

"Who is the culprit: The structure or the culture?" Indirect sexism: Linguistic representation of women in Egyptian print media

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Abstract

This paper aims at investigating the more subtle ways of linguistic sexism in Egyptian print media. The paper examines three types of indirect sexism: collocations, transitivity, and presupposition and visibility, in Al-Ahram newspaper Headline and Front Page report coverage of June 30th, 2013 events. The paper has shown that it is not just the androcentric nature of the Arabic language that posed structural limitations that led to the linguistic invisibility of women as shown in a previous study (Nayef, 2014a). Such obscuration of women here is also induced by the masculine supremacy beliefs in the patriarchal culture. The paper investigated how the reporters used certain lexical items in collocation with female participants in the political activities during that period. These collocations were either negative in meaning or used in a negative context, creating a negative image of women in both cases. The study has pointed out that even in events where women were key 'Actors', they were represented as 'Goals' rather than 'Actors'. It was also shown that the male reporters reproduced the culturally accepted division of public and private spheres, the presupposed role of women and men and the stereotypical characteristics assigned to members of the two genders.

Keywords: Sexism, Linguistic feminism, media discourse, Egyptian print media, Discourse Analysis, Gender Studies

1. Introduction

Gender assumptions define how women and men regard themselves in different contexts and how a society defines the sexes (MacLachlan 1992). The result is a culture built on a particular set of gendered assumptions structured to amplify, if not produce, gender asymmetries and inequalities, with the set of terms most associated with masculinity consistently favored over the set associated with femininity, gendering them in the process to the disadvantage of women (Vargus 2002). In patriarchal societies, like that of Egypt, sexism, whether in language or any other form, is readily accepted as part of the natural supremacy of whatever is masculine. This constitutes a difficulty in stigmatizing sexist practices in language. Thus, such linguistic practices are found in media, everyday speech, the social media and folk literature, to name but a few. In all these means of communication and interaction, the more subtle ways of sexism exist side by side with the more overt ones. Such linguistic behavior is a product of the dominant patriarchal beliefs. It, in turn, reproduces such beliefs and promotes masculine hegemony in the society. And it is the covert or hidden messages that often do more to create and sustain gender ideologies than the explicit messages that are overtly conveyed (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2003: 192).

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This paper aims to point out the way that these accepted stereotypical gender assumptions is used to produce biased presentations of women even in events where gender has no role. The paper examines women representation in Al-Ahram Headline and Front Page reports during the period between June 25th and July 30th, 2013 through investigating the subtle covert types of indirect sexism employed by the reporters.

It was shown in a previous study that the linguistically androcentric nature of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), represented in various types of overt linguistic sexism, imposed a structural limitation that led to the linguistic invisibility of women in the news coverage of June 30th events (for detailed discussion on structural limitations, see Nayef, 2014a). This paper investigates the more subtle types of linguistic androcentricity in the media coverage of these events. Through employing qualitative and quantitative methods, this paper attempts to scrutinize subtle, covert types of linguistic sexism in the Egyptian print media coverage of June 30th events and the representation of women in these events. The paper investigates the Headlines (HL) and Front Page (FP) reports that appeared in Al-Ahram newspaper during the period of investigation in terms of collocations, transitivity, as well as presupposition and visibility. The paper examines how subtle ways of linguistic sexism are used to represent women negatively. It also runs a quantitative analysis in order to discern the linguistic visibility of women in both the HL and FP reports.

We believe that the ultimate aim of such line of academic studies is to help redress some of the injustices done against women. By pointing to the subtle ways of such disparaging behavior – linguistic in this case – one can correct it and alleviate some of the harm done.

2. Political Context & Theoretical Framework

In the following section, we will give a brief account of the political events that took place in Egypt during the period of investigation as well as the theoretical framework of the study.

