



## Research Article

© 2022 Muassomah et al.  
This is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons  
Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Received: 10 July 2022 / Accepted: 25 August 2022 / Published: 2 September 2022

# The Portrayal of Gender in the Arabic Construction

Muassomah Muassomah<sup>1</sup>

Irwan Abdullah<sup>2</sup>

Umdatul Hasanah<sup>3</sup>

Nyimas Umi Kulsum<sup>4</sup>

Akhmad Muzakki<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim,  
Jl. Gajayana 50, Malang, Jawa Timur 65144, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Gadjah Mada, Bulaksumur,  
Caturtunggal, Kec. Depok, Kabupaten Sleman,  
Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 55281 Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin,  
Jl. Jendral Sudirman Kota Serang,  
Banten 42118, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah,  
Jl. Prof. K. H. Zainal Abidin Fikri Kota Palembang,  
Sumatera Selatan 30126, Indonesia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2022-0140>

## Abstract

*The portrayal of gender in the Arabic construction has shown the existence of gender inequality. The Arabic language is a highly gendered language, with every word having its own male or female identity, and this has legitimized the existing gender disparities in Arabic society. Men and women are supposed to have particular characteristics, which are similarly reflected within specific spaces and positions. This article thus employs a qualitative approach to understand the gendered identities of Arabic-language words. Data were collected by reading Arabic-language texts and recorded words that highlighted the disparity between men and women. This article finds significant disparity, with words identified as male connoting strength, might, dominance, activeness, dynamicity, and independence and words identified as female connoting marginalization, subordination, passiveness, and dependence. This study highlights the unfair portrayal of women in Arabic constructions has legitimized gender inequality in Muslim society.*

**Keywords:** sexism in language; arabic language; gender bias in language; patriarchal ideology; muslim society

## 1. Introduction

Arabic is not only a flexible language with a high degree of elasticity (Nurcholisho 2017), but one that contains significant sexism (El Abboubi, Bouylmani, & Dardar 2020). Linguistic symbols, including

letters, words, and sentences, are used to structure gender disparities (Muassomah, Fitriani, & Yurisa 2020). Masculine and feminine characteristics are attributed to all Arabic-language words. For example, masculine characteristics such as strength and independence are associated with جدار (*Jidaar*) does mean “wall”, while feminine characteristics such as dependence and disenfranchisement are associated with the word ساعة (*saa’ah*) does mean “clock”. Likewise, words with masculine characteristics tend to be broader in scope, while words with feminine characteristics are generally narrower in scope. In this context, language provides not only a means for cultural interaction and communication, but also a basis for reinforcing gender disparities.

To date, studies of language and gender have shown several tendencies. *First*, studies have examined how individuals' language styles and characteristics are informed by their gender identity (Budiwati 2011; Wibowo 2012; Zulkarnain & Fitriani 2018). Persons with different gender identities tend to differ in their elocution and diction (Hidayati 2016). On social media, for example, men tend to emphasize machismo, while women generally deal with feminine themes (Fitriyani, Wilian, and Yusra 2019). Trans speakers challenge systems for categorizing voices as female and male (Zimman 2017). *Second*, studies have shown that gender strongly influences language acquisition (Coates 2015; Hopp 2013; Park and French 2013; Van Der Slik, Van Hout, & Schepens 2015; Yim & Norton 2001). One study, for example, found that women consistently outperform men when learning Dutch as a second language (Van Der Slik et al. 2015). Highly gendered languages tend to correlate with lower women's participation in the workforce (Mavisakalyan 2015). *Third*, studies have examined diction, the use of particular words at specific times (Mahmud 2017; Makhmud & Rudiansyah 2017; Setiyawan 2014). Languages have specific rules for letters, words, phrases, clauses, and sentences (Andriani 2018), and these rules may be highly gendered (Setiyawan 2014). Such studies have positioned language as an object in social interactions, failing to consider how its internal elements contribute to the legitimization of gender disparity.

This article seeks to address this shortcoming by examining how the gender disparities evident in the Arabic language have legitimized gender disparities within Arab society. As such, it seeks to answer three questions: 1) how is gender disparity evidenced in nouns; 2) how is gender disparity evidenced in social spaces; and 3) how is gender disparity evidenced in words referring to professions and positions. The answers to these questions will provide an understanding of how specific symbols, i.e. Arabic-language words with masculine/feminine identities, provide a precondition for gender disparity.

