"Language Mirrors Gender Preference"

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Introduction:

The following piece of research will look at certain aspects of contemporary usage of Arabic and English. The aim is to reveal prejudicial attitudes in the language use that demean women while on the other hand glority and honour men. The paper will not only try to describe a linguistic phenomenon and its social context, but will also attempt to show how linguishtic differentiantion and usage reflect social structure i.e. it is a direct consequence of the structural social inequality found in the community. Data from Arabic, mainly Qatari Arabic, and English in the fields of names, insults, word ordering and titles is presented to provide evidece that sex-related bias in language usage is evident everywhere, albiet in different forms and fashions, and to different degrees.

Everyone has prejudice of one sort or another, and it is reflected in one's behaviour, attitudes, manners, etc. Language is a vehilcle through which all kinds of prejudice are materialized. Therefore we may look at language as a carrier of societal attitudes and stereotypes. Normally it takes a considerably long time and hard effort to change linguistic prejudice for it is the result of accumulations of societal behaviour and attitudes over generations. However, linguistic prejudice is largely responsible for reinforcing stereotype images found inthe society and which are in mnany cases totally unfounded and unproved.

Sexism is one type of prejudice. It is the preference of one sex, maily males, over the other. Such sexist attitude is not related only to the linguishtic aspect but is quite evident in all other domains of human behaviour.

Almost in all societies men's need for achievement and success is recognized. Men have the freedom to do what they like. They may cook, drive, dress dolls, hunt or do office work, and when society perceives such activities as part of the male domain, then the whole community: young and

old, female and male vote these activities as important and value them positively. But when the same occupations are done by woman they are regarded as less important (Sherzen 1987). For example, looking at the Qatari society where women's participation in public occupations is quite limited, we may notice that occupations traditionally done by females such as house work, rearing of children and baby care are appreciated far less than office work, although very often such activities are extolled in lectures that emphasize their value. Those lectures, however, remain part of the social rhetoric that is not practiced by the society. Thus a female who seeks a job such as in teaching, or nursing etc., is always valued far more positively than a woman who takes care of her children. But then the former is voted less efficient when compared to men, even if both parties carry out the same job.

In a recent study carried out at the King Fahad University of Petroleum and Minerals, Saudis and Asian expatriates, and to a lesser degree Western expatriates, believed that women were neither ambitious nor competitive enough for their work as managers, for it to be considered as valuable as that done by men. (Middle East Education and Training 1988).

The other issue that is closely related to prejudice is the question of identity. We live in a multi-dimensional social space. We identify ourselves with numerous groups or sub-groups. Language is just one of the means by which individuals locate themselves in the multi–dimensional social space. Speech is in fact an act of identity. When we speak, one of the things we do is identify ourselves as females or males. During our childhood we are trained indirectly to acquire linguishtic behaviour appropriate to our sex, and this becomes part of our identity. In fact the acquisition of sex-related aspects of language is essential in developing and acquiring native competence in any language. Competence relates not only to the rules of grammar but also includes rules of appropriateness.

> "A person's knowledge of his language includes more than knowledge of syntactic, semantic and phonological rules. Even if his knowledge of these is complete he must also acquire communicative competence - of when to speak or be silent, how to speak on each occasion; how to communicate and interpret meanings of respect, seriousness, humour, politeness or intimacy". (Milroy 1980/85).

However, we expect distinct social groups to develop certain characteristics which differentiate them from others. Gender is one of the

more salient social distinctions in our society, therefore we will always expect and indeed find some reflections of the gender identity in the sociolinguistic system of the society under investigation, whether in its phonology, morphology, syntax, sematics or discourse.

The linguishtic differences between the two sexes are evident in most languages of the world, but as expected such diversities are more salient in some communities than others. The most often mentioned example of sex-related language difference is probably the Malagasy speech community in wich there is a fundamental contrast between the patterns of speaking of the two sexes. Direct speech is associated with women while indirect speech is related to men. Indirect speech is the style used in public and political speeches. It is the one that is positively valued in society as a whole. The other form of speech i.e. direct, although discredited in general, is used sometimes such as in bargaining which comes within the domain of women. (Sherzen 1987).

