

**DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GENDER DISTINCTION OF
SEX MARKERS IN MALE AND FEMALE TALK**

BY

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MAY 2011

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE
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FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
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MAY 2011

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GENDER DISTINCTION OF SEX MARKERS IN MALE AND FEMALE TALK” has been written by me and that it is a record of my research work. It has not been presented for any other degree. All references are indicated by means of quotation and indentation marks. The sources of information pertaining to the study are acknowledged by means of references.

AJIBOLA Morohunkade Adejoke

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled “DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GENDER DISTINCTION OF SEX MARKERS IN MALE AND FEMALE TALK” meets the regulations governing the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God.

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ABSTRACT

This research is a discourse analysis of gender distinction of sex markers in male and female talk. Its main purpose is to investigate the extent of the manifestation of gender markers in everyday male and female discourse, and how these distinctions inform and shape the society's perception about the status of the woman. Drawing insights from Fairclough's (1995) model of analysis which considers discourse to be a specific historical product and Greenberg's (1966) markedness theory which assigns "marked" and "unmarked" to opposing entities, the study analysed data randomly gathered from over fifty (50) conversations and broadcast of news items from the media to demonstrate the linguistic reflection of the discrimination suffered by women in a male-dominated society. The investigation of the study is anchored on the assumption that the English Language is deeply rooted in words that have a sexist connotation. The analysis proved that the use of prefixes such as Dr (Mrs), Pastor (Mrs), Engr (Mrs), and expressions like "female politicians", "women police officers", "chairman"/chairperson", "female armed robbers", ectera by the society in relation to women are gender-bias, and do not just reflect the chauvinistic attitude of the male folk, but conditions society's perception of the identity and ability of the women especially in relation to the performance of certain positions in the society. The findings of the study revealed that this negatively-stereotypical image of the woman can be altered in language. The anaphoric pronouns that evoke gender bias are replaced with generic pronouns that refer to both male and female.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Most languages of the world are sexist in nature. These languages are embedded with gender markers which are the most distinctive elements that distinguish male and female talk. Gender markers can be perceived from male and male talk, female and female talk, and male and female talk: all these conversation outlets have their different distinctive gender markers.

The subject of gender difference, according to Tripp (2007), appears to have engaged people's curiosity since time immemorial, tracing its origins from the days of creation (Adam and Eve) to contemporary days when we have books like "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus" which express the premise that our expectations from the opposite sex (female) lead to anger and frustration and that we in effect think and speak different languages. All these allude to the distinction and the nature of languages as being sexist especially on the part of the women (that is, the female distinction is more pronounced). Wareing (1999:66) alludes to this when she posits:

Sexist language represents women and men unequally as if members of one sex were somehow less completely human, less complex and had fewer rights than members of the other sex. Sexist language also presents stereotypes of women and men, sometimes to the disadvantage of both, but more often, to the disadvantage of women.

The English language is richly spiced with and deeply rooted in words that have sexist connotations, a situation which leads speakers of the language to

subconsciously categorise people by their gender. This view has been expressed by authors like Spender (1981). There are three main parts to her argument:

- a. The language we use determines our world-view
- b. Meaning is invented and controlled by men
- c. Language is used 'oppressively', as when 'he' is used to cover both genders.

The idea that our language can determine our world-view confirms the relationship between language and culture. A look at how language reflects culture shows quite a large proportion of everyday vocabulary which is, in some way, culture specific. For example, Hudson (1973) lists several English words which are difficult, if not impossible to translate into French, including 'brown', 'chair' and 'carpet'. Even more dramatic differences can be found when languages from very different cultures are compared.

The claim that language determines thought is often referred to as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, after the two anthropologists whose early research tended to support this claim. This hypothesis posits that the grammar of a language has a very powerful effect upon the people's thought which is d 'the shaper of ideas'.

The "Sapir-Whorfian Hypothesis" shares commonality with the present study in the sense that the language of a particular community, in this case English, encodes meaning and ideology about the female gender particularly in the use of gender markers.

A close study of the rather stereotyped and sexist language often used in dictionaries (usually, if not exclusively, written by males) supports the notion that meaning has been invented and controlled by men. Gender in French and other European languages is also classified by sex, but in these languages, unlike English, gender is “grammaticalized,” which is to say masculine and feminine genders are assigned to inanimate objects as well as living things. Furthermore, not only pronouns change their forms but other modifying words like articles and adjectives do too. In French “the” is ‘la’ one minute and ‘le’ the next, depending on whether the noun precedes the ‘feminine’ or the ‘masculine’. There is a recent example which suggests that things may be changing. The French Academy in France which has tried to ‘protect’ the French language from ‘pollution’ can be caused by the adoption of foreign terms and expressions such as Americanisms, used by female government ministers who call themselves ‘la’ minister (as opposed to ‘le’). The problem for language purists is that French nouns are classed as male or female and so, the word ‘minister’ is normally a male noun Coates (1986). The Academy has called upon the ministers concerned to revert back to the male form of the noun.

This also relates to Spender’s argument that language is consistently used in an oppressive way. Hudson (1980) identifies two general tendencies which can reinforce prejudice and bias against women. The first covers all those words which apply to one gender or the other and the other relates to where the female version has a less positive or negative meaning, for example the difference between ‘master’ and ‘minister’. The male meaning is positive and good while the female meaning is bad or derogatory. Similarly, if one thinks of how many English words one can use to

describe a sexually promiscuous woman, and how many words there are to describe a sexually promiscuous man, one will be able to construct two lists in which the female one will be much longer, possibly to apply equally to both genders which shows that the female form is somehow unusual. For example, the English language often talks of a woman doctor but never a 'man doctor'.

There have certainly been concerted attempts to revise words or introduce new expressions to shift the balance. Examples include new terms like 'Ms' or supposedly neutral terms like 'chairperson' or 'chair' to replace terms like 'chairman' which seems to reflect male dominance. However, these strategies are often only used when there is a woman involved – 'chairman' means male and chair or 'chairperson' means female – rather than being used to refer equally to males. This suggests that there is still some level of inequality.

There is also the question regarding whether men and women behave differently when they communicate. Many texts provide detailed lists of differences. These are often based on the work of Lakoff (1975) who suggests that women use language differently in the following ways.

- Women make much less use of specialized vocabularies. They use fewer technical expressions.
- Women use expletives differently. They use fewer obscenities and swear words.
- Women use different patterns of intonation. They speak in a softer and less 'dramatic' way.

- Women are much more likely to be ‘super polite’. They tend to be ‘over correct’ in following social rules.
- Women use what is known as ‘hedges’ more often. They are much more likely to embellish what they say with hedges such as ‘well’, ‘kinds’, ‘y’ know’.
- Women use jokes and humour differently. They are much less likely than men to tell jokes.
- Women use more tags. Examples of tags are ‘he’s been drinking again, hasn’t he?’; ‘the way prices are rising is horrendous, isn’t it?’; ‘you were missing last week, weren’t you?’ and ‘open the door for me, could you?’ Not only do women use more tags but other research efforts suggest they use them differently. According to Holmes (1992), men use more ‘modal’ tags. These tags are used to encourage the other speaker to supply further information, as in ‘hasn’t he’ and ‘isn’t it. On the other hand, women seem to use more affective tags, which express feelings of togetherness and belonging.

This sort of research is usually used to justify the claim that women have a ‘weak, hesitant and powerless’ style of speech. This study therefore explores the linguistic evidence for markers which suggest that females conceive of themselves differently from the way men conceive of them and how these perceptions find expression in the language expressions used by the respective genders both about themselves and about the opposite sex.

1.1 Background of the Study

The field of discourse analysis is vast in its exploration of conversation between people of varying status and rank. It covers both the spoken and the written forms of language. Linguists like Brown and Yule (1993), Stubbs (1995), Osisanwo (2003), etc have proffered apt definitions of discourse analysis. Generally speaking, discourse analysis is the analysis of language in use, either in conversation or in written form. According to Stubbs (1995:1), the term discourse analysis covers not just the linguistic analysis but the social context in which language is used, its organization and the process of encoding and decoding meaning in talks (Osisanwo, 2003).

Since the new wave of feminism drew attention to the neglected topic of language and the sexes, there has been a burst of interest and research on feminist language study (Kramer, Thorne, and Henley, 1978: 638). This provides a good moment for feminist scholars to reflect on current tendencies and new directions in the study of gender language and discourse. Consequently, they examine the ways in which language in structure, content, and daily usage reflects and helps to constitute sexual inequality. They also focus on the dynamic nature of sexist language. For feminists who are also linguists, “discourse” is not just a site on which to observe the construction and contest of gender relations; it is of highly organized linguistic phenomenon whose formal characteristics are of interest in their own right. The ‘turn to language’ in the humanities and social science has affected many feminists’ approach to the question framed by Kramer, Thorne, and Henley (1978: 638) as to how “language-in structure, content, and daily usage-reflect(s) and help(s) constitute

sexual inequality.” It is more likely to be assumed that the role of language is strongly a constitutive one, and some may take this to mean that there is no social reality language and discourse.

The language that a culture uses is a telltale evidence of the values and beliefs of that culture (Nielson, 2005). Creating a gender-neutral language would mean that the terms used by the speakers of the language would not specify a specific gender otherwise it will be inclusive of both sexes. Gender-neutral terms would refer to “someone” rather than to just males or just females. A gender-specific language refers to one gender although in a non-sexist way. For example, in the expression; “a female business executive will be leading a meeting today”, because it does not use ‘business’, it is not considered bias. However, it is important to note that many of the terms used in the English Language are exclusive to specific gender, most often females. Using such words supports bias implications and implies irrelevant gender classification and negative stereotype.

Commonly used gender-biased words often have “man” within them, for example, ‘policeman’, ‘fireman’ and ‘mankind’. These words classify a group of people as male even if the group consists of both females and males. They also suggest that males are superior to females by not being inclusive to both genders, and this leads to negative sexual connotations. Other examples of common gender bias lexemes include ‘snowman’, ‘mailman’, ‘businessman’, ‘congressman’, ‘manpower’, ‘weatherman’, ‘anchorman’, ‘fisherman’, ‘security man’, ‘foreman’ etc. Masculine based words reinforce the idea that men are more powerful and have higher priority over women. A woman’s femininity becomes invisible when they accept being

categorized by male gender-biased terms. It also means that women are only being recognized when classified in a masculine group. However, can women truly be included or accepted as equal to men?

A way to help eliminate gender biased words according to Lannon (1997) is to use gender neutral expressions:

- Chair or chairperson rather than chairman/chairwoman
- Ancestors rather than forefathers
- Supervisor rather than foreman
- Police officer rather than policeman/policewoman
- Homemaker rather than housewife
- Humanity or humankind rather than mankind/womankind
- Anchor or news reporter rather than anchorman/anchorwoman
- Workforce rather than manpower

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

One of the problems in researching this topic is that views and attitudes about gender differences are often felt very strongly. This is not surprising when taken against the background of the very real discrimination which women had endured in the past. Consider the following advice from etiquette “once during an evening is enough for a woman to state a definite and unqualified opinion” Spender (1981). This example was quoted by newspaper feature which interviewed women who studied at Cambridge University during the days of discrimination. It is worth remembering

how badly women were treated in comparison with their male counterparts – and this is only fifty or sixty years ago.

Although the social context has changed, the debate over male and female characteristics is still generating strong opinions. Research studies such as Spender (1980), Tannen (1990) and Wodak (1993) have suggested a number of differences between males and females in their communication. This has included areas such as use of power and influence, strategies and conversational styles (Wooffitt, 2005). There are also reported differences which relate to perceptions and expectations. The way males and females report how they communicate, and the way males and females are perceived by others to communicate, can also differ.

This study seeks to investigate the sexist nature of the English language. In everyday discourse between female partners and male speakers, the latter consciously or unconsciously usually assert superiority over the former by the use of gender markers. Gender markers are important in discourse because they help to shape the content, the meaning and the shape of conversational contributions either from the point of view of the male or the female. However, in spite of their importance in distinguishing between male and female discourse, not much attention in linguistic terms has been focused on them. Most of the studies on gender have been mainly from the point of view of linguistic distinction in the structure of the pronoun. For instance subjective – ‘he’ ‘she’, ‘it’; objective – ‘him’, ‘her’, ‘it’ but ‘himself,’ ‘itself,’ are purely syntactic or grammatical in nature. Even these basic pronouns have been studied from the point of view of how they shape conversation especially when they are subjected to the vagaries of gender manipulation in real discourse situations. The

fact remains that this use of the male pronoun is one of the many examples of discrimination, each of which may seem of small consequence in itself but which, when added up, help to keep women at an enormous disadvantage – in employment, the courts, the universities and conventional sexual life.

Sociolinguistic studies of gender and speech have tended to focus on ‘markers’, or isolated linguistic or phonological items that are assumed to be characteristic of men and women’s speech, and their correlation with speaker’s gender. On the basis of such evidence, women are, for example, reported to use ‘correct’ forms or prestigious forms more frequently than men in order to make up for their low social status (Trudgill, 1983:167-168). This suggests that social markers in speech are directly influenced by inequalities in social structure. Furthermore, words which are marked for females and which are used in association with females, become ‘pejorated’ because, irrespective of origin, or intent, words which are marked for females are marked negative. Schulz (1975a) refers to this as a systematic, semantic derogation of women. This, Schulz attributes to a fundamental semantic ‘rule’ in a society which constructs male supremacy. The words for women assume negative connotation even where they designate the same state or condition they do for men. ‘Spinster’ and ‘bachelor’, for example, designate an unmarried adult but when either of these words is marked for males it is positive but when marked for females, it is negative. The only variable is that of sex which is crucial to semantic system. Miller and Swift (1976) argue that once a name or word becomes associated with women, it is rarely again considered suitable for men. They also observe that there is no reciprocity: the process does not operate in reverse. One of the examples

which Lakoff (1975) quotes is the word, 'professional'; the use of should, on 'logical' ground, be 'completely' parallel semantically' whether it applies to men or women. But when the sex changes, the meaning indicating the sex dimension of semantics also changes. The only way to 'make meaning' of these discrepancies in meaning is to situate them within the context of a semantic rule, which posits that any symbol that is associated with the female must assume negative connotations.

Other commonly used gender biased words which often have 'man' within them are 'policeman, 'fireman', and 'mankind'. These words classify a group of people as males, even if the group consists of both females and males. They also suggest that males are superior to females, by not being inclusive in both genders which could lead to negative sexual connotations. Leech (1968) in developing a set of categories for English Language suggests that the world can be divided into male and minus male, because almost all English words are masculine. Masculinity is the unmarked form: the assumption is that the world is male unless proven otherwise. According to Stanley (1977), semantic space does not exist for women because it is already occupied by the male sex. 'When a woman becomes a professional in one of the fields usually reserved for male, 'she does not move into the corresponding semantic space covered by the noun conventionally used as its label. Instead, she must signify that the norm, the positive, does not apply and so she becomes 'a lady doctor', 'a female surgeon', 'a woman lawyer', or in less prestigious occupations, 'a waitress', and 'a stewardess'. Women are often referred to by the use of male based terms, but if a male is referred to as female it is taken as an extreme insult. This is just another example that supports the fact that English Language is sexist. It once again

implies that males are the stronger more dominant sexual beings and females are the weaker more docile and insignificant gender. There is no space for a woman to be positive.

It is against the backdrop of these gender distinctions in language that this discourse on male and female talk in informal settings becomes useful. In a bid to analyse or understand the nature of this study; discourse analysis has been chosen as a model to foreground this research work. Therefore, the research questions for this study are as follows:

- i. How do sex markers manifest in male and female discourse?
- ii. What gender distinctions exist in the conversation of male and female discourse?
- iii. What is the degree of gender distinctions in communication between male and female talks?
- iv. How do differences between male and female talks affect their social interaction?

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The research aims at studying the distinctive elements that distinguish male and female talk. The study specifically sets out to:

- i. Investigate the nature of pragmatic manifestation of gender markers in male and female discourse.
- ii. Examine the gender distinctions found in male and female discourse.

- iii. Investigate the extent to which these gender distinctions in communication are related to status between male and female.
- iv. Examine how these gender distinctions inform the thinking about male and female talks.

1.4 Scope and Delimitation

The work focuses on the field of discourse analysis with particular interest on gender and the gender markers that connote sexism. Also, the generic use of pronouns (such as in expressions like ‘everybody’ should come with ‘his’ book to class – which means ‘his’, include boys, girls, men and women) is considered. The work equally explores the quantity of talk in relation to male and female sexes, in informal settings.

Talks in informal settings have included daily conversation at different places, such as in the bus, lecture rooms, hostels, students’ social centre etc. In the settings mentioned above, the topic of the conversation can range from friendship talks, party talks, football talks, academic discussions, love talks, etc. The work is strictly a discourse analysis of gender distinction of sex markers in male and female talk. The study does not include phonetics and phonology

1.5 Justification of Study

Gender discourses and research works are gaining a lot of currency worldwide. The need to investigate gender markers that distinguish male and female talk becomes very important, considering the increasing global awareness on gender inequality.

This being so, however, not much has been done in this area to explore these distinctive elements in male and female talk. This work therefore, is expected to generate more discourse along this line of thinking and add, not only to linguistic study, but to the ever growing literature on gender studies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction to Review of Literature

At a time when linguistics was largely concerned with the analysis of single sentences, Harris (1952) in McCarthy published a paper with the title 'Discourse Analysis'. Harris was interested in the distribution of linguistic elements in extended texts, and the links between the texts and their social situations. Also, important in the early years was the emergence of semiotics and the French structural approach to the study of narratives.

In the 1960's, Hymes (1964) in McCarthy (ibid) provided a sociological perspective with the study of speech in its social setting. Austin (1975), Searle (1969) and Grice (1975) were also influential in the study of language as social action. Their postulations are reflected in the speech Act Theory and the formulation of conversational maxims, alongside the emergence of pragmatics which is the study of meaning in context.

British discourse analysis was greatly influenced by Halliday's functional approach to language which in turn has connections with the Prague School of linguistics. Halliday's framework emphasizes the social functions of language and the thematic and informational structure of speech and writing. Also important in Britain were Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) at the University of Birmingham, who developed a model for the description of teacher-pupil talk, based on a hierarchy of discourse unit. Other similar works have dealt with doctor-patient interaction, service

encounters, interviews, debates and business negotiations as well as monologues. Several works in the British tradition have also been done on intonation in discourse. The British works have principally followed structural linguistic criteria, on the basis of isolation of units and sets of rules defining well-formed sequences of discourse, but none has focused on the discourse analysis of gender distinction of sex markers in male and female informal talk.

American discourse analysis has been dominated by works within the ethnomethodological tradition, which emphasizes the research method of close observation of groups of people communicating in natural settings. It examines types of speech events such as story-telling, greeting, rituals, and verbal duels in different cultural and social settings. Although what is often called conversation analysis within the American tradition can also be included under the general heading of discourse analysis, the emphasis is not upon building structural models, but rather on the close observation of the behaviour of participants in talk and on patterns which recur over a wide range of natural data. The works of Goffman (1976: 1979) and Sacks *et al.* (1974) are important in the study of conversation. Alongside conversation analysis, within the socio-linguistic tradition, Labov's (1972) investigations of oral story telling have also contributed to a long history of interest in narrative discourse. The American work has produced a large number of descriptions of discourse types as well as insights into the social constraints of politeness and face preserving phenomena in talk. Whereas such works do not focus specifically on gender distinctions in sex markers in discourse, they provide the necessary framework for the critical assessment and examination of these features in discourse.

According to Ibileye (1993), discourse analysis can be broadly studied from four perspectives viz: pragmatics, ethnomethodology, linguistics and philosophy. Of these four, the pragmatic approach, which is principally based on the work of Grice (1975), is considered adequate for the analysis of this study.

Grice suggests that there is a general co-operative principle between speaker and hearer, which roughly, controls the way in which a conversation may proceed. He then distinguishes four categories under which there are several maxims:

1. Quantity: Give the right amount of information.
 - a. Make your contribution as informative as required (that is, for the current purpose of exchange).
 - b. Do not make your contribution informative than is required.
2. Quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.
 - a. Do not say what you believe to be false
 - b. Do not say that for which you lack evidence.
3. Relation: Be relevant in whatever you say
 - a. be direct
 - b. avoid circumlocution
4. Manner: Be perspicuous
 - a. avoid obscurity of expression
 - b. avoid ambiguity
 - c. be brief, i.e. avoid unnecessary prolixity

These are the sets of co-operative principles (CP) that are exploited to arrive at conversational implicatures (CI). They can also be violated such that in the case of

maxim I (quantity), such a violation implies the opposite of what literal meaning will give; that of maxim 2(a), to irony and 2(b) to metaphors and meiosis (excuse) could also be a form of violating maxim 2(a), so also is hyperbole. A sudden shift in topic or focus is an indication of the violation of maxim 3. Maxim 4 could be violated in many ways like: by not being clear, by being ambiguous as in poetry, by giving long winded explanations or by not being orderly.

Also relevant to the development of discourse analysis as a whole is the work of text grammarians, working mostly with written language. Text grammarians see texts as language elements strung together in relation with one another that can be defined. Linguists such as Van Dijk (1972), De Beaugrande (1980) Halliday and Hasan (1976) have made significant impact in this area. The Prague School of linguistics with their interest in the structuring of information on discourse has also been influential. Its most important contribution has been to show the links between grammar and discourse. Discourse analysis has grown into a wide ranging and heterogeneous discipline which finds its unity in the description of language above the sentence and an interest in the context and cultural influence which affects language in use. This situates the research in the domain of discourse analysis and makes it relevant.

Discourse analysis is not only concerned with the description and analysis of spoken interaction; in addition to all our verbal encounters we daily consume hundreds of written and printed words: newspaper articles, letters, notices, recipes, instructions, notices, comics, bill boards, leaflets pushed through the door and so on, which are expected to be coherent, meaningful communications, with the words and

or sentences linked to one another in a fashion that corresponds to conventional formulae just as we do with speech. Therefore, discourse analysts are equally interested in the organization of written interaction.

2.1 Discourse Analysis: An Over View

Discourse analysis is an independent discipline which has relationship with other disciplines in linguistics. According to Ogwuche (2003), the term discourse is seen in many lights; however, most scholars have agreed that there are special features inherent in the concept. Such features, according to them include: talk, lecture, speech, sermon, etc. and are all geared towards eliciting response or reaction from participants in discourse. Discourse is defined as a series of utterances juxtaposed and forming part of a higher structure being linked together by semantic cohesion. In discourse, relations hold between sentences and social meaning. It can further be regarded as a structured event manifested in linguistic and other behaviour.

The features of discourse include the following:

- (i) Text (oral / written)
- (ii) Participants (oral interlocutors)
- (iii) Mechanisms (code) i.e. language or dialect used.
- (iv) Setting: (i) space / spacio-temporal (ii) time
- (v) Domains: is it in lecture, dialogue and seminar?

However, discourse analysis (D A) is referred to as the analysis of language in use.

To put it in another way, discourse analysis attempts to analyse every bit of utterance

produced by a speaker as well as the paralinguistic cues made with a view to passing on information, ideas, feelings, etc.

Ogwuche (2003) further submits that discourse analysis does not stop at analyzing or describing linguistic forms but also investigates language by native speakers. Discourse Analysis can also be defined as the norms, values and beliefs, which impinge or influence speech. It is also seen as the analysis of suprasentential unit or a shift from assembling sentences to doing things with utterances and from the sentences in isolation to utterances in context.