2.1 Political Context

On the 30th of June, 2013, millions of Egyptians flocked into the streets demanding the ouster of Islamist President Mohamed Morsi. The same scene was repeated on the 2nd, 3rd and 26th of July of the same year. On the other side of Cairo, Muslim Brotherhood (MB) supporters and other Islamist groups gathered to back what they regarded as the "legitimate and democratically elected" president of Egypt. In both of these scenes women's presence was notable. In the countrywide anti-MB mass rallies women were in the forefront, taking the lead and standing side by side with men. Women's role was highly commended on several occasions by some public figures, most notably General Abdelfattah Sissi, the then Defense Minister, who later became president of Egypt. In Rabaa Al-Adawiyah, scene to pro-MB and Islamist rallies, women were there, organizing, rallying and marching in protest to the Ministry of Defense. Yet the media coverage of this second wave of revolution disregarded this prominent role played by women (Nayef 2014a).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study examines the covert sexist methods of representation employed by 'male' journalists in their reports. This type of linguistic prejudice is labeled "indirect sexism" (Mills 2008; Mills and Mulany 2011). Mills distinguishes between two forms of sexism in language: overt sexism and indirect sexism. The former is any utterance that contains clear and unambiguous language that refers to women in any negative way, exemplified in Nayef (2014a) in generic words, coordinate pairs and structural androcentricity, while the latter has the same effect but in an indirect way and is only understood contextually and in relation to surrounding utterances; illustrated here in lexical collocations, transitivity, and presupposition and visibility.

Indirect, or subtle, sexism in the west came as a response to the political correctness and linguistic reform achieved by linguistic gender researchers over the past forty years. As a reaction to the work conducted by early feminist linguists, researchers started a process of compiling what was considered by them as sexist linguistic behaviors and called upon institutions and individuals to stop using them (Doyle 1994; Graham 1975/2006; Kramarac and Treichler 1985; Mills J. 1989; Miller and Swift 1982, 2000; Schultz 1990; Vetterling-Braggin 1986). Linguistic feminist researchers went on suggesting new non-sexist dictionary (See Alma Graham 1975, as an early example of this attempt). Though this resulted in some changes to the language used in the west, this group of feminist linguists was later termed 'political correctness' campaigners and was exposed to some criticism by the media.

They were seen as 'obsessing needlessly over trivial language issues whilst more important political issues were being neglected' (Sunderland 2006). Some linguistic feminist researchers aimed at recognizing and detecting sexist language (Swim, Mallet & Stangor 2004) while others went on a mission of designing instruments to detect sexism in languages (McMinn, Williams & McMinn 1994). The efforts of those 'language campaigners' brought about the stigmatization of some of such terms and lexical items.

This type of reformatory studies took place in language other than English. Thus scholars investigated linguistic sexism in other European languages: Chinese, Lee (2007); French, Dornbrook (2003); French and Spanish, Wasserman and Weseley (2009); Italian, Sabatini (1993), Dal Martello (2008); Spanish, Santamilla (2008), among others. Studies were also conducted in non-European languages: Hebrew, Gaunt (2012), Jacobs (2004), Muchnik (2014); Japanese, Marjorie (2005), Saito (1997); Nigerian, Yusuf (2013).

In Arabic, there have been a few studies on linguistic sexism: Sadiqi (2003, 2006), Ennaji (Sadiqi & Ennaji 2006); in Moroccan Arabic, Abd-El-Jawad (1989, 1986); in Jordanian Arabic, Abudalbuh (2012); and in Egyptian Arabic, Nayef (2014a). Yet such studies were mainly concerned with the overt type of sexism, mainly structure-imposed sexism, with few addressing the more subtle type of indirect sexism (Nayef 2014b, 2015 forthcoming; Nayef & Nashar 2014a, b). To the best of our knowledge, however, there has been no study addressing indirect sexism in Arabic-language print media, hence comes the significance of the current study.

3. Methodology

The following section will discuss the methods employed to collect and sample the data. It will also show the tools used to analyze the data under investigation.

3.1 Data Collection and Sampling

In this section, we shall discuss the rationale behind the selection of the period of analysis as well as the Headlines (HL) and Front Page (FP) reports. This section will also tackle the way the data were retrieved and analyzed.

The period subject to investigation spans the period between the 25th of June and 30th of July, 2013. This period was chosen in particular as it witnessed a surge of political activities: demonstrations, rallies, sit-ins that culminated in two major political events; namely, the 30th of June and 26th of July, 2014. In all this continuum of political activities, women were at the forefront, "divorcing the role of the observer" and adopting that of the "active participants" in a matter that belonged to the male-dominated public sphere – politics (Nayef 2014a). Thus, it is expected that women enjoy more media coverage in HL and FP reports than in other periods.

