate it with the till point at a store.

Furthermore, household objects have been repurposed and are used to take on the appearance of semiotic materials usually seen at the till points. In the Woolworths opening scene, the setup is introduced to the viewer, in which they should be able to recognise and relate the set up to that of a till point at a grocery store. Semiotic assemblages that help contribute to this relation, as seen in Figure 6.18, include a TV screen that is being remediated to represent the cashier's screen present at the till point when ringing up the customer's items for purchase. It may be embedded into one's cognitive processes that a monitor is always present at the till points and, therefore, associating the TV with a monitor. The screen is left blank, leaving it open for interpretation and open to the imagination of the viewers. However, often times in the physical space of a Woolworths, when at the till point, the cashier's screen when ringing up the items is not visible to the customer as it is facing the cashier. Resulting in the customer being unable to see what the cashier is pressing, which could perhaps also be the reason for the blank screen as the creators have left it up to their own imagination as well. Lasizwe also imitates mannerisms used by cashiers to ring up the items, allowing himself to embody the role of a cashier.

Moreover, there are also certain materials present in the scene, which one has learnt to associate with the till points since the start of the pandemic. Along with the TV seen in Figure 6.18, Materials such as the plastic barrier, the sanitizer bottles and the face shield are unconventional items seen at till points prior to the pandemic. These materials are adjustments made due to the pandemic, in which these semiotic assemblages may be considered as a collection of tools closely linked to the safety precautions that stores have to implement. These semiotic assemblages are deemed necessary to help create the atmosphere of a till point area in a grocery store during the pandemic to replicate the experience and the set up. Seeing that these materials are also closely linked to the pandemic, they would most likely not be present in a post COVID-19 environment. These materials represent a COVID-19 related reality and can, therefore, be linked to a certain period in time. Whether knowingly or unknowingly, this video, despite its

humorous content, contributes towards the of the history of the COVID-19 pandemic for future generations to look back at in order to note the changes of space and its contents.



Figure 6.19: Customer and cashier interaction

Despite the ongoing anonymity of the customer in each scenario, such as in Figure 6.19 above, the various speech styles, languages and accents of the three customers are clearly audible in each scenario, which portrays an idea of which ethnic group are more likely to be shopping at each store brand. The customer represented in the Woolworths scenario has a white Afrikaans accent, which may be implying that white Afrikaans people are more likely to be shopping the brand. This could imply a hierarchy of some sort signifying that the white Afrikaans accent is regarded as upper class. This may also give a general overview of the demographic in terms of race, language and culture one would expect to be shopping at Woolworths. The humour in this sense could be the white Afrikaner accent of the customer, but the skin colour of the customer is revealed to be black, which is seen in Figure 6.19 above.

Extending the discussion around the Woolworths cashier's appearance, looking at Figure 6.19 above, the black clothing of the cashier alludes to the all-black uniform worn by Woolworths employees as Lasizwe is trying to embody and represent an employee working at a Woolworths store. It has been previously established that black is Woolworths' main colour to help represent, identify and distinguish the brand, through semiotic materials such as shopping bags, logo, packaging of merchandise and signage, which have been seen in figures from the previous chapter. This appearance immediately informs the customer that the Woolworths scenario is set to appear first in the video. This also emphasizes how colour as a salient mode plays a key role in the re-enactment and recognizing of certain experiences. Moreover, the hair of the three

cashiers change in each scenario. The Woolworths cashier is wearing a straight haired wig and is talking in a calm, soft and mellow voice that usually is associated with whiteness. The detailing in the clothing, hair and accent accounts for the brand identity Woolworths has made and maintained for themselves and how the public perceives that identity.

