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**Department of Languages, Information and Communications**

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Doctor of Philosophy

**A Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of the Representation of Women in  
Four Algerian News Outlets between 2016 and 2021**

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## Abstract

The present study adopts a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) approach (Lazar, 2005) to critically examine the way women are represented in four Algerian news outlets. More specifically, it aims at uncovering the main discourses and ideologies embedded in two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria between 2016 and 2021. This period witnessed social and political changes that challenged hegemonic beliefs about women in Algeria. Therefore, the aim of the thesis is to investigate whether the selected newspapers represent this change in their discursive construction of women by analysing their linguistic and visual texts. Since the Arabophone and the Francophone newspapers have different ideological affiliations, the present thesis seeks to compare between the two types of newspapers to see whether this influences the way they portray women in their texts. The Arabophone newspapers chosen for the research are *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar*. As for the Francophone ones, *El Watan* and *Liberté* have been selected. The data of the study are analysed using the three-dimensional model proposed by Fairclough (1989; 1992), which consists of the categories of *description*, *interpretation*, and *explanation*. Based on these levels of analysis, the results of the study reveal a complex interaction of diverse perspectives on women in the newspapers. Hegemonic discourses that reinforce imbalanced power relations between women and men are particularly prominent in the Arabophone newspaper *Echorouk El Yawmi*. The *El Khabar* newspaper contains both hegemonic and non-hegemonic perspectives on women. In contrast, the two Francophone newspapers predominantly adopt a progressive stance on gender relations in their texts. The results of the study, hence, show differences in the way women are positioned in the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in Algeria.

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved parents,  
my sisters, brothers, and all my friends.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

CDA- Critical Discourse Analysis

CL- Critical Linguistics

FCDA- Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis

FIS- Front Islamique du Salut

FLN- Front de Libération Nationale

IWD- International Women's Day

MENA- Middle East and North Africa

MSA- Modern Standard Arabic

## **Chapter One**

### **General Introduction**

#### **1.1. Introduction**

The present chapter represents a general introduction to my research project and this introductory part of the chapter aims to demonstrate the structure of the chapter and the concern of each of its sections. The main objective of this introductory chapter is to demonstrate a clear explanation of the topic under examination. First, the research problem and research aims are outlined in Section 1.2. After that, based on the objectives of the study, the research questions that the thesis seeks to answer are identified in Section 1.3. This is followed by a discussion of the key motivations behind conducting the research study in Section 1.4. Finally, this introductory chapter concludes with an outline of all the thesis chapters and a brief description of the content of each chapter in Section 1.5.

#### **1.2. Research Problem and Research Aims**

Gender is an important category of social life. We live in a world where it is nearly impossible to perceive people without considering their gender, along with other social categories like race, ethnicity, and age, as these factors significantly shape our understanding of identity (Jule, 2017). In fact, gender is often linked to the biological differences between women and men i.e. sex (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). This connection serves as the foundation for organising social structures by assigning women and men distinct social roles and social positions (Freedman, 2001). The expression 'Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus' (Gray, 1992:4) sums up this idea by suggesting that women and men are naturally different as if they belong to two different planets. However, as Jule (2017:4) indicates, '...gendered roles have less to do with which sex we were born

with and more to do with our surrounding society's values, norms and expectations'. Indeed, gender distinctions made on the basis of the biological sex of individuals have resulted in the creation and perpetuation of gender inequalities. In this context, Schippers (2007) states that social divisions made according to biological differences maintain a system where men are positioned as dominant and the 'norm', while women are relegated to a subordinate 'other'. This indicates that gender operates as an ideological structure that divides individuals into women and men based on dynamics of domination and subordination (Lazar, 2005). This dominance tends to go unnoticed within a community as it becomes normalised through the internalisation of gendered norms and expectations (Lazar, 2005). An important question that can be asked regarding this issue is: how gender norms are maintained and perpetuated in society? Societal institutions such as the family, educational settings, workplaces, governments, and the media play a crucial role in producing and maintaining widespread beliefs about gender (Litosseliti, 2006). The media hold significant influence by actively shaping and constructing beliefs about gender through the use of language and various semiotic modes. In this vein, Santoniccolo et al. (2023:1) state: '[a]mong the many sources of influence on gender representations, media occupies an important space'. Indeed, the linguistic and semiotic structures employed in the media, and other institutional settings, play a key role in creating and shaping our gendered selves. Therefore, the present study, by focusing on the institution of media, investigates how news media serve as sites for constructing assumptions about gender. It specifically explores the way women are represented through the linguistic and visual elements of news media texts, with a focus on the Algerian social context.

Algerian society, like many other societies in the world, is structured around rigid gender divisions. In examining the role of Algerian women from colonial to postcolonial times, it can be noticed that it went through a number of changes. The colonial era in

Algeria was characterised by extreme patriarchy (Amrane Minne and Abu Haidar, 1999). Yet, during the war of independence (1954-1962), Algerian women challenged gendered expectations by actively participating in the struggle for independence against the French coloniser (Turshen, 2002). After the Algerian revolution, the country witnessed the establishment of patriarchal laws, notably the family code, in addition to the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism in the 1990s that put women in a subordinate position (Salhi, 2003; 2010). However, starting from 2000s, the field of women's rights in Algeria has witnessed a considerable development by the introduction of some reforms and the enactment of new laws in favour of women, aimed at promoting women's empowerment (Tripp, 2019a). The amendments particularly targeted the family code by granting women more rights concerning marriage, divorce, child custody and so on. In addition to changes in the family code, reforms also extended to the status of women in the public sphere, particularly their role in politics and the business market. Additionally, the Algerian protest movement against the political order, known as 'Hirak' (explained in Section 2.6 of Chapter Two), which started in 2019 and ended in 2021, gave a different image of Algerian women through their active participation and engagement in the movement alongside men (Tripp, 2019b).

All these recent changes in women's role and status in Algerian society raise the following question: do the Algerian press represent this change in women's role through their portrayal of women in their texts? More precisely, does the Algerian press reinforce stereotypical gendered beliefs in society, or does it actively challenge and reshape them? To provide an answer to this question, my research project, within the framework of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth FCDA) (Lazar, 2005), questions the representation of women in four Algerian news outlets. More specifically, it strives to uncover the main discourses and ideologies about women that are embedded in the linguistic and visual texts of two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria

between 2016-2021, by focusing on International Women's Day (henceforth IWD). The rationale for choosing this day is that it constitutes a feminist day that is commemorated each March 8 to advocate for women's rights and gender equality. By critically examining the texts of the chosen newspapers, the present research demonstrates whether they reproduce or challenge dominant discourses on gender, in light of the recent efforts by the government to advance women's rights in the Algerian society and the active involvement of women in the protest movement. It starts from 2016, coinciding with the last constitutional amendment in favour of women, which mentions the state's commitment to attain equality between women and men in the job market and promote women to leadership positions. The study continues till the recent protest movement (2019-2021), during which women actively participated as 'agents' advocating for social and political change.

The central argument of the present thesis is that language and other semiotic means are not simply a means of communication; rather, they are means of exercising power (Blommaert, 2005). This critical view of language and semiotic modes is held by FCDA whose main characteristic is its account of the way linguistic and non-linguistic structures are used to create and maintain relations of power between women and men. However, while our particular use of language (along with other semiotic modes) can perpetuate unequal power dynamics, it also serves as a tool to contest and challenge this power, ultimately aiming to bring about social change (Sunderland, 2004). By embracing an FCDA perspective, the present study aims to critically examine the way women are portrayed in Algerian news media to determine whether these representations reproduce or challenge unequal gender power relations through visual and linguistic choices. This research also explores how these choices are manifested in the data by describing their realisations. To achieve the aims of the present study, two Arabophone and two



Francophone newspapers in Algeria have been selected to analyse women's depiction in their texts. These are *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* published in Arabic, as well as *El Watan* and *Liberté* published in French. They have been chosen for some important reasons. First of all, these four news outlets have a wide readership in Algeria (Miliani, 2013). Furthermore, the Arabic-speaking press differs from the French-speaking press in its ideological and political affiliations. The former is conservative, while the latter is liberal and secular (El Issawi, 2017). Hence, this research, through making a comparison between them, demonstrates whether their representations of women reflect these ideological orientations.

Gender in this study is observed to be an effect of discourse. The latter encompasses not only written and spoken languages but also other non-linguistic means of communication. In fact, as maintained by Halliday (1978:4) '[t]here are many other modes of meaning, in any culture, which are outside the realm of language'. This indicates that meaning is not communicated by means of language only. Rather, texts tend to integrate a number of semiotic modes to communicate their intended meaning, as in the case of newspapers, which make use of both language and images in their texts. Therefore, it is worth studying the meanings and discourses communicated by the choices made in non-linguistic modes, such as images. The latter are not designed only as ornaments but instead, they fulfil different communicative purposes. What is conveyed through choosing different words and sentence structures in language, may also be expressed in visuals through choices of colours or different compositional structures (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Therefore, the present study integrates both linguistic and non-linguistic modes to analyse the portrayal of women in the Algerian press to gain a full picture of the way women are portrayed in their texts. The next section of the chapter outlines the research questions that this study seeks to address.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

Based on the previously mentioned objectives of the research project, the main research questions that this thesis seeks to answer are:

1. What are the main linguistic and visual features drawn upon in the data of selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in their construction of discourses and ideologies about gender?
2. What are the main discursive practices about gender drawn upon in the texts of the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers?
3. Do the discursive practices of the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers support and/or undermine women's rights in Algeria?

The following section of this chapter discusses the motivations for conducting the research project.

### **1.4. Motivations for Conducting the Research**

The present research project is driven by various factors, some are linked to the topic itself and others are related to my experiences in Algeria. A key motivation arises from the issue of women's status in Algerian society. Despite efforts to promote their role in society, Algerian women still lack their full rights and are largely confined to traditional gender roles. As indicated by Rouibah (2021), the ideal for a woman in Algeria is to marry and build a family. Growing up surrounded by traditional gender norms, I viewed gender as unproblematic. However, as I came to recognise the limitations of these gendered expectations, I began to see gender as problematic because it dictates how we should behave, influences our life choices, and perpetuates inequalities between women and men. In effect, as claimed by Bouatta (2017:20) '...la société algérienne...est organisée selon un patriarcat très rigide. La domination masculine est une donnée forte qui structure les rapports hommes/femmes' (Algerian society is organised according to a very rigid patriarchy. Male domination is a strong factor that structures relations between men and

women). Patriarchy and misogyny are so deeply ingrained in the Algerian society that women themselves often perpetuate and reinforce these attitudes and, hence, inadvertently becoming agents of patriarchy. In my hometown in Algeria, and in other cities, many families still have a preference for boys over girls to the extent that they feel disappointed when the first child born into the family is a girl or when a couple has only daughters. What is particularly striking is that this disappointment and preference for having boys is also exhibited by women themselves. This preference becomes evident in, for instance, wedding celebrations when female guests express wishes to the bride that her first child will be a boy. This is because a girl or a woman represents the honour of the family (Zemmour, 2002). Consequently, she is tied to the concept of shame, while a boy or man is associated with pride. In this context, Hadda (2023:2039) claims '[l]a culture algérienne accorde une valeur importante à l'être masculin, en le présentant comme source de bonheur et de vertu' (the Algerian culture places a significant value on the masculine being, presenting him as a source of happiness and virtue). Hence, despite recent governmental efforts to advance women's roles in society, patriarchy is still a dominant feature of Algerian society. The present study aims at analysing the role of the Algerian press in challenging or reproducing hegemonic assumptions about gender in the Algerian context and critiquing discourses that sustain imbalanced power relations between women and men.

Language has effects on one's gender. It is one of the main means that we use to communicate our perceptions and ideas about different aspects of the world, and this includes perceptions about gender (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). Therefore, the way language is used to talk about the notions of 'women' and 'men' influences our gendered selves. The first time I learned about the relationship between language and gender was when I was about 19 years old. I watched a programme on a well-known Tamazight-language TV channel in my country where they hosted a feminist activist who discussed the

way certain words and expressions in the Tamazight language, specifically the Kabyle dialect, are used to reinforce men's dominance over women in society. To state an example, when a woman gets married, it is common for people to describe the situation as the bride being 'given' to the bridegroom or her family-in-law. Another example cited by the feminist is the commonly used proverb in the Kabylie region: *argaz aken yekhdem yechvah*, which translates to 'whatever a man does is good'. This saying reinforces a sense of entitlement among Algerian men, implying that all their actions are inherently considered acceptable. This really attracted my attention since the examples given by the feminist clearly showed how women are trivialised and oppressed by our daily use of language; but this is done in a way that is not obvious to people. Besides, this shows that the media can play a very important role in raising awareness among people about the role of language in transmitting and perpetuating sexist gendered beliefs in society, since it is thanks to this TV show that I learned about the relationship between language and gender for the first time. The review of the literature showed that women are generally misrepresented in media, but this can be changed. The way men and women perceive themselves and are perceived is shaped by the images, meanings and representations of gender being transferred to them through different means, including media. Therefore, it is crucial that media tools shift from perpetuating stereotypical and negative portrayals of women to supporting women's rights and depicting women in a positive and proper way. The present thesis serves as an invitation to journalists in Algeria to provide positive and non-stereotypical depictions of women to change widespread gendered assumptions in society. The next section of the chapter shows the overall structure of the thesis.

## **1.5. Structure of the Thesis**

The rest of the thesis is organised into seven chapters. Chapter Two is intended to provide some important background on Algeria to understand the broader social structures of the country. It also gives a detailed historical background on gender in Algeria, which is important for the analysis of the discourses and ideologies constructed in Algerian news media through their representation of women. It particularly deals with the experiences of Algerian women during the era of French colonialism, the war of independence as well as the post-independence era. Afterwards, Chapter Three puts the thesis in a theoretical context by explaining key notions used in my study and the general theoretical background that forms the foundation of my research. It discusses key notions such as Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 1995) and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2005), which is a feminist version of CDA and constitutes the main approach of the study. Besides, it deals with some fundamental concepts within CDA and FCDA such as discourse, ideology, and power. Chapter Four presents the methodology used to conduct the present research. It explains the procedures used for data collection and selection and gives a description of the four selected news outlets. This chapter also provides a detailed account of the methods used for data analysis by explaining the analytical frameworks adopted for the analysis of the collected news articles. Chapter Five discusses the findings from the analysis of news articles in Arabic, while Chapter Six covers the results of the analysis of news articles in French. Chapter Seven highlights the similarities and differences in the portrayal of women in the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. Finally, Chapter Eight is a general conclusion which summarises my research project. It answers the main research questions of the research study and explains its contributions, implications and limitations. It also provides suggestions for future research.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Historical Background**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The present chapter is designated to provide some historical background on gender in Algeria, which is important for the analysis of the discourses and ideologies surrounding women's representation in the selected Arabophone and Francophone news outlets. It also helps readers to understand the significance of the time period being studied, i.e. 2016-2021, by dealing with the role of Algerian women throughout different phases of Algerian history. The chapter begins with the era of French colonialism and the war of independence in Section 2.3. It then moves to the post-independence era, addressing the issue of the family code and the Algerian civil war in Section 2.4. Section 2.5 explores the situation of Algerian women after the civil war, followed by Section 2.6, which discusses the Algerian protest movement. Finally, Section 2.7 focuses on the emergence of the Algerian feminist movement in postcolonial Algeria. Before delving into the role of Algerian women, this chapter provides some background on the Algerian social context in the next section.

#### **2.2. Background on Algeria**

Algeria is the largest country in the African continent. It is situated within the 'Maghreb' region in North Africa. This region encompasses countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, namely Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, Libya, and Algeria. Algeria is also referred to as belonging to the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). Its current population is around 45 million and its size is over 2 million km<sup>2</sup> (World Population Review, 2023). The desert of Southern Algeria covers more than 80% of the country and the vast majority of Algerians, approximately 90%, live in the Northern coastal area of the country (Nation Online, no date). Algeria's capital city is known as 'Algiers'. The languages used in the

country are Arabic and Tamazight/Berber as the two national languages (Tamazight was declared as a national language in Algeria in 2002, following *Tafsut Imazighen* or the 'Amazigh Spring' in Kabylie region), in addition to French and English. French is the main foreign language used among Algerians, making Algeria the second largest Francophone country in the Euro-Mediterranean space after France (Bevilacqua, 2020). However, following announcements of the president of Algeria, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, in 2022, the country started teaching English as the second language in public primary schools in efforts to prioritise English over French, due to the global prominence of the English language (Henache, 2022). The linguistic diversity of the Algerian society has given rise to the phenomenon of code-switching, which is prevalent among Algerians to facilitate communication especially in informal situations (Agti, 2022).