The HL and FP reports were chosen as they are the most frequently read section of a newspaper, addressing the most important political events (Pasha, cited in Nayef 2014a). It is worth noting that the gender of the reporters was not a variable in the choice of FP reports but all the reports subject to analysis were either the work of male reporters or the gender and identity of the reporter was anonymous. Al-Ahram, founded in 1875 by the Lebanese Takla family, was chosen for this study due to its prominent role in Arab print media, being one of the oldest and most widely circulating newspapers in Egypt and the Arab world.

The data were collected from Al-Ahram Online Index. We retrieved all Front Page reports and Headlines that contained any of the lexical entries shown in the following table:

Table (1) List of Entries Retrieved from Al-Ahram Online Index

Arabic	Transliteration	Translation	# of occurrences HL	# of occurrences FP
نساء	<i>nisaa'</i>	women	-	9
سيدات	<i>sayyidaat</i>	ladies, women	2	10
مظاهرات	<i>muzaharaat</i>	demonstrations	9	46
متظاهرون / متظاهرات	<i>mutazahirun</i>	(male) demonstrators	31	233
متظاهرات	<i>mutazahiraat</i>	(female) demonstrators	-	2
اعتصام	<i>?i'tisaam</i>	sit-in	2	23
معتصم/معتصمون	<i>mu'tasimun</i>	(male) sit-inners	19	71
معتصمات	<i>mu'tasimaat</i>	(female) sit-inners	-	-
محتجون	<i>muhtagun</i>	protesters	-	3
تحرير	<i>tahrir</i>	Tahrir	43	74
ميادين	<i>mayadeen</i>	squares	2	32
ثوره	<i>thawrah</i>	revolution	2	41
مصري	<i>misri</i>	Egyptian	9	63
مصريون	<i>misriyun</i>	(male) Egyptians	2	3
مصرية	<i>misriyyah</i>	female Egyptian	-	-
مصريات	<i>misriyyat</i>	female Egyptians	-	-
الجيش	<i>'al-gaysh</i>	he army	14	75
مرأة	<i>mar'ah</i>	woman	-	1
مسيرة/ مسيرات	<i>masirah/ masiraat</i>	march	23	110
حواء	<i>hawaa'</i>	Eve	-	-
رابعه	<i>rabaa'</i>	Rabaa (square)	33	69
النهضة	<i>'al-nahdah</i>	Al-Nahda (square)	19	20
شخص	<i>shakhs</i>	a person	2	26

The retrieved data were examined manually to verify their pertinence to the search topics and to avoid re-occurrence of the same report in more than one entry.

3.2 Tools of Analysis

The paper employs the linguistic sexism taxonomy introduced by Mills (2008). It runs a qualitative and a quantitative analysis of Al-Ahram Headlines (HL) and Front Page (FP) reports during the periods of investigation. While the quantitative analysis examines the visibility of women in the data, the qualitative tools investigate the image of women as represented in these reports and headlines.

The current study recognizes three types of subtle covert linguistic sexism, i.e. indirect sexism, in Al-Ahram HL and FP reports; namely, collocations, transitivity and presupposition. The following section briefly introduces these categories.

3.2.1 Collocations and Co-occurrences

This tool of analysis serves the purpose of identifying the connotations of the words that collocate with feminine nouns. It also investigates the co-occurrences of feminine words in text. The paper will discuss how collocations and co-occurrences in the HL and FP reports represent actively participating women in political activities, subtly drawing a certain mental image in the reader's mind. Conclusion will be drawn as to the mental images such words create.

3.2.2 Transitivity

The data are analyzed in terms of transitivity to find out what type of processes and roles are associated with women in Al-Ahram's HL and FP reports subject to analysis. The transitivity analysis, conducted in line with Halliday's approach (1994), identifies the Agent (an actor or sayer, etc.), the Goal (who is acted upon), and the Processes (doing or saying).

Applying the transitivity analysis to the representation of women sheds light on whether women are presented in the public sphere - politics in our case - as Actors or Goals. The processes associated with both cases are discussed in section (4.2) below.

3.2.3 Presupposition and Visibility

Presuppositions are those taken-for-granted, implicit claims inherent in the explicit meaning of a text or utterance (Richardson 2007:63). The main empirical properties of presupposition include "being back-grounded and taken for granted" (Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990). As far as linguistic sexism is concerned, it is among the most subtle and elusive types of sexism, being easy to deny and difficult to prove.