Not only is it difficult to define discourse; it is also not easy to make a clear cut division of discourse. Therefore, depending on the form, linguists distinguish various kinds of communicative products. A type of discourse might be characterised as a class of either written or spoken text, which is frequently casually specified, with its recognition aiding its perception, and consequently producing potential response (Cook 1990:156). This distinction, due to its suitability more for written communicative products than for spoken ones, faced constructive criticism the observation of which revealed that there are more functions performed. Consequently, there ought to be more types of discourse, not to mention the fact that these often mix and overlap. The analysis of oral communicative products was the domain of Steger, who examined features of various situations and categorized divided discourse into six types: presentation, message, report, public debate, conversation and interview. The criteria of this division include such factors as presence, or absence of interaction, number of speakers and their relation to one another (their rights, or as

Steger names it 'rank'), flexibility of topic, along with selection and attitude of interlocutors towards the subject matter.

However, it is worth mentioning that oral discourse might alter its character. For example, in the case of presenting a lecture, students can start asking questions which can change the discourse-type to interview, or even a conversation. Using this classification, it is possible to anticipate the role of participants as well as goals of particular acts of communication. The above mentioned typologies do not exhaust the possible division of discourse types, yet, nowadays, attempts are made by scholars to create a classification that would embrace all potential kinds. Also, there appears to be a shift of interest in this field, presently resulting in focus on similarities and differences between written and spoken communication (Renkema, 2004:64).

Discourse analysts are interested in analyzing stretches of utterances uttered by individuals and in context. McCarthy (1991) says Discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used: written texts of all kinds, and spoken data, from conversation to highly institutionalized forms of talk. Discourse analysis is a term which has been used for two distinct activities:

- i. The study of the narrative structures of literacy texts (Barthes, 1966; Todorov, Chatman, 1969);
- ii. The study of the rhetorical 'coherence' of records of interaction in which the focus of attention is the way the communicator draws on the resources of the language to participate in the exchange of information.

Therefore, discourse analysis is data centred, descriptive, performance and spoken. Nunan (1993) in Ajibola (2001) describes the term text to refer to any written record of a communicative event. The event itself may involve oral language (for example, a sermon, a casual conversation, a shopping transaction) or written language (for example, a poem, a newspaper advertisement, a wall poster, a shopping list, a novel). Conversely, discourse according to Nunan refers to the interpretation of the communicative event in context. This study therefore, focuses on the gender distinction of sex markers in male and female informal talk.

Context is defined as the situation or setting, that is a course of event(s) that has an initial, intermediary and final state. The actual context is defined as the situation; that is, the time or period and place where the communicative activities of the speaker /hearer are realized and which satisfy the properties of ‘here’ and ‘now’ logically and cognitively. Also, context involves mental structures such as ‘wants’, ‘knowledge’, ‘purpose’, ‘intents’, etc. The knowledge context includes:

1. Knowledge of the word in which the utterance is interpreted.
2. Knowledge of the language used; that is, its rules and possible of the rules;
3. Knowledge of the various states of the context.

It is acknowledged that discourse analysis is pragmatic since the discourse analyst usually takes a pragmatic approach to the study of language in use. He has to take into account of the context in which a piece of discourse occurs. However, some

of the obvious linguistic elements which require contextual information for their interpretation are deictic forms such as ‘here’, ‘now’ (already mentioned above), ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘this’, and ‘that’. These say something about time, space/ place, etc. In order to interpret these elements in a piece of discourse, it is necessary to know the following which constitute another knowledge set.

1. The speaker
2. The hearer
3. The time of production
4. The place of production of the utterances
5. the context or situation
6. The subject matter

A further look at pragmatics may reveal that it could be defined as the study of how utterances have meaning in situations. The strongest influence on developing a pragmatic paradigm has been the formulation of a view of meaning in terms of illocutionary force by Austin and Searle (1962) and of meaning in terms of conversational implicature by Grice (1975).

In summary, pragmatics deals with setting which entails where, when and under what circumstances communication takes place. Pragmatics is important in the study of discourse, not because it characteristically involves distinctive grammatical constructions like ‘locatives’ e.g. (here and then), but also because it is a common basis for segmentation of sequential text into their constituent parts.

What is often called conversation analysis within the American tradition can also be included under the general heading of discourse analysis. Analysis is focused

on cohesion between sentences which is exemplified by pronominalization, anaphoric reference and exophoric reference by means of which sentences are linked and references are made to parts of the text which have passed and to other parts which are to come.

2.1.1 Text

According to Ogwuche (2003), a text is a structural sequence of linguistic expression forming a unitary whole. It can also be described as a sequence of words forming an actual utterance in a language. Text may either be transcription of recorded material or the result of research work, or even work of literature or a piece of information or message.

Discourse is an oral text often not recorded in writing. The text is considered by linguists as a document containing a sample of a particular variety of language and serves as the basis for linguistic analysis and description. Text analysis is macro linguistic in nature. According to Hills (1958) and Hasan (1968), the discourse analyst approaches the text as a whole and seeks to discover the way it 'holds together'. These are related to the current study because the emphasis is on the examination of gender distinction of sex markers in male and female informal talk. This is considered as text. However, text analysis is formalistic since it attempts to correlate linguistic form in order to demonstrate the factors which control textual cohesion.

2.1.2 Discourse Context/Content

The following are included in discourse content: reference, presupposition, implicatures, inference, the context of situation i.e. language events.

1. Reference: this is treated as an action on the part of speaker or writer. Lyons (1968) says that “the relationship which holds between words and things is the relationship of reference; words refer to things”; that is, meaning is realized through referents. Types of reference include: co-reference, anaphoric, endophoric, cataphoric, exophoric. Reference is a type of discourse context.
2. Presupposition: this means to suppose beforehand. The notion of presupposition required in discourse analysis is a pragmatic one which is defined in terms of assumption the speaker makes about what the hearer is likely to accept without challenge.

Stalnaker (1978) describes presupposition as what is taken by the speaker to be the common ground (something you think the speaker/hearer knows about) of the participants in the conversation. For example,

- (a) “My uncle is coming from Lagos” presupposes
- (b) “I have an uncle”

Through of the first sentence the hearer already knows that the speaker has an uncle.

The syntactic link between (a) and (b) is uncle repeated. Sentence (a) logically presupposes sentence (b).

3. Implicature: the term is used by Grice (1975) to account for what a speaker can imply, suggest or mean, as distinct from what the speaker literally says. There are two types of implicature:
 - (a) Conventional implicature: This is determined by the conventional (culture centred) meaning of words used in an utterance e.g. she is a nun. She is therefore religious. The meaning is literal and denotes that all nuns are holy or religious.
 - (b) Conversational implicature: The conditions from which implicatures derive are formulated by Grice as maxims grouped under four headings, quality, quantity, relation, and manner, all of which are described as co-operative principle.
4. Inference: This means to draw out or to infer, because the discourse analyst has no direct access to a speaker's intended meaning in producing an utterance; he often rather has to rely on a process of inference to arrive at an interpretation. There are inferences made through deductive reasoning; that is, conclusion drawn from some premise as in syllogism. Others are made through socio-cultural knowledge of the world. This type is known as pragmatic inference as opposed to logical inference i.e. (bringing tradition to bear on other situations).

The terms reference, presupposition, inference and implicature are pragmatic concepts in the analysis of discourse, which are used to indicate relationship between discourse participants and elements in the discourse. These terms are also relevant to

this research as the focus is on how they are used to make connotations and the realization of meaning in male and female informal talk.

5. Context of Situation: This is also called language events, speech acts etc,

Features of context include:

- (a) The relevant features of participants – persons and personalities.
 - (i) The verbal action of the participants.
 - (ii) The non-verbal actions of the participants.
- (b) The relevant objects; various things talked about such as places, things, objectives of discourse, etc.
- (c) The effect of the verbal action-SPEAKING as in:
 - (i) **Locution:** Locutionary act is a term used to refer to the act of making a meaningful utterance.
 - (ii) **Illocution:** It is a term used to refer to an act which is performed by the speaker, by virtue of his utterance having been made. The illocutionary force of “get away” is command, i.e. an order.
 - (iii) **Perlocution:** It is an act which is performed when an utterance achieves a particular or specific effect in the behaviour, feeling, beliefs and attitudes of the hearer.

2.1.3 Co-Text

Co-text is sentence or utterance which includes specific reference to what has been mentioned before. It is called previous discourse or preceding text. The interpretation of an individual lexical item is constrained by co-text; that is, one cannot interpret a

word in isolation but in relation to the meaning as used in the context. In co-text, anaphoric references are found. Therefore, anaphora depends crucially on co-text for interpretation.

Example: 1. Helen married last year.

2. Her alimony is too paltry to maintain her and her kid.

The second sentence presupposes the first one. The second sentence shows that the woman once married has been divorced. The first sentence is co-text to the second. If the first sentence were not given one would not understand the second sentence. Two related principles are essential for the understanding of the explanation above.

1. The Principle of Local Interpretation

This principle instructs the hearer not to construct a context any longer than he needs, to arrive at an interpretation.

Example: 1. The baby cried.

2. The mother picked it up.

The interpretation of the second sentence depends on the first sentence. Local interpretation occurs when the analyst refers to knowledge of the first sentence/utterance to get the meaning of the second. The principle of local interpretation guides the hearer to construct a limited context in which the mother is the mentioned baby's mother and the expression "it" is used to refer to the previously mentioned baby. This principle, apart from relying on the hearer's knowledge of grammar also relies on the hearer's previous knowledge. Local interpretation involves the utilization of the hearer's knowledge of the world and past

experience of similar events in interpreting the language encountered. An individual's experience of past events of a similar kind will equip him with expectation and hypothesis about what are likely to be relevant aspects of context.

2. The Principle of Analogy

The principle of analogy is one of the fundamental heuristics (a method of teaching in which the child is allowed to solve his problem by inductive reasoning), in which hearer and analysts adopt in determining interpretation in context. They (hearer and analyst) assume that everything will remain as it is unless they are given specific notice that some aspects have changed. Discourse is interpreted in the light of past experience of similar text. Relevant previous experience together with the principle of local interpretation will impel hearer/readers to try to interpret sequential utterances (as) relating to the same topic. The two principles of local interpretation and analogy are both significant for the present study where the interest is to explore the use of gender markers in male and female exchanges. These principles help to utilize the value of surrounding text elements in the understanding of gender markers which ordinarily would not have been understood as such.

2.2 Conversational Implicature/Entailment

There is an everyday sense of the verb 'imply' in which we can and do usually imply by means of our utterances something other than what we actually say. For example, if asked to give an opinion about a person's character, one might say: 'He'd share his last crust of bread with you.' Obviously, this utterance has not said of the

person in question that he is both kind and generous, but it might be reasonable to be held to have implied this. Another good example is:

Speaker A: I'm out of petrol.

Speaker B: There's a station around the corner.

In conversation, a lot can be left unsaid. Our interpretation of sentences such as the example above is therefore normally not only dependent on literal meaning, but also on implication. Much of the information that is conveyed from speaker to hearer in day-to-day conversation is implied, rather than asserted. In some cases, it is not clear whether the speaker intends the hearer to draw a particular inference or not. This then opens the way for misunderstanding and misrepresentation, on the one hand, and for the subtle manipulation of the hearer's opinion, on the other.

The speaker may use similar devices to imply further information that the hearer does not know. The term 'imply' is used in an ordinary (non-logical) sense to refer to sentence meaning. An attempt to account for this was made by Grice (1975) in terms of the notions of implicature. According to him, there are two kinds of implicatures. These are conventional and conversational.

A conversation is used loosely and non-technically to refer to any interactional stretch of talk involving at least two participants and taking place in a non-formalized setting such that no special rules or convention may be said to operate. Conversational implicature therefore relates to a conversational situation during which meaning of sentence/utterances are derived through implication rather than through literal through the use of the principles and the maxims proposed by Grice (1975). The difference between conventional and conversational implicatures is that the former depends

upon something other than what is truth-conditional in the conventional use or meaning of particular forms and expressions, whereas the latter derive from a set of more general principle which regulates the proper conduct of conversation.

Grice suggests that there is a general co-operative principle between speaker and hearer, which roughly controls the way in which a conversation may proceed. He distinguishes four categories under each of which there are several maxims. These are:

1. **Quantity:** Give the right amount of information.
 - a) Make your contribution as informative as required (that is, for the current purpose of exchange).
 - b) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
2. **Quality:** Make your contribution one that is true.
 - a) Do not say what you believe to be false.
 - b) Do not say that for which you lack evidence.
3. **Relation:** Be relevant in whatever you say.
 - a) Be direct.
 - b) Avoid circumlocution.
4. **Manner:** Be perspicuous.
 - a) Avoid obscurity of expression.
 - b) Avoid ambiguity.
 - c) Be brief, i.e., avoid unnecessary prolixity.
 - d) Be orderly.

These are sets of co-operative principles (C.P) that are ‘exploited’ to arrive at conversational implicatures (C.I). They can also be ‘violated’ such that in the case of Maxim I, such a violation implies the opposite of what the literal meaning will give; that of Maxim 2 (a), to irony, and 2 (b) to metaphor. Meiosis (excuse) could also be a form of violating Maxim 2 (a), so also is hyperbole. A sudden shift in topic or focus is an indication of the violation of Maxim 3. Maxim 4 could be violated in many ways like:

- By not being clear.
- By being ambiguous as in poetry.
- By giving long winded explanations.
- By not being orderly.

There are four maxims in politeness principles (PP): Leech ()

1. Tact: This is the ability to be tactful or wise in one’s utterance; that is, the ability to avoid offensive utterances.
2. Generosity: This has to do with showing of gratitude.
3. Acrobation: This is approving of people’s behaviour or acceptance of people’s failure or weakness.
4. Modesty: It involves humility, and sometimes sense of condensation, i.e not being vainglorious or boastful.

2.3 Inter-cooperation between Co-operative Principles (CP) and Politeness Principles (PP)

Politeness Principles can be seen not just as another set of principles to be added to CP but as a necessary compliment which rescues the CP from serious trouble; that is , the CP cannot exist in isolation. It has to co-exist with the PP.

Example of inter-cooperation:

1. (A) We will miss Ahmed and Ada, won't we?
(B) Well, we'll all miss Ahmed.
2. (A) Someone has eaten my cake.
(B) It wasn't me.

In 1 (B) the apparent fact is to observe the maxim of quality when 'A' asked 'B' to confirm 'A's opinion. 'B' merely confirms part of it and pointedly ignores the rest. From this we derive the implicature: speaker 'B' is of the opinion that we will not all miss Ada. 'B' could have been more informative but only at the cost of being polite to the third party; that 'B' there suppressed desired information in order to uphold the politeness principle (P.P). 2 (A)'s utterances implicate 'B' indirectly and 'Bs', response to that implicature is the indirectness motivated by politeness.

2.3.1 Implicatures Connected with Definiteness (Entailment)

If the definite article is substituted for the indefinite article in some proposition the result is a proposition, which entails the original one. This is called the rule of entailment; that is, something contains something else e.g.

(1) Sule is the secretary entails Sule is a secretary.

(2) Mary: “I have lost a diamond ring”

Ado: “well, Tina was wearing a diamond ring this morning”.

That is, what Ado means entails that Tina might have stolen the diamond ring which Mary misplaced or lost. By using the indefinite article ‘a’ or the substitution ‘one’ Ado refuses to commit himself to whether the ring he saw was the same one for Mary. By pointedly avoiding an implication of co-reference, he avoids incriminating Tina. Hence the maxim of quality is superficially violated by Ado.

2.3.2 Conversational Postulates (Gordon and Lakoff)

A. Basic Assumptions:

1. In everyday, one sentence is often used to convey the meaning of another.
2. There are general principles of conversation that makes it possible for one sentence to entail another.

(These are the Gricean Cooperative Principle):

B. Postulates:

1. Sincerity Condition: If A sincerely requests B to do R then:
 - i. A wants B to do R.
 - ii. A assumes B can do R.
 - iii. A assumes B will be willing to do R.
 - iv. A assumes B will not do R in the absence of A’s request.

These partially explain why the following sentences are request:

- (a) I want you to throw away the rubbish.
- (b) Can you throw away the rubbish?

(C) Would you be willing to throw away the rubbish?

(d) will you throw away the rubbish?

Sincerity condition is based on:

- a. Hearer based sincerity condition, and,
- b. Speaker based sincerity condition.

Hearer based sincerity condition:

One can convey a request by:

Asserting a speaker-based sincerity condition, and,

Questioning a hearer-based sincerity condition.

Note that in case where the sentence is ambiguous, such as “Can you throw away the rubbish?” the conversational implicature can be conveyed only if the literal meaning is not intended. That is, the hearer takes it that the speaker is not asking a question, but rather making a request.

Speaker-based sincerity condition:

- a. If you are sincere in SAYING something; then you BELIEVE IT.
- b. If you are sincere in PROMISING something; then you INTEND to do it.
- c. If you are sincere in REQUESTING something; then you WANT the request performed.

Consider: a) It's time to go home---I believe its time to go home.

b) I'll pay you back---I intend to pay you back.

c) Shut the door---I want you to shut the door.

The following sentences cannot be said sincerely (violation cases).

- a) Ibrahim is going to cheat you but I doesn't believe it.

- b) I'll pay you back, but I don't intend to.
- c) Please close the door, though I don't want you to.

2. Reasonableness Condition

A speech act has to be reasonable, since if it is not it will normally be opened to challenges of certain fixed types. For each sincerity condition on a speech Act, there is a corresponding reasonableness condition, namely, that the speaker has a reason for maintaining the sincerity condition.

So:

A request is reasonable only if the speaker has a reason for WANTING it done.

A request is reasonable only if the speaker has reason for ASSUMING that the hearer can do it.

A request is reasonable only if the speaker has reason for ASSUMING that the hearer would be WILLING to do it.

A request is reasonable only if the speaker has a reason to BELIEVE it.

A promise is reasonable only if the speaker has a reason for INTENDING to do it.

2.4 The Speech Act Theory

Speech act is the production of speech sound in an organized way so as to produce meaningful utterances (Ogwuche, 2003). Speech act is also called event. A speech event is a collective term for linguistic and extra linguistic components of a self contained act of speech. The speech act theory is one which tries to explain what goes on in human language behaviour. It is concerned with acts or events, which are

linguistic in orientation. It also involves certain parameters such as the speaker, the hearer and the spacio-temporal dimension. The theory was expounded by Austin (1962) and further given prominence by Searle (1965).

Austin (1962) points out that there are a number of utterances that do not report or 'constate' anything and are not therefore 'true or false', but rather that the uttering of the sentence is, or is part of, an action.

Examples:

1. I name this car Belgium.
2. I bet you ₦100 it will rain this week.

By uttering these sentences the speaker actually names the car and makes the bet, but he is not making any kind of statement that can be regarded as true or false. Such utterances Austin includes along with the per-formative verb such as apologize, promise, thank, approve, congratulate, invite, praise, condole, command, direct, press etc. With all of these, a sentence with ' I ' and a present tense verb will be an example of a performative. By extension, it is possible to suggest that in uttering any sentence, a speaker could be seen to have performed some act (illocutionary act), and conventionally associated with each illocutionary act is the 'force' of the utterance which can be expressed as a performative, such as promise' or 'warn'.

The illocutionary force of 'get out' for example, is a command. Austin also points out that, in uttering a sentence, a speaker perform a 'perlocutionary act' which may be described in terms of the effect of the illocutionary act as on the hearer i.e., the effect on the particular occasion of use. The intended perlocutionary force (arising from perlocutionary act) of "will you please attend my party tomorrow?" might be to

establish a friendship, to please a friend, to assure a friend of one's continued fellowship, to cheer up a friend or to have good time with him.

The principal interest of the speech act theory, for the discourse analyst, is that it provides an account of some apparently and formally unconnected brought utterances together in conversational discourse to form a coherent sequence.

2.4.1 Per-formatives

Per-formatives are in Austin and Searle's view action oriented words or verbs. They are also described as illocutionary verbs such as 'advise', 'congratulate' etc. In this context, not all verbs are per formatives. For instance, when we are dealing with or analyzing (illocutionary) verbs we are dealing with grammar, whereas when we are analyzing the illocutionary force of utterances we are dealing with pragmatics. A special case of the illocutionary verb fallacy is the performative. A Performative verb is the main form of utterance as well as the yardstick that underlines the explication of the force of utterances. It is this theory that informs the view that an ordinary non-per formative sentence like (no I below) has a meaning which can be made explicit by adding some per formative prelude as in (2a and b) on page 15.

He did not do it.

(a) I state that he did not do it.

(b) I maintain that he did not do it.

Performatives are action performing verbs and each illocutionary act has a performative verb.

Austin's Category

1. Verdictive (verdicts)

Adjudge discharge, diagnose, suppose, presume, estimate, convict etc.

2. Exercitives (exercise)

Appoint, order, advise, warn, command, name etc.

3. Commissives (commit)

Promise, guarantee, bet, assure etc.

4. Behavitives (behave) concerned with attitude or behaviour apologize, criticize, sympathize, bless, empathize, condole, condone, challenge, pray, tease, mock etc.

5. Expositives (these clarify things)

Postulate, argue, affirm, confirm, clarify, assert, posit etc.

2.4.2 Constative

Constatives are descriptive utterances, which can be evaluated in traditional terms of truth and falsehood. A constative utterance is one which makes an assertion; that is, it is often the utterance of a declarative sentence but is not performative.

Example: "I'm trying to get this box open with a screwdriver". This is a constative utterance because it makes an assertion about a particular state of affairs but is not performative. That is, the utterance does not simultaneously describe and perform the same act. Another example: I believe in the leadership of the regime.

2.4.3 The Felicity Conditions of Speech Act

A well formed statement is called felicity. A well chosen expression is felicitations. The felicity conditions of an illocutionary act are conditions that must be satisfied or fulfilled if the situation in which the act is carried out is to be said to be carried out properly or felicitously.

Here are some examples:

1. One of the felicity conditions for the illocutionary act for ordering is that the speaker must be superior to, or in authority over the hearer. For instance, if a driver says to the provost of a College of Education;

“Open the door of the car for me”

There is a certain incongruity or anomalousness or infelicity in the act (of ordering) carried out by the Provost by the driver’s order. But if the provost says it to the driver, there is felicity. (Felicity condition fulfilled).

2. A felicity condition for the illocutionary act of accusing in some ways. Thus one can felicitously accuse someone of theft or murder if there are grounds to do so.

3. Promising: the speaker must intend to carry out the thing apologized for. The thing promised must be something that hearer wants to happen.

4. Apologizing: the speaker must be responsible for the thing apologized for. The hearer must not want the thing apologized for to happen or to have happened.

5. Greeting: the speaker and the hearer must not be in the middle of a conversation. The speaker feels some respect and or sense of communion with the hearer.

6. Naming the speaker has certain authority to do the meaning. The thing or person named must not already have a recognized name known to the speaker. The speaker must be recognized by his community as having authority to name.

2.5 Discourse Analysis and Grammar

Spoken and written discourse display grammatical connexions between individual clauses and utterances. These grammatical links can be classified under three broad types: reference, ellipsis/substitution, and conjunction. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) reference items in English include pronouns, for example, 'he' 'she', 'it', 'they' and so on; demonstratives such as this, that, these, those. The article 'the', and items like 'a'. According to McCarthy (1991), there are three major reference types: anaphoric, exophoric and cataphoric reference.