> "Pitch and intonation phenomena figure prominantly in impressionistic accounts of male-female speech differences from the earliest writing. At the empirical level, acoustical analysis of adult speakers in the United States and Germany has demonstrated that women have both a higher fundamental frequency - - - and greater pitch variability than men". (Smith 1979:123).

Various studies have shown that in the same context women use more standard forms than men (Labov 1966, New York City; Trudgill 1975, Norwich; MaCaulay 1976, Glassgow, Romaine 1978, Edinburgh). For example Labov (1966) reports that women in New York lead the way in the sound change that is taking place in the pronunciation of (r), as they adopt the hypercorrection form in most formal styles.

But women use the standard form of the language more frequently not because they belong to the less tightly-knit networks which in turn are less efficient at enforcing vernacular norms. Milroy (1980) reports that the use of non-standard forms seems to be associated not only with working class speakers, but also with men, because their networks are denser and more multiplex than the women's. This difference in strength of the networks is matched by linguishtic differences. In other words, women use more standard English forms because they are relatively less exposed to the vernacular speech. (Coates 1986).

Women display a greater tendency to ask questions (Maltz and Borker 1982). Women are interrupted more often by the opposite sex in mixed discussions (Zimmerman and West 1975). In fact the interruption policy that is regularly practiced by men in mixed conversations shows how language reflects the structural position of inequality of females and males. Thus in an interactional activities:

> "Men and women exhibit the normal power relationship that exists in society, with men dominant and women subservient. They also behave in this way because that is how they have been brought up to behave" (Wardhaugh 1986:309).

Therefore, "Men dominate women by interrupting them and by neglecting topics they raise while women exhibit their supportiveness . . . by using positive politeness strategies" (Brouwer and de Haan 1987:4).

On the whole, features that are generally associated with women's speech were renamed by O'Barr and Atkins as Powerless Language. They argue that similar speech symptoms occur in the speech of powerless people i.e. who held subordinate, lower-status jobs or were unemployed. However, powerless language has been confused with women's language because in most societies women are usually weaker than men (Kramarae 1982).

Women acquire a speech style which is more appropriate for the domestic sphere; it is supportive, harmonizing, open-hearted and cooperative. Men, on the other hand, learn a speech style appropriate for the domain of public discussion: it is forceful, fast, loud, competitive and dominant. These differences in speech styles reinforce and suit the division of labour, between men and women, found in most societies: women take care of the domestic sphere and men are visible only in the public sphere. (Van Alphen 1987).

Those were some characteristics of the language of each sex, but there are other types of sex-related language prejudices that can be observed community wide. In other words the community as whole uses certain forms of langauge that give an edge to the males over the females. Here are some of those aspects.

Names:

Names are important. It is hard to think of anything in the universe which does not have a name. For non-humans names may just serve as a tag reference; they facilitate communication among people. But for most people

a name is much more than a label or a tag. It is a symbol which stands for the unique combination of characteristics and attributes that define them as individuals. Probably it is justifiable to claim that it is the closest thing that we have to a shorthand for the self-concept (Smith 1985).

Parents usually think of a name for their baby long before s/he is due. Sometimes this is done as early as the first month of the pregnancy. In most societies two names are chosen: one for girls and the other one for boys. The reason for that is the perception of sexes as a binary system: whoever is not a member of one sex is by definition a member of the opposite sex. People who don't see themselves as members of a particular sex to which they are attached are looked upon as misfits. In our societies, British and Arab, for example, they are reffered to as gays and lizbiahs, a-sexuals, etc.

However, the Navajo, for example,

> "recognize a separate sex class for individuals who are anatomically distinct from females and males whom they call "real nadle". This sex class corresponds to a gender formular for nadle . . . Inother words "real nadle: are not forced into male or female gender pattern as they would be in our society. Furthermore, the nadle gender category constitutes a real third gender-option and not just a misfit category" (Smith 1985:24).

Such communities are really rare. Most societies follow the binary system of female and male.