One of the 'unfair propositions' that has been assumed about women is that they do not belong to the public space and that the public space is about the business of men (Haslanger 2003:459), while women are marginalized in terms of public or ritual speech (Caldas-Coulthard 1995, cited in Mills 2008: 71). Politics lies in the public space and has been perceived as the domain of men; the masculine, the strong, the ambitious, the successful, the rational, and the non-emotional. Women, on the other hand, are the feminine, the attractive, the weak, the deferential, the unaggressive, the emotional, those concerned with people and relationships (Goldstein 2001).

In this study, the researcher examines the data in line with the presupposition of the division of spaces assigned to men and women, the assumptions underlying this division and the role played by language in retaining this division. The 'fair' and 'unfair' propositions presented by the male journalists in the FP reports of Al-Ahram will be examined to find whether women got represented by the media in the public space or were left out. In other words, the study will attempt to discern whether women got 'back-grounded' and 'obscured' or got 'fair' presentation. Qualitative and quantitative approaches will be adopted to compare the linguistic visibility of women in both HL and FP reports to that of men.

4. Results and Discussion

The search yielded 130 headlines and reports in the front page of Al-Ahram in the period subject to the study with a total number of 29,100 words. We ran both a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data. In this section, we shall discuss the results of the two types of analysis and the significance of the results.

4.1 Collocations and Co-occurrences

Examining the data in terms of collocation patterns shows that in 11 out of the 17 FP reports that involved reference to women, the words 'women' and 'girls' were associated with the phrase 'being protected' and its synonyms. Thus, we find words such as 'protected', 'shielded', or 'security cordons' set up to 'protect them' (i.e. women) from being 'exposed to harassment'. These words are either sexist in themselves, as they carry a negative meaning (e.g. harassment), or give a negative connotation in the context in which they are used (e.g. cordon, protect). The following example illustrates this point.

Example 1

July 27

People mandate army to face terrorism

Millions in streets support Sisi's counter-violence call

Tahrirprotestors demand Patterson evicted and Morsi tried

1	The protestors hang huge banners in Tahrir Square mandating Gen. Sisi to protect
2	Egypt and hit 'with an iron fist' whomsoever wants to set the country ablaze.
3	Vigilante groups set up a cordon before the podium for female protestors to ensure
4	they are not exposed to any harassment during demonstrations.
5	The Square witnessed a state of lull before the start of million-strong 'No to
6	terrorism' demonstrations as well as a remarkable increase in the number of (male)
7	sit-inners and tents, especially those opposite Tahrir Complex building.

The above example is an excerpt from a 1,237 word lengthy FP report that appeared in Al-Ahram on the 27th of July. The report, the work of four male reporters, is a detailed description of Tahrir Square on the 26th of June. It is the same event that Gen. Sisi was quoted earlier praising women for taking the lead in the events. Yet the lengthy report referred only one time to women and girls and in association with protection, cordons and harassment. The word 'cordon', as mentioned earlier, does not carry a negative connotation *per se*, but in the context where women need to gather in allocated areas in Tahrir Square to express their opinions and anger and remain in 'cordons' should they seek security and safety creates an image of helplessness and weakness. This gives a negative connotation to a word which is not negative in itself. It is worth noting that in the early days of the 25th of January events women did not gather in allocated areas. This idea, however, was introduced by the Islamist groups taking part in the events under the pretext of 'protecting' women from harassment. The report also mentions the word 'harassment' in 'exposed to harassment' which carries a negative connotation in itself. These two types of collocations create a negative image of females in what is supposed to be a scene of positive actions.

This also helps draw a division between two types of participant groups: the strong 'male protestors' and the weak, helpless 'female protestors'. The (male) vigilante groups set up "cordons" to "protect" the "female protestors". Using the negative connotations of words collocating with female protestors, the four male reporters indirectly set up a negative image of women involved in the demonstrations. The subtle conflicting messages resulting from such lexical collocations are that women who call for the ouster of the president who is backed by strong Islamist militias are unable to protect themselves. The data also showed that in five of the remaining reports, women were associated with verbs like 'chant', 'demand', 'protest'. It is worth noting here that in these five cases of 'positive' connotation, these words were not associated with women alone but with men and women. This point will be further elaborated in the section (4.2) below.