The amount due after the cashier ringed up the items for purchase was excessively high for the four items. Three items were purchased, along with a donation was made in this video, amounting to R2872, which might be an exaggerated amount to emphasize the expensiveness of the brand's merchandise. The creator may also be implying that Woolworths is expensive and only a certain group or class of people can afford to shop there. The price of Woolworths' merchandise is meant to act as a key factor influencing high expectations and for categorising the brand as one catering for the middle to upper class community. The customer, who also happens to donate towards their charity, adds to the ideology that only wealthy people shop at Woolworths. The manner in which the cashier asked the customer if they would like to donate sounds rehearsed, as in the physical space cashiers are usually repetitive in their turn of dialogue between them and the customer, asking the exact same questions to each customer, i.e. "do you have a Woolworths store card?", "would you like a plastic bag?", "would you like to donate". Those are repetitive spoken discourse phrases utilized by a majority of cashiers, not just those belonging to the Woolworths brand, to project to their customers, which have become somewhat embedded in the public's mind, and shoppers in general. The creator is promoting the practices of grocery stores and its customer services that form a part of material culture and popular culture (Arthurs, Drakopoulou and Gandini, 2018).

A part of the humour is that Woolworths sells their own brand products of groceries and other commodities and materials, and this box of tissues is Checkers branded, in which Checkers is not showcased in the parody video. The viewers also picked up on this and pointed it out in the comments section. This also shows how the viewers are familiar with branded merchandise and how they could most likely memorize and visualise the appearance of the store branded merchandise. This also creates irony and adds humour to the scenario.

A statement made by Adami (2014: 224), which reads; "Digital technologies afford multimodal representation and re-use of previously existing texts in new contexts", could be applied to this video in terms of multimodality and semiotic remediation. The multimodal representations and re-use of semiotic materials present in the video were based on experiences and encounters in

the physical space that have become somewhat repetitive and redundant, creating a fixed expectation when coming into contact with that specific environment. Looking at the Woolworths scene in the video and relating it to the researcher's journey and experience while collecting data in the store, the set-up mimics the presence of a till point in the store, specifically that located within the Food Market section of the store, rather than a till point located in the clothing sections, seeing that the merchandise being purchased are mainly grocery items. This could have been done with the intention to maintain the consistency in the portrayal of grocer brands in the video. There are also no brochures seen at this till point in the Woolworths scene, seeing that during the store visit, each individual till point situated within the food market had a display reserved for brochures. Therefore, it can be noted that not all semiotic materials that are present at the till points in the physical space of the store are present in the video. However, there are a sufficient amount of materials present to assist in the portrayal and construction of a till point, in which the process of semiotic remediation resulted in the viewers successfully interpreting the space to be that of a till point at a grocery store. The video's multimodal representation of the various brands reflects what has been used and exposed to us, in the position of a customer, at these three grocery stores, which then results in an embedded general idea of the process taken when making final purchases in-store.

The audience are utilizing the site of display, being YouTube, made available to the public to share each other's experiences on the brand, showing how they can relate to one another through similar experiences, which help form or deform a general public opinion on the brand. It can also be seen as an opportunity to indirectly lodge complaints or praise directed towards the brand. YouTube is not only meant for entertainment purposes, but also utilizes social interaction through commenting (Khan, 2017). The comments section is a feature one usually associates with social media. The video allows for the comments section to be open, in which the public may take the opportunity to make their thoughts known on the site. One's thoughts are then resemiotized and remediated onto the site, as it is being shared with others on the platform. This is also seen as a more open and comfortable platform to share one's opinion on each individual grocer brand appearing in the video, as opposed to stating their opinions to the brands directly. The perception individuals have on the Woolworths brand are more easily accessible in the comments section under this video, as a safe space has been generated or formed for one to do such. The video evokes certain emotions and opinions from the audience, in which some may deem necessary to state in the comments section, whereas the comments on a Woolworths Instagram post, referring to Figure 6.14 and Figure 6.15, may not be as

diverse and as honest as that on YouTube. This could also be seen as an opportunity for the brand to collect valuable intel by reviewing the customers' perspective on the Woolworths brand. However, according to Khan (2017), some users may prefer to engage by simply just viewing the video and reading the comments pertaining to that video. Despite their choice not to socially interact through commenting, they are still consuming the information in the video and in the comments section.