A consequence of the "linguistic turn" for feminist language studies has been to change the way the field itself is implicitly divided up. In the past, studying the speech behaviour of women and men (sex or gender "difference;" a topic for sociolinguists) was often sharply distinguished from studying their representation in linguistic texts ("sexist language," a topic for stylisticians, grammarians, lexicologists, or language historians). All of these may be regarded as aspects of one process, the linguistic and discursive construction of gender across a range of cultural fields and practices. When a researcher studies women and men speaking she is looking, as it were, at the linguistic construction of gender in its first- and second-person forms (the construction of "I" and "you"); when she turns to the representation of gender in, say, advertisements or literary texts she is looking at the same thing in the third person

("she" and "he.") In many cases, it is neither possible nor useful to keep these aspects apart, since the triangle "I-you-she/he" is relevant to the analysis of every linguistic act or text. This redrawing of old boundaries has also had consequences for the way feminists address Kramer, Thorne, and Henley's third question, "How can sexist language be changed?" While "sexist language," conceived as a finite, context-free set of objectionable items (like generic he and man) undoubtedly remains a salient issue in the politics of everyday life (indeed, the recent furor over "political correctness" has provoked a new wave of public arguments about it), it has become far less central in recent feminist theoretical discussions. This change is largely attributable to the fact that "discourse" rather than language per se is seen as the main locus for the construction (and contestation) of gendered and sexist meanings. As discourse has attracted more attention, "sexist language" has attracted less.

2.5.1 Looking Backward: Anaphoric Reference

Exercises which involve looking back in text to find the referent of, for example, a pronoun, have long been common in first and second language teaching and testing. Usually items such as 'he/she/them' can be decoded without major difficulty. However, other items such as 'it' 'and' 'this' may be more troublesome because of their ability to refer to longer stretches of text and diffuse propositions not necessarily paraphrasable by any direct quotation from the text. Problems can also arise where lower level learners are so engaged in decoding the individual utterance, clause or sentence that they lose sight of the links back to earlier ones. But evidence of local difficulties hindering global processing at given points in the unfolding

discourse are not to be automatically read as inherent difficulties with processing at the discourse level. Only if intervention at the local level fails to solve larger processing problems might we begin to consider intervention in the form of training discourse skills to build up a sort of pragmatic awareness as to how references are decoded, which must, after all, be the basis of effective reading/listening in the learners first language.

The use of sex markers in certain contexts could rely on previously mentioned linguistic items for their interpretation. This concept of anaphoric reference is therefore a useful one in the understanding of sex markers within their contexts of use.

2.5.2 Looking Outward: Exophoric Reference

Outward or exophoric reference often directs us to the immediate context, as when someone says ‘leave it on the table please’ about a parcel you have for them. Sometimes, the referent is not in the immediate context but is assumed by the speaker/writer to be part of a shared world, either in terms of knowledge or experience. In English, the determiners often act in this way:

- (i) The government is to blame for unemployment.
- (ii) She was using one of those strimmers to get rid of the weeds.

It would be odd if someone replied to the question ‘which government?’ It is assumed by the speaker that the hearer will know which one usually ‘our government’ or ‘that of the country’ we are talking about. The same sort of exophoric reference is seen in phrases such as the ‘queen’, ‘the pope’, ‘the army’, and in sentences such as

‘we always take the car since we can just put the kids, the dog and the luggage into it.’ A learner whose L1 has no exact equivalent to the English ‘the’ may need to have this central use of the article taught explicitly. On the other hand, speakers of languages with extended use of definite article to cover general nouns in situations where this will not be marked as definite in English sometimes produce utterances which, to the English ear, seem to be making exophoric reference, such as ‘do you like the fork music?’ when no music is to be heard.

Exophoric reference (especially in the press) is often to a word of discourse connected with the discourse of the moment, but not directly. British popular newspaper headlines sometimes make references as that dress. ‘Queen scolds Princess Di’. Here, the reader is assumed to have followed certain stories in the press, and the reference is like a long range anaphoric one, to a text separated in time and space from the present. Exophoric references will often be to a word shared by sender and receiver of a linguistic message, regardless of cultural background, although, often, references are culture-bound and are also outside the experiences of the language learner. In these cases, the learner will need to consult some source of encyclopaedic information or ask an informant. Exophoric reference directs the receiver ‘out of the text and into an assumed shared world’. This idea of a shared world overlaps with the idea of a shared world built up by sender and receiver as any discourse unfolds, and for this reason, some linguistics see no real distinction between anaphoric and exophoric reference since both proceed on the basis of an assumption by the sender that the receiver is, at any point in time, availed of all the knowledge necessary to decode any reference items. Much of sex markers used in certain contexts can only be

meaningful if situated within the larger context of the universe of experience of the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader. This broad non-linguistic background is helpful for the interpretation of the meaning of the sex markers.

2.5.3 Looking Forward: Cataphoric Reference

Cataphoric reference is the reverse of anaphoric reference and is relatively straight forward, although language learners may lack awareness or confidence to put it into use in constructing texts, and may need to have the feature explicitly taught or exercised. There is, too, the danger of its over use or its use in unnatural context. As always, it is a question of training the learner to observe features of language above sentence level where these might not necessarily transfer from L1, especially since, in English, reference often involves the definite article and demonstratives, which do not translate easily into many other languages. Similar to anaphoric and exophoric references, cataphoric reference also provides context for the interpretation and understanding of gender markers in discourse.

2.6 Language and Culture

Concerning women and language in *Language and Sexual difference* (Witting in Setlers (1991), the women say it is necessary to disregard the discourses one has made them uphold against their thoughts and which have obeyed the codes and conventions of the cultures that have domesticated them. The women say there is no reality before words rules statutes have given in form.... The women say there is no reality before words rules statutes have given it form.... The women say that in the

first place the vocabulary of every language is to be examined, modified, and utterly shaken up, that each word must be screened.

Luce Irigaray reiterates the foregoing view by saying that the law which organises Western culture is that of the masculine desire to distinguish, reproduce and exchange the 'same' image. Woman, she stresses, under this regime, only has value in relation to the masculine, her role being that of splitting between the triptych of 'mother' virgin and prostitute. She is the 'other' in an exclusively male system, with no value or attributes of her own, apart from her ability to reflect (the image of) the man.

Irigaray (1991) develops her account of man's appropriation of women's 'difference' in relation to language. She opines that: 'every reality is based upon and defined by a discourse', and this, according to her, includes sexual reality. She further opines that: "the sexes are now defined only as they are determined in and through language, whose laws, it must not be forgotten, have been prescribed by male subjects for centuries."

As a result of this prescription, women according to Irigaray, have become the 'body-matter': the 'breach', 'lack', 'fault' or 'flaw' in which man's formulation of himself as (speaking) 'subject' can take place. Woman's absence from linguistic expression, she concludes, ensures man's position as (masterful).

She equally suggests that women can, under the present system, do little more than mimic the language they have had no share in creating. She insists that any attempt to 'speak' within the terms of the existing scheme will merely reproduce its repressive hierarchy. She argues that as long as masculine law remains in force,

women nature will remain amorphous and unknown to women, since the unconscious has been assigned and demarcated by men: ‘an intolerable debt’, of which men acquit themselves by fantasising that what women want is ‘the part of his own body... he most highly values’. Irigaray does not, however, believe that women should, by this, passively succumb to the fate mapped out for them by the men. In “The power of Discourse and the Sub-ordination of the Feminine’, she stresses the power of the feminine to disrupt and transform the masculine state. She contends that this ‘revolution’ will take place only through language.

Like Cixous and Irigaray (1991), she not only sees language as the main stay and medium of the patriarchal system, but goes further to insist that only through language can women hope to challenge that law and create new forms. In particular Irigaray believes that special attention must be paid to the language of philosophy.

Another dimension of language and culture can be seen in the way Irigaray explores the possibility of an order – feminine – mode of exchange, deriving from women’s marginalised position: a position that is, at least in part, exempt from masculine law. She suggests that if women were to refuse to reproduce the masculine – ‘socializing in a different way the relation to nature, matter, the body, language, and desire’ – women might finally begin to create amongst themselves a new ‘scheme’. She takes this suggestion a step further, arguing that it will be by articulating their own dreams and desires that women will break down the bastions of male law. She urges women: not to conceal their ‘dreams or desires in unique and definitive representations’. Whilst Irigaray emphasises the present difficulty of expressing any

new form of exchange, she believes this will mark a number of differences from the masculine.

Irigaray further looks forward to a feminine style based on a new articulation that will attend to the gaps in discourse as well as to its markers, and entailing respect for the other as well as for the self.

Cixious (1991) sees language as fundamental in women's oppression. She suggests that it is through language that man has succeeded in implementing his desire for mastery, obliterating all possibility of other. She remarks that the 'Woman has always functioned "within" man's discourse', Cixious writes, 'a signifier referring always to the opposing that annihilates its particular energy and puts down or stifles its very different sounds'. Language, she concludes, has become the 'Empire of the selfsame'. She urges women to 'break into 'language, exploding the law of its discourse to make 'fly'.

Chapsal (1991) asserts that French feminist theorists and writers challenge our view of language in a number of ways, starting from the premise that language implements men's desire at women's expense. Theorists and writers alike argue that only by inscribing the feminine can we hope to transform the current order of patriarchal relations.

Language and culture are inseparable because if language is being appropriated by men and used to structure the world according to their own ends, then no less is expected from in relation to their own a new woman's language world. But if women can achieve a new language rooted in a different, feminine perception and mode of organisation, the question that arises is what will be the effects of this

separation? Or, will the fact of women turning their backs on the present schemes merely found a new sexual tyranny, or will the creation of another feminine world reposition women in the place that has always been allotted them: the place of subordination, non-communication, and silence? All the above questions fall within the confines of discourse analysis, a wide-ranging and heterogeneous discipline which finds its unity in the description of language above the sentence putting into consideration in the contexts and cultural influences which affect language in use.

2.7 Language and the Social Setting of Discourse

McCarting (1991) quoted Hymes (1964) as providing a sociological perspective with the study of speech in its social setting. Linguistic philosophers such as Austin (1962), Searle (1969) and Grice (1975) were also influential in the study of language as social action, reflected in speech act theory and the formulation of conversational maxims, alongside the emergence of pragmatics, which is the study of meaning in context.

Halliday (1973) influenced discourse analysis greatly with his functional approach to language which in turn has connections with the Prague School of linguistics. The framework of Halliday emphasises the social functions of language and the thematic and informational structure of speech and writing. Also, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) developed a model for the description of teacher – pupil talk, based on a hierarchy of discourse units.

Equally, Gumperz and Hymes (1972) remarks that discourse analysis has been dominated by work within the ethno methodological tradition, which emphasises the

research method of close observations of groups of people communicating in natural settings. It examines types of speech events such as storytelling, greeting rituals and verbal duels in different cultural and social settings. Harris (1957) was largely concerned with the analysis of single sentences and published a paper with the title 'Discourse analysis' Harris was interested in the distribution of linguistic elements in extended texts, and the links between the text and its social situation.

2.7.1 Language and Social Class

Linguists have known for some time that differences in language are tied to social class. Rose (1954) suggested that certain lexical and phonological differences in English could be classified as 'u' (upper class) or 'non-u' (lower class). For example, serviette (non-u) versus table-napkin (u), one of the best known of all linguistic class-indicators at a time. Similarly, in the United States, some surveys of regional dialects recognised the importance of social status in geographical variation, and distinguished three categories of subjects based on the field worker's classification: Type I – little formal education, little reading and restricted social contacts; Type II – Better formal education (usually high school) and/or wider reading and social contacts; and Type III – superior education (usually college), cultured background, wide reading and/or extensive social contacts. These types correspond roughly to social status. Until the 1960's, most studies of variability were concerned primarily with regional variation dialectology, following a tradition established in the 19th century.

These studies concentrate on documenting the rural dialects which it was believed would soon disappear. Only during the latter half of the 20th century would the concern for status based differences in language become a primary rather than a secondary focus, when social linguists turned their attention to the language of cities, where an increasing proportion of the world's population lives in modern times. The rise of urbanisation is connected with an increase in social stratification reflected in linguistic variation.

2.8 Gender

There has been intense debate about the possible definitions of the term 'gender'. Early feminist work on language focussed almost exclusively on analysis of women's language (Spender, 1980; Lakoff, 1975). Some feminists have argued that 'gender' is a term which erases the political edge of feminism, and indeed this has been the case in some work in this area, most notably Showalter (1989). Feminists such as Tanya Modleski have been anxious that using the term 'gender' entails treating males and females as if they had the same political power, rights, upbringing, access to education and so on (Modleski, 1991). Modleski states that a focus on gender almost inevitably leads to a focus on men and heterosexuality, even when the debates seem to be about a male identity 'in crises. She says:

However, much a male subjectivity may currently be in crisis... we need to consider the extent to which male power is actually consolidated through cycles of crisis and resolution, whereby men ultimately deal with the threat of female power by incorporating it. (Modleski, 199:7).

The term 'gender' for such feminists simply allows for all of the gains brought about through feminist work, which have demonstrated the ways in which women and men have been treated differently and oppressively, to be lost. However, other feminists have argued that 'gender' is an enabling term which allows for the analysis of difference – by this I mean that sexual difference is not considered as a given whereby all males are classified as sharing certain characteristics which are opposed to the characteristics supposedly shared by all women.

Gender is more than the differences between a woman and a man. The term means different things to different people. First, it can be viewed as a term used to indicate social and biological aspects of the differences between women and men which make it to differ from the term, 'sex'. Whereas "sex" refers to the biological aspects of women and men (chromosomes, hormones, secondary sex characteristics), "gender" refers to those areas that are shaped by social forces or to the meaning that a society gives to biological differences. In this regard therefore, we might talk of sex differences in life expectancies as referred to biological differences in survival rates to gender differences which relates to the social influences on survival, such as the ways that girls are discriminated against in food allocation or the greater tendency for men to engage in high-risk behaviour.

Gender is viewed as a set of social and cultural practices that influence the lives of women and men in every society. Many researchers who use this definition of gender emphasize the way that these "gendered practices" are culturally or socially constructed – that is, they are defined within and through the social structures and

institutions of a society. Because culture helps to construct gender, it differs greatly from one society to another.

In every society, the roles women and men assume accord women fewer opportunities and privileges. Gender affects both “power to” and “power over” “Power to” refers to the ability to act and often requires access to social resources such as education, money, land, or time. Women usually have less “power to” – go to school, inherit land, or enter or refuse a marriage. Women are less likely to develop individual characteristics such as higher levels of education that would give these access to better paying jobs or political office and enhance their power. Individuals with “power over” are able to assert their wishes and goals even in the face of opposition from others. Women generally have less “power over” than men in all facets of society. They usually have less to say than their husbands in family decisions and less authority than men in the work place. Because women hold far fewer positions in governing bodies, they have little impact on decision making or public policies.

Although women are viewed as active agents and passive recipients of ‘development’ they are considered not to have perfect knowledge or understanding of their social situation. This approach assumes that while women as individuals may well be aware of their subordinate position, such awareness does not necessarily lead to an understanding of the structural roots of discrimination and subordination. As a corollary of this, the approach does not assume that men in their turn are aware of the social bases of male dominance, or that all men act actively to promote male dominance.

2.8.1 Gender Language and Gender Sex Markers

The subject of gender differences according to Tripp (2007) appears to have engaged peoples' curiosity for as long as people have been writing down their thought; as far back as the writing of the creation of Adam and Eve, to its current popular expression in books such as "men are from Mars, women are from Venus". In this book, the author argues that our expectations for the opposite sex to be more similar to our own often lead to anger and frustration, as does the fact that we, in effect, speak different languages. This issue is even addressed in an article for children by (Monroe, 1995), in which he describes differences in brain structure, hormones, and socialization, all of which contribute to perceived differences in thought processes and behaviour.

The fore-going only shows that, styles of communication differ and people. Our style depends on a lot of factors such as: where they are from, how and where they were brought up, their educational background, age, and also gender. Generally speaking however, men and women talk differently (Glass, 2007). Although, there are varying degrees of masculine and feminine speech characteristics in people. But men and women speak in ways particular and unique to their ways because of their gender.

The styles of communication differently used by men and women has been described as "debate vs relate", "report vs rapport", or "competitive vs cooperative" for example, men often seek straightforward solutions to problems and like useful advice, whereas women often try to establish intimacy by discussing problems and showing concern and empathy in order to re-enforce relationships.

Coates (1986) studied men-only and women-only discussion groups and found that when women talk to each other, they reveal a lot about their private lives. They also stick to one topic for a long time, letting all speakers finish their sentence and trying to have every one participate.

Men, on the other hand, have personal relationships and feelings but would be to prove themselves better informed about current affairs, travels, sports, etc in their discussion groups therefore, topics changed often and they (men) always try to establish a reasonably stable hierarchy, resulting of some men attempting dominating conversation and others talking very little.

Another aspect of the differences between male and female conversations is explored by Tannen (1990) who intensively examined how men and women use conversation in different ways. Her submission is that men basically use conversation to establish status and women use it to establish closeness. She does not indicate whether this difference is the result of nature or socialization. Rather, she simply opines that because such differences exist, they must be dealt with, although, she does not try to deal with it through moralistic exhortations, but rather simply tries to promote understanding. Her theory, however, raises intriguing questions. Tannen admits herself that whereas men do care about closeness, women do care about status. Also, whereas very rough and tumble competitions can create friendships for boys and men, status for girls and women can be determined by their closeness to the core of a prestigious social group.

This is reminiscent of Jung, Hayek, Rand, Farrell, Paglia and Hoff-Sommers (2002) theory about consciousness, the unconscious, and their relation to sexual

differences, Jung posits that anything in the mind that does not appear consciously would appear unconsciously. In sexual terms, such a view means that sexuality, which appears in consciousness one way, appears as opposite in the unconscious. That leads to Jung's theory that there is a female archetype, the anima, in the male unconscious and a male archetype, the animus, in the female unconscious. If we apply that to Tannen (1990)'s theory about conversation, it simply means that the overt seeking of status by men or closeness by women is complemented by the covert seeking of closeness by men and status by women.

Issues arising from all these differences (between male and female) require serious intellectual consideration although such issues already go beyond main stream feminism, which appear to defy even the possibility of innate differences between the sexes. The closest it has come is to a moral difference between genders; especially in relation to the view that the feminine point of view is superior to the masculine. Such a feminist view simply means that the masculine should be abandoned and the feminine adopted right across board, which a situation further presupposes that the masculine is something that can be abandoned.

Gender as a social construct is open to variations of meaning and content, stemming from both cultural and social conditions. In real life, gender is interpreted by embodied characteristics (such as physical features, voice, gestures) and so it is difficult to the gender as a social institution as a specific body type. Furthermore, the way we tend to define our sex is in-dissoluble and is related to the way we interact and view the other, whether man or woman. This is a process substantiated by available cultural scripts. Although we pass through public space as if we are

oblivious to gender, it is true that we are unable to interact with someone unless we have categorized him or her as we tend to define ourselves through defining the other. The first categorization we make is that of gender, age and race, since these features are the most obvious ones. When we meet a new person, we quickly draw conclusions about his/her gender, judging by their performance in relation to culturally constructed gender categories from early childhood. In this regard, gender is considered to be, not only a feature of the flesh, but a figment of the mind as well (Population Bulletin, 1997).

2.8.2 Gender and Career

Coates (1986) argued that gender – differentiated language use which may play a significant role in the continued marginalisation of women in the professions, particularly in terms of career progress and development. It is now widely accepted that women and men talk differently, that is, that women and men make differential use of the linguistic resources available to them. “There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that male speakers are socialised into a more cooperative style of discourse, while women are socialised into a more cooperative style of speech” (Coates, 1989).

2.8.3 Gender and Ethnographic

Maltz and Borker (1982) using an ethnographic approach, argue that same-sex play in childhood leads to girls and boys internalising different conventional rules, with boys developing adversarial speech, and girls developing a style characterised by collaboration and affiliation. ‘Support for such a distinction comes from more

psychologically oriented research on gender identity and moral development' (Gilligan *et al.*, 1988).

2.8.4 Gender and Epistemology

Belenky *et al.* (1988) on gender differences in epistemological development which characterises the feminine orientation as focussing on the self, on separateness. In public life, it is the discourse patterns of male speakers, the dominant group in public life, which have become the established norm. The isomorphism of male discourse patterns and public discourse patterns is the result of the split between public and private spheres; it was at the beginning of the last century that the division between public and private became highly demarcated in Britain. This demarcation involved the exclusion of women from the public world. In other words, in the early nineteenth-century, patterns of gender division changed: 'men were firmly placed in the newly defined public world of business, commerce and politics; women were placed in the private world of home family' (Hall, 1985:12).

One significant consequence of the gendered nature of the public-private divide is that the discourse styles typical of, and considered appropriate for, activities in the public domain have been established by men. Thus, women are linguistically at a double disadvantage when entering the public domain: first, they are (normally) less skilful at using the adversarial, information-focused style expected in such contexts: second, the (more cooperative) discourse styles which they are fluent in are negatively valued in such contexts.

Women who succeed in adopting a more competitive discourse style in public meet other problems. Jeanne Kirkpatrick, former US ambassador to the UN, describes the dilemma faced by women in high positions, where there is a clash between gender and work identities. There is a certain level of office the very occupancy of which constitutes a confrontation with conventional expectations... Terms like “tough” and “confrontational” express a certain general surprise and disapproval at the presence of a woman be considered normally assertive’ Kirkpatrick, quoted in Campbell and Jerry (1988). In other words, women are in a double-bind: they are urged to adopt more assertive, more masculine styles of discourse in the public sphere, but when they do so, they are perceived as aggressive and confrontational.

2.8.5 Gender, Power, and Population Change

Gender refers to the different roles men/women play in the society, and this is relative to the power they wield. While gender is expressed differently in different societies, in no society do men and women perform equal roles or hold equal positions of power. The impact of this inequality on women’s lives varies tremendously. In the United States, for example, this inequality is reflected by a glass ceiling, which keeps most women from advancing to top levels of management. In some Asian societies, gender inequality can compromise the basic health of women in poor families because they are the last in the household to receive food and medical care.

2.9 Sexism in Language

Sexism is discrimination on the basis of gender. While it is primarily women who are affected by sexism, it can be used to discriminate against either men or women. One of the basic principles of feminism is that society has been constructed with a bias which favours males; one of the basic principles of feminists who are concerned with language is that this bias can be located in language (Spencer, 1981). This bias in favour of men has most frequently been referred to as sexism in language but other terms such as androcentric (male centred) have been used (Bodine, 1975) to expose the male bias in the formulation of some of the rules of the prescriptive grammarians and the term masculist have been used to label the male bias in language and culture by Roberts (1976). English is one of the world's most spoken languages and Sociolinguist researches, over the years have shown though that the language favours the masculine gender as opposed to the feminine (Shaneka, 2009). The claim is that English is biased in favour of male in both syntax and semantics (Schneider and Foss, 1977:1). Broadly speaking, semantics refer to the meanings available within the language, while syntax refers to the form (the sentence structure) in which those meanings are conveyed. Currently, the who will dispute – or more one of degree – and significance – than acceptance. Various definitions have been put forward and one criterion which has been used is that the English language is sexist in so far as it relegates women to a secondary and inferior place in society (Berger and Kachuk, 1977:3). This criterion can be readily met by the simplest exercises since all that is required is a list of terms which relegate women to subordinate position. Some of the early research on sexism and language was of this order as inventories of words were

compiled which indicated that not only were there words more for males but that there were positive words; Stanley (1977) pointed out that there was no linguistic reason for this to be the case. Stanley also found that many of the words for women had sexual overtones and despite the fact that there were more words for men, the smaller sample assigned to women there were 220 words for a sexually promiscuous female and only 20 for a sexually promiscuous male (Stanley, 1973). This would seem to indicate that language – as a system – embodies sexual inequality and that it is not women who enjoy the advantage.