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is Algeria's official language, which is mainly used in government, education, as well as the media. However, the majority of the population speaks a local dialect known as 'Derdja' (also referred to as Darija), which is a mixture of mainly Arabic and Tamazight, along with many loanwords from French, Spanish, and Ottoman Turkish (Ghomri and Souadkia, 2020). There are several varieties of Algerian Derdja and also Tamazight (Belmihoud, 2018). Since the Algerian press is published in Arabic and French only, the present study focuses on analysing the representation of women in Arabophone and Francophone newspapers to make a comparison between the two types of newspapers in the way they portray women.

Algeria's history can be divided into three significant phases: precolonial, colonial and postcolonial. The precolonial phase in Algeria refers to the period before French colonialism, which started in the 1830s. The first inhabitants of Algeria (and North Africa) were the Amazigh, who witnessed the invasion and the occupation of several dynasties and empires in precolonial Algeria, including the Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Spanish and the

Turkish Ottomans (Benrabah, 1999 cited in Croisy, 2008). In the colonial period (1830-1962), Algeria was occupied by the French coloniser. The period of French colonial rule in Algeria concluded with an armed struggle that lasted for almost eight years (1954-1962). The postcolonial period in Algeria refers to the period after the fall of the French rule from July 1962. This era is characterised by significant political events, such as the Algerian civil war from early 1990s. Indeed, the three phases of Algerian history had a profound impact on the identity of Algerians, including gender identity. This chapter examines the colonial and postcolonial eras by focusing on the role and situation of Algerian women during French colonialism and in the postcolonial period. The following section addresses the experiences of Algerian women during French colonialism and the war of independence.

### **2.3. Algerian Women during Colonialism and the War of Independence**

The focus of this section is the situation of women during French colonialism and the role they played during the war of independence. As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, Algeria was colonised by the French coloniser for more than a century (1830-1962), ending with an armed struggle between 1954 and 1962. The period of the Algerian revolution saw significant developments in the role of women in Algerian society. Vince (2010:448) describes this period as ‘...a moment in which religious, gendered and ethnic identities...were challenged...’. Amrane-Minne and Abu-Haidar (1999:62) further argue that ‘...the war of 1954-62...marks the beginning of women making their presence felt’. This suggests that the war of independence is significant in Algerian history, as it marked changes in gender relations, which are explained below. I first discuss the situation of women under French colonialism, which began in 1830, and then move on to the war of independence, which started in 1954.



Algerian women during colonisation were denied all rights. They were considered by the French as 'the oppressed of the oppressed' (Cooke, 1989:2). That is to say, it is true that colonialism affected both Algerian men and women, but the latter were subject to double oppression resulting from both patriarchal values characterising the Algerian society, in addition to French colonialism and its mistreatment of women. In the late 19th century, Algerian culture was very traditional and male-dominated and when the French came under the guise of '*la mission civilisatrice*' (Vince, 2010:142 emphasis in original) or civilising mission, Algerian women's rights did not improve. In this vein, Leonhardt (2013) explains that the policies of the French coloniser regarding the rights of Algerian women were ambiguous and showed no improvement during the colonial period. Rape and other sexual humiliations were practiced by the coloniser as an act of revenge and punishment against the victims and also their men and families (Salhi, 2010). Rape is an act perceived to bring shame upon the family in a culture where honour is highly valued, both historically and in contemporary times. Algerian women were raped by the French in front of their husbands, fathers, and brothers, and in some cases, both women and men were undressed and tortured together in the same room (Vince, 2010). This led to increased veiling and seclusion of Algerian women as a means to protect their family honour and as a reaction to the colonial rule (Salhi, 2010). Colonisation, thus, escalated patriarchy in Algeria (Fanon, 2001) and led to the deterioration of conditions for Algerian women. In their account of the situation of Algerian women during French colonialism by the time the war started in 1954, Amrane- Minne and Abu-Haidar (1999:62) write:

In 1954, Algerian women were totally excluded from public life. Nearly all illiterate, with only 4.5% among them able to read and write, they did not have access to the world of work except in the sectors that did not demand professional qualifications. Those who had skills had acquired them through experience. Whether they were peasant women or domestic servants, work for them was a part of their struggle for survival. There were no more than 6 women doctors and only 25 teachers at secondary schools, but none in

higher education. The University of Algiers had no more than 500 Algerian students, among whom were about 50 girls.

This clearly shows the oppression of Algerian women during the colonial era and their (near) total exclusion from the public space. However, this situation did not prevent women from taking part in the struggle for liberation. When the war started in 1954, thousands of Algerian women became active participants in the public sphere by joining the revolution and taking part in the national liberation struggle for independence alongside men (Turshen, 2002). Indeed, the active participation of women during the Algerian revolution challenged both the colonial occupation and traditional beliefs of Algerian society towards women. In this context, Salhi (2003:27) explains that the revolt of Algerian women during the struggle for national liberation ‘...was simultaneously, a rebellion against the colonial occupation of Algeria by France, and against the restrictive attitudes of traditional Algerian society.’ According to Turshen (2002:890) Algerian women ‘...participated actively as combatants, spies, fundraisers, and couriers, as well as nurses, launderers, and cooks’. Thus, they performed both traditional and non-traditional gender roles to keep the Algerian revolution going. Their involvement in the war was significant for the liberation of their country and equally important for their liberation from the system of patriarchy widespread in the Algerian society (Salhi, 2003).

The active participation of Algerian women in the war made the French government concerned and, consequently, as part of its efforts to win the support of Algerian women, it targeted the issue of women’s rights by introducing some policies to liberate them from the oppression of traditions and patriarchy. These reforms were seen as reformist and liberal emancipation measures (MacMaster, 2007). In this regard, Vince (2010:446) explains:

From 1955 on, with efforts intensifying after 1958, public unveiling, implementing voting rights, installing a Muslim woman in government office, bringing marriage under civil rather than religious jurisdiction, and establishing new schooling and health care programs were among the measures introduced...

These reforms were part of the assimilation agenda that sought to integrate Algerian women into the French culture. The French coloniser believed that by improving women's status in society, this would result in disrupting the independence movement since women were considered as symbols of Algerian national identity and culture (MacMaster, 2007). As a reaction to these reforms, Algerians emphasised Islamic and traditional values. The *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) or 'National Liberation Front' believed that the role of women should change only according to the design of nationalists without the interference of the French government (Lazreg, 1990). Women's emancipation was not given importance by the FLN leaders, and their primary concern was to achieve independence from the French coloniser and to protect the cultural values of Algerians (Leonhardt, 2013). They believed that women would acquire their rights through freeing their country from colonisation. The FLN acknowledged women's contribution to the war and expressed its gratitude for women, as stated in one of its official texts: '[w]e salute with emotion and admiration the courage of...our sisters who participate actively, sometimes arms in hands, to the sacred struggle for the liberation of our fatherland' (Charrad, 2001:185).

Motivated by the project of liberating their country, the ones viewed as doubly oppressed joined the war and became actively engaged in the struggle for the country's independence. By their active involvement in the war, women significantly disrupted traditional gender norms by stepping out of their traditional roles centered around the private sphere and immersed themselves in the realm of urban and rural guerrilla warfare

(Lazreg, 1994). In commenting on the participation of Algerian women in the war of independence, Fanon (2001:41) maintains:

Carriers of machine guns, hand-grenades, hundreds of forged identity cards, or bombs, the unveiled Algerian woman swims like a fish in the Western waters. The military, the French patrols smile at her as she passes, compliment her on her physical appearance, but no one suspects that in her briefcase lays the machine gun, which in a short while will be used to shoot four or five members of a patrol...

In their active participation in the revolution, Algerian women used clothing as an important weapon against the French army. In some situations, they adopted 'veiling', or the Algerian traditional dress 'Haik', as a useful military tool to transport weapons, letters, and medicines. In some other situations, they opted for 'unveiling' and dressed in a Western style to seem French and pass unnoticed while carrying weapons and bombs. This indicates that '...they went, unveiled when their mission required it, veiled when their mission required it...' (Ahmed, 1982:164). The Italian-Algerian film *La Bataille d'Alger* or 'The Battle of Algiers' clearly demonstrates this and the Algerian women's crucial role in the revolution (Slyomovics, 1995; Tlemcani, 2016). The engagement of Algerian women in the war was covered by the international media which spoke about the heroism of the freedom fighters who stood against the coloniser and faced all forms of torture (Salhi, 2010).

In summary, Algerian women had an important role in the liberation struggle. Before the start of the war, Algeria was characterised by the exclusion of women from the public sphere. Yet, during the war of independence, Algerian women took an active role in the public sphere by joining the war. Consequently, they challenged traditional gender norms by their active participation in the national revolution. In effect, women fought side by side with men and expected to be given political positions after the end of the war (Tripp, 2019b). They took roles that are viewed as 'masculine' by participating in the

struggle for the liberation of the country. Through their active involvement in the war against the French coloniser, they believed that they would be recognised as equal to men after gaining independence (de Abes, 2011). The Francophone anti-colonialist writer Fanon (1959; 2001) predicted the emergence of a new society and a significant transformation in the role of women, gender dynamics, and traditional structures of Algerian families. This leads us to ask the following question: did women's active participation in the war help them gain their rights after Algeria achieved its independence in 1962? The next sections aim at answering this question by dealing with the role and situation of Algerian women in different phases of the postcolonial era in Algeria.

#### **2.4. Algerian Women after the War of Independence**

On 5 July 1962, Algeria officially gained its independence from the French coloniser after a long and tough war that lasted for more than seven years. The FLN, which led the struggle for independence, continued to be the governing political party of the independent state. As mentioned in the previous section, the FLN did not give prominence to advancing women's rights during the war of independence. The only key objective was to free the country and its people from French colonisation. Likewise, Algerian women did not question their inferior position. They believed that 'independence would surely end discrimination' (Helie-Lucas cited in Leonhardt, 2013:51). The situation after the war at first seemed positive by the adoption of a new constitution in 1962. The constitution, as summarised by de Abes (2011), granted equal rights and duties for everyone (Article 12) as well as the right to vote to citizens aged 19 or older (Article 13), and made education mandatory for all citizens without discrimination (Article 18). In addition to this, there was the creation of *Union Nationale des Femmes Algériennes* or the 'National Union of Algerian Women' in September 1962 (Salhi, 2003). However, like colonial times, the issue of women's emancipation was considered of secondary importance compared to other issues

encountered by post-colonial Algeria. The main project of the Algerian state after the independence ‘...was socialism and growth of the Algerian population as a traditional and family-centred society as outlined in the constitution’ (de Abes, 2011:202). This suggests that ‘[i]n order to be accepted into the new national and Algerian framework women were expected to shift to pre-war patriarchal patterns and [gender] roles’ (de Abes, 2011:202). That is to say, Algerian women were supposed to return to their traditional roles as mothers and wives and they were seen as the vessels of traditional and Islamic values (Marzouki, 2010). Rohloff (2012:2) further states that despite ‘...women’s military participation during the war for independence and the equality of gender roles they experienced, women were expected to return to the traditional roles...’. Vince (2015:11) describes Algerian women as both ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ of independence.

In fact, the patriarchy that characterised Algerian society in colonial times was maintained in the years after independence. This was achieved by the enactment of a highly conservative family code in the 1980s, which reinforced a patriarchal narrative that legitimised men's dominance and authority over women through the different roles it assigned to men and women. Lazreg (1994) argues that the 1980s family code gave women an unequal status in issues related to personal autonomy, polygamy, divorce and working outside the home. Afterwards, a civil war erupted between the Algerian government and Islamic fundamentalists, turning women into targets and pawns in the power struggle between the opposing forces (Turshen, 2002). However, Algerian women did not remain silent. Several women’s rights organisations and groups questioned the family law and stood against the Islamist fundamentalists. This was seen as the birth of the Algerian feminist movement, which is discussed in Section 2.7.

Section 2.4.1 below deals with the Algerian family code and its different discriminatory provisions against women. This is then followed by Section 2.4.2 that speaks about the Algerian civil war in the 1990s and the situation of Algerian women in this period.

#### **2.4.1. The Algerian Family Code**

The Algerian family code is a piece of legislation about family matters and relations in areas related to, for example, marriage, divorce, child custody and roles and responsibilities of men and women within the family. The code was first drafted in 1981 by the government of the president Chadli Bendjdid and it was believed to be highly conservative. As a result, it was rejected by groups of women from different professional backgrounds who united to organise petitions and protests against the proposed code (Marzouki, 2010). The government redrafted the 1981 family code; however, a similar conservative family code was passed into law in 1984. Algerian women considered the enacted law as a betrayal to Algerian women who had played a crucial role during the war of independence by actively fighting alongside men (Salhi, 2010), as discussed previously in Section 2.3. Sinha (2012:148) also claims: ‘...the 1984 Family Law might have felt like a betrayal for the Algerian women’. This code is, as described by Knauss (1987), a form of reaffirmed patriarchy. Some of the provisions of this code, as summarised by Bouatta (1997:5-6) are:

Concerning marriage, the man marries without a guardian, whereas a woman must have a male guardian regardless of her age and status (divorced, widowed).

The man may have more than one wife, up to four.

Concerning divorce, the man can divorce without giving any reasons, whereas the woman can divorce only under strict conditions fixed by law.

The man is the uncontested head of the family.

The wife must obey her husband.

The woman inherits half the share granted to the male members of the family.

It is clear from these provisions that the 1984 family code is based on patriarchal gender ideology, which supports the superiority of men and the subordination of women (Salhi,

2003). This unequal power dynamic extends beyond the family unit to impact the wider society, as the family serves as the fundamental unit of Algerian society. In this regard, Salhi (2010:119) explains that 'the Algerian family code is a piece of legislation that decrees men's superiority and codifies women's subordination. The code makes women minors under the law...'. In effect, in this code, women were not recognised as individuals in their own right, but only as daughters, sisters, mothers, or wives.

By the adoption of this extremely conservative family code, the patriarchy characterising the colonial period imposed itself again throughout the Algerian society during the postcolonial era. Despite women's active involvement in the war, the FLN remained restrictive and conservative towards women's rights after independence and the family code reflected its position. In this context, MacMaster (2007) suggests that both colonial and post-Independence states displayed inadequacy and ineffectiveness in confronting the deeply ingrained patriarchal family structures and ideology in society. As a result, war veterans and young Algerian women protested against the enactment of the family code with slogans like: 'No to silence, Yes to Democracy!' and 'No to the betrayal of the ideals of November 1, 1954!' (Salhi, 2010:118). The emergence of women's associations was an important characteristic of the 1980s in Algeria to oppose the 1984 family code which denied women their rights (Moghadam, 1994). Yet, the family code was not changed because it was already passed into law. The situation even worsened with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism that emphasised patriarchal gender ideology. The fundamentalists clashed with the government, which led to a civil war in the country that started in the beginning of the 1990s. The next section of the present work expands on this point by providing an overview of the Algerian civil war and the situation of Algerian women during this period of Algerian history.



### 2.4.2. The Algerian Civil War

The aim of this part of the chapter is to provide an overview of the Algerian civil war or the so-called *La Décennie Noire* or the 'Black Decade'. It describes briefly the Algerian civil war and its context of development. After that, I deal with the situation of women during this period. The Algerian civil war was triggered by some important events, which are discussed in this section. In October 1988, unemployment and the rise of food prices resulted in riots led by Algerian youth who took to the streets and called for the end of the corrupt system (Salhi, 2008). Then, the government of Chadli Ben Djedid introduced some political reforms by drafting and approving a new constitution. The constitution, which was approved in 1989, granted Algerian citizens the right of freedom of expression, association and assembly and it also recognised the right to establish political parties (Salhi, 2003). The amendment of the constitution led to the end of the FLN's monopoly and the growth of a number of new political parties, among them *Le Front Islamique du Salut* (FIS) or 'Islamic Salvation Front'. Then, in December 1991, the FIS won the majority of seats in the first electoral round. Fearing the rise of the FIS to power, the government annulled the election, cancelled the second round, and banned the FIS in January 1992 (McDougall, 2017). As a result, the Islamist guerrillas started an armed campaign and declared war against the government, its supporters and even civilians. This is referred to as the 'Algerian civil war'. The fundamentalists targeted Algerian women and made them victims and pawns in their struggle for power against the government (Turshen, 2002). For them, women's emancipation represented modernity and, hence, they strived to restore and reinforce a patriarchal social order which keeps women in a subordinate position (Amrane-Minne and Abu-Haidar, 1999). This is explained in detail in the next section of the present chapter.