Table (2) below illustrates the most frequent words associated with women and girls in the data and their connotations. It shows that words with negative connotations (either semantically or contextually) far outnumber those with positive connotations, which were not used to refer to women only, but to men and women. Taking into account the small number of references to women in the 130 FP reports analyzed as well as the negative connotation words compared to positive connotation words, we believe that such method inculcates both the idea of male domination and the helplessness and weakness of women in the average reader's mind. Thus, they transmit cultural meanings and stereotypes that were built over time (Romaine 2001, cited in Mills 2008: 150).

Table (2) Words most commonly associated with women

Lexical item	Connotation	# of occurrence
(be) protected	Negative	6
cordon	Negative	4
harassment	Negative	4
shield	Negative	2
Expose	Negative	2
Encircle	Negative	2
Aggression	Negative	1
Participant	Positive	5
Chant	Positive	3
Take part / participate	positive	2
protest	positive	1
demand	positive	1

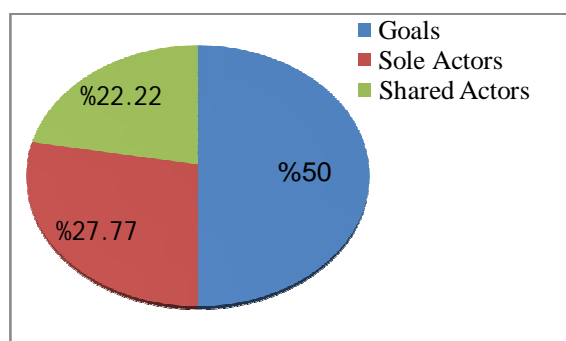
4.2 Transitivity

This tool of analysis reveals the ways women are represented in Al-Ahram in terms of what they are represented to be doing, who is acting upon them, and what is being done to them; in other words, who is doing what to whom (Burton 1982, cited in Mills 2008: 69). The analysis retrieved a total number of 36 processes associated with the noun 'woman' and its synonyms. They fell into two process types: material and verbal. They are distributed as shown in the following table.

Table 3: Process types and role of female participants (Adapted from Halliday, 1994:143)

Process type	# of occurrence	Role of female participants	
Material	31	13 (Actor)	18 (Goal)
Verbal	5	5 (Sayer)	0 (Target)
Total	36	18	18

The data included 17 FP reports that referred to women. These included 36 processes. At first glance, the results show that there is equality in the number of processes in which women were acting and those in which they were acted upon, 18 cases for each. Still, this is not to be expected in the context of the reports which cite events where women – like other participants – are expected to be more 'Actors' than 'Goals'. Yet, a closer examination of the results shows that this is not even the case. In eight out of the 18 processes in which they were 'Actors' and 'Sayers, men or old men were involved. Thus, women were 'acted upon' 18 times and were sole 'Actors' 10 times only (27%). Figure (I) shows the percentage of transitivity of women in the 17 reports which referred to women.

**Figure (I) Percentage of Transitivity of Women**

Examples (2) and (3) illustrate this.

Example (2)

July 22

Female march to Defence ministry

Rabaa geared for return-of-legitimacy protests

- 1 Raba' El-Adawiyya and El-Nahda squares are getting ready for a pro-legitimacy
- 2 one-million march today, with vigilante groups reinforcing security measures in
- 3 anticipation of any attack.
- 4 Meanwhile, (male) demonstrators expressed their vehement denunciation at the
- 5 killing of peaceful (female) demonstrators during a march in Mansoura governorate.
- 6 Several female marches proceeded from Al-Nour mosque in Abbasiyyah to the
- 7 headquarters of the Defense Ministry. Another female march went out from Cairo
- 8 University to the National Council for Human Rights demanding protection for
- 9 female demonstrators and stoppage of aggression on them.
- 10 "Targeting women is a crime and directing some blame to those who got them to go
- 11 out is political and ethical bankruptcy and retrogression off the road to freedom,
- 12 political participation and human rights," said WalidShalabi, media advisor to
- 13 the General Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood group.

In the above example, female protestors are fore-grounded by mentioning them in the headline – a relatively rare case as there were only 6 HLs out of 130 HLs that included women in the data under investigation. Yet, even in this report, the work of a male reporter, in which women are fore-grounded in the HL, female demonstrators are the "goal", the recipients of 'killing', of aggression and of protection. As Actors and Sayers, they "march" to "demand" the "stoppage of aggression" against their own fellow female demonstrators.