The language we use reflects and reinforces the values of the society in which we live. English language has developed in a male dominated, male centred society. If how we examine how we express ourselves, we will see how male-centred the language is (The Language Guy, 2005). For example, the generic use of 'he'. 'He' is used to refer to both males and females when they are being referred to as a collective group and to feminists it is a form that marginalizes women and treat them as abnormal. Take for instance, the word "man" is used to refer to mankind on a whole. So in other words, when the word "he" is used women tend to exclude themselves from the conversation, therefore rendering them invisible. In English speaking countries one can also see that there are far more negative terms for women than there are for men. The semantics of English is also used against women as the metaphors available to describe women are derogatory compared to those that describe men. The use of animal imagery is just one example where the images of women are less positive from that of men (Shaneka, 2009). For example a man is a tiger while a woman is a chick (en). Sexism is also said to be engraved in the morphology of the

language. The base structure of nouns in English always seems to be the male form. The female form is always a derivative of the male form. Take for example lion the female form is lioness, prince-princess, actor-actress and the list goes on. Many of us have never really taken the time to think about the effects of the language we use. How it can affect us or our position within society. Think about it for a minute and see if we are just succumbing to societal expectations or are we just more intelligent and more eager to promote change. Occasionally feminists say that they are personally offended by people referring to ships or aircraft as "she"; and manuals of "non-sexist" language usually require that inanimate objects be "it" without exception.

It is common today in public discussion, whether the context is academic, political, or even legal, to take it for granted that using the word "man," in isolation or as a suffix, to refer to all of humanity, or using the pronoun "he" where any person, male or female, may be referred to, is to engage in "sexist language," i.e. language that embodies, affirms, or reinforces discrimination against women or the patriarchal subordination of women to men. Thus the American Philosophical Association offers "Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language," which it says is, "A pamphlet outlining ways to modify language in order to eliminate gender-specific references" -- as though that is an unproblematic, rather than an Orwellian, goal. Not everyone agrees with this view, and "he" and "man" often seem to creep inappropriately into the speech of even those who consider themselves above such transgressions; but the ideology that there is "sexist language" in ordinary words and in the ordinary use of English gender rarely comes under sustained criticism, even in the intellectual arenas where all things are supposed to be open to free inquiry.

One of the basic main beliefs of feminism is that society has been constructed with a bias which favours males: for example, when Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon in 1969 he uttered a memorable sentence: "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." If he had landed on the moon today, no doubt he would have said a much more politically correct sentence: "That's one small step for a person, one giant leap for humankind." Less poetic but certainly more literally representative of the whole of the human race. Language tends to use male pronouns automatically whenever the sex of the person is not known: "Every student must bring his own calculator." This is a sexist use of language, which often suggests an inherent male dominance in many fields of life, and can reinforce the idea of female inferiority. There is a tendency to associate certain jobs with men or women. For instance, "A director must do his best for his company," but "A nurse must treat her patients with kindness." In addition, job names often include reference to the sex of the person: "I'm meeting a group of businessmen next Friday," or "The housemaid must clean this." The use of such words tends to emphasise the idea that it is not normal for women to be in professional, highly-paid, technical or manual jobs, and that it is not natural for a man to work in such a caring (and generally poorly-paid) role as that of a nurse.

Plainly, women are too often linguistically invisible, hidden in the word "man" when "human" is meant, forgotten by the word "he" when "she or he" might be more accurate. Even words that in themselves have no gender, such as "lawyer," "judge," or "president," evoke images of men unless otherwise qualified. One can only speculate

about the psychic damage this invisibility has caused women who are made to feel insignificant, or absent, in the shadow of the dominant HE.

Language has asymmetrical qualities that further discriminate against women.

The asymmetries include:

- i. words that do not mean the same thing when applied to a woman as when applied to a man, and
- ii. words for which there is no equivalent for both sexes. Included in the 1st category is the word "professional."

To say of a man, "he is a professional," implies no slur. To say of a woman, "she is a professional," besmirches her honour. "Bachelor" and "spinster" do not have the same connotation. Has anyone ever looked for an available spinster? And even "widow" and "widower"--which at 1st glance appear parallel--are not always similarly used. One would be unlikely to refer to a man as Mary's widower. Many words do not even have a male equivalent. For example: nymphomaniac, whore, castrating bitch, bitch.

The theory of "sexist language," however, is no credit to feminism, for it is deeply flawed both in its understanding of the nature of language and in its understanding of how languages change over time. Since the ideology that there *is* "sexist language" seeks, indeed, to *change* linguistic usage as part of the attempt to change society and forms of thought, the latter is particularly significant. First of all, the theory of "sexist language" seems to say that words cannot have more than one meaning: if "man" and "he" in some usage mean males, then they cannot mean both males and females in other usage (i.e. nouns and pronouns can have both masculine and common gender). This view is absurd enough that there is usually a more subtle

take on it: that the use of "man" or "he" to refer to males and to both males and females means that maleness is more fundamental than femaleness, "subordinating" femaleness to maleness, just as in the Book of Genesis the first woman, Eve, is created from Adam's rib for the purpose of being his companion. Now, the implication of the Biblical story may well be precisely that Adam *is* more fundamental than Eve, but the Bible did not create the language, Hebrew, in which it is written. If we are going to talk about the *linguistic structure* of Hebrew as distinct from the social ideology of the Bible, it is one thing to argue that the system of grammatical gender allowed the *interpretation* of gender embodied in the story of Adam and Eve and something very much different to argue that such an interpretive meaning *necessarily underlies* the original grammar of Hebrew -- or Akkadian, Arabic, Greek, French, Spanish, English, Swahili, etc. -- or that such a system of grammatical gender *requires* such an interpretation.

What a language with its gender system *means* is what people create language and invest it to with meaning. It is an evil principle to think that we can *tell* other people what *they mean* by what they say, because of some theory we have that makes it mean something in particular to us, even when they obviously mean something else. Nevertheless, there is now a common principle, in feminism and elsewhere (especially flourishing in literary criticism), that meaning is only in the *response* of the interpreter, not in the mind of the speaker, even if the speaker is to be sued or charged with a crime for the interpreter having the response that they do. There is also on top of this the Marxist theory of "false consciousness," which holds that "true" meaning follows from the underlying economic structure, today usually just called the

"power" relationships. Most people are unaware of the power relationships which produce the concepts and language that they use, and so what people *think* they mean by their own statements and language is an illusion.

The implications of these principles are dehumanizing and totalitarian: what individual people think and want is irrelevant and to be disregarded, even by laws and political authorities forcing them to behave, and speak, in certain ways. But they are principles that make it possible to dismiss the common sense view that few people speaking English who said "man" in statements like "man is a rational animal" were referring exclusively to males, even though this usage was clear to all, from the context, for centuries before feminism decided that people didn't "really" mean that. But even if *some* speakers *really did mean that*, it is actually irrelevant to the *freedom* of individuals to mean whatever they intend to mean through language in the conventionally available forms that they choose. What was meant by the gender system in the languages that ultimately gave rise to Hebrew is lost in whatever it was that the speakers of those languages were saying to each other; but what we can say about the functioning of gender systems and about language in general is very different from the claims that the theory of "sexist language" makes.

Historically, if a language possesses a gender system and distinguishes between "he" and "she," then one or the other will also tend to be the common gender for when both genders are involved. In English, and most other languages with gender, that falls to "he," and the feminist argument is that this reflects patriarchal dominance and so sexism -- a hierarchy in which the masculine is more fundamental. That may even be true in many cultural contexts; but interpretation is separate from

the grammatical structure, and the structure allows for interpretation that cuts both ways. Logically, English "he" stands to "she" as "number" stands to "prime." Number, in a sense, is more "fundamental" than primeness, just because it is more general; but prime numbers are certainly no less numbers than any other numbers. Prime numbers are simply *marked* with a certain property that other numbers do not have. Calling prime numbers "prime" represents the traditional sense that the distinguishing property of prime numbers -- that they cannot be evenly divided by any numbers besides one and themselves -- is particularly striking and salient.

If "she" is logically subsumed under a more general "he," it may then be because the female was regarded as more "marked" than the male. Feminists sometimes notice this, to their irritation, especially in the structures of the words "female" and "woman" as compared to "male" and "man": each simply adds a syllable. Similarly, Afro-Asiatic (or Hamito-Semitic) languages from Ancient Egyptian and Hebrew to Modern Arabic have added the syllable *-at* as the mark of feminine nouns (where the *t* is usually silent and the *a* often later pronounced as *e* or *i*). More subtly, French may represent the same thing through the quality of the vowel in the definite articles: The feminine singular article, *la*, contains a full and pure vowel, /la/, while the masculine article, *le*, actually contains a *reduced* vowel, the indistinct and indefinite "schwa" sound. The full feminine vowel can easily be interpreted as more "marked" than the reduced masculine schwa.

Such superadded distinctness, properties, or syllables, of course, could represent something either positive or negative -- femaleness could be either more valuable or less valuable than humanity in general. Or the property could be just

salient and distinguishing, without being relatively more or less valuable. Feminists argue in effect that the feminine as the more "marked" gender is the *less human* gender. This is ridiculous, like arguing that prime numbers are less "numerical" than other numbers. It actually means that the gender system of English is just as amenable to a feminist interpretation that it reflects a *primaeval matriarchy* as it is to the interpretation of Old Testament patriarchy, with the feminine, like prime numbers, as the more *significant*, rather than the more common, gender. Since the gender systems of Indo-European and Afro-Asiatic languages certainly go back to the prehistoric periods where speculation about matriarchies proliferates, it is surprising that such an alternative interpretation has not been advanced by such theorists.

The actual *positive* markedness of the feminine gender could be argued on the basis of the gender systems of Greek and Latin, which display a general characteristic of complete Indo-European gender systems: the most common regular nouns display endings that are mostly *identical* for the *masculine* and *neuter* genders (-o- themes in Greek, like *ho oikos*, "the house," masculine, and *tò biblìon*, "the book," neuter) but quite different for the feminine (-e- themes in Greek, like *hee epistoleé*, "the letter"). We might interpret this to mean that things with masculine gender are *the most like inanimate objects*, while things with feminine gender are unmistakably different from inanimate objects. This could mean that the feminine is more markedly *human* than the masculine. The similarity between the endings of masculine and neuter nouns still occurs in German. On the other hand, other noun endings in Greek and Latin (consonant stems, etc.) do group masculine and feminine together, contrasting them

with the neuter, so there is also obviously a sense that both masculine and feminine actually are animate or human.

A gender system that distinguishes femaleness as having a salient property, whether positive, negative, or neither, might still be regarded as a kind of sexism, whichever way the property goes; but it is a rather different matter from the usual feminist complaint about the patriarchal conception that we find all the way from Genesis to Aristotle to Freud: that the *male* is more "marked" and valuable because of the *presence* of a phallus, while the female is less "marked" and valuable, indeed envious, because of the *absence* of a phallus. It looks to be essential to the feminist theory of "sexist language" that a gender system where the masculine gender doubles as the common gender *causes* or *reinforces* "phallocentrism" and a patriarchal society. The feminine as merely the more "marked" gender, however, makes that unlikely.

But all this as a *theory* can actually be *tested*: We would expect that if linguistic gender were a correlate of social form, an engine for the enforcement of patriarchy or a reflection of the existence of patriarchy, then we would find it present in sexist or patriarchal societies and absent in non-sexist or non-patriarchal societies. In fact, the presence of gender in language bears no relation whatsoever to the nature of the corresponding societies. Graglia (1998) wrote,

The word "sex" -- clearly evocative of an unequivocal demarcation between men and women -- has been replaced by the pale and neutral "gender," and the words "man" and "he" -- now avoided as if they were worse than obscenities -- have been replaced by the neuter "person" and by grammatically confusing, cumbersome, or offensive

variants of "he/she" or "she" alone as the pronoun of general reference. Since it was never even remotely in doubt that when used as a general referent, the male pronoun included females, this change was never designed to prevent confusion. The change has, on the contrary, often created confusion. Its purpose is solely ideological.

Also Ravitch (2003) wrote,

“I, for one, want to be free to refer to "the brotherhood of man" without being corrected by the language police. I want to decide for myself whether I should be called a chairman, a chairwoman, or a chairperson (I am not a chair). I want to see *My Fair Lady* and laugh when Professor Higgins sings, "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" As a writer, I want to know that I am free to use the words and images of my choosing”.

Although ‘man’ in its original sense carried dual meaning of adult human and adult male, its meaning has come to be so closely identified with adult male that the generic use of ‘man’ and other words with masculine markers should be avoided. Examples of the different forms include,

Generic

Mankind (humanity, people, human beings)

Man’s achievements (human achievements)

Man-made (synthetic, manufactured, machine made)

The common man (the average person, ordinary people)

Nine man-hours (nine staff-hours)

Occupation

Layman (layperson, non-specialist, non-professional)

Chairman (coordinator of a department or committee, moderator of a meeting, presiding officer, head, chair)

Businessman (business manager, business executive, business owner, retailer)

Congressman (congressional representative)

Fireman (fire fighter)

Mail man (mail carrier)

Steward and stewardess (flight attendant)

Policeman and policewoman (police officer)

One man show (one person show, solo exhibition)

Man power (human resources, staff personnel, labour force)

Manning (staffing, working, running)

Workmen and workwomen (workers, wage earners)

Man on the street (average person, ordinary person, the common too)

Cameramen (camera operators, cinematographers, photographers)

Author (writer)

Nilsen (1977) states that what these incidents show is that sexism is not something existing independently in the particular dictionary that happen to read. Rather, it exists in people's minds. Language is like an x-ray in providing visible evidence of invisible thoughts.

2.10 Pronouns

Because English has no generic singular or common – sex – pronoun ‘He’, ‘His’ and ‘Him’ are used in such expressions as ‘the student needs ‘His’ pencil’. “When we constantly personify ‘the judge’, ‘the critic’, ‘the executive’, ‘the author’ and so forth, as male by using the pronoun ‘He’, we are subtly conditioning ourselves against the idea of a female judge, critic, executive, or author. There are several alternative approaches for ending the exclusion of women that results from the pervasive use of masculine pronouns. Examples include,

- a. where sentences should be recast into the plural
 - (i) Give each student his paper as soon as he is finished
 - (ii) Give students their papers as soon as they are finished
- b. Reword to eliminate gender problems
 - (i) The average student is worried about his grade
 - (ii) The average student is worried about grades
- c. Replace the masculine pronoun with ‘One’, ‘You’, (sparingly) ‘He or ‘She’, as appropriate.
 - (i) If the student was satisfied with his performance on the pre-test, he should take the post-test
 - (ii) (A student who was satisfied with her or his performance on the pre-test took the post test
- d. Alternate male and female examples and expressions not confusing the reader when doing so.

- (i) Let each student participate. Has he had a chance to talk? Could he feel left out?
- (ii) Let each student participate. Has she had a chance to talk? Could he feel left out?

2.10.1 Indefinite pronouns

Using the masculine pronouns to refer to an indefinite pronoun (everybody, everyone, anybody, and anyone) also has the effect of excluding women. In all but strictly formal uses, plural pronouns have become acceptable substitutes for the masculine singulars. Example of indefinite pronouns,

- i. Anyone who wants to go to the game should bring his money tomorrow
- ii. Anyone who wants to go to the game should bring their money tomorrow

Gender – neutral language (gender – generic, gender – inclusive, non – sexist, or sex – neutral language) is language that attempts to refer neither to males nor females when discussing an abstract or hypothetical person whose sex cannot otherwise be determined. English language does not have a system of grammatical gender for nouns in general; it instead uses gender – specific pronouns. Gender – neutral language in English includes but not limited to the use of gender – neutral pronouns (Wikipedia).

Subjective Pronouns

A subjective pronoun acts as the subject of a sentence—it performs the action of the verb. The subjective pronouns are *he, I, it, she, they, we, and you*

He spends ages looking out the window.

After lunch, **she** and **I** went to the planetarium.

Objective Pronouns

An objective pronoun acts as the object of a sentence—it receives the action of the verb. The objective pronouns are *her, him, it, me, them, us,* and *you*.

Cousin Eldred gave **me** a trombone.

Take a picture of **him**, not **us**

Possessive Pronouns

A possessive pronoun tells you who owns something. The possessive pronouns are *hers, his, its, mine, ours, theirs,* and *yours*.

The red basket is **mine**.

Yours is on the coffee table.

Demonstrative Pronouns

A demonstrative pronoun points out a noun can behave either as pronouns or as determiners. The demonstrative pronouns are *that, these, this,* and *those*. As pronouns, they identify or point to nouns.

That is a good idea.

These are hilarious cartoons.

A demonstrative pronoun may look like a demonstrative adjective, but it is used differently in a sentence: it acts as a pronoun, taking the place of a noun.

As determiners, the demonstratives adjectivally modify a noun that follows. A sense of relative distance (in time and space) can be conveyed through the choice of these pronouns/determiners:

- These [pancakes sitting here now on my plate] are delicious.
- Those [pancakes that I had yesterday morning] were even better.
- This [book in my hand] is well written;
- That [book that I'm pointing to, over there, on the table] is trash.

A sense of emotional distance or even disdain can be conveyed with the demonstrative pronouns:

- You're going to wear these?
- This is the best you can do?

Pronouns used in this way would receive special stress in a spoken sentence.

When used as subjects, the demonstratives, in either singular or plural form, can be used to refer to objects as well as persons.

- This is my father.
- That is my book.

In other roles, however, the reference of demonstratives is non-personal. In other words, when referring to students, say, we could write "Those were loitering near the entrance during the fire drill" (as long as it is perfectly clear in context what "those" refers to). But we would not write "The principal suspended those for two days"; instead, we would have to use "those" as a determiner and write "The principal suspended those students for two days."

Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns (who/which/what) introduce questions. (*What* is that? *Who* will help me? *Which* do you prefer?) *Which* is generally used with more specific reference than *what*. If we're taking a quiz and I ask "Which questions give you the most trouble?", I am referring to specific questions on that quiz. If I ask "What questions give you most trouble"? I could be asking what kind of questions on that quiz (or what kind of question, generically, in general) gives you trouble. The interrogative pronouns also act as **Determiners**: It doesn't matter which beer you buy. He doesn't know whose car he hit. In this determiner role, they are sometimes called

Interrogative Adjectives

Like the relative pronouns, the interrogative pronouns introduce noun clauses, and like the relative pronouns, the interrogative pronouns play a subject role in the clauses they introduce:

- We know who is guilty of this crime.
- I already told the detective what I know about it.

Reciprocal Pronouns

The reciprocal pronouns are *each other* and *one another*. They are convenient forms for combining ideas. If Bob gave Alicia a book for Christmas and Alicia gave Bob a book for Christmas, we can say that they gave each other books (or that they gave books to each other).

- My mother and I give each other a hard time.

If more than two people are involved (let's say a whole book club), we would say that they gave one another books. This rule (if it is one) should be applied circumspectly. It's quite possible for the exchange of books within this book club, for example, to be between individuals, making "each other" just as appropriate as "one another."

Reciprocal pronouns can also take possessive forms:

- They borrowed each other's ideas.
- The scientists in this lab often use one another's equipment.

An interrogative pronoun is used in a question. It helps to ask about something. The interrogative pronouns are *what*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, and compound words ending in "ever," such as *whatever*, *whichever*, *whoever*, and *whomever*.

What on earth is that?

Who ate the last Fig Newton?

An interrogative pronoun may look like an interrogative adjective, but it is used differently in a sentence: it acts as a pronoun, taking the place of a noun.

Indefinite Pronouns

An indefinite pronoun refers to an indefinite, or general, person or thing. Indefinite pronouns include *all*, *any*, *both*, *each*, *everyone*, *few*, *many*, *neither*, *none*, *nothing*, *several*, *some*, and *somebody*.

Something smells good.

Many like salsa with their chips.

An indefinite pronoun may look like an indefinite adjective, but it is used differently in a sentence: it acts as a pronoun, taking the place of a noun.

Relative Pronouns

The relative pronouns (*who/whoever/which/that*) relate groups of words to nouns or other pronouns (The student *who* studies hardest usually does the best.). The word *who* connects or relates the subject, *student*, to the verb within the dependent clause (*studies*). Choosing correctly between *which* and *that* and between *who* and *whom* leads to what are probably the most Frequently Asked Questions about English grammar. Generally, we use "which" to introduce clauses that are parenthetical in nature (i.e., that can be removed from the sentence without changing the essential meaning of the sentence). For that reason, a "which clause" is often set off with a comma or a pair of commas. "That clause on the other hand, are usually deemed indispensable for the meaning of a sentence and are not set off with commas. The pronoun *which* refers to things; *who* (and its forms) refers to people; *that* usually refers to things, but it can also refer to people in a general kind of way.

The expanded form of the relative pronouns — *whoever, whomever, whatever* — are known as **indefinite relative pronouns**. A couple of sample sentences should suffice to demonstrate why they are called "indefinite":

- The coach will select whomever he pleases.
- He seemed to say whatever came to mind.
- Whoever crosses this line first will win the race.

What is often an indefinite relative pronoun:

- She will tell you what you need to know.

Reflexive Pronouns

A reflexive pronoun refers back to the subject of a sentence. The reflexive pronouns are *herself, himself, itself, myself, ourselves, themselves, and yourselves*.

Each of these words can also act as an intensive pronoun.

I learned a lot about **myself** at summer camp. (*Myself* refers back to *I*.)

They should divide the berries among **themselves**. (*Themselves* refers back to *they*.)

The reflexive pronouns (which have the same forms as the intensive pronouns) indicate that the sentence subject also receives the action of the verb. (Students who cheat on this quiz are only hurting themselves. You paid yourself a million dollars? She encouraged herself to do well.) What this means is that whenever there is a reflexive pronoun in a sentence there must be a person to whom that pronoun can "reflect." In other words, the sentence "Please hand that book to myself" would be incorrect because there is no "I" in that sentence for the "myself" to reflect to (and we would use "me" instead of "myself"). A sentence such as "I gave that book to myself for Christmas" might be silly, but it would be correct.

Intensive Pronouns

An intensive pronoun emphasizes its antecedent (the noun that comes before it). The intensive pronouns are *herself, himself, itself, myself, ourselves, themselves, and yourselves*. Each of these words can also act as a reflective pronoun (see above).

I **myself** don't like eggs.

The queen **herself** visited our class.

Personal Pronouns

Unlike English nouns, which usually do not change form except for the addition of an *-s* ending to create the plural or the apostrophe + *s* to create the possessive, personal pronouns (which stand for persons or things) change form according to their various uses within a sentence. Thus *I* is used as the subject of a sentence (I am happy.), *me* is used as an object in various ways (He hit me. He gave me a book. Do this for me.), and *my* is used as the possessive form (That's my car.) The same is true of the other personal pronouns: the singular you and he/she/it and the plural we, you, and they.

Personal pronouns can also be characterized or distinguished by **person**. First person refers to the speaker(s) or writer(s) ("I" for singular, "we" for plural). Second person refers to the person or people being spoken or written to ("you" for both singular and plural). Third person refers to the person or people being spoken or written about ("he," "she," and "it" for singular, "they" for plural). As can be seen there, each person can change form, reflecting its use within a sentence. Thus, "I" becomes "me" when used as an object ("She left me") and "my" when used in its possessive role (That's my car"); "they" becomes "them" in object form ("I like them") and "their" in possessive ("That's just their way").