#### **2.4.2.1. Algerian Women in the Civil War**

During the civil war, Algerian women found themselves trapped between the misogynist violence of the Islamic fundamentalists and the discriminatory family code. The women who had played an active role in the revolution and who were viewed as symbols of courage and resistance became examples of a 'cautionary tale' (Vince, 2015:7). In fact, while the entire nation of Algeria felt the impact of the civil war, it was women who endured the most profound terror in this decade (Rohloff, 2012). The major aim of the Islamic fundamentalists was to protect Algerian identity and values from modernisation, thus, they set women at the centre of their enterprise. They encouraged sex segregation and discouraged women from performing public roles, as stated by Rohloff (2012:16): '...the FIS discouraged women from working outside the home and they pushed for the creation of separate public transportation and beaches for women and men'. They targeted working women from different professional backgrounds, including journalists, medical doctors, teachers and even students. For the fundamentalists, women had to leave their jobs for men because they were expected to fulfil what was perceived as their main role in society as mothers, wives and housekeepers. This is seen in the statement of one of the Islamist leaders named Ali Belhadj (cited in Moghadam, 2001) who asserted that the inherent place for a woman is at home, emphasising that a woman's role is the reproduction of men rather than the production of material goods. It is evident from this statement that the FIS designated the family and the domestic sphere as women's space and associated the public sphere with men. The fundamentalists viewed women working outside the home as taking jobs away from young men and, thus, they asked them to return to their homes using all sorts of violence against them. Another FIS leader named Abdelkader Moghni (cited in Salhi, 2010:113) stated '[w]omen should go home and leave their jobs for the thousands of young unemployed men. They waste their time, spending

their salaries on make-up and dresses'. In addition to this, wearing the veil in the public sphere was made obligatory by the fundamentalists. As a result, they extended their acts of violence to women who chose not to wear the veil and those who dressed in clothes considered as alien to Algerian traditions (Lazreg, 1994). They legalised the killing of young girls and women not wearing the veil in its different forms, such as hijab and burqa. Katia Bengana, a 17-year-old high school student, is an example of the girls who were killed for their refusal to wear the veil (Aslaoui, 2000 cited in Turshen, 2002). As a result, several Algerian women became veiled out of fear and many others quit their jobs (Tlemcani, 2016). Furthermore, the Islamic fundamentalists allowed kidnapping and they kidnapped many young girls and women, forcing them to serve as cooks and cleaners in the forest camps and to provide sex for them when demanded (Turshen, 2002). Women who performed public roles faced violent punishment by the fundamentalists because this was seen as a threat to male dominance. Non-veiled women were attacked because 'veiling' is seen as 'a symbol of Muslim identity' (Mernissi, 1987:97). Hence, the imposition of the veil is a way to protect this identity and maintain male control over women. Despite all of this, women's groups and organisations were active during this period, and they took to the streets to express their anger and opposition to the fundamentalists. In this regard, Vince (2015:3) explains:

Algerian feminists marching in 1992 against the Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front, FIS) and the looming spectre of a theocratic state carried placards bearing slogans such as 'Hassiba Ben Bouali, if you could see our Algeria' and 'Hassiba Ben Bouali, we will not betray you'- an appeal to the 'memory' of Hassiba Ben Bouali, recast as a forerunner of women's rights campaigners.

Hassiba Ben Bouali mentioned in this quote is one of the women heroines and martyrs of the Algerian war of independence. The period between 1989 and 1994 witnessed the creation of a number of active feminist organisations, such as *l'Association Indépendante*

*pour le Triomphe des Droits de la Femme, l'Association pour l'Émancipation des Femmes, l'Association pour la Défense et Promotion des Femmes, Cri de Femmes, Voix des Femmes* and so on (Moghadam, 2001). The main objectives of these organisations were the repeal of the Family Code, full citizenship for Algerian women, and the establishment of civil laws that ensure equality between women and men, particularly in issues related to employment, marriage, and divorce (Moghadam, 2001). Since 1991, these feminist associations set the slogan '[n]o dialogue with the fundamentalists' (Mahl 1998 cited in Moghadam, 2001:141) to show their strong opposition to the fundamentalists. In the aftermath of the Algerian civil war, the situation of Algerian women witnessed important improvements. This is the focus of the next section, which discusses the role and situation of Algerian women after the Black Decade.

## **2.5. Algerian Women after the Civil War**

After a long conflict between the fundamentalists and the government that lasted for approximately ten years, the Algerian civil war ended in 2002 with the victory of the government and the surrender of the Islamist groups (Arab, 2018). Abdelaziz Bouteflika who was chosen as the new president of Algeria in 1999 had the aim of stabilising the country after the traumatic period of the civil war. Roberts (2001:23) suggests that 'Bouteflika... was committed to a number of modernising reforms...'. This included reforms that targeted women's rights, especially after his second term in 2004 where he introduced some policies to promote women's rights, raising hopes for the creation of a more equal nation. Algerian women gained more rights socially, economically, and politically under the rule of this president. For example, in higher education, more than 60% of Algerian graduates are women (Ghosh, 2012). Moreover, women are present in various job sectors, predominantly in education, healthcare, and the legal field, and some women even pursue careers as policewomen, taxi drivers, or members of the military (Marzouki, 2010).

Nevertheless, there are still patriarchal family laws even though the code was amended during Bouteflika's reign of the country. The extremely conservative family code, which was enacted in 1984, was amended in 2005. In the new code, the duty of women to obey their husbands was abolished and substituted with mutual rights and responsibilities within the context of marriage (Lalami, 2017). The new code gave women increased rights in terms of divorce and housing and diminished the role of a woman's male guardian to a symbolic status (Tlemcani, 2016). Also, the legal age for marriage was amended from 21 for men and 18 for women to 19 for both (Marzouki, 2010). Furthermore, the 2005 family code ensured Algerian women's right to pass on citizenship to their children (Marzouki, 2010). However, a number of discriminatory laws remain in this code. For example, polygamy is still legal in the family code under certain conditions (Tripp, 2019a). While the consent of the first spouse is necessary, it is common for the husband to opt for a divorce if the first wife declines his proposal for a second marriage (Marzouki, 2010). In addition, the code grants women the right to divorce, but only on specific grounds, such as the husband's failure to fulfill his duties, including providing for the family and fathering children. If a woman's reasons for asking for divorce fall outside the scenarios outlined in the family code, she needs to pay for the divorce which is known in Arabic as *khôl* (Lalami, 2017). In terms of inheritance, a daughter is entitled to receive half the share of inheritance that her brother is allocated (Lalami, 2017). Furthermore, if the woman remarries, she loses her right of custody of her children (Ouitis, 2019). Some women's rights activists praised the amendments, but many others are still unhappy with some aspects of the code and believe that it needs to be repealed completely (Tripp, 2019a). The code is considered to be anti-constitutional, since it does not meet with the principle of the constitution of non-discrimination based on sex, as article 29 of the constitution states: 'All citizens are equal before the law. No discrimination shall prevail because of bind, race, sex, opinion or any

other personal or social condition or circumstance' (cited in Ghorbani, 2015: online). Some also consider the amendments made to the code as a compromise between the advocates of women's rights and the conservative Islamists (Lalami, 2017; Tripp, 2019b). In addition, with regard to violence against women, in 2015, the Algerian parliament passed a bill criminalising violence both in private and public life. However, under the pressure of some Islamist parties, a 'pardon clause' was introduced, permitting convictions to be waived or sentences reduced if the victim chooses to pardon her perpetrator (Begum, 2017).

After the amendment of the family code, Bouteflika's government introduced some laws and policies that challenged gender ideology by promoting women to positions that are perceived to be 'masculine'. This is evident in the revised constitution of 2008, which explicitly mentions the state's commitment to enhancing the political rights of women and expanding their chances of representation in elected assemblies (Lalami, 2017). After this amendment, the electoral law of the country underwent a reform in 2012 introducing quotas for women in elected assemblies, which led to a significant increase in the proportion of female representatives in parliament, rising from 7.7% in 2007 to 31.6% in 2012 (Lalami, 2017). In 2013, Algeria was placed at 26 out of 142 nations by the Interparliamentary Union's ranking of women in national parliaments (Moghadam, 2015). However, the International Labour Organization (2014: online) states that '[d]espite the considerable advances seen in the Algerian political sphere...[women's] economic participation remains very low'. Women make up only 18% of the total workforce in Algeria (Tripp, 2019b). It is evident that securing more seats in parliament may not directly equate to absolute liberties; but such reforms in a traditional patriarchal society like Algeria hold significance as they show that women are as capable as men in the realm of politics (Achilov cited in Ghosh, 2012). In February 2016, the constitution was amended to extend the progress in women's rights to job market and business matters. This was done by the

introduction of a new article, which proclaims that the state is committed to achieving gender equality in the job market and promoting the advancement of women to positions of responsibility in both public institutions and businesses (Boudina, 2016). The president Bouteflika was honoured in the fifth General Assembly of Kigali International Declaration Conference (KIDC) in 2016 for his efforts to promote women's rights in the country (All Africa, 2016).

In short, after the Black Decade, the Algerian government made efforts to advance women's rights by introducing some progressive reforms in favour of women, but some patriarchal family laws persist in the legal framework in relation to the family code amended in 2005. This is referred to as 'neopatriarchy' (Sharabi, 1988 cited in Moghadam, 2020:470). The term neopatriarchy is explained by Moghadam (2020) as the introduction of policies to advance women's status and role within areas, such as public education employment, as well as granting them the right to vote. However, this concept also entails the preservation of patriarchal family laws which continue to bind women and girls to family structures, subjecting them to the protection and control of men (Moghadam, 2020). Algerian feminists today continue to call for the abolition of the family code, as it is seen in the Algerian protest movement (Tripp, 2019b), which is explained in the next section of the chapter. Therefore, further changes are needed to promote women's rights in the country.

In 2019, Algeria witnessed the rise of a protest movement against the political order in which women took an active role. The next part of the chapter deals with the Algerian protest movement and the role of women in this uprising.

## **2.6. Algerian Women in the Protest Movement**

In February 2019, millions of Algerians marched in the streets to demand the resignation of the president Abdelaziz Bouteflika who had declared his candidacy for a fifth term in

office (Ouitis, 2019). This marks the beginning of the Algerian protest movement known in Arabic as 'Hirak'. Every Friday, Algerian people demonstrated across the country and the president Bouteflika was eventually forced to resign in April 2019 (Serres, 2022). However, Algerian people continued to hold peaceful demonstrations in cities throughout the country to demand the fall of the entire regime, democracy, dignity, an end to corruption and increased government transparency (Tripp, 2019a). The protest movement unified all Algerians under one slogan in the Algerian dialect *yatnahaw gaa*, which entails that the entire regime must be removed.

In effect, women were deeply involved in the protest movement whose participation is seen to be crucial (Haffaf, 2019). At the very beginning of the movement, there was a small number of women who took part in the Hirak, but since IWD they have become massively present in the protests (Ouitis, 2019). Algerian women reclaimed public space in the protest movement. They took to the streets not only to advocate for a radical change in the Algerian political landscape, but also to stand against the injustices that Algerian women have been subject to (Lassel, 2020). Women of different ages and professional categories (academics, students, retirees, housewives and so forth) took the public space and demonstrated shoulder to shoulder with men. War veterans like Djamila Bouhired were also present in the demonstrations (Tripp, 2019b). Engaging in the public sphere during the movement was important for women, especially because of what they endured during the Black Decade, when the fundamentalists targeted women working outside the home and the ones not wearing the veil. The fundamentalists encouraged the segregation between men and women, but in this Hirak, they protested together side by side to call for a free and democratic country. Among the iconic female figures of the Hirak are the activists Samira Messouci and Nour El houda Oggadi.



Women's activism in the movement was also seen through *Le Collectif de la Société Civile pour une Transition Démocratique* or 'The Civil Society Collective for a Democratic Transition', which appeared as the most powerful network in the Algerian uprising (Tripp, 2019b). It included about thirty associations and citizens' organisations, and a significant number of them are under the leadership of women, including *SOS Disparus*, *Wassila Network* and *Djazairouna* (Tripp, 2019b). The engagement of women in this uprising is not surprising, considering their long engagement in different social and political events in Algerian history, especially in the 1954 war of independence, where women played a crucial role, as explained earlier in this chapter. In fact, women's rights and gender equality were incorporated within the demands of democracy following March 8, 2019, as protestors marched with banners, stating, 'no free and democratic Algeria without freedom of women' (Tripp, 2019b). Another example of the slogans shouted by women in the protest are *El dimokratia hoqouq niswiya* meaning 'democracy is granting women their rights' and *mazalna mazalna thouar* which entails 'we are always revolutionaries' (Lassel, 2019:44). By stating that they are still revolutionaries, Algerian women made reference to women's participation in the struggle for independence as freedom fighters. Some women's rights activists created what is called the 'feminist square', located near the University of Algiers, where feminist leaders and activists in feminist associations meet to ask for the repeal of the family code and a new Algeria that guarantees equal rights for all its citizens (Moon, 2019). IWD before was marked by concerts and gifts and flowers being given to women. But since the start of the protest movement in 2019, this day was given a new meaning. It became perceived as an opportunity to go into the streets to advocate for a total change in the political system and the end of all sorts of discrimination against women. Algerian women have used IWD on three occasions since the start of the Hirak to make their voices heard and articulate their demands. In sum, the protest movement gave

women a good opportunity to reclaim the public sphere to express their demands of democracy, freedom, and gender equality. By their strong presence in the movement alongside men, they challenged many traditional gendered beliefs in society. The next part of the chapter deals with the rise of the feminist movement in Algeria in relation to the political events discussed in this chapter.

## **2.7. The Algerian Feminist Movement**

This section discusses the development of the feminist movement in the Algerian social context during the postcolonial era. As discussed previously in the present chapter, during the Algerian revolution, thousands of Algerian women actively engaged in the national liberation struggle alongside men. However, after the end of the war in 1962, ‘...women’s rights were relegated to the back burner in favour of nation building...’ (Lloyd, 2006:457). Indeed, Algerian women found themselves resisting several patriarchal laws as well as religious fundamentalism, which led to the rise of the Algerian feminist movement. This is done through the creation of several associations to fight for gender equality in the country. In this context, Moghadam (2020:470) indicates ‘Algeria’s feminist organizations emerged in the 1980s to challenge...patriarchal family law, and they expanded in the 1990s to oppose Islamist militancy’. Though the post-independence constitution guarantees equal rights for women and men, several discriminatory laws against women were enacted during this era within the 1984 family code, reinforcing patriarchal structures in society. According to Tlemcani (2016:237), the ‘Algerian women’s movement became vocal and very active in the 1980s and early 1990s’. It consisted of numerous associations that rejected patriarchal laws of the Algerian family code and religious fundamentalism (Moghadam, 2020). In the 1980s, Algerian feminist associations organised themselves in opposition of the family law by demonstrating in the streets. Their main objectives were:

the abolition of the Family Code; full citizenship for women; enactment of civil laws guaranteeing equality between men and women in areas such as employment and marriage and divorce; abolition of polygamy and unilateral male divorce, equality in division of marital property.

(Moghadam, 2001:141).