This article departs from the argument that the masculine/feminine identities of Arabic-language signs are not arbitrary, but rather designed to legitimize the gender disparities in Arab society. Every Arabic-language term has a specific gender identity, and this must be recognized as having been shaped by a patriarchal society and culture that forefronts men. This, in turn, has reinforced the patriarchal society of Arabic society.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Gender Bias in Language

Although gender bias may be illustrated with the assumption that any undefined person is male, it is also evident in terminology and grammar. Such gender disparity reflects a highly androcentric paradigm, which holds that men are more representative of humanity and that stereotypically masculine characteristics are desirable. In some languages, particular professions are associated with specific genders; take, for example, the German *die Lehrerin/der Lehrer*. Other languages have sought to replace masculine/feminine pairings with neutral forms, but used male forms for this purpose; for example, Norwegian has abandoned the *lærer/lærerinne* pairing in favor of the historically masculine *lærer*. Even words that are conjugated neutrally, without feminine or masculine characteristics, can exhibit male bias (Lindqvist et al. 2018). MacArthur et al. (2019) found that many words, phrases, and discourses belittle, neglect, or stereotype women, and that individuals tend to favor masculine forms

over feminine ones. As well gender discrimination and gender stereotypes are embedded in the meanings and use of words and speakers appear to be creating and adding new sexist term to the existing ones (Alhassan 2014).

Gender biases have been identified in many classes in Lebanon, but said biases are generally hidden in language. Children begin to view women as agreeable, tidy, and obeisant, and men as confident, active, and aggressive. Science is understood as a more masculine discipline, while art and language are viewed as feminine (Protivinsky & Munich 2018). Girls are stereotyped as lacking confidence in the classroom, and boys thus dominate computer and technology classes (Mougharbel & Bahous 2010:200). Similar biases were identified by Jaworska and Ryan (2018:109), who found that men and women describe pain differently. Women tend to be more verbose, using metaphors and more emotional terms, while men tend to be factual and descriptive. Even when emotional language is used, women tend to show their emotions openly (crying, sobbing, etc.), while men attempt to be factual.

Language is understood as correlating with group identity, and individuals' reactions to spoken language usage tend to correspond with their reactions to group members. By hearing a shared language spoken, people can develop a sense of unity; different language usage, meanwhile, distinguishes between groups and facilitates the emergence of specific stereotypes (Coll et al, 2018:338). Ginsburgh and Prieto-Rodriguez (2013:365) found that the premiums received by speakers of foreign languages in the workplace are gendered, with women workers in France receiving 20 percent less than their male peers; in Spain and Italy, gaps are also evident, albeit only in the higher quintiles.

## 2.2 Arabic and Gender

Arabic is one of the most commonly used languages, being spoken not only by millions of native speakers but also integral to the religious practices of the world's 1.5 billion Muslims. In Arabic, it is very important to identify the age and sex of a speaker and speech partner (Alsmearat et al. 2017:87). Although Arab society and its understandings of gender have changed in recent years, this has not been reflected in the Arabic-language textbooks used in teaching the language. Masculine forms are more common in these textbooks, and men are used more commonly as references; consequently, women are underrepresented (Al-Qatawneh et al. 2019; Izzuddin et al. 2021).

Arabic is a highly gendered language, and thus English-Arabic translations are often challenged by the need to identify the language of the writer and use the appropriate verb forms. In English, there is no verb-noun agreement (at least when it comes to gender). Conversely, in Arabic, every verb is conjugated to reflect the gender of the speaker (Hamdan & Natour 2014:277). Take, for example, these three examples: (1) This is the man who found the answer; (2) This is the lady who found the answer; (3) These are the three men who found the answer. In the first example, the word *who* must be translated *الذي* (*alladhii*)/ singular male-referring who; in the second, *التي* (*allatii*)/singular female-referring who, and in the third, *الذين* (*alladhiina*)/plural male-referring who. Any mistake in translating the referential item will affect the entire meaning of the sentence (Abu-Ayyash 2017:75).

In their study of the language used on social media (Twitter), Al-Ghadir & Azmi (2018) note that social media has offered unprecedented opportunities to study collective behavior and human interactions. They found that Arabic-language tweets are replete with gendered terminology. They note that women tend to use descriptive language heavily, and thus are more verbose in communicating their ideas, while men tend to use fewer words. Gendered practices differ between cultures, places, and communities, and are shaped by the intersections between them. At the same time, these guide male-female interactions. In Jordan, for example, women are expected to use specific intonations, pronunciations, and dictions. Jordanian women are often rebuked for using language incorrectly or uncommonly, as they are seen as violating the social norms of their society. Women tend to use more conservative language than men, as women tend to be more cognizant of their status, while men tend to be more direct in their language use (Al-Harahsheh 2014:873).

### 2.3 Patriarchal Culture in Muslim Society

The term patriarchy refers to the dominance of men within the private and public sphere, and has often been used by feminists to explain how women are subordinated by men (Altay 2019). Between the 1960s and 1980s, feminists understood patriarchy as a system that subjugated women in different ways (Hill and Allen 2021). In the Middle East and North Africa, it has become part of the political lexicon, especially in employment matters (Benstead 2021). It penetrated the home as well as the workplace, where the dominance of men has often been used to justify the status quo and permanently relegate women to inferior positions (Adisa, Cooke, & Iwowo 2020). Patriarchal characteristics have often marked diverse aspects of society (Benstead 2021).