It is worth noting that this report (118 words in the original Arabic version) that had female march on its headline, dedicated only (33) words to discuss the female marches while the majority of the report is allocated to the masculine protest, denunciation of violence against female demonstrators and call for protection of female protestors. The previous example is about female protestors in a pro-Morsi camp. The following example is a report that appeared on Al-Ahram on the 30th of June on the anti-Morsi camp. The gender and name of the reporter is unknown.

Example 3

June 30

(Male) demonstrators increase in Tahrir ... Female march arrives in square

- 1 The number of (male) demonstrators increased significantly after the arrival of
- 2 marches coming from El-Sayyidah Zeinab, Azhar and Mostafa Mahmoud, with
- 3 (male) participants reaching tens of thousands who are unable to enter the
- 4 already congested square.
- 5 The marches included people of different ages – old men, women, men and children– all
- 6 bent on unifying their chant: 'Egypt ... Egypt', hoisting Egyptian flags
- 7 while others raising pictures of the martyrs of the glorious January 25th revolution.
- 8 The (male) demonstrators demanded that Morsi depart and that early presidential
- 9 elections be held.
- 10 A female march of hundreds of women and girls also arrived in Talaat Harb square,
- 11 which is near Tahrir, chanting "leave... leave". Young men set up cordons to protect them.
- 12 The vanguard of Mostafa Mahmoud Mosque march arrived in Tahrir Square, while
- 13 a large number of (male) demonstrators participating in the march are still in
- 14 a street leading to the square.

As it is the case in example (2), female protestors are fore-grounded by using the phrase 'female march' in the headline. Female protestors were mentioned in two locations in this 187-word report (the original Arabic text). Female protestors in this report "march" and "chant" assuming the role of Actors and Sayers respectively. They also participate with "old men, men and children" in 'chanting' and 'hoisting' the flag – yet another process in which they are Actors and Sayers. Even though they are Actors and Sayers side by side with men in these processes, the reporter again draws the line that separates the strong from the weak, the protector from the protected – the division between men and women. While demanding the president to 'leave', women cannot do that except after being protected by men who 'set up' cordons to protect 'them'.

This represents women as 'Goals' rather than 'Actors', and that they are the recipients of either protection, harassment, embarrassment etc., driving the reader to cognitively anchor women with helplessness, weakness and the mental image of 'being done to' rather than being 'doers'.

4.3 Presupposition and Visibility

The data show that women were negatively represented both qualitatively and quantitatively in print media coverage of the events marking the June 30th revolution. Out of 130 HL and FP reports analyzed, women were referred to in only six HL and 17 FP reports. On the other hand, the whole 130 HL and FP reports had reference to men.

It is also worth noting that even in the reports that women were granted some visibility, it was indeed very little visibility regardless of the length of the report. Thus, we find a 1,237-word report where there is only one reference to women. Such obscuration is repeated throughout the data. In example (3) above, a rare case where women are foregrounded in a headline, only 27% of the report is dedicated to women and the rest allocated to men. This result reflects and supports the already accepted, presupposed assumption of the binary division of the world in which politics belongs to the public sphere - the domain of men.