The first Algerian women's association was the *Association for Equality Between Men and Women Before the Law*, which was created in May 1985 (Bouatta, 1997). Besides, Algerian women formed the *Collectif 95 Maghreb-Egalite* in collaboration with those in Tunisia and Morocco in order to call for an end to discriminatory laws (Moghadam, 2020). While the family code was not amended, the struggle of Algerian women at that time resulted in some advancements in women's rights in Algeria. For example, in 1980s, feminist associations successfully challenged and lifted a travel ban on women without a male relative (Tripp, 2019a). They resisted attempts to permit husbands to vote on behalf of their wives (Lalami, 2014). Then, the outbreak of the civil war in Algeria led to various forms of violence and aggressions against Algerian women by the Islamist fundamentalists (Bouatta, 1997), as explained previously in this chapter. However, despite these challenges, Algerian women became very active and emerged as powerful agents of change in their society by resisting the Islamist fundamentalists (Salhi, 2010). Women's organisations continued their protests and activities during this period. After the civil war, the Algerian women's movement is characterised by advocacy for gender equality, mobilisation for an egalitarian family structure, and putting an end to violence against women, as well as sexual harassment in the workplace (Moghadum, 2011 cited in Sinha, 2012). This is seen in the Algerian protest movement where Algerian feminists took part in the protests to call for gender equality. In fact, thanks to their struggle, Algerian feminists, have achieved significant gains, such as the amendment of the 1984 family code in 2005 and the implementation of quota laws to increase women's representation in 2012 (Tripp, 2019a).

IWD was used on several occasions by Algerian activists throughout the phases of Algerian feminist movements to call for gender equality. For example, on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1989, feminists organised a gathering in opposition of the Family Code, which was believed to stand against their aspirations for justice, equality, democracy, and the overall advancement of Algerian women and society (Salhi, 2010). The same day was also used during the Black Decade against the fundamentalists. On March 8, 1995, a protest against the fundamentalists was held in the capital city 'Algiers' (Gadant, 1995). After the Algerian civil war, the battle of Algerian women's rights activists is still the complete repeal of the conservative family code. In March 2010, feminist groups gathered to advocate for the abolition of the Algerian family code and its substitution with a new egalitarian law (Moghadam, 2015). The most remarkable demonstration of IWD in the country was the one of 2019 during the Hirak. On March 8, 2019, thousands of Algerian women and men took to the streets across Algeria to call for freedom, democracy, government transparency and the eradication of corruption (Tripp, 2019b). In this regard, Rouibah (2021:597) indicates: '[l]a marche du 8 mars 2019 marque un tournant à partir duquel les femmes et certaines féministes n'hésitent plus à occuper l'espace public' (the march on 8 March 2019 marks a turning point from which women and some feminists no longer hesitate to occupy the public space). The present study focuses on analysing the way women are represented in news articles published on IWD since it constitutes a feminist day that is used to advocate for gender justice and the end of women's subordination in society.

To conclude, the activism of women in Algeria has a long history of struggle against all forms of discrimination of women in society. The establishment of the family law and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism launched the Algerian feminist movement. In the contemporary era, feminists continue their activism to promote change and the total repeal of the family code.

## **2.8. Conclusion**

This chapter provided some important historical background on the Algerian social context and gender in Algeria. This was achieved by discussing the situation and Algerian women's role in different phases of Algerian history. This chapter explained how the role of Algerian women went through changes from colonial to postcolonial times. The colonial era was characterised by extreme patriarchy but, in the years of the war, Algerian women challenged gendered expectations by taking an active role in the struggle for independence. The aftermath of the war witnessed the creation of patriarchal laws and the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism that reinforced the patriarchal social order. In the contemporary era, some patriarchal laws are maintained, but many other progressive laws and policies were introduced to advance women's rights in the country. In addition to these reforms, in 2019, a protest movement started in Algeria against the political order. Women were 'active' and 'agents' in the movement and their role was considered to be an important one. This resists dominant gendered expectations of the Algerian society.

To analyse the representation of women in the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in Algeria, my research project focuses on news articles published on IWD between 2016-2021. It starts with the amendment of the constitution which states that the Algerian government works to achieve equality between women and men in the job market and encourages the promotion of women to leadership positions. It continues till the recent protest movement in Algeria, which started in February 2019 in which women played a crucial role. This can be viewed as challenging the dominant gender ideology. The aim of my study, through focusing on this period, is to find out whether the newspapers reproduce or challenge dominant discourses on gender through their representation of women in their linguistic and visual texts.

The present thesis also provides an account of the development of the Algerian press in Section 3.4.4 of Chapter Three, in addition to a full description of the four selected newspapers in Section 4.2 of Chapter Four. The next chapter aims at presenting some important theoretical background for the present study.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Theoretical Background**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This third chapter of the thesis is intended to discuss key concepts used in the present study and the general theoretical framework that underpins the research project. It is divided into three main parts, in addition to the introduction and conclusion sections. Section 3.2 of the chapter provides some background on feminism, gender and sex and the key debates surrounding feminist study of the relationship between gender and language in its early development. Section 3.3 is about the connection between gender and discourse, which is the main concern of the research project. It first discusses the notion of 'poststructuralism' and the concept of 'discourse', as presented by the scholar Foucault (1972), which provide the foundation of discourse studies and the conception of gender as a discursive construct. It then moves to deal with Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 1995) and its key notions, including discourse, power and ideology which serve as a connecting bridge between theory and analysis of print media representations of women in Algeria. Afterwards, a discussion of the notions of 'gender as a discursive construct', 'femininity' and 'masculinity' and key principles of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2005), which is based on CDA and constitutes the main approach of the present research, is provided. Section 3.4, which is the final part of the chapter, focuses on media and power, as well as gender representation in media discourse. It also gives an overview of the development of the Algerian press.

#### **3.2. Feminism, Language and Gender**

Following the development of linguistics as a field of study in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scholars have approached the study of language through two main standpoints: structuralist and poststructuralist perspectives. In fact, these two perspectives have deeply influenced the

way feminist linguists have examined the interplay between language and gender. Hence, in this part of the chapter, I look at how second wave feminist linguists studied the connection between language and gender from a structuralist perspective before looking at how this has been dealt with from a poststructuralist standpoint in the second part of the present chapter. However, before dealing with the second wave feminist study of language and gender, a definition of the terms 'feminism' and 'gender' is needed. In the following, I define 'feminism' and provide a detailed overview of its historical development as a political movement.

### **3.2.1. Feminism**

This section deals with feminism in order to understand key assumptions surrounding this notion which provides the basis for the development of key terms surrounding my research topic mainly 'gender' and its relationship to language. The word 'feminism' was first used in French (*féminisme*) in the 1870s as a medical concept to denote the feminisation of the male body, or to refer to women that exhibit masculine characteristics (Pilcher and Wheelehan, 2004). Then, according to Freedman (2001), the notion of feminism has been adopted to indicate a movement supporting women's rights long after women started questioning their inferior position in society and demanding equal rights. Feminism is now understood as '...a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression' (hooks, 2015:1). It is also a body of thought that places women and their status in society at the core of political analysis. It seeks to understand and address the question of why, across many societies, men have more privilege and power than women, and how this power dynamic can be transformed (Bryson, 2003). Therefore, the notion of feminism nowadays is used to refer to both a movement and a body of thought that aims at eradicating all sorts of discrimination against women in society.



The starting point of feminism as a political and an intellectual movement is women's domination and subordination in society. In effect, biological differences between women and men have long been used as a justification for the creation and the assignment of different social roles for them (Freedman, 2001). This comes from the belief that '...socially determined differences between women and men are natural and inevitable' (Talbot, 2010:9). For example, because of their biological capacity for childbirth and perceived lesser physical strength, women are seen to be well-suited to fulfil domestic roles and unsuited to occupy public roles (Freedman, 2001; Krolokke and Sorensen, 2005). Consequently, women have been given an inferior and a secondary status in societies. However, after the development of feminism as a political movement, the situation of women has advanced in many countries in the world by the establishment of laws that support women's rights and their participation in all spheres of society.

Feminism aims at critiquing gender relations and seeks to offer strategies to end women's oppression. Nevertheless, feminism is not homogeneous; rather, it is diverse in its political movements, struggles, and theoretical positions (Tong and Botts, 2018). Thus, there are different strands of feminism which are often referred to as 'feminisms' (plural). What they all share is not a mere interest in girls and boys, women and men and gender dynamics, but also a critical concern of social structures and power dynamics (Sunderland, 2006). To make some kind of classification, the development of feminism is divided into four different chronological waves. But this does not mean that feminist struggles do not exist outside of these waves. First wave feminism, which is sometimes known as 'old wave' (Humm, 2003:98), started in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century in the United States and Europe. It is assumed to begin with the Seneca Falls Convention convened by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and held in New York in 1848, which discussed the social, civil and religious condition and rights of women (Krolokken and Sorensen, 2005). The goal of this wave was

women's attainment of equality with men in legal rights mainly the right to suffrage. This gave rise to the women's suffrage movement.

Second wave feminism, also known as the 'women's liberation movement', emerged in the late 1960s and ended in the 1990s. Unlike the first wave which concentrated on gaining legal rights for women, notably the right to vote, the second wave focused on the private and social areas of women's life under the slogan 'the personal is political' (Tong and Botts, 2018:37). That is to say, feminists of the second wave extended the scope of politics to encompass issues related to the body, sexuality, emotions and other domains of social life that were traditionally considered purely 'personal' (Humm, 2003). It aimed at gaining rights for women concerning maternity leave, birth control, abortion, and equal education and employment opportunities; and actively campaigned against rape (including marital rape), sexual harassment and domestic violence (Mohajan, 2022). This indicates that second wave feminists sought to liberate women from patriarchal social constraints by giving greater attention to issues that were previously sidelined on the political agenda. Throughout this wave, feminists started looking at to the question of the interplay between gender and language, which is discussed thoroughly in Section 3.2.3 of this chapter. After the second wave, a third wave of feminism arose in the 1990s as a reaction to the constraints of the previous waves, in general, and as response to the opposition and critique directed towards second-wave feminism, in particular. Theoretically, according to Mills (2003), this wave holds a critical, constructionist and poststructuralist stance on gender. Unlike the second wave, which rests on the notion of universally shared experiences of women, this wave recognises the existence of diverse experiences. That is, third wave feminists rejected the tendency of second-wave feminists to generalise from white middle-class women's experiences. They challenged the notion of universal womanhood and emphasised the intersection of gender with other social

variables including race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation and so forth (Krolokke and Sorensen, 2005). This wave also placed emphasis on the discursive and performative aspects of gender, moving away from essentialist or possessive dimensions of gender (Mills, 2003), which is discussed in more depth in Section 3.3.4 of the present chapter. In fact, feminists of the third wave perceived themselves as strong and empowered social agents; and believed in having greater opportunities and encountering less sexism compared to first and second wave feminists (Baumgardner and Richards, 2000). Finally, in the 2010s, a fourth wave feminism which is associated with online technology began. It is characterised by the use of social media sites including Facebook, Twitter as well as YouTube for activism (Mohajan, 2022). This wave is concerned with some issues that were targeted by previous waves of feminism including abortion, gender-based violence, sisterhood and self-determination (Peroni and Rodak, 2020). Feminists of this fourth wave created different hashtag and blog campaigns such as Everyday Sexism Project, Feministing, Counting Dead Women Project, #Fem2, #YesAllWomen, #HeForShe, #ToTheGirls, #EverydaySexism, #MeToo, #NoMore, and #TimesUp as a new means for feminist struggle (Cochrane, 2013 cited in Malinowska, 2020). Indeed, the utilisation of social media emerged as a vital tool for combatting the issue of gender inequality and marked a step towards an inclusive and insightful feminism that embraces the voices of women from both Western and non-Western contexts (Malinowska, 2020). For example, during the Arab spring, social media tools were used by girls as a means for overcoming domestic barriers and gender and national borders by sharing their experiences, reflections, challenges, and ambitions with their peers all over the world (Munro 2013 cited in Peroni and Rodak 2020). This suggests that fourth wave feminism is a form of engagement and contact among women which takes place in online spaces (Rampton, 2008 cited in Peroni and Rodak, 2020).

The waves of feminism were also important in the development of feminist theory to create a deeper understanding of women's situation in order to change it. However, feminist theory is not a unified body of thought. In this context, Tong (1989:1) claims: '...feminist theory is not one, but many, theories and perspectives and that each feminist theory or perspective attempts to describe strategies for women's liberation'. Some of the main feminist theories are liberal feminism, Marxist/socialist feminism, radical feminism, psychoanalytical feminism, poststructuralist feminism, black feminism and so on. For example, liberal feminism rests on the liberal principles of equality or 'sameness', which implies that all people are created equal and, thus, they should not be denied equality of opportunity because of their gender (Krolokke and Sorenson, 2005). Radical feminism advocates a revolutionary model of social change, that is, a revolutionary change in the organisation of power relations existing between men and women (Tong, 2009; Beasley, 1999). The notion of patriarchy, i.e. systematic male dominance of women, is central for radical feminists. In addition to the above-mentioned strands of feminist theory, there are other forms of feminism that emerged in Non-Western contexts, such as Islamic feminism, postcolonial feminism, third world feminism and so on. For instance, Islamic feminism focuses on the role of women in Islam. This form of feminism is '...a discourse of educated urban women who re-read the Quran and early Islamic history to recuperate their religion from patriarchal interpretation and practices' (Abdul Rani, 2015:249).

In a nutshell, feminism is a movement and a body of thought aiming at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. It is divided into four waves which made different feminist demands at different time periods. These waves were important in pointing at the different sorts of oppression faced by women in society and bringing many rights for them. Feminism also affected non-Western contexts like the Algerian context, as explained in Section 2.7 of Chapter Two. After discussing the notion of feminism, the next

section of the present chapter deals with two important terms in feminism, namely 'sex' and 'gender' to show the main difference between them. A discussion of the meaning of these two concepts is important for the present research, which focuses on the representation of gender in Algerian media to understand how the notion of gender is utilised in this study.

### **3.2.2. Gender and Sex**

In her famous statement, the French feminist thinker de Beauvoir (1949:273) argues that 'one is not born a woman but becomes one'. This indicates that being a woman is not an inherent condition, rather it is a result of societal and cultural influences. The word woman thus denotes a social category rather than a biological one. This further suggests that women's inferior position is not a natural fact, but it is created by society. This view was important for second wave feminists who took up de Beauvoir's claim and distinguished between sex and gender (Cameron, 2019). The contrast between sex and gender, according to Jule (2008), was first introduced by the British feminist Oakley (1972) who perceived sex to be biological and gender to be social. Sex is viewed as:

...a word that refers to the biological differences between male and female: the visible differences in genitalia, the related difference in procreative function. 'Gender', however, is a matter of culture: it refers to the social classification into 'masculine' and 'feminine'.

(Oakley, 1985 cited in Colebrook, 2004:9)

Thus, sex is biological and binary as Jule (2008:5) clarifies '...except in unusual circumstances, sex is essentially binary: one is either male or female'. The notion of gender, on the other hand, is considered as social and cultural. In this context Talbot (2010:7) argues: '...gender is socially constructed, it is learned. People acquire characteristics which are perceived as masculine and feminine'. For instance, the traditional view that the primary role of women in society is to be housewives and mothers is viewed to be the result

of social learning not biology. Thus, gender is related to the behaviours, roles and norms linked to being a male or a female (Litosseliti, 2006). The reason why this conceptualisation of gender was important for feminists was that:

...learning entails tendencies and variation rather than absolutes. More importantly, it shifted the focus from a grim determinism to the possibilities of unlearning and relearning, resistance to the existing order, and change, on both an individual and social level.

(Sunderland, 2004:14)

This means that emphasis on the view of gender as being socially learned is crucial since individuals and society as a whole can actively challenge and change their preconceived notions about gender. This sociocultural view of gender came as a reaction to the biological or essentialist view of gender. Essentialist theorists (and general prevailing view) believe gender to be tied to sex, in the sense that feminine behaviour and masculine behaviour are expected of biological females and males respectively (Freedman, 2001). They believe that gender is an inherent characteristic with which people are born (Freedman, 2001). However, according to the sociocultural view of gender, people are born as male and female and then society assigns them different gender roles based on their biological characteristics. Beliefs about inferiority due to biology are then used to justify discrimination towards females. Gender, hence, is social, it is something that is given to and imposed on individuals by society. It encompasses ways of behaving, styles of dressing and ways of using language. However, this view of gender was also perceived to be problematic. Consequently, a different conception of gender as a discursive construct has been developed and considers gender as being ‘...neither something into which we are born nor something that we eventually become’ (Edley, 2001:192). Rather, it is something that is produced through discourse (Lazar, 2005), which is a key principle adopted in the present research. This is thoroughly discussed in part two of the present chapter (see Section 3.3.4).