In patriarchal societies, men have the power to discursively set rules and assign roles, with public spaces being allocated to men and private spaces assigned to women. Roles are divided based on specific cultural, social, and religious factors, all of which are used to uphold traditional masculinity (Sikweyiya et al. 2020). Toward the end of the twentieth century, as globalization expanded and democracy became more common, the patriarchal came under fire from women seeking a position in society. In practice, however, change has been limited, as women continue to face legal and social hurdles (Khelghat-Doost & Sibly 2020). At the same time, although women are assigned the domestic sphere (and the duties within it), they still face inequality, as their activities, clothing, and behavior must all conform to standards set by the patriarchy (Lilolia 2019; Dewi et al. 2020).

The patriarchal culture of the Middle East has been strongly influenced by the Islamic laws that regulate society, particularly the Hambali school and its Salafi understandings of sharia (Ardiansyah 2013, in Dewi et al. 2020). This situation has been reinforced by the continued prevalence of conservative religious leaders. Although, as reported by Faktual News (2020), King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia appointed a woman Deputy Minister of Education in February 2009, in their everyday lives women continue to face oppression. This is driven in part by historical factors, including those that date back to before the revelation of Islam (the *jahiliyyah* era). At the time, the birth of a daughter was seen as boding ill for a family and its tribe. As narrated in QS An-Nahl 16:58, "And when one of them is informed of [the birth of] a female, his face becomes dark, and he suppresses grief." With such a history, patriarchy has remained embedded in Arabic society, even as globalization has provided women with more spaces for self-expression (Elomäki & Paula 2020; Musgamy 2020; Ne'eman 2020).

### 3. Method

Language is an important tool for communication, one that is inexorably intertwined with the everyday lives of men and women alike. For this research, the gender inequalities found in Arabic were selected for three reasons. *First*, the symbols contained within Arabic are inexorably gendered; letters, words, and sentence structures all reflect the disparity between men and women. *Second*, few studies have used word mapping to explore the sexism contained in Arabic, let alone to explore the influence of patriarchal culture. *Third*, a linguistic analysis of the gender inequalities embedded in Arabic-language symbols is sorely needed. These three motivations have driven the decision to investigate the Arabic language and the sexism contained therein.

The link between the Arabic language and gender inequality will be explored qualitatively, relying on both primary and secondary data. Primary data consisted of the 28 letters in the Arabic alphabet (*al-abjadīyah al-'arabīyah*), as well as the diacritics and words used in Arabic to assign masculine/feminine characteristics to particular spaces, professions, and positions. Secondary data, meanwhile, consisted of the structure of Arabic-language texts related to the needs of the researcher. These primary and secondary data were analyzed to obtain the necessary understanding of the sexism and gender inequalities embedded in the Arabic language.

This study of the sexism and gender inequalities embedded in the Arabic language was

conducted in three phases. First, Arabic-language texts were identified and collected, thereby enabling the researchers to obtain relevant data. Second, the texts were read, thereby enabling the researchers to identify the letters, diacritics, and words that are associated with masculine and feminine characteristics. Third, the symbols identified were mapped by gender and word type. In this manner, the researchers were able to evaluate the data.

Data were subsequently analyzed using two techniques. Analysis was conducted in three stages: (1) data reduction, through which data were mapped, selected, and classified. (2) data display, through which data were presented descriptively and displayed in table/illustration format; (3) data verification, through which trends were identified and traced from the collected data. Data were analyzed descriptively and interpretatively. Description was used to textually explain the data, while interpretation was used to understand the data within context. Such analysis and techniques enabled the researchers to draw conclusions regarding the sexism embedded in the Arabic language.

#### 4. Results

Language is not only a series of sounds produced through human speech, but also a set of symbols and signs that are embedded with the ideology and culture of its host society. Arabic clearly distinguishes between the masculine and feminine, and gender inequalities are evident in every word contributing. This can be seen in three categories: nouns, words referring to spaces, and words referring to professions/positions.

##### 4.1 Gender Inequalities Embedded in Nouns

In Arabic, nouns may be masculine or feminine, with connotations that are rooted in gender inequality. Masculine nouns are characterized as strong and independent, existing without the support of others. Feminine nouns, meanwhile, are characterized by their dependence on other objects. This is reflected in Table 1:

Table 1: Gender Inequalities Embedded in Arabic-Language Nouns

Masculine		Feminine	
	مكتب (desk)		ساعة (clock)
	كرسي (chair)		سبورة (blackboard)
	باب (door)		نافذة (window)
	جدار (wall)		ستارة (curtain)
	عماد (pillar)		مرآة (mirror)

Table 1 shows several masculine and feminine nouns, distinguished by the letter ة (*Ta' marbutah*) at the end of the word. Words ending with the letter ة, such as the word ستارة (*Sitaarah*), are feminine; conversely, words that end with another letter (such as the word جدار/*Jidaar*) are categorized as masculine.