Names are usually marked for gender. Im other words, we can in most cases define the person's sex on the basis of his/her name (given name). For example names like John, Joseph (English) and Mohammed, Ali (Arabic) are unambiguously masculine, whereas Mary, Josephine (English) and Fatma, Mariam (Arabic) are clear feminine names. Names like Lee and Dale (English) and Sabah, Nour (Arabic) which are acceptable for both sexes are really rare. Other familiar names which seems to suit both sexes such as Jo, Chris and Pat are usually abbreviations of longer unambiguous forms such as Joseph or Joanne, Christopher of Christine and Patricia or Patrick.

The assumptions which underline the customs regarding female names after marriage is quite interesting, and the whole process reflects a sexism strategy. It is very common in Europe and North America to see women

adapting their husbands' family names when they marry. Thus women are said to marry into a family and families die out if an all-female generation occurs.

We may want to think that women are better off in the Eastern societies (like Qatar) where females retain their family names after marriage. But this is not the case. Before going into details, I would like to describe the naming system in Qatar (which is true for many other Arab societies).

Children are usually addressed by nik-names. These names are usually abbreviations of or derived from their given names. The system is applied to both sexes. Here are some examples:

محمد	Mohammed	حمود	Hammoud
علي	Ali	علوي	Alloy
فاطمة	Fatma	فطوم	Fattoom, Fitami
خالد	Khalid	خلود	Khalloud
مريم	Maryam	مريوم	Maryoum, Miureim

An important process pf change takes place during adolescence. Men are no longer, or very rarely, addressed by their nik-names. Instead they are given an agnomen which consisits of abu أبــو father of and another name. The agnomen or kunya كنــية names have historical roots and they are in a kind of fixed relation with a person's given name. Here are some examples.

محمد	Mohammed	أبو جاسم	Abu Jassim lit ''father of Jassim'' or Jassim's father
جاسم	Jassim	أبو محمد	Abu Mohammed lit ''father of Mohammed'' or Mohammed's father
علي	Ali	أبو حسن – حسين	Abu Hussein/Hassan lit father of Hussein or Hassan's father
حسن/حسين	Hassan/Hussein	أبو علي	Abu Ali ''lit father of Ali'' or Ali's father

However, it is also possible to use a person's father's name to construct his agnomen. Thus, if one's name was جاسم علي Jassim Ali, one may have any of the following agnomen:

أبو محمد

Abu Mohammed
father of Mohammed

or

أبو علي

Abu Ali
father of Ali

Normally the father's name is chosen to make up an agnomen if the person's given name does not have a fixed counterpart in the agnomen system, since some names like ناصر Nassir, as سيف Saif etc. have no fixed or agreed upon agnomen.

Females, on the other hand, are not given equivalent agnomen أم mother of . . . until they are married. Thus, males are regarded as full adults long before their marriage takes place, whereas for the females this is not the case.

But after marriage the females lose their name almost completely. They are no longer reffered to as فاطمة Fatma or مريم Maryam but addressed, in the presence of others, in term of female agnomen أم umm/ "mother of . . . " and the name that follows is always that of a male.

In fact the parent's agnomen أبو Abu " father of" and أم umm "mother of" are always followed by the son's (male) name, even if the eldest child of the family is a female and even if a male child doesn't exist in the family. But some people, though very rarely, use the name of their eldest daughter to construct their agnomen, such as أبو فاطمة Abu Fatma/lit. father of Fatma. "Fatma's father". They may go on using them for years before a boy arrives in the family. Once he arrives, the female name is abandoned and the masculine name is used instead.

Avoidance of female names is so evident and forceful that many people do not know their grandmothers' names. Mothers' names and sisters' names are considered taboo. Children 12 and over make sure that their mothers'

names, for example, are not known by their peers, for if they do, they can be used as a source of embarrassment.

It seems that the agnomens أم "umm . . . " "mother of . . . " and أبو "Abu.." father of . . . are used for different purposes. In the case of males, it is used o elevate the stature of the person and to grant him respect and honour. But in the case of females, agnomens are used to conceal their names which are considered taboo. Moreover, male first names such as علي Ali and محمد Mohammed are used far more often to address a married man than female names, like فاطمة Fatma and مريم Maryam, are employed to addressed married women.