Feminist linguists of the second wave focused on the category of gender and studied how it relates to language because they believed that this would contribute to challenging patriarchy and sexism (Weatherall, 2002). In the next section, I elaborate on this point by showing the main debates surrounding the feminist study of language starting from the 1970s.

### **3.2.3. Feminist Study of Language and Gender**

This section provides some background on how feminist linguistic study developed. The aim is to understand the key issues and questions surrounding feminist research on language and gender in its early development before moving on to deal with the conception of gender as a discursive construct. An important aspect of the behaviour of human beings in their social surroundings is that a substantial part of it is linguistic behaviour (Halliday, 1971). Indeed, as Cameron (1985) claims, the ability to interact through the use of language stands out as the most distinctive quality possessed by human individuals and that linguistic communication plays a pivotal role in the organisation and structure of human societies. Hence, to understand the workings of any society, it is essential to study its language and how it is used. With the aim of identifying and eliminating the underlying sources of women's oppression, feminists demonstrate a deep interest in understanding how their societies operate. In doing so, language is identified as an important and a powerful means used by societies to discriminate against women (Wodak, 1997). Consequently, it became the object of study for feminists of the second wave who turned their attention to the study of the relationship between language and gender. The theoretical orientation of feminist linguistic study of the second wave was a structuralist one. Structuralism is a school of thought that originated from the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. It views language as being a system of signs which have stable meanings (Moghaddas, 2015). That is, de Saussure's work is based on the

principle of language as being a static system of interconnected elements or signs. It is also based on binary oppositions of *signs*, which consist of two parts: the *signifier* and the *signified* (structuralism is discussed in more depth in relation to poststructuralism in Section 3.3.1). This binary thinking is a key characteristic of second wave feminist study, which is explained and illustrated below.

Lakoff's (1975) work is the first work to explore the interplay between language and gender inequality from a feminist perspective. In fact, empirical work on language and gender existed well before the publication of this book and the emergence of the feminist movement of the second wave (Sunderland, 2006). This includes, for instance, the work of the scholar Jespersen (1922) which is one of the early and 'classic' texts in language and gender. However, what distinguishes 'non-feminist' linguistic research from 'feminist' linguistic research is that the latter has political goals. That is, feminist linguistic research seeks to identify, demystify, and resist the ways language is used to reinforce women's subordinate position in society, under the principle that linguistic change is an integral aspect of social change (Litosseliti, 2006). The two main areas of interest of early feminist linguistics are 'linguistic sexism' and 'differences between women and men in language use'. In the following sections, I first explore linguistic sexism, followed by a discussion of women's and men's language use.

### **3.2.3.1. Linguistic Sexism**

Before explaining the connection between language and sexism, a definition of the term 'sexism' needs to be established. Wodak (1997:7) defines sexism as '...discrimination within a social system on the basis of sexual membership'. This suggests that sexism involves a set of attitudes and stereotypes that endorse the superiority of one sex over another. It is usually males that are perceived to be superior to females. Feminist linguists of the second



wave perceive language as reflective of men's power and women's disadvantage in society. This is referred to as 'linguistic sexism', which can be defined as '...words, phrases, and expressions that unnecessarily differentiate between females and males or exclude, trivialize, or diminish either gender.' (Parks and Robertson, 1998:455). Sexist language is seen to be biased in favour of men and against women. In this context, Stanley (cited in Kramarae and Treichler, 1985:412) views sexism in language as '...one of the most powerful means of perpetrating a masculinist interpretation of the world, including the view that women are inferior, passive, and...subordinate to males'. As a result, it became one of the key issues in feminist linguistic research during the second wave of feminism, by identifying and demonstrating various forms of sexism across languages.

In the English language, feminist linguists identified various instances of sexism. For example, the masculine nouns and pronouns ('he/him/his') are utilised as generics to refer to both men and women (Litosseliti, 2006). In addition, many words in the English language are male-oriented in the sense that they contain the element 'man' like chairman, policeman, fireman and so on, which are used to refer to both men and women (Lei, 2006). These words were interpreted as emphasising male prominence and excluding women (Weatherall, 2002). Another instance of the marginalisation of women in the English language lies in the use of titles, i.e., 'Mr' vis-à-vis 'Mrs' and 'Miss' which indicate the marital status of women (Sunderland, 2006). In addition, sexism is found in the semantics of English or what is termed by Schultz (1990 cited in Mills and Mullany, 2011:155) 'the semantic derogation of women' by, for example, associating women with terms that have negative and sexual connotations like: 'mistress', 'bitch', 'slut', 'whore' and so on. Counterpart terms for men rarely have similarly negative connotations, even when they are sexual in nature. In fact, linguistic sexism is found not merely in English, but in many other languages too, like Arabic and French. Since the present study is concerned with

analysing the representation of women in news texts written in Arabic and French, I provide some examples, below, that show how Arabic and French contain sexist words and expressions.

### **3.2.3.1.1. Sexism in Arabic**

The Arabic language has been considered ‘...a masculine language not a feminine one.’ (Aleasa, 1996:5). Grammatically speaking, ‘[standard] Arabic exhibits grammatical and semantic gender usages that may be qualified as “androcentric” (male-biased)’ (Sadiqi, 2006:2). Unlike English, the Arabic language has retained a clear system of feminine and masculine gender. Arabic employs gender markers across verbs, nouns, adjectives, determiners, and quantifiers that ensure grammatical agreement among these diverse linguistic elements (Sadiqi, 2006). However, there exists a grammatical rule stipulating that when a sentence involves both females and males as its subjects, the plural form of the subject will take the masculine form; and the verb in such cases will be conjugated into the masculine form too (Aleasa, 1996). For example, in the sentence *النساء والرجال يدرسون معا* *al nisaa wa arijal yadrusun ma’an* ‘the women and the men study together’, the prefix *ya-* indicates that the masculine form is used for the verb, even though the subject of the verb has both women and men. This means that no matter how many feminine subjects meet masculine subjects in one sentence, the verbs and pronouns will take the masculine form (Muassomah et al., 2021). Besides, masculine vocabulary items and pronouns are used as the generic form (Wulandari and Hayani, 2020; Vicente, 2009). This indicates that the ‘Arabic language views man (the being) as the measurement from which the feminine gender is derived’ (Eleasa, 1996:5). Theodoropoulou (2018) shows the way assessment activities adopted in educational settings in Qatar incorporate questions with verbs that carry masculine pronouns as morphological affixes to address both female and male pupils. For instance, the verb *أجب* *ajib* ‘answer’ and the verb *اقرأ* *ikraa* ‘read’, which are conjugated

to the masculine form, are used to address the pupils in educational assessment activities even though they are distributed to female only schools in Qatar (Theodoropoulou, 2018). Another example of grammatical androcentricity is the precedence of the masculine over the feminine in sentences and expressions, as in *رجل وإمرأة* *rajulun wa imra'a* 'man and woman' and *طفل وطفلة* *Tiflun wa Tiflatun* 'boy and girl' (Sadiqi, 2006). In fact, the expression *Tiflun wa Tiflatun* *طفل وطفلة* shows another instance of sexism in Arabic, in which feminine forms are derived from the masculine forms. In the word *tiflatun* *طفلة*, the feminine *t'aa* or *تَاءُ التَّأْيِيثِ* is added to the word *tiflun* *طفل* to form the feminine form. Therefore, '...the masculine form is the basic one and the feminine is only a derivation of it' (Eleasa, 1996:5). The examples discussed in this section clearly demonstrate that sexism is a feature of the Arabic language.

In this part of the section, I show some studies that are conducted in relation to sexism in the Arabic language. In the case of proverbs, Theodoropoulou (2018) in their study demonstrates how some proverbs in Arabic are used in a sexist way in the Gulf area. One such proverb is *أخت الرجال* *okht al-rijal*, which translates to 'the sister of men'. Despite its positive connotation, this proverb implies that a woman's strength is attributed to her male siblings. Additionally, in the Algerian context, Benneghrouzi and Abdelhay (2012) examined the metaphorical representations of women and men in Algerian dialectal Arabic. The study's findings reveal that a considerable number of metaphors concerning women in Algeria can be categorised as depreciatory. These metaphors unveil associations that are notably linked to aspects like sexuality, short-sightedness, and narrow-mindedness (Benneghouzi and Abdelhay, 2012). For example, in this study, it is found that men are often metaphorised as non-domestic animals which associate men with strength, enormity or demeanour, such as *sbaa* 'lion', *fard* 'bull', *diib* 'fox' and so on. Women, on the other hand, are generally metaphorised as domestic animals such *kalba* 'dog' to refer to a woman

as being nasty, spiteful and untrustworthy. However, when women are metaphorically associated with wild or powerful animals, this suggests viciousness and sexual impropriety. Boudjema (2021) also shows the way metaphors are used to reinforce negative stereotypical representations of women in the Algerian context. For example, in the expression *كان مهني شرا معزة* *Kan mhani chra maaza* 'he (husband) was at peace until he bought a goat', a woman is metaphorised using the domestic animal 'goat', which is known for its irritating habits. This suggests that the wife is a troublemaker. Consequently, men in the Algerian society are always advised to be careful in choosing their future spouse. Another metaphorical expression is related to women's beauty *تخاف المرا من الشيب خوف* *tekhaf lmra men chib, khouf anaaja men dhib* or 'the woman fears aging (gray hair) as the sheep fears the wolf'. This expression is used in the Algerian context to show the extent to which aging terrifies women. This stems from the prevalent belief in society that women are obsessed with beauty. In the next section of the present chapter, I demonstrate the way sexism is encoded in the French language.

### **3.2.3.1.2. Sexism in French**

Like Arabic, the French language is also regarded as containing sexist elements. It shares similarities with Arabic in the forms of sexism it exhibits, as both languages have a system of masculine and feminine gender. For example, French, like Arabic, has a form of sexism in which even if there are one hundred women and one man, the subject of the sentence will take the masculine form (Cresci, 2016). In this regard, Carson (1993:34) says: '[w]e have come to terms with the fact that the masculine plural...takes precedence, regardless of the number of feminine elements present - it isn't fair...'. To state an example, in the sentences: *Alicia, Emily et David jouent ensemble. Ils s'amusement tellement* or 'Alicia, Emily and David are playing together. They are having so much fun', the masculine plural pronoun *ils* is used to refer to Alicia, Emily and David rather than *elles* (plural feminine), even though there are

two girls and one boy as subject of the sentence. The use of the feminine pronoun *elles* in this instance would be seen as grammatically incorrect (Carson, 1993). Indeed, '[t]he French plural pronoun is an example of a linguistic structure that will remain sexist' (Carson, 1993:34). This grammatical rule in French is referred to as *le masculin l'emporte sur le féminin* or 'the masculine takes precedence over the feminine' (Roubin, 2017). Furthermore, like Arabic, the feminine form in French is derived from the masculine (Roubin, 2017). For instance, in the case of adjectives, masculine adjectives ending in *f* change to *ve* in the feminine (e.g. *naïf/naïve*, *actif/active*) and masculine adjectives ending in *el* change to *elle* in the feminine (e.g. *exceptionnel/exceptionnelle*). Besides, some feminine adjectives are formulated by adding 'e' to the masculine adjectives (e.g. *sérieux/sérieuse*, *joli/jolie*, *brun/brune*). Another instance of sexism in the French language is that many job titles do not have the feminine form, such as *professeur* 'professor', *chef* 'boss', *entrepreneur* 'businessman', *magistrat* 'magistrate', *huissier* 'bailiff', *commissaire-priseur* 'auctioneer', *ingenieur* 'engineer' and *sapeur-pompier* 'firefighter' (Gervais, 1993). The lack of feminine forms in French language was considered as '...an obstacle to social change, it was not merely a language question but also un problème de société' (Gervais, 1993:129). In addition to that, French vocabulary carries numerous sexist biases towards women. In this respect, (Roubin, 2017:11) indicates: '[l]e vocabulaire français est fortement sexué et véhicule un grand nombre de préjugés sexistes à l'égard des femmes' (the French vocabulary is highly gendered and conveys many sexist prejudices towards women). For instance, *un gars* refers to a boy, while its feminine form *une garce* is a derogatory term for a woman of loose morals (Roubin, 2017). The next section discusses the way linguistic sexism was challenged.

### 3.2.2.1.3. Combatting Linguistic Sexism

Linguistic sexism was challenged by feminists because it reinforces the patriarchal order in society. As a result, several strategies aiming at changing 'sexist wordings' and promoting a more inclusive language were adopted. In English, notable instances of these strategies include the adoption of words such as 'Ms' as a title applicable to all women, regardless of marital status, the use of gender-neutral terms such as 'spokesperson' and 'chairperson' to refer to both men and women, and avoiding masculine generic pronouns (Sunderland, 2006). In French, efforts were made to feminise titles of profession (Bevilacqua, 2020). This was done, for example, by adding 'e' to the masculine job titles such as: *docteur/docteure*, *professeur/professeure*, *ingénieur/ingénier*e and so on. Another strategy involves the use of doublets to encompass both women and men like *toutes et tous*, *elle et il* 'she and he' (Bevilacqua, 2020). There is also a shift towards the utilisation of 'encasing' forms that steer clear of gender stereotypes like *les droits humains* 'human rights' instead of *les droits de l'Homme* 'the rights of Men' (Bevilacqua, 2020). In a study conducted by Bevilacqua (2020) about the use of inclusive language in six Francophone newspapers in Algeria, it has been found that the feminisation of occupations, titles, and names of functions became significantly more prevalent in news articles published in March 2018 in comparison to those published in March 2010. The study attributed this shift to an increased sensitivity in Algeria regarding the representation of gender in the French language. This awareness was influenced by ongoing political and institutional debates in French-speaking countries concerning the adoption of *écriture inclusive* or 'inclusive writing' (Bevilacqua, 2020).

However, changes in what is termed as 'overt sexism' (Mills, 2008:126) is seen to be simplistic and it has not proven effective in tackling and eliminating sexism. What is needed is to challenge 'the indirect sexism' (Mills, 2008:126) or the discursive practices that manifest sexist assumptions through linguistic (and non-linguistic) choices (Litosseliti,

2006). That is to say, we need to unpack and challenge the underlying discourses embedded in both text and talk, as well as visual elements which produce sexist and gendered ideologies in a variety of cultural and institutional settings, including the media, educational settings, workplaces and so on (Lazar, 2005). This constitutes the concern of the study which seeks to analyse the discourses and ideologies embedded in the linguistic and visual choices of two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria.

The next section discusses the second concern of second-wave feminist linguistics, which is the differences in language use between women and men.

### **3.2.3.2. Women's and Men's Use of Language**

Another area of interest of early feminist linguists was gendered language use. They documented gender differences in speech to identify with the aim of uncovering the power dynamics in language use. Their focus was on understanding the conventions and behaviours through which women's and men's speech both mirrors and reinforces the issue of gender inequality (Cameron, 1992). Feminist linguistics of second wave feminism asked a key question which was: do men and women talk differently? and provided different answers which led to the foundation of three theoretical models, namely Deficit, Difference and Dominance (often referred to as the three 'Ds'). These theoretical models are explained below.

Firstly, the key figure within the deficit model is Lakoff (1975) who paved the way to research on gender differences in ways of speaking specifically and feminist linguistics generally. This scholar studied 'women's language' and identified several features characterising women's speech. She then made conclusions that the language use of women is deficient, weak and inferior compared to men's use of language. In this regard, Lakoff (1975:7) argues that '...women are denied access to power on the grounds that they

are not capable of holding it as demonstrated by their linguistic behavior'. This scholar gave many examples that were perceived as indicating women's weakness in speech. For instance, women tend to use tag questions and question intonation in declarative sentences that show their uncertainty in their claims. In addition, women use weaker forms of expletives such as 'oh dear!' and 'goodness', while men use stronger ones like 'shit' and 'damn'. Secondly, in the Dominance model, the female sex is seen to be dominated in interaction by the male sex due to power or social status which is the primary factor in explaining differences in the speech of women and men (Weatherall, 2002). In this context, Spender (1980) argues that because of patriarchy, language is made by men and held under male control. Zimmerman and West (1975) found that men control and develop the topics of conversation, interrupt more and use delayed minimal responses when talking to women, which shows their dominance of women in interaction. Finally, the (Cultural) Difference Model attributes differences in language use to the different socialisation or acculturation of girls/women and boys/men (Tannen, 1990). For example, in their childhood, girls are taught to be polite and nice, while boys are encouraged to be competitive and strong. Consequently, girls and boys acquire distinct interaction styles and make different linguistic choices.