Figure 6.20: Negative comments on YouTube



Figure 6.21: Positive comments on YouTube

Looking at the above Figures, these comments made under the YouTube video focalise on whether the brand is expensive or not. Figure 6.20 portrays written discourse stating that the brand is expensive, whereas Figure 6.21 portrays discourse stating otherwise by implying that the brand is inexpensive. This may also counter the statement made by de Jager (2009) stating that Woolworths targets medium to high income consumers (Methner, 2013; Methner, Hamann and Nilsson, 2015). It is also unclear to determine whether these commenters fall under the category of medium to high income earners in order to further explore how affordable the brand

may appeal to be. However, it is clear that the comments seen in Figure 6.20 counter that of the comments seen in Figure 6.21, showing that people do have different experiences and views when it comes to the brand and its prices. Although, the first comment's like count in Figure 6.20 being a number of 303 likes, seen next to the thumbs up icon, is much higher than the like count seen on the comments made in Figure 6.21, implying that more people agree with the comment saying that Woolworths is expensive. Other users are building onto that first comment in Figure 6.20 to agree, by saying "ikr", being an abbreviation for the phrase "I know right", and to provide supporting information where it is stated "I went and bought like 5 items and the price was around 700", which somewhat relates to the excessive amount due for the groceries that were mentioned in the video. The users whose comments are seen in Figure 6.20 present the ideology that Woolworths is expensive. Lasizwe uploads his thoughts and ideas on this platform and it is spread to the public whose ideology they can relate to or whose ideology they may adopt.

However, Figure 6.21 counters the ideology which appears in the video by expressing individual viewpoints and experiences on the brand. This warrants individual experiences and expression. Arthurs, Drakopoulou and Gandini (2018) does state that YouTube videos enable commentary to be presented from an insider perspective, which is seen in Figure 6.20 and 6.21. The top comment in Figure 6.21 stating "Am I the only one whom doesn't find their prices so high. I feel people are over exaggerating" expresses a sense of exclusion in ideology and experience. While another commenter places emphasis on Woolworths quality through comparison by stating that other brands, such as "Pick n Pay and Spar are the overpriced stores with lesser quality than Woolworths". Here it is also made clear that the public are more focused on the Woolworths Food Market than the rest of the departments in the store. These contradicting views challenge the general public idea that Woolworths is expensive and costly when it comes to their merchandise, which may be beneficial to the brand.



Figure 6.22: Great customer service comment

Social media could be seen as a primary platform for advertising in the virtual space. Whether it be on Woolworths' Instagram page or through other domain's such as YouTube, following

the parody video that was previously discussed. A comment under the video, seen in Figure 6.22 above, adds that this parody is free advertising for Woolworths as it promotes their “great customer service”. The Woolworths scene can be interpreted as an advertisement rather than a comedy skit, especially when comparing it to the other two scenes of Pick N Pay and Shoprite encounters. The commenter in the above figure is also leaving a positive review of the brand with regards to their customer service. This may not have been the creator’s intention, but may have rather seized this opportunity to use well-known brands as a tool to support the boost in his viewings and ratings. The creator, Lasizwe, promotes himself through this parody seeing that “the site centers on a culture of self-promotion and broadcasting the self (Burgess & Green, 2009)” (Khan, 2017: 237), which may be seen through an increase in views, likes and subscribers on his YouTube channel. The self-promotion also led to the indirect promotion of the Woolworths and other brands.

The comments section under this video may be useful, not only to Woolworths, but to Pick N Pay and Shoprite as well, despite not being directly produced from the brands themselves. The video operates mainly in the favour of Woolworths, while somewhat diminishing the customer service of the other two brands. Hence, a possible reason for the like count on that comment being over 100, in which over 100 users appear to agree with that statement.

To a certain extent there seems to be a formality in communication found in the comments section under the Woolworths posts in comparison to the comments under the focused YouTube video. This may be due to the different audiences in the form of followers that contribute to these contrasts and indifferences. Lasizwe is seen as a comedian and his videos create a humorous atmosphere which brings out people’s humorous side while his followers can range from young to elderly, and include all races and ethnicities. Woolworths, however, upholding this certain image through quality, high prices and expectations, only those who regularly shop at Woolworths are expected to follow the page and take their posts more seriously. As stated by Georgakopoulou (2011), if the communication was face-to-face rather than computer mediated or other forms of mediated communication such as a smartphone, an example being in the form of comments, the communication and responses would be immediate, there would be little to no editing or planning in the response and there would be a clear face to put to the name or username. Most of the users commenting on the YouTube post do not have profile pictures of their face, whereas the users who are seen commenting on the Woolworths Instagram page have profile pictures of their face. One platform seems more

trustworthy than the other. The comments section under the previously discussed YouTube video does not contain detailed complaints and in which Woolworths does not directly reply to complaints in that comments section.