It seems that women both in the West and the East alike take part of their identity by relating to a man.

> "Lakoff 1975 argues that men are defined in terms of what they do in the world while women are defined in terms of the men with whom they are associated . . . the owner and the owned . . . Women more often than men are reffered to in terms of their partners: "John's wife" "Harry's daughter" "Bill's girlfriend". It becomes most acute in the event of a spouse's death" "A women whose husband dies is "Ed's widow". But the man whose wife is deceased is not commonly reffered to as "Vera's widower". (Smith 1985: 46-7)

Similar approach is also evident in Qatari Arabic. Here are some examples:

| زوجة علي | Ali's wife |
| خطيبة علي | Ali's fiance |

However, we must remember that a great degree of flexibility is attached to this point. So it is not the case that females are always attached to men, but the matter depends on the degree of acquaintance between the speaker and the male and female to whom he refers. Thus, if he is familiar with the man but not the woman the male will be the centre to which the female is attached. The reverse is true if he is acquainted with the female but not the male. But when the speaker knows the two parties to a similar extent, then women are more often than men are reffered to in terms of their male partners.

Moreover, the term "family" which is derived from the Latin word "famulus" which means a slave or servant, is itself a constant reminder that

wives, children and servants were historically part of male's property and were actually inherited. (Smith 1985).

Another asymmetry in the treatment of women and men in language is seen in the order of precedence and preference that is given to men when females and males are points of reference.

Here are some examples from English and Arabic :

a. English :

husband and wife
son and daughter
king and queen
Adam amd Eve
brother and sister
John and Mary

b. Arabic :

ولد و بنت	a boy and a girl
آدم و حواء	Adam and Eve
رجل و امرأة	male and female
العاملين و العاملات	male employees and female employees
الطلاب و الطالبات	male students and female students

In fact we are so accustomed to this order of presentation that if we attempt to reverse the order at presentation it will be odd and very much out of tune. Thus, the cliche "Ladies before gentlemen" is mere rhetoric that is never observed in practice. Even this cliche reinforces the strenght of men. The cliche means "let the women, the weak ones go first, we men can look after ourselves".

This order of precedence and preference of males over females is evident at all levels including academic and school books. To illustrate this let's take the reading book for the first primary level at schools in Qatar as an example. This book is chosen for different reasons. On the one hand it is children's first encounter with the academic world which is supposed to be authentic

and lacking any sex bias. On the other hand the whole book centres around two main characters:

سحر Sahar : "a girl" and حمد Hamad : "a boy".

The first lesson starts with حمد Hammad and a photographs of a small boy while on the second page سحر Sahar is introduced with a photograph of a girl. Lesson two is quite interesting. It reads:

حمد مع سحر

Hamad and Sahar = male and female

If we compare the photographs which appears at the top of the page of the lesson, with the order of presentation of the two characters, we notice clear discripancies. Sahar, the female character is on the right. She is much bigger in size and much older than Hamad, the male character. Bearing in mind that in Arabic we write from right to left, the natural order should be:

سحر مع حمد

Sahar and Hamad

But because the influence of male-female pole is so strong we end up with

حمد مع سحر Hamad and Sahar = male and female

Lesson three reads :

حمد أخو سحر Hamad is Sahar's brother

سحر أخت حمد Sahar is Hamad's sister

Here the two new words are أخ "brother" and أخت "sister". As expected the male term is presented first followed by the female equivalent. In fact this pattern of male first female second is so evident throughout the whole book to the extent that every activity is first executed by حمد Hamad: the male character and later by سحر Sahar: the female character.

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The naming process and the order of presentation reflects the dominant social values. The attitudes transmitted help to reinforce the status quo: the subjugation of women and the dominance of men. (Smith 1985).

Deviation of Women's Language:

Many people working in the field of linguistic have attempted to show that women's langauge has certain characteristics which make it different from that of men. However, in all cases men's language is seen as the standard norm whereas women's language is regarded as deviation from that norm (Hills 1987, Bolinger 1980). Thus, when linguists talk about sex-related differences in the language of men and women, they always look for distinctive female pattern of speech. For example, Otto Jasperson, the famous Danish linguist, in his book Language, devoted a chapter to female speech and called it "the women's" but had no equivalent male one "the men's".