Deficit, Dominance, and Difference models have played a crucial role in sparking discussions on key issues surrounding language and gender from a feminist perspective. However, they were subject to several criticisms due to some limitations. To begin with, the three approaches adopted the view of gender as being social, but it was perceived as a stable category that is imposed by society upon sexed individuals since childhood. Then it influenced the linguistic behaviour of men and women. That is, they conceptualised gender as '...the culturally shaped group of attributes given to the female or to the male' (Humm 1989:84), and language use reflects the attributes assigned to men and women by society.



Therefore, they substituted biological determinism with a form of social determinism (Apostol, 2013), in the sense that society determines the social roles and, consequently, the linguistic behaviour of women and men. Besides, they emphasised the view of 'gender difference' or the binary opposition of gender i.e. masculinity and femininity (Litosseliti and Sunderland, 2002). This reinforces sex stereotypes by, for example, perceiving women as inferior and weak, and perpetuates gender imbalances. Furthermore, they concentrated on finding out stable gender differences in speech styles, and ignored the fact that language use varies across context and linguistic forms have different communicative functions. In addition to that, they perceived women as a homogenous group and did not pay attention to the way gender intersects with other social factors, such as race, age, and sexual orientation. Due to the limitations of these models, language and gender research has shifted to a 'Discursive Model', which considers gender as an outcome of discourse. This is discussed in detail in the next part of the chapter.

### **3.3. Discourse and Gender**

Starting from third wave feminism, feminist linguistics witnessed a move away from a structuralist to a poststructuralist approach in exploring the connection between language and gender. Third wave feminist linguists hold the view of gender as being a discursive construct and, consequently, focus on identifying subtle or indirect forms of sexism through analysing discourse (Lazar, 2005). This part of the chapter first discusses the notion of 'poststructuralism', which paved the way for the conception of discourse as actively shaping social reality, in addition to the notion of 'discourse' from a Foucauldian perspective. It also discusses CDA, which is a critical approach to analysing discourse to unveil subtle forms of power and inequality, along with its principles and key terms, before moving to explaining the notion of 'gender as discursive construct' and FCDA (which is the approach adopted in this study) and its key tenets.

### 3.3.1. Poststructuralism

It is poststructuralism which has come with the notion of ‘...language as a ‘site’ for the construction and the contestation of social meanings’ (Baxter 2003:6), including meanings about gender. Therefore, it is important to provide some background on poststructuralism to understand some of its basic tenets before moving to discussing the notion of discourse provided by the poststructuralist scholar Foucault on which (Feminist) CDA draws. Poststructuralism as a school of thought emerged in the 1960s and refers to a group of theorists who revised Saussurian premises regarding the function of signs and the role of language (Apostol, 2013). Baxter (2003:6) refers to poststructuralism as a philosophical movement which is characterised by a ‘sense of scepticism towards all universal causes, its questioning of what ‘true’ or ‘real’ knowledge is, and its loss of certainty about all absolutes’. Some of the major poststructuralist theorists are Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Chantal Mouffe, Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva, Jacques Lacan and so on, who share the view that language is the primary site of the construction of the world, rather than being simply reflective of a pre-existing social reality. To better understand poststructuralism, we need to refer to some of the key ideas of structuralism, as presented by the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. De Saussure (1960) perceives language as a system of signs and each sign, as explained in Section 3.2.3, consists of two sides: form (signifier) and meaning (signified). The relation between the two sides is arbitrary, i.e. the result of social convention. Consequently, societies have different words for the same concepts. This entails that language is not determined or bound by the reality it represents. Besides, de Saussure (1960) views that a given sign gains its meaning only in relationship to all other signs in the language. That is, a sign is part of a network of signs, and it gets its meaning from being different from other signs. Its meaning then becomes fixed within the system of *langue*. The latter points to a further distinction made by de Saussure (1960) between

two language levels which are *langue* and *parole*. The former refers to the underlying structure of language, or the network of signs, which is fixed and unchangeable. The latter is the use of signs by people in specific situations and it is perceived to be vitiated by mistakes because individuals use language according to their wishes and intentions. As a result, de Saussure made *langue*, i.e. the internal structure of language, as the main object of linguistics and not language in use (Fairclough, 1992; Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). Poststructuralism, on the other hand, rests on the principle that reality is created and understood by language use. That is, language does not merely reflect an objective social reality. Instead, language for poststructuralists actively constructs and shapes our understanding of different aspects of reality (Baxter, 2003). Besides, poststructuralism shares the structuralist view that the sign's meaning is derived from its relationship with and distinction from other signs. However, it rejects the fixity of the meaning of the sign within the structure. For poststructuralism, the meaning of signs is not fixed, and it changes according to the context. Poststructuralism also criticises the distinction between language and *parole* and believes that the actual use of language (*parole*) is where the structure is produced, reproduced and transformed (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002). That is to say, when using language, whether speech or writing, people draw on the structure, but also have the capacity to question it by introducing new concepts that redefine the meaning of signs (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002). For poststructuralists there are different forms of knowledge that compete to fix meaning (Baxter, 2003). In other words, there is not merely one single meaning system as claimed by Saussurian structuralism. Instead, there are multiple systems of signification known as 'discourses' and meaning changes from one discourse to another. The idea of multiple discourses acknowledges that meanings are not stable and vary across diverse social and cultural contexts. For instance, in the Algerian society, there are different discourses on how women and men should behave. Indeed,

meanings associated with gender differ from one society to another. To illustrate with another example, Lazar (2000), in her analysis of discourses surrounding parenthood in the Singaporean national campaign, shows the coexistence of two competing discourses of gender relations, namely 'the discourse of conservative gender relations' in addition to 'the discourse of egalitarian gender relations'. Within the conservative discourse, women and men were represented as involved in different roles within the private and public spheres, which reinforce stereotypical views about gender. The egalitarian discourse, on the other hand, is characterised by the representation of identical parenting, and the portrayal of both sensitive 'New Man' and the 'New Woman' as an individual with commitments extending beyond the domestic realm. This suggests the existence of not just one discourse, but rather a multiplicity of discourses addressing various aspects of social life, including gender.

To make a link between what has been discussed in this section and feminist study of language and gender (as discussed previously in Section 3.2.3), feminist linguists of the second wave were influenced by structuralist thinking by seeking to find out the fixed features underlying men's and women's speech without considering the interplay between language use and social context. From a poststructuralist view, however, there are different discourses about gender. Meaning is not fixed, and people can construct different masculinities and femininities through their use of language. Discourse is seen to be constitutive and, therefore, gender is something that is constructed through discourse, which is a key principle adopted in this research project. In the next part of the chapter, I define the notion of discourse as proposed by the scholar Foucault.

### 3.3.2. Foucault's Notion of Discourse

Foucault's body of work covers some concepts that hold significance and relevance for the present research, such as discourse and power (1972; 1980). Accordingly, this section focuses on the term discourse and its relationship to power from a Foucauldian standpoint. The notion of discourse is defined differently across different disciplines. In this context, Mills (2004:1) writes:

[t]he term 'discourse' has become common currency in a variety of disciplines: critical theory, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology and many other fields, so much so that it is frequently left undefined, as if its usage were simply common knowledge.

This suggests that there is no one agreed upon definition of discourse and its meaning depends on the disciplinary context in which this concept is used. In this section, I focus on the definition offered by the poststructuralist scholar Foucault (1972), since it has informed (feminist) CDA in its examination of the relationship between discourse and society. By highlighting the constitutive power of discourse, Foucault's ideas offered new ways for conceptualising aspects of the social world, including gender. Therefore, it is important to understand some of the key ideas provided by Foucault regarding the notion of discourse.

Foucault (1972:49) views discourse as '...practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'. This implies that discourse is constitutive of social reality. It is 'a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment' (Hall, 1992:291). This indicates that discourse, in its Foucauldian sense, constructs the topic by giving meaning to an experience and articulating different ways of perceiving the world. Foucault (1972) perceives discourse to be linked to concepts of knowledge, power and truth since discourse has effects because of these elements. Discourse produces knowledge and

societies accept some forms of knowledge as true while excluding others. Power, for Foucault, is linked to discourse. As summarised by Jorgensen and Phillips (2002:14) it is 'responsible both for creating our social world and for the particular ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking'. This suggests that power is not simply negative and repressive (as claimed by Karl Marx, which is discussed in Section 3.3.3.1.4), rather it is 'productive' as it produces forms of knowledge. In this regard, Foucault (1980:119) claims:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it does not only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.

In effect, people derive their knowledge of the social world from the discursive environment in which they are born and actively engage throughout their lives (Jager and Maier, 2009). There are multiple discourses that are in constant struggle over questions of truth and all knowledge that we have is the result of power struggle in discourse. Discourse influences the way people perceive the social world and, consequently, their actions. For instance, there are different discourses of femininity which women draw upon to perform their gendered identity. These discourses surrounding femininity influence a woman's clothing choices, behaviour, speech and the ways she perceives herself and others in the context of power (Mills, 2004). Thus, discourses can be observed as types of knowledge or powerful sets of beliefs, expectations and explanations that govern social practices (Baxter, 2003). They are 'ways of seeing the world' (Sunderland, 2004:205), which actively construct the own self, the other and reality. Yet, this does not suggest that reality itself does not exist, nor does it deny the existence of physical objects, but they only gain meaning through

discourse (Mills, 2003). The following section of the chapter discusses the notion of 'discourse analysis'.

### **3.3.3. Discourse Analysis**

The development of 'discourse analysis' as a multidisciplinary field of research is the result of the discourse turn in the humanities and social sciences. The American scholar Zellig Harris initially introduced the term in his study of language beyond the sentence level and the interplay between linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour (Meyerhoff, 2012). Then, the term has been used to refer to a number of different approaches that focus on 'the analysis of language in use' (Brown and Yule, 1983:1), both talk and written texts and other means of communication such as images. Hence, discourse analysis is not a single approach or method, rather it is an 'umbrella term' (Cameron, 2001:7) that is used to refer to a series of multidisciplinary approaches with different theoretical traditions (Taylor, 2013). These approaches range from more textually oriented approaches which give more importance to describing the text's features, to socially oriented approaches which concentrate on the functions of the text within its social and cultural context (Paltridge, 2006). Gee (2011) further makes a distinction between two types of discourse analysis, namely 'descriptive' and 'critical'. The descriptive form aims to describe language for the purpose of understanding it, while the critical form goes beyond language description by seeking to intervene in social and political problems to contribute to social change (Gee, 2011). CDA and Feminist CDA are approaches that belong to the critical form of discourse analysis. A key characteristic of CDA is its focus on social issues, particularly the function of discourse in producing and perpetuating power dynamics or domination (van Dijk, 2001). Therefore, CDA deals with the connection between power, discourse and social inequality. It does not solely offer a description and an interpretation of discourse, but it also explains why and how discourse operates (Rogers, 2004). FCDA is a feminist version of CDA which deals with

gender and its relationship with discourse and power. I consider FCDA as a useful approach for my study for its shared concern with gender representation(s). This research project focuses on the notion of gender as a social problem in the Algerian context by analysing the way women are represented in some selected Algerian news outlets. In the coming sections, I introduce CDA with its aims, principles and key notions.

### **3.3.3.1. Critical Discourse Analysis**

CDA is an approach to discourse analysis that sets as its main objective the study of the connections between discourse, power, and ideology. It was originally introduced by a group of scholars within Critical Linguistics (CL) of the University of East Anglia, namely, Robert Hodge, Roger Fowler, Tony Trew and Gunther Kress (Machin and Mayr, 2012). CL draws on Halliday's Functional Grammar and deals with aspects related to language use in societal institutions and the connections between discourse ideology and power (Blommaert, 2005). It also advocates for a linguistically analytical approach with a critical orientation aimed at achieving emancipatory goals (Blommaert, 2005). The aims of CL are taken up by CDA and the two terms are often used interchangeably. CL was later developed by other scholars mainly Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk and Ruth Wodak. CDA finds its theoretical roots in Western Marxism, which includes key figures like Antonio Gramsci, Jurgen Habermas (within the Frankfurt School) and Louis Althusser with their view of ideology, French poststructuralist scholars mainly Michel Foucault with his notion of discourse and power, as well as Mikhail Bakhtin and Valentin Voloshinov with their linguistic theory of ideology (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). The core theoretical basis of the CDA approach is described as neo-Marxist since it rests on the principle that cultural dimensions, rather than economic ones, are important for creating and perpetuating power dynamics in society. The upcoming section expands on this point by discussing the aims, key assumptions, and principles of CDA.



### 3.3.3.1.1. Background on CDA

This section of the thesis provides some definitions of CDA and explains its key principles. According to Richardson (2007:1), CDA is ‘a theory and method analysing the way that individuals and institutions use language’. In its analysis of language use, CDA concentrates on the relationship between language, power and social inequalities. In this context, Luke (2002: 100) argues:

CDA involves a principled and transparent shunting back and forth between the microanalysis of texts using varied tools of linguistics, semiotic, and literary analysis and the macroanalysis of social formations, institutions, and power relations that these texts index and construct.

Hence, the main task of CDA is to unveil power issues hidden in discourse. van Dijk (2001:352) further defines CDA as ‘a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power, abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk’. This shows that CDA starts with a social problem. That is, CDA does not initiate its analysis directly from texts and interactions; instead, it commences from the broader social issues and challenges that individuals encounter in their everyday lives (Fairclough, 2001). In its focus on social problems, CDA undertakes a ‘critical’ approach for the analysis of text and talk. The concept of ‘critical’ here does not refer to its common interpretation i.e., criticising, rather it means:

denaturalising the language to reveal the kinds of ideas and taken for granted assumptions in texts by exposing strategies that appear normal or neutral on the surface, but which may be in fact ideological and seek to shape the representation of events and persons for particular ends.

(Machin and Mayr, 2012:5).

In other words, CDA makes connections between linguistic structures and social structures to demonstrate how language is utilised to convey specific discourses. It explores how discourses can be used either in opposition to or in support of individuals, and how they

play a role in initiating, manipulating, or challenging particular social and political ideologies (Wodak, 2001). Thus, CDA extends beyond a mere descriptive account of linguistic structures. It seeks to reveal connections between power, ideology and discourse in texts and conversations that may be hidden from people. In this context, Luke (2002:101) claims that 'a linguistic and text analytic metalanguage...cannot 'do' CDA in and of itself. It requires the overlay of a social theoretic discourse for explaining...[the] consequences of any given text'. This means that a thorough textual analysis is valuable however it cannot do CDA on its own. In order to fully grasp the broader social implications, power dynamics, and consequences of a specific text, the researcher needs to integrate a social theory to investigate the impacts of the text or discourse. In CDA, inequality is seen as the outcome or the effect of ideological power that exists in discourse as power acts as a force that differentiates and selects, includes and excludes (Blommaert, 2005). CDA, therefore, seeks to reveal the way language is used as an instrument of ideological power that results in forms of inequality by setting discourse as its main object of analysis to understand wider aspects of power relations. Forms of inequality include gender, cultural, class, ethnic and racial inequality. This indicates that CDA is a problem-oriented approach which is deeply interested in real-life problems and different manifestations of inequality in society. CDA researchers are not neutral but commit themselves to an engagement in favour of the oppressed groups in society. They are interested in conducting a critical examination of the how language is used to create unequal power dynamics with the goal of raising critical awareness amongst people. This contributes to specific social change in favour of the marginalised groups as '...awareness of the ways in which language is used as a stabilizing mechanism, can be a step in the direction of liberation' (Mills, 1995:14). In effect, this what makes CDA '...a distinct theory of language, a radically different kind of linguistics' (Kress, 1990 cited in Wodak, 2001:5).

