

Linguistic Sexism in Online Greek Newspapers

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Linguistic Sexism

- One of the most painful manifestations of sexism is linguistic sexism.
- Sexist Language is supposed to be a language that is considered to be all inclusive, but unintentionally or not, excludes a gender.
- Main forms of Linguistic Sexism
 1. The use of male as generic
 2. The semantic derogation of women

According to Mills (1995) sexism could be analyzed at three levels in a text: at word-level, sentence-level and at discourse-level.

A Study examining Linguistic Sexism In Greek Newspaper websites

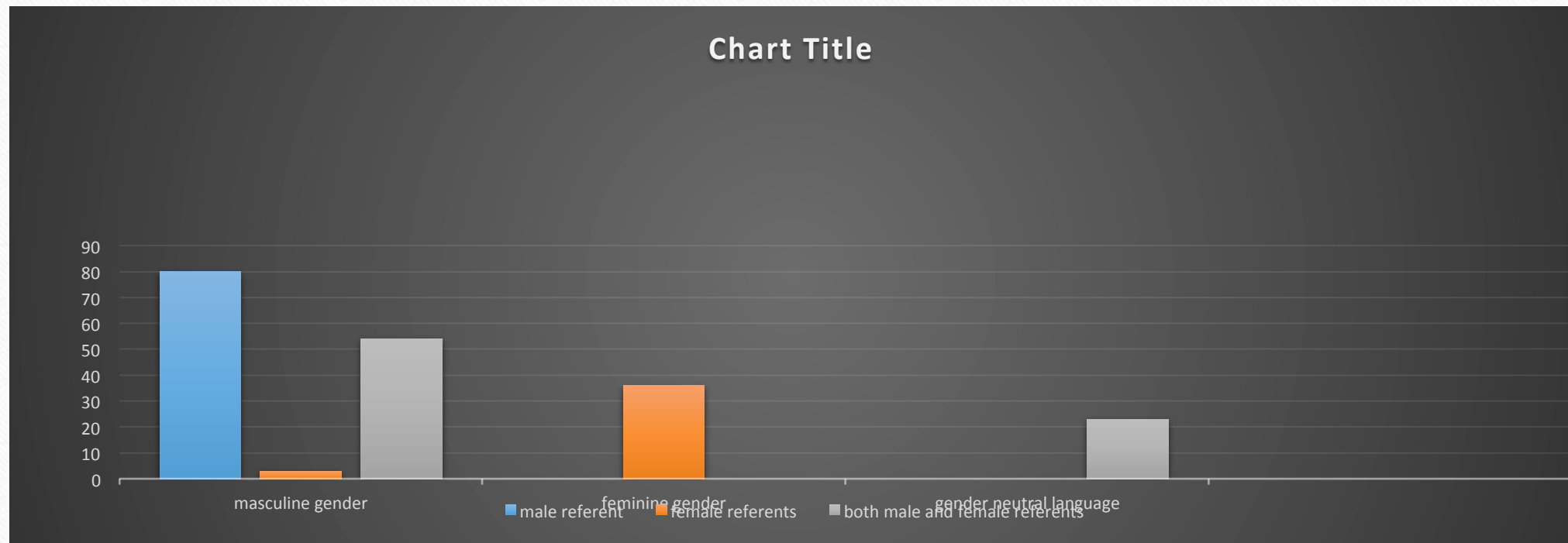
Research Questions

- Is the male used as generic or more gender inclusive approaches have been adopted? (such as gender specification or gender neutralization)
- Is the semantic derogation of women a prevalent phenomenon in the analysis?
- How are men and women depicted in the discourse level? Do they diverge from depictions that perpetuate or justify essentialist ideologies?

Data Collection

The corpus of this research is 11 articles and news broadcast, which were selected randomly. The articles and the news broadcast were selected from 9 different mainstream online Greek newspapers. Namely: “CNN GREECE”, “LIFO”, “H AYTH”, “ΛΑΙΜΗΤΟΜΟΣ”, “ΡΙΖΟΣΠΙΑΣΤΗΣ”, “Η ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΔΑ ΤΩΝ ΣΥΝΤΑΚΤΩΝ”, “ΤΟ ΒΗΜΑ”, “Η ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ”. Moreover, the data collected are recent, dating from 2020 to 2022, so they depict the contemporary situation in Greece.