> "So at the outset we are equating male langauge to the norm. Since male and female devide the species evenly, the comparison might as well be in the other direction, but even linguistics has been till now so dominated by men that female speech has always been regarded as the marked or supposedly exceptional form" (Bolinger 1980:91).

In other words, female's speech is seen as deviation from the norm: the male's.

For example the notion of hypercorrection introduced by Labov (1966) and copied by many linguists later on, e.g. Trudgill (1974), is s clear case of such conception. Labov showed that lower class speakers aim towards the standard norm of speech of people directly above them in term of the class hierarchy. Thus, lower-middle class speakers try to elevate their speech to match the standard norm of the midle-middle class speakers as the speech event becomes more formal. However, in the two most formal styles of speech: word list and minimal pairs, the lower-midle class speakers even shoot ahead of midle-middle class speakers. Thus, we get the hypercorrection phenomenon. Labov concludes that this hypercorrection practice is more evident in the speech of females from the lower-midle class than in the speech of males.

However, one must point out that such treatment of females aspects is not confined to language but is found in other domains as well. For example, checking the encyclopedia Britanica for the headings man and woman, I was

surprised to find that the two entries were dealt with differently. <u>Man</u> talked about the evolution of mankind whereas the other heading: <u>woman</u> talked about various things such as women's status, women's liberation movements, jobs that women held . . . etc. No such topics were discussed under the heading man simply because it is a man's world. He dictates the world. Thus, we look at some of aspects of the partner's life in the light of his standard.

Moreover, men's speech is stereotypically logical, concise and dealing with highly important topics, whereas women's speech is pictured as trivial and emotional. Thus in Qatari dialet we have the cliche.:

a.   كــلام حـريـم   women's talk

b.   كلام رجاجيل (ريايل)   men's talk

(a) is used to refer to a speech that is considered to lack seriousness and is worthless, but (b) is considered more like a promise. It is seen as very serious and important.

In Qatari society, as in Western societies, stupid comments are seen as part of women's language but not of men's. Moreover, women as a group are characterized as silly speakers."The idea that women discuss topics which are essebtially trival has contributed to the myth of women's verbosity, since talk on trival topics can more easily be labelled "too much" (Coates 1986:103).

English is full of sayings of "women's verbosity".

Here are some proverbs :

a. Foxes are all tail and women are all tongue.
b. A women's tongue wags like a lamb's tail.
c. Many women, many words, many geese, many turds.

The same is equally trur in Arabic. In fact the term الثرثــرة "talkativeness" is normally associated with women.

Such widespread belief that women talk more than men is regularly contradicted by research findings. No single study has shown that women

talk more than men. On the contrary many studies have shown the opposite i.e. that men talk more than women in various diversified settings "such as staff meetings (Eakins and Eakins 1978), T.V. panel discussion (Bernard 1972), experimental pairs (Argyle et al 1968) and husband and wife in spontaneous conversaation (Soskin and John 1963)" Coates 1986:103).

The verbosity of women has obviously been gauged in comparison, not with men, but with silence. Women are supposed to be silent in front of men. When silence is the desired behaviour, then any talk, no matter how much, can be labelled too much. Coates (1986:37) writes that "there is evidence that silence is an ideal that has been held up to women for many centuries". The same idea is also evident in the Estern cultures. Women are to keep quiet in the presence of their husbands or other male speakers.

This may be due to the fact women are considered weak creatures. Thus, in the Qatari dialet, a male person who is afraid or reluctant to do what is asked to do is labelled " حرمة " "/" a woman". The expression that is normally used is

<div dir="rtl">

ايش دعوى انت حرمة ؟

</div>

What's the matter, are you a woman (coward).

On the other hand, a woman who fights for her rights is seen, not as a female, but as <u>a man.</u> In such case the expression that is used is

<div dir="rtl">

هاي ريال ماتقول عنها حرمة

</div>

She is a man.   You would not call her a woman.