Discourse in CDA is seen to be carrying ideological assumptions about aspects of social life which make them appear as natural and commonsensical. van Dijk (1998:193) claims: '...ideological socialization...largely takes place through discourse'. Hence, the aim of CDA is to expose those commonsensical assumptions by analysing linguistic features of different types of texts and talk and explaining what kinds of ideas they might convey and possible ideological goals they might serve. Examples of texts that are analysed in CDA research are news media texts, political speeches, advertisements, textbooks, and so on. Ideologies are believed to be a tool of power by reproducing unequal relations of power and domination in society (Fairclough, 2003). CDA pays attention to how power flows and operates within society through discourse by analysing linguistic phenomena. Discourse is seen as a vehicle for establishing differences between social groups, for example between women and men, through the ideologies that it carries. The ideological biases embedded in specific language use to depict individuals and the power relations underlying them are often ambiguous and invisible to people. To make those opaque aspects of discourse visible to people, CDA builds a bridge between micro and macro levels of analysis. The former refers to the use of language, discourse, speech and communication whilst the latter is associated with ideology, power, dominance, and disparity among social groups (van Dijk, 2005). Even though the main interest of CDA is directed to the study of linguistic structures, other scholars have emphasised the importance of incorporating other non-linguistic elements such as visual images in the study of discourse (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006). Indeed, discourse involves both linguistic and non-linguistic resources. That is, meaning is constructed by means of various representational systems and language serves as merely one of the sign systems utilised by individuals to convey meaning (Rogers, 2004). Consequently, CDA has expanded its scope 'beyond language, taking on board that

discourses are often multimodally realized, not only through text and talk, but also through other modes of communication such as images' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:292).

As a summary to what has been discussed above, the basic principles of CDA, as proposed by Fairclough and Wodak (1997) are: (1) CDA focuses on social issues, (2) power dynamics are expressed and maintained through discourse, (3) discourse actively shapes both society and culture, (4) discourse has ideological effects, (5) discourse is historical, (6) the relationship between text and society is mediated, and (7) discourse is interpretative and explanatory. These principles are shared by the different CDA approaches, including Fairclough's dialectical-relational approach (1989; 1992), Wodak discourse-historical approach (1991), and van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach (1998). These approaches, however, differ in their methods used for a systematic analysis of the use of language in social interaction and their ideological consequences (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). In addition to the above-mentioned approaches, there are feminist approaches to a critical study of discourse, such as Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (Baxter, 2003) as well as Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2005), which constitutes the main approach for my research project. In the upcoming sections of this part of the chapter, I define key concepts used in CDA that are important for the present study.

#### **3.3.3.1.2. Discourse in CDA**

When the notion of discourse is used as an abstract noun, it points to '...language use as social practice' (Fairclough, 2010:92). On the other hand, when the same concept is used as a count noun, it signifies 'ways of signifying areas of experience from a particular perspective' (Fairclough, 2010:93). This implies that discourses are ways of expressing and talking about different aspects of the world from diverse perspectives. The discourses that are used within a particular institution or domain of life are referred to by Fairclough as

'orders of discourse'. Fairclough (1992:9) defines the latter as the 'total configurations of discursive practices in particular institutions, or indeed in a whole society'.

To better understand how the notion of discourse is used in CDA, I refer to the three main definitions of discourse proposed by Schiffrin et al. (2001): (1) anything that extends beyond the sentence level, (2) language in use, and (3) a combination of both linguistic and non-linguistic social practices and ideological beliefs that together construct power. The first definition belongs to the structuralist paradigm in linguistics which focuses on the structural properties of the text including cohesion and coherence, i.e. form, whereas the second conception of discourse is held by the functionalist paradigm which concentrates on the functions communicated by language in specific contexts, i.e. meaning, (Mayr, 2008). It is the third definition of discourse which is held by CDA scholars who are influenced by Foucault's conception of discourse (see Section 3.3.2). The concept of discourse in CDA aligns with the Foucauldian perspective, viewing it as a form of social practice. However, unlike Foucault, discourse from a CDA perspective does not constitute the social completely, but it is itself constituted by aspects of the social. In this vein, Fowler et al. (1979) suggest that the way individuals use language is shaped by their social groupings and relationships, and these linguistically influenced patterns, in turn, affect the non-verbal behaviour of people. This means that language does not exist in isolation; it is related to the social context in which it is employed. Our language use does not simply reflect our behaviour and practices, but it actively shapes them. Therefore, there is a dynamic relationship where language is not only shaped by its social context, but also serves as a powerful force that contributes to shaping the world around us. In this regard, Fairclough and Wodak (1997:258) further argue:

CDA sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of 'social practice'. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s),

institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it.

This quote summarises CDA's view of discourse that the latter is both constitutive and constituted by the social world. In effect, language acts as a dynamic force in the sense that it shapes our perception of the world, and simultaneously, it is shaped by the social context in which it operates. This perspective, as discussed previously in this section, is seen as the most abstract conceptualisation of the term by Fairclough who uses the term discourse in two other different ways. In addition to the view of discourse as being both constitutive and shaped by social elements, Fairclough understands discourse as any type of language employed within specific domains like scientific discourse (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002). Furthermore, Fairclough uses the term discourse as a count noun to refer to ways of using language that provides meaning to experiences from a particular standpoint, and this encompasses various identifiable discourses, such as a feminist discourse and a neoliberal discourse (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002).

Indeed, discourses are not fixed and 'they are not immanent truths, but rather are constructed that way from particular positions that serve particular interests, whilst subordinating others' (Lazar, 2000:377). Discourse includes not just written and spoken languages but also other non-linguistic means such as images. In this respect, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) highlight that discourses manifest in various modes and, within a culture, all available semiotic modes are utilised to articulate different discourses. This indicates that discourse is not limited to language use only. It functions through language as much as it does through other semiotic modes of communication (Lazar, 2000). CDA Scholars

have emphasised the importance of incorporating other non-linguistic elements, such as visual images, in their analysis of discourse (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006). In the case of images, they are not mere decorative elements; instead, they serve to represent different aspects of the world. Similar to how language conveys meaning through word classes and clause structures, visuals convey different meanings through choices of, for example, colour and compositional structures (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Different discourses serve different interests, and the examination of these interests is what links discourse to power dynamics. When analysis aims to uncover the connection between discourse and power relations, it falls under the umbrella of critical discourse analysis. The present study endorses the idea of gender as being produced in and through discourse by investigating the ways in which women are positioned in both linguistic and visual texts of the selected news outlets to gain a holistic account of their positioning in the Algerian press. The next section of the chapter explains key differences between the terms 'discourse' and 'text' drawn upon in this study.

#### **3.3.3.1.3. Discourse and Text**

The concept of 'text' is used on many occasions in the thesis. Therefore, it is important to establish the meaning of this term and show how it differs from 'discourse'. Like discourse, text is an important notion in (feminist) CDA research. Some approaches within discourse analysis consider the two terms to be synonymous and tend to use them interchangeably (Litosseliti and Sunderland, 2002). Widdowson (2007:6) indicates that '[t]exts are produced to express ideas and beliefs or to make other people think in a certain way or to get other people to do certain things'. Most researchers within the realm of CDA adopt and use this definition of text (Aoumeur, 2014). They hold the belief that examining texts can give us a significant amount of information regarding social reality. Fairclough (1992) characterises a text as a physical object which exists in connection with both discursive and social

practices. In his own words, Fairclough (2010:95) defines text as the 'written or spoken language produced in a discursive event'. Thus, there is a distinction between text and discourse. A text is viewed as the verbal manifestation of a communicative event (Brown and Yule, 1983). It is '...the fabric in which discourse is manifested' (Talbot, 1995:24). This entails that a text can exist physically whereas discourse is 'text in context' (van Dijk, 1990:164). Texts contain linguistic properties or cues (such as grammatical structures) that help find out the embedded discourses. Texts encompass not only written or spoken forms, but they also incorporate other modes of semiosis like images (Fairclough, 2003). Images also have visual structures (such as colour, placement of depicted elements) which help identify the hidden discourses and meanings. In this thesis, the term 'text' is employed to signify both written language and images. It aims at analysing both written and visual texts of four Algerian newspapers to expose their discourses and ideologies on women, through the linguistic and visual choices made in their texts. Not integrating both modes of meaning making in my analysis would result in an incomplete examination of discourse (Lazar, 1999). The next section deals with the notion of ideology.

#### **3.3.3.1.4. Ideology**

Ideology is a key concept in CDA. According to Thompson (1990), this term emerged during the late 18th century in France and since then, it has been given different meanings and definitions. This suggests that the concept of ideology lacks a precise definition. In this section, I explore some definitions of ideology drawing from the perspectives that have shaped CDA's understanding of the term. According to Mayr (2008), the different definitions given to the notion of ideology can be grouped into two main groups: a relativist definition that views ideology as systems of ideas, assumptions and practices, in addition to a critical definition which aligns with Marxist theory and considers ideology as serving the interests of a specific social group. Fairclough (2003), in turn, distinguishes between a



'critical' view as well as a 'descriptive' view of ideology. The former standpoint sees ideology as a form of power, while the latter view considers ideology as encompassing attitudes and perspectives of social groups, without addressing the power dynamics among these groups. Karl Marx holds a critical view of ideology by considering the term as being a system of false and distorted beliefs that the ruled have about the ruling class. That is to say, the ruling class uses belief systems or ideologies to make the subordination of the working class within economic structures of inequality appear 'natural'. This is because the dominant class controls the means of production, which gives them the ability to make their ideologies widely accepted by the ruled as 'common sense' (van Dijk, 1998). The ruling class wins the consent of the working class for their exploitation through various means. One of these methods is the way workers trade their labour power for wages to buy the commodities they produce, but these commodities are owned and sold by the capitalist ruling class (Stoddart, 2007). Ideology for Marx takes a material form in the sense that material reality is the foundation of ideology, which functions to make the subordinate class accept the exploitative nature of the capitalist mode of production. Hence, opposition to ideology needs to take a material form by the overthrow of capitalism through revolutionary action. In short, ideology for Marx is 'false consciousness'. It prevents the subordinate class from seeing the world as it really is and works to legitimise the capitalist mode of production. Later, critical social theorists of the Frankfurt School, including Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Benjamin Walter and Herbert Marcuse embraced Marx's notion of ideology and expanded it. Unlike Marx which considers the ideological superstructure as the main arena for obtaining the consent of the subordinate class to capitalist modes of production, these theorists consider ideology to be spread mainly through 'mass culture' (film, music, newspaper and so on), in addition to scientific and

technological rationality (Stoddart, 2007). Thus, economic power is not the primary site of power, exploitation, and resistance.

In CDA, ideology is approached critically by adopting the Marxist view of the term to refer to the subordination of one social group to others. However, it considers ideology as an effect of discourse. That is, discourse carries ideological assumptions through the ways it represents and positions people, things, and events. In this context, Fairclough (1992:87) considers ideologies as:

significations/constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities) which are built into various dimensions of the forms/meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination.

This indicates that the meanings assigned to different aspects of the world play a role in producing, shaping or changing relations of domination. Fairclough (1995:14) further states that ideology relates to 'meaning in the service of power'. That is, ideologies, as manifested in discourses, play a key role in producing relations of domination. The ideologies carried out by discourse are implicit rather than explicit in the sense that they are often invisible to people. In other words, '[i]deology works through disguising its nature, pretending to be what it is not' (Fairclough, 1989:92). CDA, therefore aims at exposing the hidden ideologies of discourse through close analysis of different types of texts.

In the scope of this study, my stance aligns with the neo-Marxist view, which sees ideologies as a set of assumptions which work to create and sustain relations of domination often not in obvious way, through analysis of discourses about gender in the texts of selected news outlets. Since a 'critical' perspective of ideology considers the latter as being linked to power, I demonstrate, in the next part of the chapter, what the term power involves.

### 3.3.3.1.5. Power/Hegemony

Power is another salient concept used in CDA research. Like discourse and ideology, power is defined differently by different scholars. Foucault, as discussed previously, focuses on the notion of productive power. For him, power 'produces reality, it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth' (Foucault, 1977:194). It is 'secured not so much by the threat of punishment, but by the internalization of the norms and values implied by the prevailing discourses within the social order' (Mesthrie et al., 2000:324).

Gramsci (1971), drawing on the work of Marx and Engels (1848), developed the concept of 'hegemony' to indicate the role of ideology and culture in the perpetuation of the state and capitalism. Power, for Gramsci, goes beyond mere economic and political influence; it encompasses how the dominant group maintains its ideologies, shaping the perception of the subordinate group that accepts these ideologies as 'common sense'. He distinguished between 'coercion' and 'consent' as two mechanisms of power. That is, for Gramsci, the power of the ruling class is interwoven with both political society and civil society. Coercion characterises the former, while the latter constitutes the realm of hegemony where the majority's consent to the existing order is secured (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). Institutions are viewed as responsible for disseminating hegemonic power (Stoddart, 2007). In this context, Gramsci (1971:242) claims that the state serves an 'educative and formative role, by showing how the various institutions of civil society including the family, school, media, workplace, church and so forth are used to sustain the state and capitalism (Devetak et al., 2011). Donaldson (1993:645) further refers to 'hegemony' as:

the winning and holding of power and the formation (and destruction) of social groups in that process. In this sense, it is importantly about the ways in which the ruling class establishes and maintains its domination. The ability to impose a definition of the situation, to set the terms in which events are

understood and issues discussed, to formulate ideals and define morality is an essential part of this process.

Thus, hegemony is 'domination through consent'; it resides beneath the surface and functions as 'common sense' in society. Yet, hegemonic power for Gramsci is always challenged and depends on historical circumstances which suggests that change in power relations is possible.

All of the accounts of power discussed above highlight the role of language in exercising power (Mayr, 2008). Weatherall (2002) explains that power is an integral aspect of language and inseparable from it. CDA rests on the view that power is hegemonic and commonsensical, and it is exercised through discursive means. It explores the discursive construction of (hegemonic) attitudes and opinions, that often appear natural, through linguistic and non-linguistic means. Therefore, CDA adopts a critical stance in its analysis of discourse with the aim of revealing how power operates within discourse. In the present study, by adopting an FCDA perspective, I demonstrate whether the selected Algerian newspapers, through their representations of women, draw on hegemonic discourses and ideologies about gender. In the following section of the chapter, I explain the concepts of 'manifest intertextuality' and 'interdiscursivity' which are important notions that are applied to the data of the study.

#### **3.3.3.1.6. Intertextuality**

This section aims at introducing a pivotal concept in the realm of (feminist) CDA studies which is 'intertextuality'. This notion belongs to the second level of analysis of Fairclough's (1989, 1992) analytical framework which I apply to the data of the study to analyse representation of women in four news outlets in Algeria. Therefore, it is important to gain a deeper understanding of this concept through existing literature, before presenting how

the term is used for data analysis in the next chapter of the thesis. To begin with, the notion of intertextuality refers to a text's interaction with prior texts. It is widely believed that the literary theorist Kristeva (1986), drawing on Bakhtin's (1981) work, introduced the term intertextuality to describe the structural connections between texts (Bullo, 2017). The term became popular in the 1960s after it was introduced by Kristeva (1986:37), who claims that 'each text is an intersection of texts where at least one other text can be read'. Bakhtin (1981:293) uses the term 'dialogism' to indicate that 'the meaning of an utterance is always half someone else's'. This means that the meaning of any utterance or piece of text is derived from its association with other texts. Using this Bakhtinian notion of dialogism, Kristeva (1986:37) indicates that any given text is understandable through 'a mosaic of quotations'. Hence, intertextuality is centered on the principle that texts cannot be understood or examined in isolation; instead, their meaning emerges through their interconnectedness with other texts (Richardson, 2007). Building on this view, Kristeva (1986) proposes two axes of texts: *horizontal axis* and *vertical axis*. The former connects the author and reader of a text, while the latter establishes connections between the text and other texts.