Words identified as masculine have connotations of strength, power, independence, and the ability to bear burdens. The word مكتب (*Maktab*) means *table* or *desk*, referring to a "surface on which various objects may be placed". A dining table, for example, is a surface on which food and drink can be placed, while a desk can hold office supplies, books, paper, computers, etc. The word كرسي (*Kursiy*) means *chair* or "place to rest and support the human body or another object". The chair is a masculine type, has a strong nature and is able to carry heavy loads on it, he stands alone and does not depend on other objects. The word باب (*Baab*) means *door*, something that functions not only to allow access/egress but also provides security and privacy; in homes, offices, and other buildings, doors serve to protect the occupants from all outside disruptions. Similarly, the word جدار (*Jidaar*) means *wall* ("a strong and supportive structure) while عماد (*Imaad*) means *pillar* ("a structure used to support a building").

Words identified as feminine, meanwhile, connote dependence; they exist only with the support of other objects. The words ساعة (*Saa'ah*) means "clock", سبورة (*Sabbuurah*)/ blackboard, ستارة (*Sitaarah*)/curtain, and مرآة (*Mir'aah*)/mirror all refer to objects that require support to function optimally—in most cases, a wall, which is a masculine noun in Arabic. The word نافذة (*Naafidzah*) means *window*, which functions not only to circulate light and air, but also to accentuate the building itself. However, windows are not primary needs like doors, walls, and pillars (all of which are masculine and necessary for any structure). Windows, as with the above nouns, require walls for support.

The gender inequalities in Table 1 highlight how masculine nouns are understood as strong, powerful, supportive, and independent, reliant on nothing but themselves, while feminine nouns are associated with dependence and reliance on others. In other words, feminine nouns are positioned as accessories/supplements to masculine nouns.

#### 4.2 Gender Inequalities in Words Referring to Social Spaces

Arabic also exhibits gender inequality in the words that refer to social spaces and structures. Spaces identified as masculine are associated with power, strength, and security, while spaces identified as feminine are associated with order, health, and learning. See Table 2 below:

**Table 2:** Gender Inequalities in Words Referring to Spaces

Masculine		Feminine	
جامع	Mosque	جامعة	University
مكتب	Office	مكتبة	Library

Table 2 shows that masculine and feminine nouns may both refer to public spaces in which people may gather. However, these social spaces have different characteristics. Take, for example, the words جامع (*Jaami'*) and جامعة (*Jaami'ah*), which refer to distinct spaces with particular characteristics. The masculine word جامع (*Jaami'*) means *mosque*, a space used not only for worship but also education, communication, cultural, and economic activities. Mosques tend to fulfill the needs of the sons of Adam, particularly the imam and the mosque administrators. Meanwhile, the feminine nouns جامعة (*Jaami'ah*) means *university*, a space that imbues students with desirable knowledge and socio-religious values. Such education is associated with mothers, who are the first educators of their children after birth. Similarly, the word مكتبة (*Maktabah*) means "library" refers to a space where one can learn. As such, the gender of the term is associated with the function of the space referenced.

Table 3: Gender Inequalities in Nouns referring to Public Spaces and Structures

Masculine		Feminine	
مسجد	Mosque	مستشفى	Hospital
سوق	Market	مدرسة	School
متحف	Museum	قاعة	Hall
مطار	Airport	محطة	Station
بلد	Country	محافظة/جزيرة	Province/Island

The masculine and feminine identities of nouns referring to public spaces can be seen in the examples above. For example, the masculine noun سوق (*Suuq*) means *market*, a public space where mercantile activities that require dedication and strength take place. The feminine noun مدرسة (*Madrasah*) meanwhile, means *school*, a place where education services are provided. Teaching, as with nurture and childcare, is associated with women. Looking to another example, the masculine noun متحف (*Muthaf*) means *museum*, and refers to a play where history, civilization, and culture are preserved. Museums, thus, are important for ensuring the continued survival of civilization. The word قاعة (*Qaa'ah*) means *hall*, a large space (in a museum, school, office, etc.) that is used for meetings, ceremonies, etc. To take another pairing, the noun مطار (*Mathaar*) means *airport* is masculine, while the word محطة (*Mahaththah*) means *station* or *terminal*. Both words refer to transportation hubs, but with different scopes; the masculine airport is used for national and international travel, while the feminine station/terminal is used for ground travel, which may be more local or take more time.

The association of masculine and feminine identities with particular spaces is also evident in the nouns بلد/*Balad* (*country*, masculine) and جزيرة/محافظة (*Muhaafidhah/Jaziirah*) means *province/island* is feminine. A country is large in scope, having the authority and responsibility to regulate society and maintain order. Such authority requires power, something that lies at the root of masculine identity. Islands and provinces are both subordinate to the State and constituent parts of the country. Indonesia, for example, consists of multiple islands—Sumatra, Kalimantan, Java, Bali, etc. Provinces, likewise, are under the control of the State.