Furthermore, the comments section on Woolworths' Instagram account portrays the dominance of the English language in a post-colonial time period, given that although the posts on the internet are able to reach a global audience, it is still posted within a South African context and audience in mind. Although the language in which the comments are written in are mainly English, it is not limited to English, especially in the YouTube comments section.

6.4 Summary

There are clear distinctive traits amongst the physical space, the textual space and the virtual space. Noting that the three platforms covered in the virtual space pertaining to the Woolworths brand are the Woolworths online store website, Instagram and YouTube. The online store and the Woolworths Instagram account are interlinked as they both act as representatives of the brand. Whereas the video analysed is not endorsed by Woolworths, inferring that they are not responsible for how their brand is being represented in that video.

The trace of one's trajectory in the physical space is captured through physical movements in the store, whilst the trajectory in the virtual space, more specifically the online store, is traced through the clicking of hyperlinks leading the customer from one page to the next, without the requirement of walking. It is found that not all merchandise that exists in store exists in the online store and vice versa. Not all merchandise is remediated from the physical store to be portrayed and sold online. There are branded merchandise that exist solely online or which will be remediated to be displayed and sold in the physical store. However, the brand allows customers to utilize the space for more convenient shopping to occur, but the space is limited and does not allow all five human senses to be activated when conducting shopping, which may implicate the customer's buying action.

Woolworths' Instagram page acts as a means for the advertising of merchandise and other brand related activities, in which the space allows engagement and discourse between the brand and their customers to occur. The brand is then able to receive feedback on their merchandise and on their brand in general. This is a feature that the online store does not allow. Social media

can often be fabricated to make products seem desirable to the public. This occurs due to the lack of human senses that cannot be used in the space.

The YouTube video made on the Woolworths brand's cashier is meant to portray a re-enactment of the brand image and portray a general customer experience or expectation when shopping at one of the Woolworths stores. The experience of paying at a Woolworths till point has been remediated to the virtual space, while repurposing household objects to represent items one would find at a till point in the store. The comments section under the YouTube video, promotes a space for freedom of speech in comparison to the comments section under Woolworths posts on Instagram. The atmosphere on Instagram is more business related and at most times related to the context around the post being commented on, given that the users are directly communicating to the brand. Whereas the YouTube video has a more humorous nature where people feel more free and safe to comment their thoughts on the brand, which is a more natural manner of bringing out people's honest thoughts, while also noting that not everyone watching and interacting with the video is a supporter of the Woolworths brand.



CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.0 Introduction

This study sets out to explore the spaces pertaining to the Woolworths brand. The spaces, being the physical, textual and virtual space have been explored and analysed by means of a multimodal discourse analysis. The analysis has been performed while keeping in mind that the research objectives of the study has to be reached.

7.1 Summary

The first objective was to identify the different sites of Woolworths advertisement as spaces of multimodal meaning making. There were three spaces identified that pertain to the Woolworths brand. In the physical space, the Woolworths store located inside of Tyger Valley shopping mall was identified as a space for multimodal meaning making while following Pennycook (2017) and Pennycook and Otsuji (2017) to explore and analyse the various semiotics and multisensory materials found within the space. The two brochures were identified to represent that of the textual space. These brochures, containing multimodal aspects, were serving their communicative goal by advertising the brand's financial services. The virtual space has been identified and explored through three platforms; namely the online Woolworths store, the Woolworths Instagram page and YouTube, in which a video uploaded on the platform has been consulted. Each mentioned space constitutes for multimodal meaning making.