The reason is that women are supposed to take what they are given, but never fight for it. Thus, weak frightened women are not equated with men, while strong women are, because only men are seen as strong and dominant whereas women are by definition weak.

The problem here is not so much a linguistic one as much as it is a cultural one. Perhaphs as Lakoff (1975) points out the distinction between men's and women's language is a reflection of the fact that men and women are expected to have different interests and roles and to held different types of conversations.

The presentation of women as sex objects:

A further aspect of sex bias in language is the fact that women are generally presented and seen as sex objects. Many of the terms refer to females carry sexual connotations to suite the taste of dominant males, whereas the equivalent masculine terms carry no such connotations. We may see this in the use of the titles Mr. and Mrs./Miss. Similar distinctions has recently been introduced in Qatari Arabic a السيد / السيدة – آنسة . The important point is that in the case of women a distinction is made between a married and unmarried person, thus we have Mrs./Miss. But the distinction does not apply to men. Thus, the sexual availability of the woman is being pointed out.

However, the Mrs./Miss distinction is not very old. Prior to early 19th century Mrs. was applied to all adult women and Miss to female children. But,

> "the change in the use of these forms to denote married status
> arose as a consequence of women's changing role during the
> Industrial Revolution. To the extent that wage labour enabled
> more women to achieve an identity and means of existence
> independent of men, the use of the titles Mrs./Miss became
> popular as a means of communicating information about a
> woman's sexual availability" (Smith 1985:4).

In Qatari Arabic we have the word عانس bachelor/spinster. This word is supposed to refer to both males and females who reach a certain age without being married at all. Buit in real usage of the term, it is only applied to women whereas for men another term is used i.e. عازب / "bachelor". When the two terms are considered carefully we realize that the meaning of the female term عانس is "a female who is not married but who is not attractive and who has passed the age of marriage i.e. not useful for men. But the male term عازب indicates that the person is not married, nothing else.

It also seems that most of the titlles that refer to women "degrade" in the course of history whereas men's equivalent terms remain intact (Chaika 1982). Here are some examples from English.

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Master/Mistress:

The male word remained as intended : "a man who has others working under him or a male head of a household, great artist . . . etc.". But the female word became to mean, in addition to the original meaning which is equivalent to that of men's, "a woman who has regular sexual intercourse with one man to whom she is not married".

Sir/Madam:

The fate of the female term was not different from the fate of the previous female word. It has taken on a new meaning: "a keeper and procurer of women for men to use for sexual purposes". Thus, Madam is mistress of a house of ill repute.

King/Queen:

In addition to the original meaning. the female term has come to refer to "a male homosexual who acts like a woman". However, a female homosexual who acts like a man is not called a king, but a butch which is an older nick-name for tough, lower-class boy.

It is not wrong to claim that the

"terms for females in authority have taken on sexual meanings. Worse, these terms originally denoting high female position have been demeaned to refer to women with the least admirable feminine sexual behaviour. The lofty mistress and madam have been lowered to porvide elevated terms for those held in contempt: whores and procurers. A mistress is one better than the prostitute on the street ... but still she is a whore" (Chaika 1982:206).

But do we use Sit to refer to a pimp? Never! Men's term do not suffer the same fate.

Women also suffer more that men in the process of swearing. Moreover, they are always attacked on sexual basis. Swearing is an act of revenge that one seeks as a response to an outside stimula. It varies from one country to another. For example, it is very harsh insult to call someone a guy in the Qatari society, but this is not the case in England.

Male and female sides of the opponent are attacked in the event of swearing, but they are treated differently. It seems that in all societies more female parties are involved or being attacked in the event. For example, in English, the insult is always directed at the mother but never the father. We may see this very clearly in the phrase "son of a bitch". In the Qatari society the father is attacked as in ابن الكلب "son of a dog" "your father is a dog". Obviously the mother is involved too. But in this society, the opponents sisters are brought in as well, but not his brothers. Moreover, the types of insult directed at each sex is quite different. Swearing aimed at the father attempt to equate him with a particular animal e.g. dog, donkey, etc., whereas those directed at the mother and sisters have clear sexual components, e.g. "whore".