This description of gender identities in Arabic-language nouns shows that significant gaps exist between those identified as masculine and those identified as feminine. Spaces identified as masculine are characterized by greater accessibility, historicity, and power, being central spaces in everyday activities. Meanwhile, spaces identified as feminine are secondary ones associated with nurture and education. In other words, the gendering of these nouns has implications for their accessibility and function.

#### 4.3 Gender Inequalities in Nouns Referring to Professions and Positions

Inequalities are not only evident in the nouns referring to objects and spaces, but also those referring to professions and positions. The nouns إمام (*Imaam*) and سلطان (*Sulthaan*) mean *leader* and *person in power*, respectively, are only available as masculine nouns. This implies that men must always occupy positions of power, for example as imams during communal prayers or as the leaders of their families and communities. Conversely, the word رعية/*Ro'iyyah* mean *people* only has a feminine form; no masculine form is available. People (i.e. the common people, the populace) are those persons within the territory and under the power of a leader, and thus expected to obey the government/person in power. In their structure, these words promote the primacy of men even as they marginalize women. Masculinity is identified by dominance and power, while femininity is associated with marginalization and subordination.

Identity may also be indicated by the association between the subject and object. Take, for example, the words فلاح/*Fallaah* (*farmer*) and مزرعة/*Mazra'ah* (*field*). In Arabic, the word *farmer* acts as the subject and is identified as masculine. Conversely, the word *field* acts as the object and is

identified as feminine. Farmers are involved in planting, cultivating, harvesting, and selling crops. They have full authority and power over their fields. Fields, meanwhile, are passive, being unable to refuse farmers' activities. This example shows that masculine nouns are active and dynamic, while feminine ones are static and passive.

Words identified as feminine tend to be associated with service. Take, for example, the nouns ربة البيت (*Rabbah al-bait*) and مضييفة (*Mudhifah*), which mean *housewife* and *stewardess*, respectively. Both of these feminine nouns refer to individuals who provide service. Housewives are women who serve their families at home (within the domestic sphere), while stewardesses ensure that airplanes are prepared for passengers, help passengers find their seats, and serve passengers during their travels. Similarly, nouns that refer to means of transportation—دراجة/*Darrajah* (bicycle), سيارة/*Sayyaarah* (automobile), حافلة/*Haafilah* (bus), سفينة/*Safinah* (boat), and طائرة/*Thaairah* (aircraft)—are feminine. Such vehicles are also necessary for public service, and thus associated with femininity.

As shown by these examples, significant inequalities are evident in the Arabic-language terms that refer to professions and positions. Masculine nouns are associated with activeness, prominence, superiority, and dominance, while feminine nouns are associated with stacticity, inferiority, service, and subordination. In other words, gender biases are evident in these nouns.

## 5. Discussion

This discussion has shown that sexist structures in Arabic have laid the foundation for gender inequality. Masculine nouns are characterized as strong and independent, while feminine ones are identified as dependent. Similar distinctions are evident in nouns referring to public spaces. Masculine nouns are characterized by accessibility, historicity, and power, while feminine nouns are marked by marginalization, subordination, and inferiority. In other words, women are positioned as occupying a small part of male existence (Muzdalifah Muhammadun 2016). Similar sexism is evident in English, with the use of the pronouns *he* and *she* (Gastil 1990). Gender marks such as ix 'feminine' and aj 'masculine' have been used in Mopan Maya languages in Eastern Central America (Contini-Morava, E., & Danziger, E. (2022).

Arabic distinguishes between men and women, creating high levels of inequality. This cannot be separated from the patriarchal ideology of Arab society, wherein men are associated with strength, power, and leadership while women are associated with marginalization, dependence, and subordination. Such beliefs are reinforced and legitimized by social, cultural, and religious practices (Rofi'ah 2016), such that masculine and feminine characteristics become seen as natural (Syafe'i 2015). As a result, women cannot be equitable partners in everyday life (Musarrofa 2019). A different case in the study of Contini (2022) that Mopan language divide nouns into feminine, masculine, possessed, and nature are in paradigmatic relationship

Language is not only involved in the construction of masculinity and femininity, but also plays a key role in maintaining the distinctions between men and women (Gormley 2015). As seen above, the Arabic language creates inequality by ascribing masculine and feminine characteristics to nouns. Pišković (2018) notes that individuals' gender commonly affects their diction and speech patterns, and that these linguistic practices inform the relationships between men and women. The sexism evident in Arabic, wherein particular identities are ascribed to nouns, is unique, imbuing the language with characteristics not found in any other.

Studies of the link between language and gender have often positioned language as an object, something used as a means for interaction and communication. This study, meanwhile, has highlighted how Arabic has provided a structure that emphasizes the dominance of men and marginalizes women. Language not also facilitates communication, but also creates specific roles and inequalities that become embedded in society and culture (Cameron 2020). Studies of language and gender have therefore produced diverse explanations of language's use in gender construction and differentiation (Gormley 2015).