When a personal pronoun is connected by a conjunction to another noun or pronoun, its case does not change. We would write "I am taking a course in Asian history"; if Talitha is also taking that course, we would write "Talitha and I are taking

a course in Asian history." (Notice that Talitha gets listed before "I" does. This is one of the few ways in which English is a "polite" language.) The same is true when the object form is called for: "Professor Vendetti gave all her books to me"; if Talitha also received some books, we'd write "Professor Vendetti gave all her books to Talitha and me."

2.11 The Semantic Derogation of Women

One of the first steps taken in relating sexism to language was by Schulz (1975) by incorporating both descriptive and analytical frames of reference to the investigation and suggested that there was a systematic basis to linguistic sexism. It was not a mere coincidence that there are more positive words for males in language, nor is an accident that there are so many negative words for females with no semantic equivalent for males. These manifestations of a patriarchal order were rule-governed and the rule is that words which are marked for females are used in association with females, become 'pejorated'. This is because irrespective of origin, or intent, words which are marked female are marked negative, Schulz referred to the systematic, semantic derogation of women. Few attempts had been made to link the examples of sexism with patriarchal order. Miller and Swift (1976), observed that once a boy's name became popular as a girl's name, it lost its appeal and usually ceased being used for boys.

. Furthermore, 'woman' does not share equal status with 'man' (linguistically or otherwise) because, in accordance with the semantic rule, woman has become pejorated while man remained pure and untainted, protected by its semantic

association with the male. To illustrate this the use of titles shows that male titles have retained their original positive meanings, female titles have frequently undergone a dramatic ‘downhill slide’ ending more often than not with sexually debased meanings. It is by this process that more positive words are created for males. Although ‘Lord’ still preserves its initial meaning, ‘Lady’ has undergone a process of ‘democratic levelling’ and is no longer reserved for women of high rank. With these titles it can be argued that such terms did not have parity to begin with partly because females have always been inferior to males and therefore few insights can be gained from the documentation of contemporary asymmetry. This is because of the historical subordination of women and the social practice of inheriting through the male line.

Systematic pejoration of female terms does not, however, rest solely on titles. All words regardless of their origin which associated with females acquire negative connotations, because this is a fundamental semantic ‘rule’ in a society which constructs male supremacy. When the same word shifts from being positive to being negative once it has moved from referring to a male to referring to a female, then the ‘logic’ lies not in the word (and what it represents) but in the sex (Schulz, 1978). The way meaning is created in a society depends upon dividing the world into positive – masculine and negative – feminine (Schulz, 1975). Metaphors and labels are more likely to narrow and assume sexual connotations when applied to women. One of the examples which Lakoff (1975) quoted is that of ‘professional’: the use of such a term, be it applied to men or women, should on ‘logical’ grounds be ‘completely parallel semantically’. But when the sex changes so too does the meaning, indicating the sex dimension of semantics:

(a) He's a professional

(b) She's a professional

In (a) the normal conclusion the casual eavesdropper would come to was that 'he' was a doctor or a lawyer or a member of the other professions. But it is much less likely that one draws a similar conclusion in (b). Rather, the first assumption that most speakers of English seem to make is that 'she' is a prostitute, literally or figuratively speaking.

2.12 Semantic Terms for Plus and Minus Male

The difference which is manifested in language is the outcome of differentiating the sexes in semantic terms on the basis of plus and minus. In developing a set of categories for English, Leech (1968) used plus male and minus male to distinguish masculine from feminine. Leech's analysis has been justified on the grounds of simplicity because almost all nouns in English are masculine. This been the case, there are implications for females for it means that most of the semantic space of the language is occupied by males. Masculinity is unmarked form: the assumption is that the world is male unless proven otherwise.

When women attempt to move outside the lesser spheres which have been allocated to them they do not join the ranks of those who enjoy positive status because they carry their femaleness, their minus maleness, with them. This is what Stanley (1977) refer to as negative 'semantic space' for no matter what women do they are still branded as women and therefore cannot develop positive meanings and definitions for themselves. According to Stanley, semantic space does not exist for

women because it is already occupied by the male sex. When a woman becomes a professional in one of the fields usually reserved for males, she does not move into the corresponding semantic space covered by the noun conventionally used as its label. Instead, she must signify that the norm, the positive, does not apply and so she becomes a lady doctor, a female surgeon, a woman lawyer, or else, in less prestigious occupations, a waitress, a stewardess, a shepherdess. There is no space for a woman to be positive. Also, women who do not wish to be compared to men there is 'nowhere to go' in the language. This is one way of expressing the concept of negative semantic space for women. Even where they venture into areas which have ostensibly conferred high status upon males, females find themselves still labelled negative, as minus males, as 'not the real thing'. There is only negative semantic space for females in the English language.

The semantic rule which has been responsible for the manifestation of sexism in the language can be simply stated: there are two fundamental categories, male and minus male. To be linked with male is to be linked to a range of meanings which are positive and good: to be linked to minus male is to be linked to the absence of those qualities, that is, to be decidedly negative and usually sexually debased. The semantic structure of the English language reveals a great deal about what it means to be female in a patriarchal order (note that female is not even an autonomous category but a derivation of the male) because by definition males are assigned the positive attributes.

Unless irony or insult is intended it is usually a violation of the semantic rule to refer to males with terms that are marked for minus males. It is alright, for

example, to call a mixed sex group ‘guys’ or ‘men’ but it is a mistake – and an insult – to refer to a group which contains even one male as ‘gals’ or ‘women’. A woman may be called a bachelor without implying abuse but do the opposite and call a man a ‘spinster’ or an ‘old maid’ the semantic rule is thus violated – abuse is intended for it means he is a nervous person who frets over inconsequential details (Schulz, 1975). It is also laughable to say a male is as good as a female.

2.13 Education

Education is one of the most important sources of opportunity in any society. The ability to read and write gives individuals access to a wide body of knowledge. Formal education and its related activities expose people to social life outside the family. Education and employment, for example, often accord women wider power and influence, which enhance their status.

Oyewumi (1997) denies that gender is a fundamental social category in all cultures. He also attributed the biology of difference to the primacy of vision in European intellectual history giving privilege to the usual facilities as emphasis on appearance and possible markers of difference. She remarks that the entire western epitome bases its categories and hierarchies on visual modes and binary distinctions: male and female, white and black, homosexual and heterosexual, etceteras. The physical body is therefore always linked to the social body (Oyewumi 1997: xii).

She elaborates the first claim by arguing that language is central to the formation of social identity. Language ‘represents major sources of information in

constituting world-sense, mapping historical changes, and interpreting the social structure' (Oyewumi, 1997:32).

Since the 1960s, English – speaking feminists have routinely distinguished between sex as biological and gender as social or cultural category. The sex/gender distinction provides the basic framework for a great deal of feminist theory, and it has become widely accepted in society at large.

Moi (1991) considers sex to be a cultural construct, the effect of regulatory discourses. Sex to her, is the performative effect of gender. Gender in relation to culture and religion ascertained that women face the same discrimination as they do in other spheres, and both religion and culture are sources of gender oppression and inequality. While religions may teach equality between people, in practice women usually have a subordinate role and may be excluded altogether from the religious traditions. Within the Christian Church for example, this has different implications for women. Religion nevertheless holds out the promise of equality and justice, and this is why despite its role as a powerful form of male control over the lives of women, it continues to be a source of hope and support to many women. There are many culturally – sanctioned practices – such as genital mutilation, and preferential feeding of boys – which damage women and make their lives more difficult and painful. Culture, however, like religion, can also be the source of cohesion and solidarity amongst women, and amongst women and men.

Gender oppression takes a multitude of forms, and is an added dimension to oppression based on race, ethnic identity, class and caste. Its forms also vary with these factors, and assumptions should never be made about forms of gender

oppression in cultures or social groups that have not been clearly understood. However, it is universal that women's experience of male domination is felt by them in every sphere of life – in political office, in the courts and judicial system, in the market place, in the class room, in the clinic, in the trade union, in the community, organisation, in the household, and in the bedroom.

Equally, on the road to social equity, gender is the last barrier, because it involves transformation of attitudes and practice in all societies, for all people; touching everyone, all the way to their most intimate relationships. For this reason, therefore, it arouses very strong feelings among both women and men, and these feelings are often brought out by gender awareness training.

2.14 Informal Talk

According to Jaasma *et al.* (1999), the positive benefits of informal student faculty interaction, (that is, students' academic success, faculty evaluations, and student retention) may differ from female and men students. Out of class communication refers to student – faculty communication in the instructor's office, informally on campus, or before and after class. The importance of student – faculty out of class interactions became evident in work on student retention early 25 years ago.

Only recently, however, communication scholars began to address students' faults out of class interactions and the communication variables that are related to these interactions.

Works on out-of-class communication also try to access sex differences between female and male students faculty. The view is that female and male students may have different expectations about the behaviours of the males and female faculty and female and male faculty may have different expectations about the behaviour of female and male students.

According to Chodorow (1978), gender socialisation begins early in life through the development of gender identity. She posits that the gender identity of boys and girls develop differently because of the influence of the primary caregiver, who is usually the mother. Daughters tend to develop their gender identities in relationship to their mothers, whereas sons differentiate themselves and define themselves as independent from their mothers. Through differing parts of development, males are likely to come to value independence or autonomy, and females are likely to come to value relationships.

2.14.1 Features of Men and Women Talk

In Susan Herring's (1993/1996) work about male and female behaviour in on-line communications, she opines that women and men appeal to different systems of values both in posting their own behaviours and in interpreting that of others. Women tend to be polite, considerate and supportive, whereas men seem to be more aggressive and adversarial. Herring (1993) further remarks that men and women do not participate equally even in academic cycle. According to her, a small minority of men still dominate the discourse and choice of topic, and always try to exhibit a self-promotional and adversarial rhetorical style. Herring (1993), therefore concludes that

because of the social conditioning that makes women uncomfortable with direct conflict, women tend to be more intimidated by these practices and this leads to their avoiding participation in discourses involving them and men.

Males and females tend to adopt different interpretations of what is polite and rude, aggressive and compromising in on-line communication. Men appear to be negatively polite. Questioned about the values that they appreciate most in on-line communication, women mentioned thoughtfulness, short, to the point messages, supportive behaviours and helpful advice. They would like to see more please and thank yous and they seemed bothered by rude, insensitive remarks, and unnecessary nastiness. In general, women are more considerate, attentive and protective of the participant's want to be liked, supported and accepted. Brown and Levinson. (1978).

Male respondents on the other hand value debate, candour and freedom from censorship. They forward the honest and frank expressions of one's thoughts and feelings to the positive face wishes of the addressee; if one disagrees with someone, one should say so directly. As far as debate is concerned, men believe that this element is required to the point of an open confrontation in order to get the care of things and to sharpen one's intellectual skills or even to get one's blood flowing. Men are more individualistic and love to promote self interest. They complain about idiocy and repetitions, advertising, low content and off topic posts, stupid questions and request by others to do things for them. However, they do make a distinction between good and bad adversariality (hostility). Women do not make this kind of distinction; they interpret all kinds of adversariality as hostile, un-constructive, rude and provocative. Women use words as ugly, harmful and dangerous to evaluate men's

egotistic behaviour and they characterise their own feelings/response to this disposition and conduct by men as offensive. Even though men seemed more concerned about freedom from imposition, they are responsible for the majority of violations of negative politeness, sending the longest messages, and copying the most text from the previous messages and responding to them point to point.

Men are widely observed to come quickly to the point they wish to make, while women tend to use more details in leading up to the point. In communicating with women, men may become impatient as they search for the points, or lose interest. If they interrupt, women can be frustrated or offended. In talking with men therefore, women can use two techniques to communicate more effectively. The first is beginning with the point or bottom line if possible; the second is omitting unnecessary details.

Men on the other hand, can refrain from interrupting, or ensuring they don't interrupt immediately. When leading a conversation, men cannot expect that women will interrupt when they have something to say. From childhood, many women are taught to smile and be pleasant to others. Smiles of goodwill, interest and encouragement by either men or women can be interpreted as agreement with what is being said. In conversation, it is necessary to be direct and honest as well, especially when a smile does not signify agreement or approval.

2.15 Theoretical Framework

According to Fairclough (1993:3) “Discourses include representations of how things are and have been, as well as imaginaries – representations of how things might or could or should be”. The knowledge of the knowledge based economy includes imaginaries in this sense – projections of possible state of affairs, possible worlds. In terms of the concept of social practice, the imagined possible social practices and networks of social practices and possible articulations of activities, social subjects, space times, values.... in terms of the concept of social practice. These imaginaries may be operationalized as actual (networks of) practices – imagined activities, subjects, social relations, etc. can become real activities, subjects, social relations, etc. Operationalization includes materialisation of discourses – economic discourses become materialised. For instance, in the instruments of economic production, include the hardware (plant, machinery, etc) and the software (management systems etc.).

Discourses as imaginaries also come to be enacted in new ways of acting and interacting, and such enactments are in part (intra-semiotic), discourses also become enacted as genres. Consider, for instance, new management discourses which imagine management systems based upon teamwork, relatively non-hierarchical, networked, ways of managing organisations. They may become enacted semiotically as new genres (within new networks of genres); for instance, genres for team meetings.

Discourses as imaginaries may also come to be inculcated as new ways of being, new identities that it is. It is common place that new economic and social formations depend upon new subjects. According to Gramsci (1971), for instance,

'Taylorism' as a production and management system depended upon changes in the ways of being, the identities, of workers.

Inculcation is a matter of people coming to own discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of new discourses. A stage towards inculcation is a rhetorical deployment: people may learn new discourses and use them for certain purposes; for example, procuring funding for regional developmental projects or academic research, while at the same time self-consciously keeping a distance from them. One of the complexities of the dialectics of discourse is the process in which what begins as self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes ownership – how people become unself-consciously positioned within a discourse. Inculcation also has its material aspects: discourses are dialectically inculcated not only in styles, ways of using language, they are also materialised in bodies, postures, gestures, ways of moving, and so forth (which are themselves semiotised to various degrees, but without being reducible to semiosis).

It is difficult to give a single definition of Critical or Discourse Analysis as a research method. Indeed, rather than providing a particular method, Discourse Analysis can be characterized as a way of approaching and thinking about a problem. In this sense, Discourse Analysis is neither a qualitative nor a quantitative research method, but it is rather a manner of questioning the basic assumptions of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Discourse Analysis can be applied to any text; that is, to any problem or situation. Since Discourse Analysis is basically an interpretative and deconstructing reading, there are no specific guidelines to follow, especially as it aims at allowing us to view the "problem" from a higher stance

and to gain a comprehensive view of the "problem" and ourselves in relation to that "problem". Discourse Analysis is meant to provide a higher awareness of the hidden motivations in others and ourselves and, therefore, enable us to solve concrete problems - not by providing unequivocal answers, but by leading us to ask ontological and epistemological questions (Dewey, 1933).

The contribution of the post-modern Discourse Analysis is the application of critical thought to social situations and the unveiling of hidden (or not so hidden) politics within the socially dominant as well as all other discourses (interpretations of the world, belief systems, etc.). Discourse Analysis can be applied to any text, that is, to any problem or situation. Discourse Analysis and critical thinking is applicable to every situation and every subject. The new perspective provided by discourse analysis allows personal growth and a high level of creative fulfilment. No technology or funds are necessary and authoritative discourse analysis can lead to fundamental changes in the practices of an institution, the profession, and society as a whole. However, Discourse Analysis does not provide definite answers; it is not a "hard" science, but an insight/knowledge based on continuous debate and argumentation.

Critical Discourse Analysis is the way in which:

Social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Dijk, 2001)

Fairclough (1995), states that critical discourse analysis looks at discourse in context not utterances in isolation. It considers discourse as a specific historical product. Wodak (2001) defines critical discourse analysis as an analytical and inter-

disciplinary approach to discourse, which is viewed as a cultural and social practice or as a political approach to language in context.

2.16 The Markedness Theory

The markedness theory has been extensively explored and applied in various fields of linguistic studies such as phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax since the last century. Greenberg (1966) assigns the designations “marked” and “unmarked” to opposing structural entities that exhibit a consistently asymmetric relationship in terms of distribution and/or syntagmatic structure and or paradigmatic complexity. The one of the two entities that is consistently more widely distributed and/or simpler is called “unmarked”; its complement is the “marked” members of the opposition. An important point to help understand the concept of markedness is “[m]arkedness relations are not fixed, but rather depend on the language – internal evaluation of the terms of an opposition” (Battistella, 1990:4); a marked form from within a language might be as an unmarked form in another language. For example, in Russian, the nominative case is unmarked and the other cases marked, while in English, the objective case is unmarked and the nominative is marked.

The notion of markedness can be applied within a particular language or between languages. “Universal markedness relations are defined independent of individual languages. Language particular values are those assigned on the basis of the facts of an individual language system” (Battistella, 1990:61). The Differential Markedness Hypothesis (DMH) proposed by Eckman (1977) indicates the

markedness relations cross-linguistically. Markedness is defined by Eckman (1977) as follows:

Markedness: A phenomenon A in some language is more marked than B if the presence of A in a language implies the presence of B: but the presence of B does not imply the presence of Eckman (1977) equally posits that there are languages (e.g. Arabic, Greek, etc.) in which passive sentences occur without expressed agents (see example 1a below), but do not with expressed agents (example 1b).

1a. The door was closed.

1b. The door was closed by the janitor.

There are languages (e.g. English, French, and Japanese) that have both types of passive sentences. However, there are apparently no languages which have passives without also having agents.

Examples can be seen as follows:

Brotherhood is used for both male and female while sisterhood is ‘marked’ because it is used for only female.

Lion is used generally ‘unmarked’ for male and female but Lioness is ‘marked’ because it can refer only to female.

This study conceives of gender markers as part of the materialisation of the conception of the female gender by the society as subordinate to the male. The nature of language that is used by men about women and by women about themselves can therefore be seen as part of the semiotic representation of subjugation.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology chosen for the study. As discussed earlier in Chapter One, assertion of superiority of male speaker over speakers in everyday discourse using ‘gender markers’ in English Language, which is termed ‘sexist’ was investigated from the point of view of linguistic distinction in the structure of the pronoun, such as ‘he’, ‘she’, ‘it’ (subjective), ‘himself’, ‘herself’ (objective), etc.

The qualitative method used in this work is applicable to many disciplines and subject matters. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). It is a scientific research term under which a variety of research methods that use language data are clustered (Merriam, 2002; Seale *et al.*, 2004; Smith, 2003). Qualitative methods are specifically constructed to take account of the particular characteristics of human experience and to facilitate the investigation of experience (Polkinghorne, 2005). Qualitative research is effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours, and social contexts of particular populations as it provides information about the “human” side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals (Golafshani, 2005).

The three most common qualitative methods are participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. Each method is particularly suited for obtaining a specific type of data. The types of data these three methods generate are field notes,

audio (and sometimes video) recordings, and transcripts (Mack et al., 2005). In this study of gender differences in language, the details of the investigative analysis and measurement techniques used follow the order:

- i. Research design
- ii. Data gathering method
- iii. Data gathering instruments
- iv. Procedure for data analysis

3.2 Research Design

In the perspective of the research objective and questions earlier stated which includes the manifestations of social asymmetry via discourse, sexism, and in general segregation and discrimination, it is obvious that the design has to be based on survey and identification of sex markers in language use of a population. In order to make credible statements on the use of language there is need to indirectly observe talks and read published articles.

Discourse analysis is central in this work and deals with certain aspects of everyday language usage which aims to disrupt those consolidated expressions of inequality in society. The model analysis is drawn from the theory of Fairclough (1995) that considers discourse as a specific historical product and the markedness theory of Greenberg (1966) which assigns “marked” and “unmarked” to opposing structural entities.

3.3 Data Gathering Instruments

In this work, the data was captured in audio format using a tape recorder and mobile phone (GSM). The choice of these instruments was informed by the impossibility of self-editing and the fact that the respondents will not be overtly conscious of the recording. Akindele and Adegbite (1992: 15) support this method as a backup instrument of the events being observed. Other sources of data used include broadcasts of news items recorded from Nigeria Television Authority (NTA), Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Cable News Network (CNN) and publications in national newspapers such as The Guardian, The Nation, Daily Trust and The Sun dailies.

3.4 Data Gathering Method

The purpose of data gathering in qualitative research is to provide evidence for the experience it is investigating (Polkinghorne, 2005). The evidence is in the form of accounts people have given of the experience. In the process of data collection, a tape recorder and mobile phone (GSM) were used to record the informal conversations of male and female genders. This study is stated in purely empirical mode, capturing several primary chat room dialogues of several sites randomly, based on the ease of their access. These include lecture halls of different faculties, student social centres, hostels of Ahmadu Bello University (Main Campus and Kongo Campus) and Federal College of Education, Zaria, Jesus is Life Church premises, Samaru and Chapel of Redemption, ABU (main campus). The various conversations were captured on two 90-minute cassette tapes using a recorder, and sometimes on a mobile phone. The

numbers of relevant samples gathered and used for analysis in this work were 30 conversations in all.

3.5 Transcription of Data

The transcription of data followed the model described by Tesch (1990) which distinguishes between the linguistic tradition, that treats text as an object of analysis itself, and the sociological tradition, which treats a text as a window into human experience. The linguistic tradition includes methods such as narrative analysis, conversation (or discourse) analysis, performance analysis, and formal linguistic analysis.

However, conversation analysis was selected in this work because it provides a rich sample of the ways in which gender is constructed and the ways in which utterances operate. Conversational analysis is used to examine the structuring rules of the natural or real-world conversation; with the aim of uncovering sex markers in gender conversation break-down which involves a chat session containing a series of interactions by male and female. This investigation will involve an analysis of the transcript of a conversation between interlocutors, males and females. The recorded tapes were played over and over and transcribed linguistically and not phonetically in order to isolate and identify the 'gender markers' used in speeches of the subject in the forms of pronouns, adjectives and other marked features of gender references. Straight forward or ordinary transcription was done; the tape was given to another person to verify whether the sex markers were actually identified.

3.6 Sample Analysis

Professor (Mrs.) Dora Akunyili was picked as the Silverbird ‘MAN’ of the year 2005 in This Day on line.com/nview.

Transcript

The use of ‘man of the year’ in reference to Professor Dora Akunyili is generic as Prof. Dora Akunyili is a ‘woman’ reference to who should be woman of the year which is not captured in the award designation. The term therefore, subsumes the female gender within the rubric of the man. This agrees generally with the masculine conception of the society which sets the man as primary and the woman as an appendage of that primacy.

In discourse ‘man of the year’ without contextual information and background will give the misleading notion that the recipient of the award is a male unless the name is mentioned. This is an attempt to see the female against the background and parameters of the male in terms of achievement and status. This is an ideological strategy fostered on the society by the patriarchal dominance of the male of the discourse space and of other social and occupational spheres in the society.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter dwells on the analysis of some discourse between female and male which demonstrate elements of female sex distinction markers. The notion of markedness was first developed in the Prague School of Phonology but was subsequently extended to Morphology and Syntax. When two phonemes are distinguished by the presence or absence of a single distinctive feature, one of them is said to be marked and the other unmarked for the feature in question. Similarly, in Morphology, the regular English verb can be said to be marked for past tense (by the suffixation of-ed) but unmarked in the present (compare ‘jumped’ versus ‘jump’).

4.1 Data Analysis

The data for this study was gathered from both the electronic and print media and these are presented under the following sub-headings:

4.1.1 Electronic Media

The data collected from the electronic media is presented here and this is closely followed by some analysis of the text.