The second objective was to identify the different sites of Woolworths advertisement as constituting 'coherent' chains of interconnected activities for meaning making. While specifically exploring the comparison between the physical space, textual space and the virtual space, there seems to be coherence amongst the three spaces from what was analysed. Semiotic remediation does not only take place across spaces, but also within the space itself, pertaining particularly to the virtual space. Within the platforms found in the virtual space, being the online store and the Woolworths Instagram page, the interconnected activities do display coherence and successful remediation practices made by the brand. Expanding the remediation practices across the mentioned spaces, the brand was able to maintain coherence in terms of identity through means of advertisement of their merchandise and services.

The third objective was to explore the trajectory and transformation of repurposed semiotic material for extended meaning across time and space. Through exploring the trajectory of the

data collected in each of the spaces it is clear to see that there is semiotic mobility present of meaning making material within and across the three spaces. The information has been resemiotised amongst the brochures, meaning that the same semiotic material has been reused. The textual space of the brochures is connected to the virtual space, by redirecting the reader to the online website for successful interactions to occur. The virtual space of the online store and the Instagram page are associated to the physical space of the store by advertising the products. The Instagram page and online store are connected to each other and interlink through hyperlinks. The trajectory of one space guiding the customer to another is a means for the brand to acquire the customer to engage with more than one space pertaining to the brand. By allowing customers to travel across spaces, the semiotic material attached to these transformations have to be repurposed for successful meaning making to occur. However, not all that exists in the physical space exists in the online store and vice versa. Therefore, not all remediation practices generate from the physical space of the store, but may also generate from the virtual space of the online store.

The fourth objective was to unravel the producers' intellectual and composing processes as design features to keep potential customers engaged to the different Woolworths sites and merchandise for sale. It has been previously established that the brand creates opportunities for customers to engage with the various spaces the brand exists in by enforcing the trajectory from one space to lead to the other. The trajectory of the path and its layout in the physical space of the store allows customers journeying into the store to come into contact with each department and section of merchandise in the event that something attracts their attention, which may result in a sale. Whilst the placement of displays and mannequins are strategic and have certain goals and purposes. The brand also creates opportunity by using Instagram as social media to further promote their brand image and to use this platform to interact with potential customers, but it can also be seen as a means to advertise merchandise and create announcements benefitting the brand. It is important to note the contribution that the virtual and textual space make towards the promotion of the Woolworths brand and their products. Noting that the physical space of the store may be out of reach for some people, the virtual space steps in, making it easier for customers to receive updates on all things related to the brand as opposed to solely relying on the linguistic landscaping within the physical store for information. In this specific study, the textual space provided for Woolworths customers, in the form of brochures, also allows customers to take a part of Woolworths home with them seeing that the brochure contains detailed information that could not be simply put into the linguistic landscape of the store.

These brochures contained detailed information to read through that would, ultimately, take time and consideration from the customer.

All the objectives laid out for this study have been addressed.

7.2 Conclusion

The physical space, being the Woolworths store is seen as the space where all semiotic objects are to true to nature as opposed to the images seen or found in the virtual or textual space. All five human senses are activated in this space, resulting in a multisensory space. In the virtual and textual space, one's senses are limited to that of an image of the merchandise for sale. Therefore, the physical space is seen as the most reliable and trustworthy space of the three, while the other two spaces act as additional spaces allowing Woolworths to expand their brand identity. The virtual and textual space hold properties of advertising for that which is made available in the physical space. The shift and remediation of the physical space to the virtual space allows the public an easier access to the brand. However, one's senses are limited in this space, despite its design for ease.

All three mentioned spaces: physical, virtual and textual, play a central role towards the identity of a brand. Any brand, as a whole, needs to exist in either the physical or the virtual space in order to gain and establish an image for themselves. However, relating to this study, it is important to note that one space cannot be deemed more viable or more successful than the other. Each space serves a purpose that contributes towards the success of the brand. Although there may be disadvantages and limitations to each particular space, when one's brand exists in more than one space, the other space(s) may make up for those disadvantages and limitations. That particular space may also contain certain advantages which the other space(s) lack.

There are endless amounts of possibilities to be developed within all three spaces, but the brand creates a means for all spaces to co-existence in relevancy, at often times through remediation practices.

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