An Analysis of the Linguistic Sexism in Greek newspapers websites.



Male as Generic

- The use of masculine grammatical gender -> a default category to refer to both male and female referents –A **common tendency in in Greek newspapers**
- Male's dominance is not only present in generic terms but throughout the texts.
- Use of the masculine gender even when there is an analogous term that refers exclusively to female referents. (Article 6)

Συνειδητοποιώ ότι υπάρχει **ένας ηλικιωμένος** που μιλάει έντονα στη **σερβιτόρα** και κάτι λέει "θα φωνάξω την αστυνομία, αυτό που μου λες είναι παράνομο". Ο διπλανός του εξίσου ηλικιωμένος Όπως αναφέρουν, η τακτική που ακολούθησε δεν συνάδει με την "ηθική" του καταστήματος, καθώς και της περιοχής, ενώ η πρόσληψή του, έγινε πριν λίγο καιρό. Αναφέρεται δε, πως **ο συγκεκριμένος** υπάλληλος απομακρύνθηκε από το κατάστημα. Σε απάντηση προς χρήστη του

Observations

- In Greek in the case of the endings -ός/-ίς/-έας , the gender of the referents is clarified either through the article and the suffixes in the noun phrase , or through pronouns, as long as they appear either in the sentence or in the text. (Georgalidou & Lampropoulou ,2016) For example, in the article 11, or in the article 3

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Προηγούμενος **η Πρόεδρος** της Δημοκρατίας :

- The cases of ambiguity as far as it concerns the author's intention to use the masculine gender, are resolved by using the masculine article in different parts of the same text. (Article 6)

ότι οι άνθρωποι δεν νοιάζονται τόσο πολύ για τις ειδήσεις και για τις “έκτακτες ειδήσεις” όσο εμε **οι δημοσιογράφοι**. **Οι πολίτες** θέλουν πάνω απ’ όλα να καταλάβουν τι συμβαίνει. Το να παίρνουν ασταμάτητα ειδοποιήσεις στις συσκευές τους, τους μπερδεύει περισσότερο. Θα λάβουν φυσικά αυτές τις ειδοποιήσεις, με τον ίδιο τρόπο που σκρολάρουν στο Twitter τους, γιατί όλο αυτό ενεργοποιεί το μαγικό κουμπί της ντοπαμίνης. Θα **τους** προκληθεί όμως και ένα άγχος, όπως φυσικά άγχος δημιουργείται και **στους ίδιους τους δημοσιογράφους**. Στο τέλος, **το κοινό** αρχίζει ν

- Neutral gendered words, such as “katoikoi”, “anthropoi” (Article 2) on strict terms refer to both female and male referents. However, the texts are interpreted as a whole. When the whole text contextualizes the dominance of masculine grammatical gender, then even the neutral terms will be interpreted as masculine.

όμως να λειτουργεί. **Οι κάτοικοι** των Βουτών είναι **πραγματικοί δημοκράτες** αλλά και **σεμνοί άνθρωποι**. Εκδήλωσαν τότε τα δημοκρατικά τους αισθήματα, έγιναν παράδειγμα αντίστασης στην

Semantic Derogation Of Women

- Words with female reference tend to be associated with negative meanings. (Schulz, 1975)
- Also, feminine nouns denoting professions and having feminine-marked endings, are subject to negative evaluations (Georgalidou & Lampropoulou, 2016)

article 9 vs article 11

vs

Σάλος στην Πάτρα: Η γιατρίνα σύζυγός μου έφερε δύο εραστές στο σπίτι!

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The woman is presented as a creature disloyal to her family, having multiple love affairs while married and unworthy to raise properly her children. In this context the use of the term “γιατρίνα”, is used pejoratively. The feminine realization of the term is used to humiliate the woman. This becomes even more evident in comparison with the term “η ιατροδικαστής” (Article 11), in which the female referent is presented as a victim, that was murdered by her husband. Despite the fact that there is in Greek, a word to refer to a female referent “ιατροδικαστίνα”, in this case, the writer chooses the more “valid” term, the masculine, so as not to “insult” the victim.