## 6. Conclusion

It has been shown that the Arabic language contains sexism that has contributed to gender inequalities in society. Masculine and feminine identities are not constructed arbitrarily, but through patriarchal political and cultural processes that are deeply rooted in Arab society. Every linguistic unit—every word, letter, and diacritic—is used for gendering purposes, and this implies the creation of gender inequalities and perpetuation of existing ones. Likewise, all nouns contain symbols that distinguish between men and women; none are genderless. The cultural practices at the individual, family, communal, and national levels can thus be understood as reflecting the sexist structure of the Arabic language.

By focusing on the sexism contained in Arabic, this study has investigated how different symbols are used for gendering. At the same time, it has touched on a more fundamental issue: the patriarchal ideology that has existed in Arab society since before the revelation of Islam, what has been known as the Age of Ignorance (*jahiliyyah*). Arabic is more than a tool for interaction and communication; it also contains historic elements that enable it to shape specific inequalities. Arabic contains many unique characteristics, including a wealth of lexical elements that discriminate against women.

This study has limited itself to Arabic-language root nouns that are characterized as masculine and feminine, without considering those marked by gendered affixes. It has yet to examine the inequalities evident in the grammar and non-noun words of the Arabic language. As such, further studies should seek to explore how other symbols are used in the Arabic language for gendering purposes.

## References

- Abu-Ayyash, E. A. S. (2017). Errors and non-errors in English-Arabic machine translation of gender-bound constructs in technical texts. *Procedia Computer Science*, 117, 73–80. doi: 10.1016/j.procs.2017.10.095
- Adisa, T. A., Cooke, F. L., & Iwowo, V. (2020). Mind your attitude: the impact of patriarchy on women's workplace behaviour. *Career Development International*, 25(2), 146-164. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-07-2019-0183>
- Al-Ghadir, A. I., & Azmi, A. M. (2018). A study of Arabic social media users—posting behavior and author's gender prediction. *Cognitive Computation*, 11(1), 71-86. doi:10.1007/s12559-018-9592-7
- Alhassan, Salifu Nantogma (2014). Sexism and gender stereotyping in the Dagbanli language. *Gender and Language*, 8(3) 393-415 <https://doi.org/10.1558/genl.v8i3.393>
- Al-Harshsheh, A. M. A. (2014). Language and gender differences in Jordanian spoken Arabic: a sociolinguistics perspective. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(5), 872. doi:10.4304/tpls.4.5.872-882
- Al-Qatawneh, S., & Al Rawashdeh, A. (2019). Gender representation in the Arabic language textbook for the ninth grade approved by the Ministry of Education for use in schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 60, 90-98. doi: 10.1016/j.stueduc.2018.12.001
- Alsmearat, K., Al-Ayyoub, M., Al-Shalabi, R., & Kanaan, G. (2017). Author gender identification from Arabic text. *Journal of Information Security and Applications*, 35, 85–95. doi: 10.1016/j.jjsa.2017.06.003
- Altay, S. (2019). Patriarchy and women's subordination: a theoretical analysis. *E-Şarkiyat İlimi Araştırmaları Dergisi/Journal of Oriental Scientific Research (JOSR)*, 11(1), 417-427. <https://doi.org/10.26791/sarkiat.541704>
- Andriani, A. (2018). Frasa dalam bahasa arab (konstruksi frasa dalam bahasa arab berdasarkan unsur kata pembentuknya). *Cendekia : Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 2(1), 103-113. <https://doi.org/10.37348/cendekia.v2i1.24>
- Ardiansyah (2013). Pengaruh mazhab hanbali dan pemikiran Ibnu Taimiyah dalam paham salaf. *Analytica Islamica*, 2(2), 246-261. <http://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/analytica/article/view/406>
- Benstead, L. (2021). Conceptualizing and measuring patriarchy: The importance of feminist theory. *Mediterranean Politics*, 26(2), 234-246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2020.1729627>
- Boulos, S. (2021). National interests versus women's rights: the case of polygamy among the bedouin community in Israel. *Women and Criminal Justice*, 31(1), 53-76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08974454.2019.1658692>
- Budiwati, T. R. (2011). Representasi wacana gender dalam ungkapan berbahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Inggris: Analisis wacana kritis. *Jurnal Kawistara: Jurnal Ilmiah Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 1(3). 298-310. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22146/kawistara.3926>