**¹SENATOR GBEMI RUQAYYAH SRAKI,
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON MARINE
TRANSPORT (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)**

Here, there are sex marker distinctions, except when it comes to the name of the Chairman Committee on Marine Transport. What distinguishes the senator as a female is the name (Gbemi Ruqayyah Saraki) since Ruqayyah is a name for the female folk. Apart from the name of the senator which is female, the only sex marker which can be used in distinguishing her is the use of pronouns such as ‘she’ and ‘her’.

**²FIRST FEMALE ADVISER TO THE
PRESIDENT PROF. (MRS.) GARBA
APPOINTED (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)**

The stress is on ‘the 1st Female Adviser’, and not on ‘the economic adviser to the President, Prof. (Mrs.) Garba appointed’. The use of female economic adviser to the President draws attention to the gender of the adviser and not to the office she occupies. The same expression could have been stated without mention of ‘female’.

**³FEMALE DEPUTY SPEAKER OF EBONYI STATE (NTA News:
9.00pm, 2010)**

The above example has been sex-marked with the use of ‘female’. The use of female has clearly been marked, distinguishing the sex of the Deputy Speaker of the State House of Assembly, stating the person who has been appointed as a ‘female’. This shows bias which is mitted against the women folk as if they cannot perform certain functions in male-dominated society.

⁴FEMALE CHIEF JUDGE (BBC News)

The statement could simply have read ‘chief judge’, but it has been marked ‘female’ chief judge. A chief judge is a chief judge, whether male or female. But in this case, the emphasis in on ‘female’ chief, to tell the reader that it has been sex marked. Pronoun like ‘she’ and ‘her’ could have been used to indicate the sex of the chief judge.

**⁵KYRGYZSTAN SWEARS IN FIRST FEMALE
PRESIDENT (PROVISIONAL LEADER) TO
ENTHRONE STABLE DEMOCRACY (BBC
NEWS)**

The use of first female President (provisional leader) is sex marked. From the above statement the stress in on the ‘first female President’ and not on the first democratically elected president of Kyrgyzstan. Instead, the statement could have

read ‘Kyrgyzstan swears in democratically elected provisional leader’, while the news content will show the gender of the president being sworn in. Only the pronouns such as ‘she’, ‘her’ and ‘hers’ can be used to distinguished whether the sworn in president is a female or male.

**⁶THE IRON LADY IN EUROPEAN
GOVERNMENT, MARGARET THATCHER
(HISTORICAL NEWS ON BBC, 2009)**

Thatcher was one of the greatest prime ministers of Great Britain. Here, she is referred to as the ‘iron lady’ because she was strong and principled in the way she handled government issues in Britain. The use of ‘iron lady’ is gender bias, and consequently throws up features of her non-feminist disposition; compared to the general expectation that femininity is calm, soft and gentle. That is she is too tough as a woman for the position she is occupying. Margaret Thatcher is being compared to a man in decision making and governance of her country.

**⁷FEMALE POLITICIANS CANNOT MATCH
THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS WHILE ON
CAMPAIGN IN NIGERIA, ESPECIALLY IN THE
AREA OF MONEY AS MOST MALE POLITICIANS
ARE MONEY BAGS.(NTA News: 7.00pm, 2010)**

This statement is an example of how the female folk are underestimated in the area of politicking in Nigeria. Here, women politicians have been marked as being are unable to match their male-counterparts in politicking, because they cannot provide enough money for campaign. The distinction in this discourse lies in the

portrayal of female politicians as not being financially buoyant enough to provide enough money for campaign. The use of the word 'female' which is prefixed to 'politicians' draws attention to the gender of the politicians as marked. The statement could have simply read: 'Some politicians cannot match other in terms of money for campaign'; since it is not only female politicians who cannot provide enough money during campaigns. There are some male politicians who are tagged 'hungry politicians' because they too cannot provide enough to foot their campaign.

**⁸MORE WOMEN SHOULD COME OUT EN
MASS AND SHOW OUR MALE
COUNTERPARTS THAT WE ARE EQUAL TO
THE TASK IN NIGERIAN POLITICS (NTA News:
9.00pm, 2011)**

The above statement clearly shows that women have been relegated to the background in Nigerian politics. A manifestation of this relegation is the now over flogged saying by the men that the relevance of the woman is only felt in the kitchen and the handling of domestic chores. The political arena is considered to be the exclusive domain of the men. Consequently, the general view about the woman is that of being a 'weaker sex' who cannot make or create any impact in the political arena of the country. The text above also reveals that women have risen from their slumber and are now ready to confront the male hegemony and prove to them that they(the women) can live up to, and compete favourably with them in politics and other sectors of influence. Contemporary events across the world show that this awakening is a global phenomenon, cutting across the Continent of Africa. There is a growing

consciousness among women to mobilize themselves in resistance against a long standing patriarchal ideology of discrimination and subordination, especially in the political and economic spheres. Currently, therefore, a number of women in Africa and elsewhere are into politics. For example, women in countries such as the Philippines, Argentina, Brazil, Liberia, Kyrgyzstan, etc are actively involved in the political activities of these countries, thus proving that they are equal to the task in politics.

**⁹AKUNYILI IS SILVERBIRD MAN OF THE YEAR
2005 (www.thisdayonline.com/view)**

The use of ‘man of the year’ in reference to Prof. Dora Akunyili who is a woman is gender bias. The award designation should have been ‘woman of the year’. The term therefore subsumes the female gender within the rubric of the man. This tally generally with the masculine conception of the society which see the man as primary and the woman as an appendage of that primacy.

In this discourse, ‘man of the year’ without contextual information and background will give the misleading notion that the recipient of the award is a male until the name is mentioned. This is an attempt to see the female against the background and parameters of the male in terms of achievements and status. It is an ideological strategy fostered on the society by the patriarchal dominance of the male folk over of the discourse space and other social and acceptable spheres in the society.

**¹⁰MRS. JUSTINA OKORO, NATIONAL CHAIRMAN,
SOCIETY OF WOMEN IN TAXATION (SWIT) IN
NIGERIA (NTA, NEWS, 9.00PM 2010)**

From the statement above, the only markers which suggest that the ‘chairman’ is female is ‘Mrs.’, and possibly the name of the person under discussion. In normal discourse, the chairman is usually associated with the male-folk and the mention of chairman can be misleading in the sense that it can be misinterpreted to mean a man, unless the name and the title of the person are mentioned, or a pronoun is used in place of the name of the chairman to show the sex of the chairman.

In this case, the sex marker, ‘chairperson’ could have been used to distinguish the sex of the chairman of the Society of Women in Taxation in Nigeria, as it is usually done in some instances.

**¹¹GABRIELLE GIFFORD, FIRST FEMALE
CONGRESS WOMAN FROM ARIZONA TO BE
ATTACKED BY ANTICIPATED WHITE
SUPREMACIST IN THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA (CNN, 2010)**

The statement above is genderly marked, ‘first female congresswoman’ to be attacked. The mention of ‘the congresswoman’ reveals the sex of the person. The statement reveals that the stress is on the ‘first female’ and not on ‘the congresswoman’ who was attacked by the supremacists.

**¹²LADY SURVEYORS AND FEMALE ENGINEERS
ARE NOT INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENT
PROJECTS AS HEADS (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2009)**

The statement could have been generalized, as ‘all surveyors and engineers are not involved in government projects heads’. Pronouns such as ‘she’ ‘her’ and names of the female surveyors and engineers should have been used to indicate that some of them are females and that they hardly participate in any government projects. The Nigerian society is so male-dominated and patriarchal that females who have undergone the same training and have the same qualifications with the male counterparts in the same profession are discriminated against and denied contracts, unlike their male-counterparts, who are usually beneficiaries of such advantages.

**¹³WOMEN SOLDIERS IN PEACE KEEPING CAMP
IN LIBERIA (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)**

Soldiers on peace mission received the same training without exempting women from certain exercises. Since the women were not exempted from any form of military training as their male counterparts, there is no need stressing ‘women soldiers’ as if they were performing different duties from their male counterparts. This shows some form of degrading tendencies against the female soldiers who are considered incapable of performing the same functions or duties as their male counterparts. The sex distinction markers in this discourse further clearly shows the discrimination against the women folk in the society. They are regarded as the weaker sex who cannot match their male counterparts in performing certain tasks.

The statement could have just read ‘soldiers in peace camp in Liberia’ and not ‘women soldiers in peace camp in Liberia’.

**¹⁴ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES MEETS IN
ABUJA CONCERNING CHILD-TRAFFICKING
AND HUMAN RIGHTS.(NTA NEWS, 9.00pm, 2010)**

There is bias in the above statement in that the stress is on ‘association of women judges’ meeting to deliberate on child trafficking and human rights. In this discourse, it seems as if women judges are the only ones who engage in discussing human rights and trafficking. Judges, irrespective of their sex, can deliberate on the above mentioned issues. Judges could have been more generalizing, and not ‘association of women judges’, which shows that their counterpart judges do not want to sit on the same table to deliberate on child trafficking and human rights. It might be that the male judges will not accept the inputs made by female judges or that the female judges are considered as people who cannot make meaningful contributions towards the stoppage of child trafficking and human rights abuses.

**¹⁵DR (MRS) DAISY DANJUMA, CHAIRMAN,
CENTRAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
(NCPP)(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2010)**

From the above discourse, the use of ‘chairman’ is neutral to an extent, but the use of ‘Mrs.’ is discriminatory against the sex of the chairman. Although in everyday

discourse, the use of 'chairman' is usually associated with the male, in this case, the only sex marker will be the name or the use of pronoun like 'she', 'her', or herself'.

Furthermore, the use of doctor in this statement is also general, because a doctor can either be female or male, and as such, the only sex marker which could be used in this instance could be the pronoun and the title of 'Mrs.' to distinguish the sex of the chairman.

¹⁶PDP FEMALE DELEGATES MEET FIRST LADY (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)

In the above text, there is an element of bias towards the female delegates who went to meet the first lady. The use of 'female delegates' who met with the first lady has been distinctively marked. It could simply have read the 'PDP delegates meet with the first lady' and not to be qualified with the sex marker 'PDP female delegates'.

¹⁷FEMALE STAKEHOLDERS IN PEACE-KEEPING IN PLATEAU STATE MEET DAME PATIENCE GOODLUCK JONATHAN IN JOS.(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)

The above statement is gender-bias, considering that women are not the only stakeholders in peace keeping in Plateau State. The statement could have read: 'stakeholders in peace-keeping in Plateau State meet Dame Patience Goodluck Jonathan in Jos'. The text, therefore, by the use of 'female', draws attention to the

gender of the stakeholders over and above their initiative of peace keeping in Plateau State.

**¹⁸PRESIDENT, ROAD SAFETY WIVES
ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA MEETS IN ABUJA
(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)**

The Nigerian society is patriarchal and has less regards for women. This is manifested in the formation of parallel associations by women to fight against male domination. It is further very glaring as wives of road officers have a parallel association different from that of their husbands. Women are often relegated in most areas and, as such, they often seek ways to extricate themselves from this male dominance by creating their own association where they can fight against male dominance over them. The Safety officers and their wives could have paid a courtesy visit to the First Lady, instead of only their wives paying a courtesy visit to the First Lady in Abuja.

**¹⁹MRS. MARY UDOMA, DIRECTOR NIGERIAN
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (NCC). (NTA NEWS,
9.00PM, 2011)**

The use of ‘Mrs.’ in the above discourse has marked the sex of the Director of the Nigerian Chambers of Commerce. Furthermore, the name of the Director has revealed her gender. Director generally agrees with the masculine conception of the society which sees the man as the ‘primacy’ and the woman as a mere ‘appendage’ of that primacy. In Nigerian society, it is assumed that most posts are exclusively

reserved for men and, as such, when ‘director’ is mentioned, one’s thinking automatically goes to a man, and not a woman, as the Director of the Chambers of Commerce. Ordinarily, this would have tallied well with the gender neutrality sought for in language; however, the text again captures the patriarchal nature of the society, by the use of ‘Mrs. Mary Udoma’. This gives the impression that she occupies the post in error.

**²⁰FLORENCE ADEBANJO, CHAIRPERSON,
NIGERIA POLICE FORCE (NPF) MICRO
FINANCE BANK PLC.(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)**

Here, the sex of the person in question has been marked as female. This is because in most occasions, ‘the chairman’ is often used to mark a male chairing an occasion or a parastatal or any organization. The use of ‘chairperson’ in this case, signifies that it is a female who is at the helm of affairs. Furthermore, apart from the use of chairperson to distinguish the sex, the name has also been included to stress that the chairperson is a female. There is no linguistic neutrality here as sex markers have been applied in the text ideologically to agree with the gender nature of the society. This becomes even more pertinent if one thinks of a male being the head of the parastatal in question. It is not likely that ‘chairperson’ would be used as reference.

The chairperson used in this context is generic, and it is not stated whether the chairperson in this context is a female or male, although, ideally, most associations for officers’ wives are mostly headed by a female. In this context, therefore, the

chairperson might be a female or a male, but since the Association is for Road Safety officers' wives, it is assumed that the President of the Association is a female.

**²¹FEMALE MAGISTRATE AND THE CLERK
SHUT BY LONE GUNMAN IN A COURTROOM
IN SOUTHERN TURKEY (BBC NEWS, 2011)**

The statement could have just read 'magistrate and clerk shut by a lone gunman in a courtroom in Southern Turkey'. The use of female has marked the gender of the magistrate. In this discourse, the use of 'magistrate' in the text without contextual information and background will give the notion that the magistrate assassinated was a male, unless the term 'female' is attached and marked. Ordinarily, the gender of the magistrate is not essential for the performance of the duties of the office, but the patriarchal nature of the society expects every magistrate to be male.

Also, from the discourse, it is not certain whether the clerk killed was a male or a female. There is an element of linguistic neutrality because no gender is applied to the clerk. The clerk might have been a female or male.

**²²CATEGORY BUSINESS MANAGER, MRS.
UDUAK BASSEY, NESTLE NIGERIAN PLC;
MAGI MIXPY DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE
NEW SEASONING AT WATER PARKS LAGOS.
(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)**

In the above discourse, the use of 'Mrs.' in reference to the business manager has been sex marked; that is to say, the business manager of the Nestle is a lady. Business manager tallies generally with the masculine conception of the society

which sets the man as superior to the woman who is considered to be his appendage. In this discourse, ‘business manager’ without contextual information and background will give a rather misleading notion that the business manager is a male until the name or the pronoun of the manager is mentioned (Mrs. Uduak Basse). This is an ideological strategy fostered on the society by the male dominance, especially when it comes to the position of top management in business.

**²³DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NAFDAC, MRS. ADELINE
OSAKWE (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)**

‘Director’ here refers normally to the male-folk; as such when the Deputy Director of NAFDAC is mentioned, it is not marked until the name of Mrs. Adeline Osakwe is mentioned to mark that the position of Deputy Director of NAFDAC is being occupied by a female and not a male. ‘Deputy Director’ standing on its own is neutral, and, as such, does not have any sex markers to distinguish the sex of the Deputy Director. In this case, the name of the Deputy Director serves as the only gender distinction to distinguish who is the occupant of the post. The name, ordinarily, may not have been necessary as reference is to the office and not to the occupier of the office. However, the name deliberately draws attention to the gender of the holder of the office.

²⁴WOMEN IN POLITICS IN NIGERIA (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)

Here, politicians who are women have been sexually marked as female. There is no neutrality in the above text. The discourse refers to women politician in Nigeria and not to any other politician in Nigeria.

**²⁵HAUWA KERI, DIRECTOR ESTABLISHMENT
INSPECTION (FOOD AND NUTRITION UNIT),
NAFDAC (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM, 2011)**

The above text has been genderly marked because the name of the Director of Establishment Food Nutrition NAFDAC has been mentioned, and it is a female name. In our male-dominated society, when the position of Director is mentioned, it is automatically assumed that the occupant of that position is a male, until the name of the person occupying the position is mentioned, or a pronoun is used to mark the sex of the occupant of the position. In a male dominated society, there is a general notion that top level management positions are normally headed by men. In this discourse, the position of the Director, Establishment, has been gender-marked. The name ordinarily may not have been necessary as reference is to the office and not to the occupier of that office. However, the name deliberately draws attention to the gender of the holder of the office.

**²⁶MODUPE THANI, SENIOR BRAND MANAGER,
COCA COLA, NIGERIA LTD.(NTA News: 9.00pm,
2010)**

The brand manager Coca Cola, Nigeria, is a neutral term, because it does not indicate the gender of the manager designate. Brand manager without contextual information and background will give the misleading notion that the ‘brand manager’ of Coca Cola is a male.

The brand manager Coca Cola, Nigeria Ltd, has been marked by the name, but in this context it is not clear whether the name is that of a female or male. The only sex markers to distinguish the sex of the brand manager is the use of pronouns ‘she’, ‘her’ and ‘herself’. The ideological strategy in our society is that, if the brand manager’s name is not mentioned, it could be assumed that the brand manager is a male since in the African society the male folk are regarded as those in position of leadership and the women folk only as subordinates.

**²⁷THE MANAGING EDITOR, LEADERSHIP
NEWSPAPER GROUP LTD, HAJIYA ZAINAB
SULEIMAN OKINO**

The position of Managing Editor is usually occupied by the male folk and once the position is mentioned without any sex markers attached to it, it is assumed that the position is occupied by a male. This shows a degree of discrimination against the female folk. In this discourse, there is neutrality in the mention of the position of the Managing Editor. Hajiya Zainab’s name has made the position of the Managing Editor to be sexually marked as a female.

**²⁸GENERAL MANAGER, NIGERIAN
PETROLEUM TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT
FUND (PTDF) HAJIYA HABIBA WAKILI (NTA
News: 9.00pm, 2010)**

The expression, ‘General Manager of (PTDF) Petroleum Technology Development Fund’ in a patriarchal society will immediately suggest that the manager is a male and not a female. In a male dominated society where the women are often regarded to be playing subordinate roles, once a position is mentioned without mentioning the name of the person occupying the position, it is immediately assumed that the position is occupied by a man.

In this discourse, therefore, the mention of ‘General Manager, Nigerian Petroleum Technology Development Fund’ has an element of neutrality, especially with regards to the gender of the person managing the Fund. The occupant of the office is genderly marked by the mention of the name (Hajiya, Habiba Wakili) which is a female name. The mere mention of the name is to mark the occupant of the office, since the name does not have any bearing with the function the General Manager performs in that office.

**²⁹JULIAN GILLARD, THE AUSTRALIAN
PRIME MINISTER.(BBC, 2010)**

The use of ‘the Prime Minister’ is generic. The position of Prime Minister in most countries of the world is usually occupied by the male folk. In this discourse, the only sex marker that is used in distinguishing whether the Prime Minister is a male or female is the pronoun : ‘she’, ‘he’, ‘her’ and ‘his’. In this case, the Prime

Minister in question will be distinguished most of the time using the sex markers ‘she’, ‘hers’, ‘herself’ and ‘her’.

**³⁰PROFESSOR FUNKE LAWAL, CHAIRMAN
COMMUNIQUÉ DRAFTING COMMITTEE (NTA
News: 9.00pm, 2010)**

Here, the only sex distinctive marker is the name of the Chairman of the Communiqué Drafting Committee. The term ‘chairperson’ could have been applicable here to show that the person is chairing the drafting communiqué.

**³¹FIRST LADY HOSTS FEMALE FALCONETS (NTA News:
9.00pm, 2010)**

In this discourse, the First Lady has been marked. ‘First lady’ here signifies the position of the wife of the Nigerian President. Also, the ‘female falconets’ has already been marked. ‘Falconets’ alone are distinguished as the female team. The statement could have read ‘the football team which comprised only female members was hosted by the Nigeria First Lady, Dame Patience Goodluck Jonathan’. The stress on the ‘female’ falconets already shows that the speaker is very particular in making it known that the females were the ones being hosted by the First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

³²CHAIRPERSON, HAJJ OPERATIONS IN NIGERIA
(NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)

‘Chairperson’ here can be taken for a female, since it is often assumed in most discourses that chairperson is a sex marker for female. In some settings, women are not expected to head certain organizations or operations, most especially in the Islamic faith. Women in most male dominated societies are often relegated to the background and are not allowed to take up certain responsibilities, because it is widely believed that they are not competent and cannot equal men in handling these responsibilities.

³³ALL NIGERIAN WOMEN LEADERS CONFERENCE *(NTA News: 9.00pm, 2009)*

This above text is sex marked because it restricts the conference to women leaders, and not men leaders, or any woman or group of women. The statement could as well have read ‘Conference of All Nigerian Leaders’. However, the gender sex mark has distinguished the category of leaders that the conference is meant for.

³⁴DAME VIRGY ETIABA, THE FIRST FEMALE DEPUTY GOVERNOR IN NIGERIA *(NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)*

In the above example, the name of the woman could have been used as a distinguishing sex marker, but the addition of the ‘first female deputy governor’

clearly shows that there is bias against her being the Deputy Governor of the state.

From all indications therefore, the statement reveals patriarchal abhorrence against women taking certain political appointments, because it is perceived that such political appointments are reserved only for men, further confirming Stanley's (1977) view that 'the semantic space does not exist for women because it has been occupied by the male sex'. This is especially when a woman becomes a professional in one of the fields usually reserved for her male counterparts.

³⁵FEMALE LEGISLATORS ADVOCATE WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2009)

The use of 'female' in reference to the legislators draws attention to their gender. The text could still be meaningful without the use of 'female'. However, because of the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society where leadership positions are mainly thought to be the exclusive preserve of the male, the text gives the impression that the female legislators are occupying their respective positions by default, since such posts are 'naturally' reserved for the men.

³⁶FIRST FEMALE REAR ADMIRAL DECORATED (NTA NEWS 17/12/2010)

The foregoing reveals that women have not been enrolling in the Nigerian Navy. The stress on 'first female Rear Admiral" shows gender bias not to the officer

being decorated, but rather to the gender of the officer, which has no bearing in performance of the duties which are assigned to the office she is occupying.

From the discourse, therefore, the statement could have read ‘Rear Admiral Decorated’ and the name or the pronoun being assigned to the officer will determine the gender. This goes further to confirm the earlier discussed view on the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society, wherein some positions are regarded as the exclusive preserve of the male folk.

³⁸MADAM MARY EWEKENE, FIRST FEMALE DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, DIED AT THE AGE OF 85 YEARS YESTERDAY. (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)

Mrs. Mary Ewekene was the first female Director in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The emphasis on ‘first female Director’ also goes to illustrate how the Nigerian society considers some posts as the exclusive reserve of the male folk. First female Director has been marked to show that there is discrimination against females holding high positions in certain parastatals or ministries in the society. The statement could have read ‘Mrs. Mary one time Director in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, died at the age of 85 years yesterday’.

**³⁹FUNMI OMITOWOJU, REGIONAL MANAGER,
MONEYGRAM NIG. LTD. (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

The above phrase is generic in the sense that the Regional Manager, Moneygram, can either be a male or a female. The only possible sex distinction markers are either the name of the Manager or such pronouns as ‘she’, ‘her’, ‘hers’ and ‘herself’. In real world situation, where equality is the order of the day, there is no use of sex distinction markers, since the name of the person, or pronouns would serve as sex distinction markers, identifying the sex of the person directly concerned. This is what is supposed to be obtainable in the above discourse.