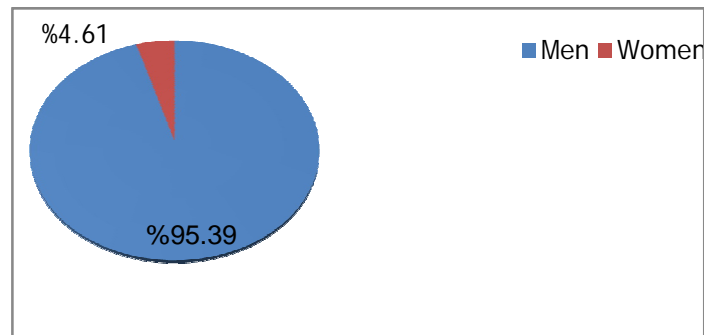


Figure (II) Percentage of Visibility of Women and Men in HL reports

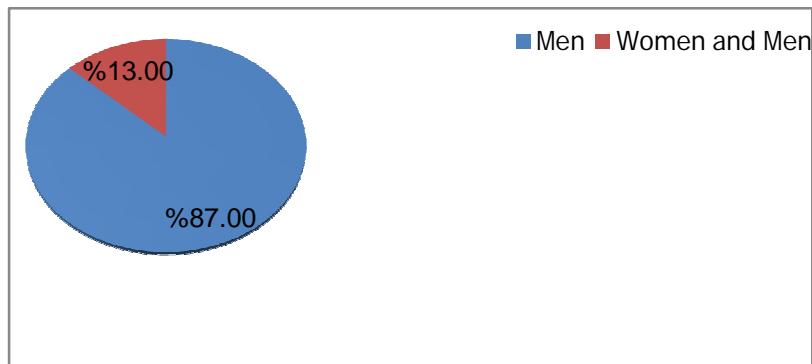


Figure (III) Percentage of Visibility of Women and Men in FP reports

An examination of the image of women in the little visibility they enjoyed in the HL and FP reports illustrates the way male reporters show semantic and pragmatic bias against women. By addressing a reader who belongs to their own 'epistemic community' with the same shared 'culturally accepted beliefs' (van Dijk, 2005), the reporters strengthen his semantic proposition of the image of the weak woman and the strong man. Therefore, the image they introduce in the data is the stereotypically accepted image of helpless 'women' who are 'exposed' to 'harassment', 'embarrassment' and 'aggression'. They are depicted as in need of 'protection' from the strong male demonstrators who 'set up security cordons' to 'protect' them. In addition, the male reporters, whether consciously or unconsciously, manipulate their reader by implying the unfair proposition that *all* the female protestors were inside the 'security cordons' enjoying the protection of male demonstrators. By back-grounding women and limiting their mention in the reports to words collocating with negative connotations (where women's presence in protests was limited to being inside protected zones), the reader takes the 'truth value' of such propositions for granted. In other words, the 'male' reporters, through obscuring and mystifying the existence of women outside these 'cordons', manipulate the reader into believing the 'unfair proposition' that women role was limited to this.

Bekalu (2006) argues that in media texts there exist "ideological reasons behind journalists' use of fair and unfair presupposition" (147). Thus reporters and journalists, in an attempt to create 'cognitive effect' on the part of their readers, tend to obscure certain issues through using unfair presupposition. The ideological belief in masculine supremacy drives male reporters to give little visibility to women in their reports. The desire to keep and promote the already accepted masculine hegemony leads readers to 'see' women only in the light of the stereotypical image of the weak and helpless even in events where women are neither weak nor helpless.

5. Conclusion

In our modern patriarchal systems, men are in control of all legitimate areas of power, including language (Cameron 1985; Gay 1997; Irigaray 1985) and become the 'symbolic elite' (van Dijk 2006) who determine who is to be represented as what. This paper has shown that this was the case in the women representation in Egyptian print media during the June 30th, 2013 events.

The paper shows that it is not just the androcentric nature of the Arabic language that posed structural limitations that led to the linguistic invisibility of women in the Al-Ahram front page coverage of June 30th events as shown in a previous study (Nayef 2014a). Such obscuration of women here is also induced by the masculine supremacy beliefs in the patriarchal culture. The paper shows that in the little male-reported visibility granted to women in Al-Ahram front page during these events, a negative image of women protestors was drawn. Male reporters employed various types of indirect linguistic sexism. They used certain lexical items in collocation with female participants in the political activities of the period. These collocations were either negative in meaning or used in a negative context, creating a negative image of women in both cases. The study has also shown that even in events where women were key 'Actors', they were represented as 'Goals' rather than 'Actors', being done to rather than doers. It was shown that the presupposed assumptions that public sphere matters belong to men while women, even when participating in such events equally actively, are represented negatively as weak, helpless and in need of constant protection by men. The fact that the FP reports of this period were written by male reporters led to their control over the way stories are presented. Women were given very little visibility as they were mentioned in only 17 out of the 130 FP reports of that period. They were foregrounded only 6 times in the 130 Headlines. The male reporters reproduced the culturally accepted division of public and private spheres, the presupposed role of women and men, and the stereotypical characteristics assigned to members of the two genders. The scene of women participating in protests, an activity which belongs to the male-dominated public sphere, is still expressed negatively.

We hope that by pointing to the subtle ways of covert linguistic sexism in such media coverage, we can help in redressing such injustices inflicted upon women, especially in the patriarchal culture of the Arab world.

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