- Cameron, D. (2020). Language and gender: Mainstreaming and the persistence of patriarchy. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2020(263), 25-30. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2020-2078>
- Coates, J. (2015). Women, men and language: A sociolinguistic account of gender differences in language: Third edition. In *Women, Men and Language: A Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language: Third Edition*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315645612>
- Contini-Morava, E., & Danziger, E. (2022). Challenging 'definite article' as a comparative concept: The case of Mopan Maya. *Language Sciences*, 91, 101461. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2022.101461>
- Dewi, N. Rusmarina, Fikri, A. Ihsanul, & Febriani Afifah (2020). Dinamika kesetaraan gender di Arab Saudi: Sebuah harapan baru di era raja Salman. *Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik*, 6(1), 30-42.
- El Abboubi, Z., Bouylmani, A., & Dardar, M. (2020). Sexism in moroccan arabic: gender differences in perceptions and use of language. *Journal of applied language and culture studies*, 3, 215-230. <https://revues.imist.ma/in dex.php/JALCS/article/view/18397>
- Elomäki, Anna, and Paula Koskinen Sandberg (2020). Feminist perspectives on the economy within transforming nordic welfare states, *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 28(2), 81-85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08038740.2020.1747248>
- Faktualnews (2020). Perempuan arab saudi dari waktu ke waktu. *Faktualnews.com*. <https://faktualnews.co/2020/01/04/perempuan-arab-saudi-dari-waktu-kewaktu/185610>
- Fitriyani, I., Wilian, S., & Yusra, K. (2019). Ekspresi bahasa indonesia tulis berdasarkan gender pada media facebook. *Lingua: Journal of Language, Literature and Teaching*, 16(1), 137-156. <https://doi.org/10.30957/lingua.v16i1.581>
- Garcia Coll, C., Garcia Miranda, A., Buzzetta Torres, I., & Noguera Bermúdez, J. (2018). On becoming cultural beings: a focus on race, gender, and language. *Research in Human Development*, 15(3-4), 332-344. doi:10.1080/15427609.2018.1491217
- Gastil, J. (1990). Generic pronouns and sexist language: The oxymoronic character of masculine generics. *Sex Roles*, 23(11), 629-643. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00289252>
- Ginsburgh, V., & Prieto-Rodriguez, J. (2013). Is there a gender bias in the use of foreign languages in europe? *Kyklos*, 66(4), 552-566. doi:10.1111/kykl.12035
- Gormley, S. (2015). Language and Gender. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences: Second Edition*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.53055-4>
- Hamdan, J. M., & Natour, Y. S. (2014). Gender of cited authors: A problem for the English-Arabic translation of scholarly research. *Babel*, 60(3), 265-280. doi: 10.1075/babel.60.3.o1ham
- Hidayati, N. N. (2016). Bahasa dan gender: kajian karakteristik kebahasaan laki-laki dan perempuan dalam film anak. *Al hikmah Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 6(1), 9-32. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/268132642.pdf>
- Hill, R. L., & Allen, K. (2021). 'Smash the patriarchy': the changing meanings and work of 'patriarchy' online. *Feminist Theory*, 22(2), 165-189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700120988643>
- Hopp, H. (2013). Grammatical gender in adult L2 acquisition: Relations between lexical and syntactic variability. *Second Language Research*, 29(1), 33-56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658312461803>
- Htun, M., & Weldon, S. L. (2015). Religious power, the state, women's rights, and family law. *Politics & Gender*, 1(3), 451-477. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X15000239>
- Izzuddin, Dalimunthe, R. P., & Susilo, S. (2021). The Portrayal of Women in Arabic Textbooks for Non-Arabic Speakers. *SAGE Open*, 11(2), 21582440211014184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211014184>
- Jaworska, S., & Ryan, K. (2018). Gender and the language of pain in chronic and terminal illness: A corpus-based discourse analysis of patients' narratives. *Social Science & Medicine*, 215, 107-114. doi: 10.1016/j.socscim ed.2018.09.002
- Khelghat-Doost, H., & Sibly, S. (2020). The impact of patriarchy on women's political participation. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(3), 396-409. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijar bss/v10-i3/7058>
- Lilolia, A. (2019). Perempuan Arab Saudi sedang berjuang untuk kebebasan - dan kesuksesan mereka terus bertambah. Diperoleh dari <https://theconversation.com/perempuan-arab-saudi-sedang-berjuang-untuk-kebebasan-dan-kesuksesan-mereka-terus-bertambah-122269>
- Lindqvist, A., Renström, E. A., & Gustafsson Sendén, M. (2018). Reducing a male bias in language? Establishing the efficiency of three different gender-fair language strategies. *Sex Roles*, 81(1), 109-117. doi:10.1007/s1199-018-0974-9
- MacArthur, H. J., Cundiff, J. L., & Mehl, M. R. (2019). Estimating the prevalence of gender-biased language in undergraduates' everyday speech. *Sex Roles*, 82(1), 81-93. doi:10.1007/s1199-019-01033-z