**⁴⁰CAROLINE ANYANWU CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF
DIRECTORS FIN INSURANCE (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM
2011)**

Caroline Anyanwu is the only sex marker which can be used to distinguish the gender of the Chairman of the Board of Directors of FIN Insurance. ‘Chairman’ is a general term which can be attributed to a male or a female. However, in some instances, the term ‘chairperson’ is applied, especially when reference is made to a female leading a committee, an organization or operation. The appropriate term which could have been applied is ‘the chairperson’, but in the real sense, the application of the term ‘chairperson’ will indicate that there is discrimination against the women folk; as such, the generic term ‘chairman’ is more suitable.

**⁴¹DR (MRS.) DAISY DANJUMA, CHAIRMAN,
CENTRAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (NCP)
(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

Under normal circumstances, if it is a male, the title 'Dr' is what is attached as a prefix to his name, but when a female is involved, as in the statement above, the two prefixes of 'Dr' and 'Mrs'. is attached. This is a form of discrimination against the women-folk. Furthermore, the chairman of the central organizing committee is a lady and not a male; the term 'chairperson' therefore ought to have been applicable to indicate the gender of the person heading the central organizing committee. Although the feminist will prefer the term 'chairperson', in most discourses, the 'chairman' is applied, to avoid bias, and the only sex marker to distinguish the sex of the person is the name of the person or the use of pronouns attributing to the sex of the person.

**⁴²GERMAN CHANCELLOR, ANGELA MARKEL
DURING THE EU SUMMIT IN BRUSSELS
PRESENTED HER SPEECH (BBC NEWS, 2011)**

The use of 'Chancellor' here is often associated with the male folk; consequently, what could have been applicable here should be 'Chancellor' for a lady. Her role is more often seen as official and marked as a female gender. In the above statement, the only gender markers that distinguish the Chancellor's sex are the names and the use of the pronoun 'her'. 'Chancellor' is generic, but the use of 'chancellor' would be gender distinctive.

⁴³MISS EFURU, GENERAL MANAGER POWER HOLDING COMPANY OF NIGERIA (PHCN) (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)

From the above statement, the word ‘Miss’ has already marked the General Manager of Power Holding Company of Nigeria as a female. The statement could have gone as “Efuru, the General Manager of Power Holding Company of Nigeria, so as to avoid sex-markers which are often associated with gender discrimination in our society. The manager in question could have been mentioned without necessarily putting the ‘Miss’ as prefix against her name and possessive pronouns like “her”, “She”, ‘hers’ will determine the sex of the manager.

⁴⁴FIRST FEMALE REAR ADMIRAL IN NIGERIA DECORATED BY PRESIDENT GOODLUCK JONATHAN ON 17TH DECEMBER 2010 (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)

The above statement shows that the Nigerian society has been discriminating against women attaining certain ranks in the Nigerian Navy and the society abhors women occupying certain positions in the military or in the Navy. The Nigerian Navy has been in existence since 19th century and this is the only time that a female is being decorated as a Rear Admiral. This also goes further to show that the Nigerian society, as well as the African society is patriarchal and so it expects women to play subordinating roles to the men. The males are at the helm of affairs at home and at places of work.

**⁴⁵MRS. NKECHI NWUGU CHAIRMAN, SENATE
COMMITTEE ON BANKING (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

The above statement has been genderly marked in that the use of ‘Mrs.’ connotes that the person heading the committee on Banking is a female. Again, if the speaker wanted to convey feminist tendency in the above statement, the use of ‘chairman’ could have been substituted for ‘chairperson’, so that a sense of bias towards the female folk is complete.

**⁴⁶FUNKE ODEYINKA, DEPUTY GOVERNOR
EKITI STATE (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

The above statement is generic and any reader will immediately assume that the Deputy Governor of Ekiti State is a male. The reason is that most women are hardly occupying top political posts in the male-dominated Nigeria Society. Also, from the above statement, unless such generic pronouns such as ‘he’, ‘she’ ‘her’ and also anaphoric like ‘Mr.’, ‘Mrs.’ are applied in relation to the Deputy Governor; it is not indicated whether the Deputy is a female or a male.

**⁴⁷YEWANDE ZACCHEAUS, CHAIRPERSON
WOMBIZ (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)**

The use of ‘chairperson’ in the above statement is gender-biased because it connotes that the person in-charge of the Wombiz a female or a lady. This also shows

that there is no need for the use of generic pronouns such as ‘she’, ‘her’, because the sex of the person who is at the helm of affairs is already identified as a lady.

**⁴⁸PHILOMENA OKORAFOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NIGERIAN LANGUAGE PROJECT (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

The Executive Director is more masculine and any reader will immediately assume that the Executive Director is a man and not a lady. The only sex distinguishing marker which can be used to identify the sex of the Executive Director is the name and the use of anaphoric like ‘Mrs.’ or ‘Miss’ and pronouns like ‘her’ or ‘she’.

**⁴⁹INVITATION TO FEMALE CANDIDATES IN APRIL,
2011 ELECTIONS BY THE FIRST LADY FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA AND GRAND PATRON
WOMEN FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE, HER EXCELLENCY, DAME (DR)
PATIENCE GOODLUCK JONATHAN IN ABUJA (NTA
NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

In the above statement, there is a mixture of feminine and masculine sex distinguishing markers. In the first instance, the use of ‘First lady’ has already indicated the gender of the person calling the ‘female candidates in April 2011 elections’. But further down the line, the use of ‘Grand Patron contradicts the gender of the caller. The word “Grand Patroness’ could have been applicable here instead of using ‘Grand Patron. Again, the use of ‘Her Excellency’ indicates the gender of the

grand patron of the women for change and development initiative. Still on the above statement, the use of ‘Dame’ and ‘Dr’ relegates women to a certain position as if they did not work hard to earn the title of a doctor. Why not just ‘Dr Patience Goodluck Jonathan’, as anybody will know that the ‘doctorship’ here relates to the wife of Dr Goodluck Jonathan and not to Dr Goodluck Jonathan himself.

**⁵⁰DIRECTOR OF NTA NEWS, MARYAM ADAMU
UMAR (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

The above discourse shows that the Director of NTA News can be either a female or a male. The use of an anaphoric will distinguish the sex of the Director of NTA News. Another criterion which can be used to determine the sex of the Director is the name of the Director which in this case is Maryam, a name for the female folk. Here, the writer is only interested in the office and not the sex of the person occupying the position of NTA News Directorate.

**⁵¹MRS. SALLY ADUKWU, PRESIDENT, NIGERIA
INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM
2011)**

The use of the anaphoric ‘Mrs.’ has already indicated the gender of the President of the Nigerian Institute of Management as a female, since ‘Mrs.’ refers to a female. The writer could have just captioned it as ‘President, Nigerian Institute of Management’ and then indicated the name of the President, without necessarily

adding the anaphoric “Mrs.” Too much emphasis was laid on her name and not on the position she is occupying.

**⁵²YEMISI, MANAGING DIRECTOR SHELL
WOMEN’S NETWORK (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

From the above statement, any average person in the Nigerian society will assume that the Managing Director is a male, since the Nigerian society is a patriarchal society and top level management positions are occupied by mostly the male folk. In the place of ‘Managing Director’ the word ‘Managing Directress’ could have been more applicable so that the sex distinction markers of the occupier of the office of the Managing Director will be complete.

**⁵³DELTA STATE OUTWASHED ENUGU STATE IN
THE WOMEN BASKET BALL TEAM (NTA NEWS,
9.00PM 2011)**

The above statement shows that women have not been partaking very much in basketball and other sporting events. The Nigerian society is male-dominated and women participating in sporting events are abhorred upon, since such events are regarded as events for the male-folk. The statement could have read ‘Delta State outwashed Enugu State in the basketball event’.

**⁵⁴PRESIDENT GOODLUCK JONATHAN SENDS
CONDOLENCE MESSAGE TO RENOWNED
MUSICIAN FAMILY OF CHRISTY OBUKWE
CALLED LADY OF SONGS. (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)**

The discourse above shows how very rare it is in the Nigerian society to see or hear about women in the show business. The first part of the text does not tell us the gender of the deceased, until when the name of the deceased is mentioned. There was a sense of gender discrimination when it is further stated that: ‘a renowned musician called lady of songs, Christy Obukwe’.

**⁵⁵LORNA GOLDING, JAMAICA’S FIRST LADY
SPEAKING ON AWARENESS OF HIV-AIDS
CONCERNING PREVENTING MOTHER-TO-
CHILD TRANSMISSION (BBC NEWS, 2011)**

The above discourse shows that the use of the First Lady’s name “Lorna Golding” is enough to distinguish the sex of the person who was speaking on the awareness of HIV-AIDS mother-to-child transmission. The stress on ‘Jamaica’s First Lady’ is not necessary, as it goes to show the bias towards women in a male-dominated society. The stress here should be on the message which she wanted to pass across on HIV-AIDS awareness and not on the position she is holding in her country, Jamaica.

⁵⁶TWO NEW SUPREME COURT JUDGES WERE SWORN IN. JUSTICE MARY PETER ODIKE BECOMES THE THIRD WOMAN SETTING CONVENIENTLY IN THE APEX COURT. OUT OF THIS SHE IS THE THIRD WOMAN WHO HAS PROVED HERSELF WORTHY OF THIS EXCELLENT AND ENVIABLE POSITION (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)

The discourse above shows that Supreme Court judges were sworn in and one amongst them is a female, further revealing that there are certain positions or jobs which, in the Nigerian society, are regarded as the male-oriented jobs and women are not supposed to take-up or be appointed into such positions.

⁵⁷DR. (MRS) NWOKOCHA PRESIDENT, MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA TALKING ABOUT THE WAY TO REDUCE MOTHER-CHILD TRANSMISSION OF HIV- AIDS. (NTA NEWS, 9.00PM 2011)

In the above discourse, there is a clear gender marker used against the President of the Medical Association of Nigeria. The use of “Mrs.” after ‘Dr’ is unnecessary, as it shows some bias against the women-folk. It should simply have been ‘Dr Nwokocho’ (and not ‘Dr. (Mrs.) Nwokocho’) and then the use of generic pronouns such as ‘she’, ‘her’, ‘hers’ etc what would have distinguished her sex.

**⁵⁸MARY UZOMA DIRECTOR, CONSUMER
COMMUNICATION SERVICES (CCS) (NTA NEWS,
9.00PM 2011)**

The use of 'Director' is generic and anybody can be the Director, but in most circumstances, the Director is often associated with the male-folk. The only thing that can be used to distinguish the sex of the Director, Consumer Communication, is the name of the Director in question, or the use of generic pronouns such as 'she', 'her', 'him', 'hers', 'his', etc.

**⁵⁹CHIEF (MRS.) FRANCES ADEBAJO FORMER
MANAGER PROGRAMMES NTA AT 80, WHO
RETIRED AS A PRODUCER.(NTA NEWS, 9.00PM
2011)**

In the above discourse, the use of 'Chief' is an anaphoric which is usually attributed to the male title holders in most Nigerian ethnic group settings and it is rarely attributed to the woman-folk. The use of 'Chief (Mrs.)' shows that the woman folk are relegated to the background to play subordinate roles to the male-folk in the Nigerian society. The name of the person in the discourse is masculine-oriented and, as such, it is only through the use of the anaphoric "Mrs." that the sex of the Chief is identified.

**⁶⁰DR. ROSE ABAH WUSISI, VICE
CHAIRMAN OF ICPC, ABUJA (NTA
News: 9.00pm, 2011)**

The use of 'Dr.' as an anaphoric before the 'Vice Chairman of ICPC' is generic. Also, the term 'chairman' is also generic. In order to identify the gender of

the Chairman, of the ICPC, it should have been ‘Chairperson’ since it is usually applicable to the female-folk.

**⁶¹MRS. SARAH OCHEKPE, MINISTER OF
WATER RESOURCES (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2011)**

The use of the anaphoric, ‘Mrs.’ has marked the gender of the Minister and this clearly shows the discriminatory tendencies against the women in the Nigerian society. The stress could have been on ‘minister’, and not on ‘Mrs. Sarah Ocheke’, since in the final analysis, what matters is the performance of the functions assigned to the minister and not necessarily the gender of the person occupying the position.

**⁶²WOMEN APPLAUDED THE ELECTION OF 13
WOMEN MINISTERS IN THE EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL OF NIGERIA BY PRESIDENT
GOODLUCK JONATHAN (NTA NEWS: 9.00PM,
2011)**

The discourse above further confirms the subservient position of women in Nigeria, as compared to their male counterparts. Nigerian women have been and are still considered the subordinates of men. It is indeed this lingering discrimination that can explain why the election of 13 women ministers in the Executive Council of Nigeria by President Goodluck Jonathan should be applauded. The Nigerian society, especially the male-folk, frowns at women taking up top positions in public services. However, the women have, in the recent years, awakened to fight for equal rights with the male-folk. The appointment of 13 ministers in the Executive Council is,

therefore, part of the gradual results of the agitation of Nigerian women to be given their space to contribute their quota to nation building.

⁶³MRS. HELEN OGUNLEMO, HEAD CORPORATE COMMISSION PENSIONS COMPANY, NIGERIA, (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)

The head of the Corporate Commission pension Company of Nigeria has been marked by the use of the anaphoric ‘Mrs.’ The use of the anaphoric indicates that women are not cherished to take up top level management positions over their male counterparts. The society (Nigerian Society) wants a situation where women will continue to be subordinates to the male-folk, since it is a patriarchal one.

⁶⁴WOMEN POLICE OFFICERS MARRIED TO CIVILIAN HUSBANDS SHOULD VACATE THEIR HOUSES IN THE POLICE QUARTERS. (NTA News: 9.00pm, 2010)

The use of ‘women’ in the phrase ‘women police officers’ is an example of how language is used as a tool of deliberate ideological discrimination. The word ‘women’ draws attention to their gender. This would have been considered as normal, if male officers are described with the use of ‘male police officers’. Since this is not always the case, it could be argued that the use of ‘women police officers’ is a deliberate ideological stance of the male-dominated discourse space. Moreover, one wonders why ‘women police officers’ should pack out of the barracks. This only indicates that women are not considered as being unable to head the family in the

African context. This is discrimination against married officers in the police force with civilian husbands. This is because women too are not capable of providing shelter for their civilian husbands. The foregoing only goes to show that the Nigeria society is a male-dominated society, where the woman is not allowed to fend for the husband and the rest of the family. Even when she does, the society expects her to transfer the glory to the men.

The police force is a sector where equality is supposed to be the bench-mark of operations. However, this is usually not the case as most of the people at the helm of affairs are men, and as such women are looked down upon as subordinates who cannot make good decisions for the family and the nation. This goes further to reveal an ideological strategy fostered on the society by the patriarchal dominance of the male of the discourse space and other social and acceptable spheres on the society. Consequently, anything ‘female’ at the helm of affairs in a male-dominated society is always pessimistically considered as being doomed for failure.

Most women in the southern states of Nigeria are going through a lot of emotional trauma, when their husbands die. They are usually subjected to all forms of dehumanizing experiences to demonstrate their innocence in respect of their husbands’ death.

4.1.2 Print Media

Apart from the above electronic sources of our data for the study, the print media was also consulted and these include the following below:

⁶⁵IN THE 2007 GOVERNORSHIP RACE IN ANAMBRA STATE, THE AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS PRESENTED A FEMALE CANDIDATE, NJIKEDA ANYADIKE, THE WOMAN WHO FLEW THE ADC'S FLAG IN 2007 SAYS SHE IS READY TO TAKE THE SHOT AGAIN AT THE NUMBER ONE JOB IN THE SOUTH-EAST STATE AS SHE SPEAKS TO SOME JOURNALISTS IN LAGOS (*Sunday Punch, August 16, 2009*)

In a male-dominated society, there are certain positions which are assumed to be occupied by the male-folk and any female who attempts to vie for such positions is looked upon as awkward. When candidate Njikeda Anyandike made the declaration that she would still vie for the position of the governorship of Anambra State under the auspices of the ADC, she was considered as a 'non-conformist'. The statement has been gender-marked with the word 'female candidate'. Hence, the statement would have been 'the ADC governorship candidate' and only the name or the pronoun (she, her, herself and hers) will be used to differentiate the sex of the ADC governorship candidate who made the declaration in Lagos.

In the Nigerian society, it is very rare to see the female taking up certain challenges against the male-folk, especially in politics and positions of leadership. This is why the above statement is marked 'female candidate'.

**⁶⁶HAJIYA HAUWA KULU MUSA MOHAMMED AT
THE FEMALE FOOTBALL KICK-OFF
CEREMONY AT ABAJI (*Daily Trust, Monda, October,
2009*)**

There is bias against women in this discourse. The statement would have read, 'Hajiya Hauwa Kulu Musa Mohammed at the football kick-off ceremony at Abaji', but in order to let the listener know that caliber or sex of the footballers that were at the kick-off, the speaker distinguished it with the sex marker, 'female footballers. The statement clearly reveals an element of bias towards the female footballers, informed by the widely held belief that female footballers cannot perform as high as their male counterparts. If there was no bias against the female footballers, the only sex distinctive markers could have been that of footballers at the kick-off ceremony. It is only recently that the Nigerian society began to recognize the skills and expertise of Nigerian women in football.

**⁶⁷ARUMA OTEH, DG, STOCK EXCHANGE
COMMISSION (*Daily Trust, Wed. August, 2010*)**

In the text above, there is no sex markers applied. 'DG' is general and anybody, whether female or male, can be a DG of any organization. In most normal social discourse, when DG is mentioned, it is often attributed to the male folk, but when a female is in this position, eyebrows are raised, because most top managing positions in patriarchal societies are considered the exclusive preserve off the men.

In the above example, therefore, only sex markers that differentiate different the sex of the DG are pronouns – ‘she’, ‘herself’ and ‘hers’. Despite the fact that some women have performed far better than their male counterparts in positions of management, there is still bias against the female folk in the Nigerian society.

⁶⁸THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AWESOME TREASURES FOUNDATION (ATF), MRS. OLAJUMOKE ADENOWO (SUNDAY TRIBUNE, MARCH, 2011)

The use of ‘Executive Director’ in the above statement will make the reader at the first glance to assume that the Director is a male, because the office of a director is often associated with the male folk. As the reader goes forward, the use of ‘Mrs.’ has made the difference and the sex of the Executive Director is known. In order to be more precise and to distinguish the gender of the person occupying the seat, the word ‘Executive Directress’ could have been applied. Also, the use of ‘Mrs.’ has marked the sex of the Executive Director. This further reveals that in the Nigerian society as well as the African society in general, women occupying certain top level management positions are often under-looked by their male counterparts as people who cannot deliver or perform as much the men would, occupying the same positions.

⁶⁹SEVENTY-YEAR OLD CHAIRMAN OF BRIAN MUNRO LIMITED, MRS. REBECCA OLAMIDE ALU, SPEAKS ABOUT HER REGRETS AND THE TRANSITION HER LIFE HAS WITNESSED IN THIS INTERVIEW WITH ADA ONYEMA (SATURDAY, PUNCH, AUGUST 8, 2009)

‘Seventy-year old chairman of brain Munro Limited’ at the beginning of the above text will be automatically draw the attention of the reader to the fact that the chairman is a male. This is because, as has been severally stated, the Nigerian society is a male-dominated society, where it is often assumed that any person chairing or leading any organization is a male. But the text goes further to reveal the title, name and gender of the chairman, simultaneously in ‘Mrs. Rebecca Alu’. The Nigerian society is a patriarchal society where the women are considered subordinates to the men, and that is why the term ‘chairman’ mentioned anywhere immediately suggests that a man is in charge.

⁷⁰DIRECTOR, TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION AND INFORMATION, MRS. FUNKE ARABA (THE PUNCH, TUESDAY, AUGUST, 4, 2009)

The above statement has used a generic term “Director” and in the Nigerian context, when the title ‘Director’ is mentioned, one’s thinking goes straight to a male occupying such a position. Here, however, the ‘Director, Technology Acquisition is a female and not a male. The use of ‘Director’ here is gender bias. The term “Directress” could have been more appropriate here so as to indicate the gender of the person who is occupying the position.

⁷¹IN THE 2007 GOVERNORSHIP RACE IN ANAMBRA STATE, THE AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS PRESENTED A FEMALE CANDIDATE. THE SUPREME COURT, HOWEVER, ANNULLED THE ELECTIONS, RULING THAT THE INCUMBENT GOVERNOR, PETER OBI'S TENURE CONTINUES TILL 2010. NEXT YEAR, THEREFORE, IS ANOTHER GOVERNORSHIP POLL IN THE STATE, AND NJIDEKA ANYADIKE, THE WOMAN WHO FLEW THE ADC'S FLAG IN 2007 SAYS SHE IS READY TO TAKE THE SHOT AGAIN AT THE NUMBER ONE JOB IN THE SOUTH-EAST STATE. SHE SPEAKS TO SOME JOURNALISTS IN LAGOS (SUNDAY PUNCH, AUGUST, 16, 2009)

The above discourse has some traces of female distinctive markers revealed in 'Njideka Anyadike, the woman who flew the ADC's flag in 2007 says she is ready to take the shot again'. The stress on "the woman who flew the ADC's Flag in 2007" in the discourse shows that the society regards politics and certain positions as the prerogative of the male and the female are not supposed to venture into such areas.

⁷²FIRST FEMALE SECRETARY OF MAYO-BANI DEVELOPMENT AREA OF ADAMAWA STATE HANATU MALGWI (LEFT) AND THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE DEVELOPMENT AREA, ALHAJI SHUAIBU MARAFA BEING SWORN IN BY A CHIEF MAGISTRATE AT MAYO-BANI (DAILY TRUST, AUGUST, 14 2009)

It is clear that the stress in the above text is on the 'first female Secretary' and not person who is occupying the position of secretary. Nigeria is patriarchal

society, where women are expected to be subordinates to the male-counterparts and as such they are not supposed to be appointed into certain positions to lord over their male counterparts. It is invariably expected that a female should not be appointed into certain positions which the society regard as being exclusively for the male folk. The stress on first female secretary clearly indicates that women have been suppressed, relegated to the background and given second class citizenship positions when it comes to positions of authority, or public functions.

⁷³DIRECTOR-GENERAL, SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION, MS. ARUNMA OTEH, WITH EXECUTIVE COMMISSIONER FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION LAWAL SANI DURING THE COMMISSION'S MEETING WITH HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKET IN ABUJA YESTERDAY (DAILY TRUST WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2010)

In the Nigeria society, the use of the term “Director-General” presupposes to most people that a man is in charge. This is because of the general notion that all top ranking positions in any government and non-governmental organization are occupied by the male-folk and the females are only subordinates. “Director-General of the Securities and Stock Exchange Commission’ in the text above is a female and not a male and the appropriate title which could have adequately reflected the gender of the person occupying the position should have been ‘Directress-General’.

⁷⁴THE WORLD BANK VICE-PRESIDENT AFRICAN REGION MRS. OBY EZEKWESILI HAS LISTED IMPROVEMENT IN THE NATION'S FINANCIAL SECTOR AS ONE OF THE FACTORS TO GROW THE ECONOMY (THE PUNCH MONDAY AUGUST, 10, 2009)

The Vice President of the World Bank for the African region is a female and the only distinctive sex marker used here is the title “Mrs.”, and the use of ‘Vice ‘President is generic because the Vice President can either be a female or a male. The reason why there is no discriminatory tendency against the female vice-president may be because the appointment is from the international community where appointments are based on merit, and not on sentiments and gender-based criteria as is obtainable in the Nigerian society.