Προηγουμένως η Πρόεδρος της Δημοκρατίας :

The existence of pair of words like master/mistress, bachelor/spinster in English are some indicators of the social symmetry of males and females. (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2003). **Semantic derogation** Why do we have 'χορεύτρια' but not 'βουλευτρια'?

Women and Men at Discourse Level

Μια αναπληρώτρια [ιατροδικαστής δολοφονήθηκε](#) την Τρίτη στο γραφείο της στο Ντάλας από τον εν διαστάσει σύζυγό της, ο οποίος στη συνέχεια έστρεψε το όπλο στον εαυτό του και αυτοκτόνησε.

The stereotype that men are sexually driven and women are passively the victims of their aggressive tendencies, is portrayed on the article 11 and on article 7, where they fall victims of their partners, who killed them.

On the other hand, femininity most of the times is linked with sex. Women are the ones that take part in sex scandals (article 9) and they are driven by their emotions. Women's jobs as dancers, sound sexually promiscuous and this can stand as a justification of their death by their "jealous" partner, in case he murdered her (article 7). The characterization of the female as "Ρωσίδα χορεύτρια", carries meanings of a sexually promiscuous woman, both due to her profession and her origin. Language is overloaded with ideologies and the writer takes advantage of those ideologies. There was no need to refer to her as "Ρωσίδα χορεύτρια"

Ρωσίδα **χορεύτρια** βρέθηκε νεκρή χωρίς ρούχα στην μπανιέρα Νοτιοκορεάτη επιχειρηματία...

Women and Men at Discourse Level

Butler (1990) claims that sociocultural gender is brought into being by the performance of certain acts which are culturally understood as gendered and based on the false belief that a pre-social biological essence preexists and determines social relations.

Στους θύτες ενδοοικογενειακής βίας δύναται να επιβληθεί 10ήμερη απομάκρυνση από την οικογενειακή εστία, διάστημα κατά το οποίο δεν μπορούν να έρθουν σε επαφή με τη σύντροφο ή τα παιδιά τους. Το πρωτοποριακό αυτό μέτρο που εφαρμόζει η Ολλανδία έχει στόχο οι Αρχές να

Το κακό με τους δολοφόνους, βιαστές, ληστές, εμπόρους ναρκωτικών, μικροκλέφτες, απατεώνες, μαστροπούς κ.λπ. έχει παραγίνει, καταγγέλλει με εύλογα οργισμένο άρθρο του στην ιστοσελίδα

- Women, are treated as the weak sex and most of the time passive viewers. Men are presented as aggressive and they choose solve their problems through the use of violence.
- They are described most of the times as the victimizers and women are their victims. It can be considered sexist the fact that in article 4 that explores generally the topic of domestic violence, men are treated as the victimizers and there is no single reference to women as such.

Επτάχρονος είπε στη μητέρα του ότι 14χρονος τον παρενόχλησε στις τουαλέτες του νοσοκομείου. Η μητέρα ενημέρωσε τον πατέρα του 7χρονου κι εκείνος έσπευσε στο νοσοκομείο και ξυλοκόπησε τον 14χρονο.

Concluding Remarks

The press is a powerful means dissemination of information and it can shape the public opinion and influence people's attitudes and beliefs.

The language used and the stereotypes that are propagated through it, contribute to the construction of reality.

The results of this study show that through the extensive use of male as generic, the semantic derogation of women at word level and the stereotypical depiction of male as aggressive and women as passive at discourse level, linguistic sexism is promoted. Greek newspapers still use sexist language. Researches from other countries showcase such inclinations on their newspapers, as well.

Jakarta Post-→ 21 lexical asymmetry and 97 uses of male as generic, which showcases the male dominance. (Wulandari, Purwaningsih, & Hawasi, 2016)

Daily Mail (Demberg ,2014). → **word level** :the generic use of masculine words was extensive, as well as the difference of how first name and surname are used to refer to women and men and in the use of titles.

At discourse level: sexism was traced at the difference of how women and men are referred to in terms of their relationship to others and in terms of appearance. However, the gender of the journalist did not show any significance for the language-use in terms of sexism.

THANK YOU FOR

YOUR ATTENTION!

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