Moreover, it seems that feminine words with negative, obscene and dirty connotaitions outnumber male counterparts. In an interesting study Nilsen (1977) analysed 517 words chosen from a dictionary. The choice was done on the basis of their masculine or feminine semantic marker such as son, girl, host, hostess, etc. Words were also analysed according to their prestige or negative connotations. Overall, masculine words were three times as frequent as the feminine ones. The masculine words which had positive or prestigious connotations outnumbered the feminine words by ratio 6:1, (e.g. crafstman, first lady, etc), But feminine words with negative connontations (e.g. old maid, fish wife, etc.) outnumbered the masculine one with similar connotations (e.g. madman) by about 20 percent, despite the massive overall dominance of masculine items. Ervin-Tripp (1987:19) explains this point by stating that

> "that lower public prestige or ridcule of womenin modern western societies shows up symbolically in many ways. Words that refer to women tend to get lower prestige meanings or have secondary meanings than their male cognates".

Perhaps the most revealing aspect of sex bias are words that have different connotations when applied to each gender. Many adjectives take on an additional sexual meaning, when attached to a female. But no such connotation is implied when the same words are used to refer to men. Here are some examples :

She is a professional = "prostitute"
He is a professional = "skillful"

Similar thing is evident in Qatari Arabic as well :

                                    lit. "the woman is walking"
حرمة ماشية   = "the woman is a prostitute"

ريال ماشي   = "The man is walking"

Other examples include :

loose woman = tramp
loose man   = casual

The word beast when applied to males, it means strong, but to the females, it means sexually unattractive.

Discussion:

In the previous pages we have examined evidence from English and Qatari dialect which clearly shows the sex bias in language use. But why is it the case that the two societies subjogate women through language use, more or less in the same way, although they have very little in common in terms of language, religion, tradition, social structure . . . etc.?

The answer to this question lies in the relative position of women in the British society, and the west, and their psoiton in the Qatari society, and other Arab states. In the study by جابر عبدالحميد والخضري (Jaber and Al-Khodhari 1978) on population of Qatari female and male students at the University of Qatar, it was found that the informants (50% of women, 75% of men) believed that a woman is weak character and was created to provide comport to a man. Similar results were also obtained in other Arab countries e.g. Iraq جابر عبدالحميد جابر والخضري (Jaber جابر and Al-Khodahari 1978), Egypt محمد علي محمد (Al-Sayed 1987) and السيد عبدالعاطي السيد (Mohammad 1985).

This is also true of western culture. For example Augste Comte (1968) and Herbert Spencer (1954) (quoted in احمد جمال ظاهر Chahin 1983), clearly put forward the idea of superiority of men and the subordination of women. Such attitudes are also evident in many aspects of contemporary conduct and events in the west. Firstly, we have, in Europe and North America, women liberation movements. Are there equivalent movements for men? None.

Secondly, very limited senior posts in any country are held be females whereas the majority of such posts are monopolized by men. Finally, we must remember that not long ago female were paid less for carrying out the same duties. Thus we see that the difference between the two societies as just matter of degree and not of principle, as far as the subjogation of women goes.

Power is obviously related to responsibilities. One becomes more influencial as one's responsibilities increase. In most communities men fulfill more obligations than women do; thus they dominate and dictate the norms of the society. Therefore, we may say that bias use of language is a reclection of men's dominance and women's subordination. It is also a way of constructing the social reality. In this event, contribute to the inequal distribution of power (Appleman et al 1987). This is because "language is man-made product, designed by and for the male half of the species to the neglect and exclusion of women". Smith 1985:1). Men's dominance in conversation, for example, parallels their dominance in society. The two levels are really parts of the same social system. Likewise, interruptions and topic control are synptoms of male display of power which is in the large social structure but reinforced and spelled out in direct interactions with women (Maltz and Borker 1982).

The evidence from the areas of naming, world order, and in conjunction with other asymmetried, shows quite clearly that the overall picture of the ways in which the two sexes are represented in the British and Qatari cultures, as being different not just descriptively but also evaluatively. In other words, not only men and women use different strategies and forms in language, but that the form used by men are always more prestigeous than the ones by women.

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