⁷⁵HEAD SYSTEMS CERTIFICATION UNIT, STANDARDS ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA, MRS. N. A. OLUJIE, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, FOOD CONCEPTS, PLC, MRS YEMISI JAJI, MANAGING DIRECTOR DEJI AKINYANJU; AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR, SON MRS. OLUREMI AYEMI AT THE PRESENTATION OF ISO CERTIFICATION TO FOOD CONCEPTS IN LAGOS. (THE PUNCH, MONDAY 19 2009)

The Deputy Director of Standard Organisation of Nigeria is a female. As a female, the statement could have read “Deputy-Directress SON, Mrs. Oluremi Ayemi” and not “Deputy Director, SON, Mrs. Oluremi Ayemi”. This is because whoever comes across the title ‘Deputy-Director’ in the Nigerian setting

immediately concludes that the occupant of the position is a male and not a female. If not for the use of the sex marker title “Mrs.”, most people will conclude that the occupant of the office is a male.

⁷⁶MRS. FUNKE OSIBODU, MANAGING DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, UNION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE IN LAGOS, YESTERDAY (DAILY TRUST THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2009)

The use of the gender marker ‘Mrs.’ in the above text reveals that the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Union Bank of Nigeria PLC” is a female. However, the use of “Director” in this context will automatically suggest that the occupant of the Chief Executive Officer is a male. Consequently, the appropriate title should have been “Directress” so that it will clearly reveal the gender of the occupant of the office.

⁷⁷TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION CHAIRMAN NDI OKEREKE ONYIUKE YESTERDAY IN LAGOS EXPLAINED THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO THE N40.8BILLION INDEBTEDNESS OF THE TRANSCORP TO BANKS. SHE SAID THAT HUGE DEBT AROSE FROM ACCUMULATED INTEREST. (DAILY TRUST THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2009)

The gender of the Chairman of Transnational Corporation is not mentioned, although the use of the pronoun “she” indicates the sex of the Chairman.

Therefore, using the word “chairman” for a female relegates the female folk as subordinates of the male-folk in the Nigerian society. It also shows that there are certain offices and positions in Nigeria which are regarded as the reservation of the male folk. The appropriate word to have been used is “chairperson” which will clearly indicate the gender of the occupants of the office.

⁷⁸FEMALE STUDENTS LAMBAST FG OVER STRIKE, UNDER THE NAME OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIAN FEMALE STUDENTS (NANFS) (SUNDAY TRUST, AUGUST 23, 2009)

The stress on ‘female students’ and the use of a different association apart from the main body of NANS which the overall body of the Nigerian students is indicative of a patriarchal society that is highly discriminatory against the female folk. The above reveals a high possibility of the female student members of the Association being seriously relegated to the backgrounds in an organization which they should have an equal say with their male counterparts. The statement could have been better expressed as “students lambast the federal government over strike” without necessarily stressing ‘female students’.

⁷⁹NATIONAL PRESIDENT ASSOCIATION OF PROPRIETORS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE, MRS. OLANREWaju OLOMOFE-KUFEJI, DEPUTY GOVERNOR, LAGOS STATE, MRS. SARAH SOSAN AND PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MRS. OMOLARA EROGBOGBO DURING A VISIT TO THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR IN IKEJA . . . ON WEDNESDAY (*THE PUNCH, AUGUST, 13, 2009*)

The gender of the President of the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools in Lagos is not clearly identified, except for the use of ‘Mrs.’. The name of the President is generic, because in Yoruba, there are no clear and distinctive names for the male and the female. Also, the Deputy Governor of Lagos State has been gender marked with the use of “Mrs.” The use of ‘Deputy Governor’ is not proper, because the occupant of the office is a female; as such, “Deputy Governess” which would have been more appreciated. Again, the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Education in Lagos State is not gender marked. The only gender marker is the use of “Mrs.” and the name.

⁸⁰MANAGING DIRECTOR OF JHN MICRO FINANCE BANK (MFB), MRS. HELEN OKORODUDU, SAYS THAT THE COOPERATION OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE MICRO FINANCE SUB-SECTOR IS NEEDED TO REDUCE INCIDENCE OF POVERTY IN THE COUNTRY (DAILY TRUST FRIDAY AUGUST 7, 2009)

The Manger of the Micro Finance Bank is a female, and so the right expression to use is the ‘Managing Directress’. Also, the gender of the Managing Director is marked with “Mrs.” This is also a manifestation of the degree of discrimination against the idea of women occupying certain positions in the Nigerian society. In order to avoid this trend and the sentiments usually expressed especially by feminists, pronouns such as ‘she’, ‘her’, ‘hers’ will be more appropriate.

⁸¹FEMALE JOURNALISTS TASKED ON MATERNAL HEALTH REPORTING. PRACTICING FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA HAVE BEEN CHARGED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAMPAIGN FOR IMPROVED MATERNAL HEALTH THROUGH EXTENSIVE REPORTING AND AWARENESS CREATION ON THE ISSUE PARTICULARLY AT THE GRASSROOTS (SUNDAY TRUST, AUGUST, 2, 2009)

The above statement has been sex-marked by the use of the expression ‘female journalists’. The statement could have read ‘Journalists tasked on maternal health reporting’. The statement raises the questions regarding whether it is only female journalists that can effectively contribute to maternal health. It

also tends to question the capabilities of the female journalists in executing their tasks effectively.

**⁸²VICE-CHAIRMAN, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES’
COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION, HAJIYA
KHADIJA ABBA (THE PUNCH, TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2009)**

Although ‘Vice Chairman’ in the above statement suggests that the gender of the Chairman is a male, the mention of the name ‘Khadija’ and the use of the anaphoric “Hajiya” immediately reveal the female identity of the committee head, because the ‘Hajiya’ anaphoric especially is applied only to females in Islamic culture. The title of the Chairman could have been “Vice-Chairperson’ to be more precise and to distinguish the gender of the person heading the house committee on communication.

**⁸³MANAGER, MAJOR PROJECTS, MOBILE
PRODUCING NIGERIA, SUSAN ESHETT, DURING
THE DONATION OF BIOMEDICAL TEST AND
REPAIR KIDS TO LABORATORY SERVICES IN
LAGOS ((THE PUNCH, TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2009)**

The gender of the Manager, Major Projects, Mobile Producing Nigeria, has not been identified nor any anaphoric such as “Miss” or “Mrs.” used as gender distinctive marker. It is only the name ‘Susan’ which can give a clue as to the

gender of the Manager. The term ‘manageress’ could have also been applied here to serve as a distinctive gender marker of the manager in question.

⁸⁴SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON ARRIVED IN LIBERIA YESTERDAY IN A SHOW OF SUPPORT FOR AFRICA’S ONLY FEMALE LEADER, ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF, WHO FACED CALLS TO QUIT AFTER A PROBE INTO THE COUNTRY’S CIVIL WAR. (DAILY TRUST, AUGUST 14, 2009)

The above statement reveals a stress on Africa’s only female leader, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. In the Nigerian society and in most societies of Africa, leadership positions, especially those that are political, are seen as the exclusive preserve of the male; therefore, women are not supposed to take part in politics. The stress on the above statement shows the extent of this exclusion of women from participating in politics in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular. The men always stress that the position and responsibility of the women is in taking care of the home front while they (the male folk) are out there taking part in politics and other activities considered too masculine for women.

Apart from the female president, ‘the secretary of state’ is generic since the gender is not known. The names of the secretary of state are unisex and any person can think that the secretary is either a male or a female. In this case, the only gender distinct marker was the use of ‘she’ where it is stated “on arrival she went into a meeting with President Sirleaf”.

**⁸⁵DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF PLATEAU STATE,
MRS. PAULINE YESTERDAY MADE PUBLIC
HER INTEREST IN RUNNING FOR THE
GOVERNORSHIP OF THE STATE IN THE
FORTHCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS
(DAILY TRUST, DECEMBER 2, 2010)**

Top political offices in Nigeria are often viewed as positions only for the male-folk and any woman vying for such positions is often frowned upon by the society. This is because the society often makes reference the woman as being in charge of the children at home and other household chores. The above statement is clearly gender-bias because the Deputy Governor is a female. The use of the anaphoric “Mrs.” has made it very obvious that the Nigerian populace often frown upon women who compete with the men for certain positions which they think should only be for the males.

The declaration of Mrs. Pauline Tallen could not have gone down well with her male political counterparts, for they would certainly have looked down on her; “a woman competing with them”.

⁸⁶GENERAL MANAGER OF ADDAX PETROLEUM, DOROTHY ATAKE AND ADDAX'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MONDAY OTABOR AT THE OPENING OF A MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF PETROLEUM ENGINEERS (SPE) AT TRANSCOP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA, YESTERDAY. (DAILY TRUST, TUESDAY 4, 2009)

There are no distinctive gender markers in the above text, and it is only the name 'Dorothy' that identifies the gender of the General Manager. Another way to have identified the gender of the General Manager is to use the term "General Manageress" for the female manager in this situation. The use of 'General Manager' in this context is generic and in order to avoid confusion, there should be the application of gender markers to identify the gender of the subject(s).

⁸⁷DR. DOYINSOLA, ABIOLA, CHAIRMAN ALL OF THE INTEGRATED MICROFINANCE BANK (IMFB) AT THE RECONCILIATORY BOARD MEETING BETWEEN MUDAKA AND OTHER BOARD MEMBERS OF THE BANK IN LAGOS YESTERDAY. (DAILY TRUST, TUESDAY 4, 2009)

Although 'Dr. Doyinsola Abiola, Chairman, All Integrated Microfinance Bank (IMFB)' is a female, she is not identified as such in the above text. The most important thing here is the position she is occupying and not her gender. This might be as a result of her competence in performing her duties. Normally, in Nigeria such gender marker as 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' are used after the title abbreviation

of ‘Dr’, with ‘Mrs.’ being more common. This is usually applied in order to downgrade the female folk or to show that they are not equal to the male-folk in terms of performing their functions.

**⁸⁸SUDANESE TROUSER WOMAN READY FOR
40,000 LASHES (*DAILY TRUST, TUESDAY 4, 2009*)**

The above statement shows that the wearing of trousers by women is often frowned upon in most, if not all, African societies. Women are not allowed to wear trousers in public. Most Africans believe that trousers are only meant to be worn by men.

**⁸⁹THE POLICE IN MADUGURI HAVE RESCUED
SIX OUT OF THE 12 FEMALE STUDENTS
ABDUCTED BY A CLERIC SUSPECTED TO BE
A MEMBER OF THE BOKO HARAM SECT ON
JULY 18, 2009 IN PLATEAU STATE (*DAILY TRUST,
TUESDAY 4, 2009*)**

The statement is gender-bias as the stress is on “12 female students” that have been rescued. This statement could have simply reads ‘six out of 12 students abducted’, and then the use of pronouns such as ‘she’, ‘her’, ‘hers’ will differentiate the gender of the rescued students.

⁹⁰THE DIRECTOR OF THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE NDI OKEREKE-ONYUIKE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF STOCK BROKING HOUSE OF NIGERIA AND CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF STOCKBROKERS HAVE EXONERATED THE EXCHANGE FROM THE SACK OF THE MANAGEMENT OF FIVE BANKS, SAY THE EXPOSURE OF THE AFFECTED BANKS TO THE CAPITAL MARKET WAS LESS THAN N426 TRILLION TOTAL LOAN PORTFOLIO OF THE BANKS (DAILY TRUST, WEDNESDAY19, 2009)

The gender of the Director of the Nigerian Stock Exchange has not been identified, although she is a female. There was no use of any anaphoric like ‘Mrs.’ or ‘Madam’ which could have given a clue that the Director is a female. The most appropriate term which could have been used here is ‘The Directress General’ which would easily have identified the gender of the Director of the Stock Exchange market in Nigeria.

⁹¹40 LADY MECHANICS GRADUATE. AFTER THREE YEARS OF INTENSIVE AUTOMOBILE REPAIR TRAINING, INCLUDING INTERNSHIPS IN NIGERIAN FOREMOST AUTOMOBILE COMPANIES, 40 YOUNG LADIES HAVE GRADUATED (DAILY TRUST, TUESDAY 28, 2009)

There are certain occupations which are assumed to be meant only for the male-folk and women who venture into them are often looked upon as misfits or people who have missed their way out of their right vocation. The above

discourse does not just indicate that there were female mechanics for the training, but places the stress on 40 female mechanics, because the Nigerian society looks at the mechanic profession as an occupation strictly for the male-folk.

**⁹²AFTER TALKS WITH GERMAN
CHANCELLOR ANGELA MERKEL,
NETANYAHU EXPRESSED HOPES FOR A
QUICK RESUMPTION OF MIDDLE EAST
PEACE TALKS AS HE WARNED OF A MORTAL
THREAT TO ISRAEL'S SURVIVAL POSED BY
IRAN (DAILY TRUST, TUESDAY 28, 2009)**

Angela Merkel is female, and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, occupying the top political office of her country. Ideally, this could have been frowned upon by the male-folk, but because in Europe there is gender equality to a certain degree, it was not.

The German Chancellor is a female, and the title as used above is not gender marked. Anybody who comes across this discourse will think that the German Chancellor is a male, because it is often assumed that most top political office holders are males.

**⁹³FIRST WOMAN WINS ECONOMIC NOBEL
(DAILY TRUST, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13,
2009)(Daily Trust Tuesday, October 13, 2009)**

The above discourse is clearly genderly marked 'first woman'. This goes to show that the male-folk are underrating the female -folk in certain aspects of intellectual capabilities. What could have been obtainable in this situation would have been to put down the name of the Noble Prize winner and use pronouns such as 'she', 'her' , 'hers', and not stressing 'first woman to win an Economic Nobel' as if to say that women cannot compete favourably with their male counterparts in certain aspects of life.

**⁹⁴FEMALE SOLDIERS MARCH PAST
TIANANMEN SQUARE DURING MILITARY
PARADE (DAILY TRUST FRIDAY, OCTOBER,
2009)**

In a male dominated society such as Nigeria, women are often looked upon as the weaker sex, and people who need to be protected at all times, and therefore should be and excluding them from picking up certain occupations. From the above discourse, the stress is on 'female soldiers' as if women are not competent enough to be in the military. This shows that the extent to which women are looked down upon by the males.

**⁹⁵LADIES FIGHT OVER BEEF, FOOD AT
COMMISSIONER'S PARTY (*DAILY TRUST FRIDAY,
OCTOBER 30, 2009*)**

Naturally human beings struggle for survival in any situation where there is the need to keep life going and also where the resources are not enough to take care of one's hunger. There is the need to struggle in order to get food where there are many mouths to feed. From the above discourse, the stress on 'ladies fighting over beer, food at commissioner's party' as if they are not human, although naturally it is very rare to see or hear ladies fighting over food. It is only believed that only the males usually fight for food, drinks and other necessities.

**⁹⁶FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT OF PLATEAU
STUDENTS SWORN IN (*DAILY TRUST THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 22, 2009*)**

The above discourse reveals that the male students have been dominating the student union activities in Plateau state, relegating the female students to the background, and giving them supporting roles in the union activities. The stress in 'First Female President' shows the extent to which the males abhor females ruling over them. It also reveals that women are regarded as being incompetent and cannot compete favourably with male students in terms of student unionism and other political activities.

⁹⁷EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANN VENEMAN (DAILY TRUST FRIDAY, AUGUST 27, 2009)

The use of ‘Executive Director’ here is generic. To reveal the gender of the Director, the word ‘Executive Directress’ word have been used.

⁹⁸AN APPARENTLY RESPECTABLE WOMAN TEACHER HAS BEEN EXPOSED AS A ‘PREDATORY PEDOPHILE’ WHO SEXUALLY ASSAULTED CHILDREN 100 TIMES (LEADERSHIP WEEKEND, OCTOBER, 10, 2009)

The stress on ‘woman teacher’ in the above discourse is discriminatory against the women folk. Men too are pedophiles, and if such an article were to be written about men, the stress would not have been on ‘man teacher’. In the above text, therefore, the writer could have just mentioned ‘a teacher’, her name, and such pronouns as ‘she’, ‘her’, ‘hers’, etc which would have helped the reader to distinguish the gender of the pedophile teacher.

⁹⁹CHAIRPERSON OF THE LIBERIA ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION, MRS. FRANCES-JOHNSON (LEFT) BEING DECORATED WITH THE EFCC CHAIRMAN MRS. FARIDA WAZIRI, DURING THE LIBERIAN COMMISSION’S VISIT TO EFCC HEADQUARTERS IN ABUJA YESTERDAY (DAILY TRUST FRIDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2010)

The use of ‘Chairperson’ and the anaphoric ‘Mrs.’ in the above text is gender marked, and it has made the reader to understand the gender of the person heading the

EFCC to be a female. Furthermore, the use of ‘Chairman’ for the head of the anti-corruption agency in Nigeria contradicts the term which was used for the title of the head of Liberian anti-corruption agency. The use of ‘Chairman’ in this case will make any reader to believe that the head of the Nigerian anti-corruption agency is a man, and so the term ‘Chairperson’ could have been more appropriate in revealing the female identity of the person in question.

4.1.3 Conversations

Another source of data for this study was the recording of conversations with people in places; hospitals, markets and homes. Some of these discussions had gender markers, and discussed below:

¹⁰⁰FEMALE ARMED ROBBERS ARE MANY IN NIGERIA NOW, SO I FEAR TO GIVE LIFTS TO LADIES I DO NOT KNOW. (CONVERSATION AMONGST COLLEAGUES, 2010 [NON-FORMAL])

Over the years, women in the Nigerian society have not been associated with armed robbery. Recent reports of their involvement in it are only attributed to the increasing rate of unemployment and the harsh economic realities in the country. Since the crime permeates the entire society with even more of men participating, the statement above should have just been ‘armed robbers are many in Nigeria’. The words ‘female armed robbers’ are in the statement is therefore sex-marked. It could also have been ‘armed robbers are many in Nigeria, and some are female’.

¹⁰¹THE FEMALE DOCTOR WILL BE ON DUTY AT THE CLINIC TODAY. SHE IS TO CARRY OUT A CAESAREAN OPERATION. I DON'T KNOW IF SHE CAN DO IT ALONE.(CONVERSATION IN THE HOSPITAL: [NON-FORMAL])

The above statement clearly reveals a distinctive bias against the female doctor. In this discourse, the stress is on 'the female doctor', which casts doubts on her competence in carrying out a caesarean operation alone. This is a very glaring example of bias towards the female folk by a society which is predominantly patriarchal, and in which the general feeling is that the woman cannot perform certain functions or duties without the backing or support of man.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the work with its findings, and conclusion which involves the discourse analysis of gender distinction of sex markers in male and female talk.

5.1 Summary

In chapter one, the researcher established a background for the study by surveying how the field of Discourse Analysis forms a basis for the exploration of conversation between people of varying rank and status. Drawing insights from the works of Brown and Yule (1993), Stubbs (1995), Osisanwo (2003), this chapter attempted an overview of the subject-matter of Discourse Analysis, by looking at the field as the analysis of language in use. Also in this chapter, some gender-sensitive expressions in common use were highlighted and briefly examined forming a basis for the study. The chapter also dwelled on the statement of the research problem of the study and establishing the basis for the analysis of the sexist nature of the English Language in everyday discourse especially as it concerns the use in the society, gender markers with bias connotations. Research questions were raised; the aims and objectives of the study as well as its delimitation and scope were also stated in this chapter. The chapter also captured the justification of the study

Chapter two is a broad review of the corpus of literature relevant to the subject-matter of the research. First, there was a general review of Discourse Analysis with particular regards to such discourse concepts as references, presupposition, implicatures, inference, the context of situation; conversational implicatures/entailment, etc. The chapter also reviewed the principle of analogy which hearers and analysts adopt in determining interpretation in context. Also reviewed in this chapter is Austin's (1962) famous Speech Act Theory which provides an account of some apparently unconnected utterances brought together in conversational discourse to form a coherent sequence categorizing utterances into constatives and performances (with the latter furnishing the research with insights on the sexist nature of language use in the society), the Speech Act Theory as reviewed in this chapter, outlined a set of conditions an utterance should fulfill for it to be a successful performance of the act contained in its propositional content. The chapter also attempted an elaborate review of the concepts of anaphoric references, exophoric reference and cataphoric reference especially in respect of how they provide the appropriate context for the interpretation and understanding of gender markers in discourse. Other concepts reviewed in the chapter were gender, power, and education, all as they affect the discriminatory identity of the female folk in language use. This chapter finally established a theoretical framework for the study by drawing insights from the works of Fairclough (1995) and Greenberg (1966).

Chapter three is the methodology of the research. Here, the researcher proposed the research design of the study, together with the method and instrument of data collection and the procedure for data analysis.

Chapter four is the presentation and analysis of data. Over fifty statements, most of which were sampled speeches of discourses picked from male and female discussions on political, social and educational matters, were analysed. The analysis revealed society's low-rating of women, manifest in the use of gender sex markers that name distinctive bias against the women folk, in the area of language use. The elements of sex and distinctive markers as revealed by the analysis of the data showed that the bias and discrimination suffered by the women folk is rooted in a long standing patriarchal ideology that advocates the superiority of the 'male' over the 'female'.

5.2 Findings of the Research

The research revealed that English Language is deeply-rooted in words that have sexist connotations, leading those who use the language to subconsciously categorise people by their gender. Commonly used gender-biased words were found to have a significantly negative impact on how we think about women in the society. It was discovered that through the use of these words, people, both men and women, are usually generally categorized into one gender-the masculine gender. Although, this is a manifest demonstration of male chauvinism, it also suggests that sexism in English language may be sometimes difficult to recognize in discussions or writings, because it's usually embedded in male and female talk.

The research also revealed that sometimes, it is the subtle forms of sexism in language that contribute to the reinforcement and sustenance of gender stereotypes in the society. The research reveals that by itself, sexist language is not without negative

consequences for the society that condones its usage. Thus, it is only by altering the sexist character of our language that the negative stereotype imposed on the identity of the woman can be lifted.

Also one of the findings of this study is that there are areas of less discrimination against the womenfolk and these areas included language use of sex markers in some phrases like: “Ladies and gentlemen” and “Mother tongue, motherhood”.

5.3 Conclusion

Though, women as a social group is clearly different from men as a minority group they are as oppressed and marginalized. Outside the way in which we order the world there can be no compelling reason to classify people according to their genitalia, and even if there were, there would still be no compelling reason to classify them simply dichotomously, a division which we even find frequently inadequate, despite our mental set which helps to construe difference along sexually dimorphous lines. While at one level we may support or refute the myth of male superiority – it being a matter of political choice – at another level we are unaware of the way in which it structures our behavior and forms some of the limits of our world. Substance should no longer be given to patriarchal this order and its integral component, the superiority of the male. We have started to formulate different rules for classifying the world, rules that are not based on the assumption that the proper human being is a male one and that female is a negative category. All words-regardless of their origin-which are associated with females acquire negative connotations, because this is a

fundamental semantic ‘rule’ in a society which constructs male supremacy. When the same words shift from being positive to being negative once the reference is made to a male or to a female then, the ‘logic’ lies not in the word (and what it represents) but in the sex. The way meaning is created in our society depends upon dividing the world into positive –masculine and negative-female. Codifying the meaning that woman is an autonomous category and should begin to make this version of the world come true. Another factor which we must bear in mind is that women need more words – and more positive words not less. The removal of sexist words would not leave a large repertoire of words for women to draw upon! Such strategies as the elimination or addition of words are basically short-sighted, for the problem lies not in the words but in the semantic rule which governs their positive or negative connotations. More evidence which disproves male superiority and which unmask the many mechanisms which have helped to sustain this unfortunate and inappropriate reality should be gathered.

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