- Mahmud, F. N. (2017). Interferensi struktur kalimat bahasa indonesia dalam struktur kalimat bahasa mandarin pada karangan naratif mahasiswa sastra cina universitas sumatera utara (USU). *Metahumaniora*. <https://doi.org/10.24198/metahumaniora.v7i3.18851>
- Makhmud, F. N., & Rudianyah, R. (2017). Interferensi struktur kalimat bahasa indonesia dalam struktur kalimat bahasa mandarin pada karangan naratif mahasiswa sastra cina usu. *Genta Bahtera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kebahasaan Dan Kesastraan*, 3(2) 191-201. <https://doi.org/10.47269/gb.v3i2.15>
- Mavisakalyan, A. (2015). Gender in language and gender in employment. *Oxford Development Studies*, 43(4), 403-424. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/13600818.2015.1045857>
- Mougharbel, G. M., & Bahous, R. (2010). Gender bias in lebanese language classes. *The Educational Forum*, 74(3), 198-212. doi:10.1080/00131725.2010.483901
- Muassomah, M., Fitriani, L., & Yurisa, P. R. (2020). Sexism of gender in arabic vocabulary and its influence in social culture. *Buletin Al-Turas*, 26(1), 55-67. <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v26i1.13823>
- Musarrofa, I. (2019). Pemikiran pierre bourdieu tentang dominasi maskulin dan sumbangannya bagi agenda pengarusutamaan gender di Indonesia. *Kafu`ah: Journal of Gender Studies*, 9(1), 34-49. <https://doi.org/10.15548/jk.v9i1.227>
- Musgamy, Awaliyah (2018). Menakar batas kesetaraan gender poligami dalam pp. No. 45 tahun 1990 tentang izin perkawinan dan perceraian bagi PNS. *Al Daulah : Jurnal Hukum Pidana dan Ketatanegaraan*, 6(2), 395-404. [http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al\\_daulah/article/view/4892](http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al_daulah/article/view/4892)
- Muzdalifah Muhammadun (2016). Penanda gender dalam perspektif bahasa arab dan bahasa indonesia (sebuah analisis kontrastif). *Jurnal Al-Maiyyah*. 9(1), 46-86. <https://ejournal.iainpare.ac.id/index.php/almaiyyah/article/view/334>
- Ne'Eman-Haviv, Vered (2020). Attitudes of Arab Israeli students towards honour killings. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 30(1), 18-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2020.1768831>
- Nurcholisho, L. R. (2017). Fleksibilitas bahasa arab dalam membentuk ungkapan idiom. *Lisanan Arabiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 1(2), 145-161. <https://doi.org/10.32699/liar.v1i02.203>
- Park, G. P., & French, B. F. (2013). Gender differences in the foreign language classroom anxiety scale. *System*. 41(2), 462-471. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.04.001>
- Protivinský, T., & Münich, D. (2018). Gender bias in teachers' grading: What is in the grade. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 59, 141-149. doi: 10.1016/j.stueduc.2018.07.006
- Rofi'ah, S. (2016). Membangun pola relasi keluarga berbasis kesetaraan dan keadilan gender. *Muwazah: Jurnal Kajian Gender*, 7(2). 93-107. <http://e-journal.iainpekalongan.ac.id/index.php/Muwazah/article/view/515/0>
- Setiawan, A. (2014). Mudzakkar dan muannats: sumber pendidikan islam bias gender. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 3(2), 245-266. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2014.32.245-266>
- Sikweyiya, Y., Addo-Lartey, A. A., Alangea, D. O., Dako-Gyeke, P., Chirwa, E. D., Coker-Appiah, D., Adanu, R. M. K., & Jewkes, R. (2020). Patriarchy and gender-inequitable attitudes as drivers of intimate partner violence against women in the central region of Ghana. *BMC Public Health*, 20(1). 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-08825-z>
- Syafe'i, I. (2015). Subordinasi perempuan dan implikasinya terhadap rumah tangga. *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*. 15(1), 143-166. <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v15i1.716>
- Van Der Slik, F. W. P., Van Hout, R. W. N. M., & Schepens, J. J. (2015). The gender gap in second language acquisition: Gender differences in the acquisition of Dutch among immigrants from 88 countries with 49 mother tongues. *PLoS ONE*, 10(11), e0142056. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0142056>
- Wibowo, P. A. W. (2012). Bahasa dan gender. *Lite*. 8(1), 15-23. <https://doi.org/10.33633/lite.v8i1.1105>
- Yim, Y. K., & Norton, B. (2001). Identity and language learning: gender, ethnicity and educational change. *TESOL Quarterly*. doi:10.1080/15235882.2001.10162792
- Zimman, L. (2017). Gender as stylistic bricolage: Transmasculine voices and the relationship between fundamental frequency and /s/. *Language in Society*, 46(3), 339-370. doi:10.1017/S0047404517000070
- Zulkarnain, S. I., & Fitriani, N. (2018). Perbedaan gaya bahasa laki-laki dan perempuan pada penutur bahasa indonesia dan Aceh. *Gender Quality: International Journal of Child & Gender Student*. 4(1), 159-172. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/equality.v4i1.4486>