Within the field of CDA, Fairclough (1992), building on Bakhtin's and Kristeva's works, introduces a systematic approach to intertextuality for practical application. Indeed, as suggested at the beginning of this section, intertextuality is a fundamental concept within Fairclough's model. In this context, Jorgenson and Phillips (2002:70) argue that Fairclough's CDA model is founded on the idea that '...texts can never be analysed or understood in isolation – they can only be understood in relation to webs of other texts and in relation to the social context'. Intertextuality for Fairclough (1992) relates to how texts have the capacity to reshape previous texts and restructure established conventions (genres, discourses) to create new ones. That is to say, intertextuality has to do with 'how

an individual text draws on elements and discourses of other texts' (Phillips and Jorgenson, 2002:7). Based on this perspective, Fairclough (1989; 1992; 1995) made a distinction between two types of intertextuality, namely *manifest intertextuality* as well as *constitutive intertextuality* which is also referred to as *interdiscursivity*. According to Fairclough (1992:104) manifest intertextuality is when 'other texts are explicitly present in the text under analysis; they are 'manifestly' marked or cued by features on the surface of the text such as quotation marks'. This suggests that manifest intertextuality occurs when a text overtly incorporates elements from other texts. Besides, there are various ways in which manifest intertextuality is realised, such as direct quotation, indirect quotation, paraphrasing and so forth. In the following statements, Fairclough (2003:39-40) summaries the way manifest intertextuality is realised in a text:

there are various...ways of incorporating elements of other texts. If we think, for instance, of reported speech, writing or thought, it is possible not only to quote what has been said or written elsewhere, it is possible to summarize it. This is the difference between what is conventionally called 'direct speech' (which may quote writing and purported thoughts as well as speech — e.g. 'She said, "I'll be late') and forms of 'indirect speech' (e.g. 'She said she'd be late'). The former claims to reproduce the actual words used, the latter does not; a summary may reword what was actually said or written. Reported speech, writing or thought attributes what is quoted or summarized to the persons who said or wrote or thought it. But elements of other texts may also be incorporated without attribution.

As for constitutive intertextuality or interdiscursivity, it relates to 'the configuration of discourse conventions that go into its production' (Fairclough, 1992:104). Indeed, our language use always draws on already established meanings. Thus, the feature of interdiscursivity is concerned with the 'discourses' and 'genres' expressed together within a particular text (Fairclough, 2003). Fairclough (1992:118) further explains the notion of interdiscursivity as '...a matter of how a discourse type is constituted through a combination of elements of order of discourse'. Fairclough (2001) emphasises that

interdiscursive analysis operates on two levels. Firstly, it functions paradigmatically by spotting the genres and discourses incorporated into a text. Secondly, it operates syntagmatically by examining how these elements function together in the text. Discourses, as seen in Section 3.3.3.1.2, are 'semiotic ways of construing aspects of the world...which can generally be identified with different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors' (Fairclough, 2010:232). In the case of gender, there are different discourses about women and men which either work to reinforce or challenge traditional gender norms. Hence, the present study, through applying the feature of interdiscursivity, seeks to find out the discourses surrounding women in the selected Algerian newspapers and analyse their ideological implications. Genres, on the other hand, are 'semiotic ways of acting and interacting, such as news or job interviews, reports or editorials in newspapers, or advertisements on TV or the internet' (Fairclough, 2010:232). In effect, interdiscursive analysis needs textual analysis which deals with the formal aspects of a text. This includes an examination of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, which serve as the means through which discourses and genres are linguistically expressed. By describing the formal features of a text, we can understand how language is a site of the construction of different discourses or meanings about different aspects of the world, and this includes meanings about gender, which is the main focus of this study. The concept of intertextuality is linked to hegemony. In this context, Fairclough (1992:102) argues:

The relationship between intertextuality and hegemony is important. The concept of intertextuality points to the productivity of texts, to how texts can transform prior texts and restructure existing conventions (genres, discourses) to generate new ones.

This means that blending hegemony theory with intertextuality is important for exploring existing power structures and dominant ideologies (hegemonies) and showing how language plays a key role in reinforcing or challenging these structures (Fairclough, 1992).

Therefore, the feature of intertextuality is important for investigating social change. That is, examining the feature of intertextuality within a text serves to explore both the reproduction of discourses without introducing new discourse types and the potential for discursive change through innovative combinations of discourse (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002). The present study applies the notion of intertextuality to investigate discourses and ideologies about women in the Algerian press. The upcoming section of the present chapter deals with the notion of discourse as a social construct, which is a key principle adopted in this thesis.

#### **3.3.4. Gender as a Discursive Construct**

As explained in the first part of the chapter, language and gender research during second wave feminism primarily explored differences in the speech patterns of men and women. However, the current emphasis of the field has shifted towards the examination of 'discourse' in line with the 'discursive turn' in the social sciences. In Section 3.2.2 we have seen how gender is distinguished from sex as something given to and acquired by sexed individuals from early socialisation. However, this distinction between sex and gender was a matter of debate as it sounded '...crude, deterministic and misleading' (Sunderland, 2000:149-150). This was because the concept of attributes and behaviours being given brings about inquiries, such as "by what or whom?", 'given once and for all?' and of how 'the female' and 'the male' recipients accepted these attributes and behaviours: passively? Even graciously?' (Sunderland, 2000:150). In addition to that, though gender was perceived as cultural and social, it was often simply mapped into sex (Sunderland, 2004). Consequently, this paved the way for a new conceptualisation of gender, which is 'gender as a discursive construct', moving away from linking gender with the biological sex of individuals. That is, poststructuralist ideas that stress the discursive nature of social life have brought about changes in the conception of the category of gender (Weatherall, 2002)



which is a key tenet of third wave feminism. The focus has been directed to how gender is constructed through discourse in interactions and texts. Wodak (2015:699) summarises the key characteristics of a poststructuralist conceptualisation of gender as follows:

gender diversity (e.g., class, ethnicity, and how these both interact with gender; multiple masculinities/femininities; differences among 'women' and 'men'); (2) gender being 'performed'...in an ongoing way, allowing for agency; performance being achieved partly through language (which is therefore constitutive); similarly, power being 'done' rather than something speakers 'have'; (3) 'local' or 'contingent' explanations for gendered language patterns and the importance of specific contexts.

Drawing on the notion of discourse, gender is understood not as a possession but as a concept or a collection of ideas expressed within and through discourse (Sunderland 2004). It is 'an outcome of discourse in situated contexts and communities of practice' (Lazar and Kramarae, 2011:221). It is not 'a stable, prediscursive construct residing in individuals; rather it *emerges* in discourse and in other semiotic practices' (Ehrlich et al., 2014:4). A key tenet of poststructuralism, as shown in Section 3.3.1, is that meaning is not fixed, rather it is dynamic. There are different discourses that give meaning to the same aspect of the world differently. Therefore, there exist 'varied discourses of gender' (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003 cited in Sunderland, 2004:20) which points to the idea of gender as being fluid, multiple and continually being constructed in discourse. Cameron (1997 cited in Sunderland, 2004:5) notes '[m]en and women... are members of cultures in which a large amount of discourse about gender is constantly circulating'. Discourse thus is the site where alternate meanings of gender can occur to change widespread gendered beliefs.

Butler (1990) conceptualises gender to be a discursive construct through her notion of 'performativity'. The latter considers gender as 'the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly regulatory frame that congeal overtime to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being' (Butler, 1990:33). Gender is

performative in the sense that individuals are actively engaged in the 'doing' of gender. Hence, it is a verb, something that people constantly do and perform in interaction (Mills and Mullany, 2011). However, people do not perform their gender in isolation. They draw on the available discourses in their social context on how men and women should act (Apostol, 2013). By doing so, they construct and accomplish a wide range of 'femininities' and 'masculinities' that are available and appropriate within their social contexts (Litosseliti, 2006). The repeated performance of gender makes it appear as a natural way of being (Butler, 1990).

In fact, social institutions are seen to have an important influence on the way gender is constructed (Mills and Mullany, 2011). This gives validity to the present research, which is based on the principle of gender as being constructed in and through discourse, to investigate the main discourses and ideologies about women in Algerian news media. The next section of the chapter explains the notions of 'femininity' and 'masculinity'.

#### **3.3.4.1. Femininity and Masculinity**

This section addresses two central terms within language and gender studies, which are 'femininity' and 'masculinity'. In our daily lives, femininity tends to be associated with the behaviours and roles traditionally assigned to women and girls; whereas masculinity is closely aligned with those typically attributed to men and boys. Hence, the notions of being masculine and feminine can be understood in relation to the unconscious, or sometimes the conscious, association between the concepts of biological sex and societal gender. According to Connell (1995), masculinity is a position within gender relations and involves the actions through which individuals, both men and women, participate in shaping that position. These practices have profound effects on the individuals' personality, bodily experiences as well as culture. However, there are different ways of doing masculinity and

femininity, hence, one would not anticipate having only one type of femininity and masculinity (Paetcher, 2006). Instead, there are multiple femininities and masculinities. According to Connell (1995), in any society, there are various forms of masculinity, with 'hegemonic masculinity' being the dominant type when compared to other 'subordinate masculinities' and the concept of femininity. Hegemonic masculinity is linked to power and domination, and it encompasses the various traits that men are desired to have in a given society. Connell (1995:77) defines hegemonic masculinity as:

The configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimation of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.

This suggests that 'hegemonic masculinity' serves to legitimise men's dominance over women. Femininity, on the other hand, is a counterpart of masculinity and it is also understood as a count noun in the sense that it encompasses various forms of femininities. Nevertheless, unlike hegemonic masculinity, femininity cannot be hegemonic since being hegemonic is to have power (Paetcher, 1995). Connell (1987) refers to the notion of emphasised femininity which is equal to being 'super girly'. In this context, Paetcher (2006:255-256) argues that '[f]emininities are not constructed in the ways masculinities are; they do not confer cultural power, nor are they able to guarantee patriarchy'. This shows a dualistic relationship between femininity and masculinity, where masculinity is linked to power and dominance, while femininity is connected to powerlessness and subordination. Yet, Schippers (2007) indicates that the definition of hegemonic masculinity should include its connection to femininity, forming a complementary and hierarchical relationship. Emphasising the pivotal link between masculinity and femininity, Schippers (2007) introduces the concept of 'hegemonic femininity', which refers to characteristics that are perceived to be 'feminine' that both establish and legitimise a hierarchical and

complementary relationship to hegemonic masculinity. This, according to Schippers (2007), plays a role in reinforcing men's dominance over women in society. Hegemonic femininity dominates other forms of femininities, but this works to uphold the interests of the gender order and reinforces male domination. Schippers (2007) also identifies the concept of 'pariah femininities'. The latter is defined as 'characteristics or practices [of hegemonic masculinity] that, when embodied by women in the setting, are simultaneously stigmatized and feminized' (Schippers, 2007:96). This suggests that, within gender ideology, hegemonic masculinity must be reserved for men and hegemonic femininity must be confined to women. In other words, men who exhibit hegemonic feminine features, such as physical weakness and compliance, often face societal stigma and sanction, much like women who display characteristics of hegemonic masculinity (Schippers, 2007). However, unlike Connell (1995), Schippers believes that there are neither subordinate masculinities nor pariah masculinities, as indicated in the following quote by Schippers (2007:96):

It is cultural insurance for male dominance that anybody who enacts or embodies hegemonic characteristics that do not align with their gender category is stigmatized as problematic and feminine. Masculinity maintains its position of superiority in relation to femininity and men maintain legitimate possession of those superior characteristics regardless of who is embodying femininity or masculinity. This means that there are no masculine characteristics that are stigmatized as contaminating or as subordinate. There are neither pariah masculinities nor subordinate masculinities. Thus, what were identified by Connell as subordinate masculinities, are, in this model, simply hegemonic femininity embodied or enacted by men.

This indicates that the embodiment of features pertaining to hegemonic masculinity are stigmatised and labelled as problematic and feminine. For example, a woman who is physically violent is often referred to as a 'badass girl' (Schippers, 2007). Hence, there is no 'pariah' or 'subordinate' masculinities since the superiority of masculinity remains unchallenged within gender ideology.

What constitutes femininity and masculinity varies across social contexts. Yet, there are some shared understandings of what characterises these concepts across different cultures. In the Algerian social context, 'emphasised femininity' encompasses characteristics that are associated primarily with domestic responsibilities, such as being a good cook, having cleaning skills and obedience to the male members of the family (the father, the brother, or the husband). Other characteristics include being beautiful, dressing in a modest way, talking and walking quietly to convey a sense of shyness. Deviation from these traits is generally perceived in a negative way. The present study adopts an FCDA perspective to investigate discourses about gender in the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in the Algerian context to see whether the newspapers reproduce or challenge widespread beliefs about gender. In the next section, the approach of FCDA is introduced.

### **3.3.5. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis**

My research project treats the question of women's representation in Algerian print media from a feminist critical perspective. The aim of this section is to outline the key principles and assumptions of this approach. Feminists have demonstrated a keen interest in the insights provided by CDA. They used tools proposed by the CDA approach to investigate gendered assumptions as produced and perpetuated in discourse. The combination of CDA with feminist perspectives has given rise to a new approach to discourse analysis which is referred to as 'Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis'. FCDA is concerned with examining the workings of gender ideology and hegemonic power relations in discourse. In fact, there is an overlap between CDA and feminism in terms of their concern with social inequality and injustice and their emancipatory goals, and '[t]he marriage of feminism with CDA...can produce a rich and powerful political critique for action' (Lazar, 2007:144). The main aim of FCDA is to reveal the complex, subtle and sometimes not covert ways in which commonly accepted gendered assumptions and dominant power dynamics are produced, maintained,

negotiated, and contested through discourse in diverse social contexts and communities (Lazar, 2005). This statement echoes CDA's concern with analysing the connection between discourse, power and ideology in different texts and contexts, but FCDA adds gender to this connection and aims to flag its feminist perspective explicitly. According to Lazar (2005) the key motivations behind adding the 'feminist' label to the CDA approach is to establish a distinctively 'feminist politics of articulation' (Wetherell, 1995:141). This involves theorising and analysing, from a feminist critical standpoint, the oppressive dimensions of gender as a pervasive category in various social practices. Additionally, the feminist label serves the purpose of offering feminist visibility and a voice within the realm of CDA scholarship. Lazar (2005) states five principles of FCDA: (1) feminist analytical resistance, (2) gender as ideological structure, (3) complexity of gender and power relations, (4) the role of discourse in the (de) construction of gender and finally (5) critical reflexivity as praxis. These are explained below.

FCDA adopts a critical stance in its analysis of discourse on gender by demystifying the taken-for-granted assumptions of gender and demonstrating that these beliefs are ideological. It exposes discourses that support a patriarchal social order, or more precisely, unequal power dynamics that systematically favour men as a social group while disadvantaging, excluding, and disempowering women as a social group (Lazar, 2005). Thus, FCDA is praxis-oriented research as an analysis which shows up the operations of power and ideology in discourse is seen as a form of analytical resistance (van Dijk, 1991), and contributes to effecting social transformation. It aims to undertake a radical critique of prevailing discourses on gender to raise awareness among people which is an important step towards social change (Lazar, 2014). Although gender is the main focus of analysis in FCDA, the latter takes into consideration the way gender intersects with various social variables such as ethnicity, class, age and sexual orientation. This is referred to as

'intersectionality', a notion that is developed by Crenshaw (1989) to account for the way multiple forms of oppression (such as sexism and racism) intersect with each other or overlap in individuals' experiences.

Like CDA, FCDA rests on the Marxist critical view of ideologies which, as previously discussed, are seen as 'representations from particular perspectives in the interest of maintaining unequal power relations and dominance' (Lazar, 2005:6-7). Even though ideology in its Marxist sense accounts for class relations, it is also used to refer to other relations of domination, such as gender. FCDA considers gender as 'an ideological structure that divides people into two classes, men and women, based on a hierarchical relation of domination and subordination, respectively' (Lazar, 2005:7). That is, based on sexual difference, societies assign different traits or characteristics to men and women (i.e. femininity and masculinity), which are then used as a rationale for creating and establishing a complementary yet hierarchical relationship between them. In this context, Schippers (2007:93) writes:

Masculinity and femininity, as a web of symbolic meanings, provide a rationale, or as Garlick (2003) suggests, a technology available for organizing social practice that, over time as recurring patterns of practice, become, produce, and legitimate male dominant interpersonal power relations, a gendered division of labor, an unequal distribution of resources and authority, global imperialism, and so on. Thus, masculinity and femininity are hegemonic precisely in the ideological work they do to legitimate and organize what men actually do to dominate women individually or as a group.

In this quote, Schippers refers to the notions of 'hegemonic masculinity' and 'hegemonic femininity.' The former, as seen in the previous section of this chapter, encompasses qualities deemed traditionally masculine that legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship with femininity. In doing so, it ensures the dominant status of men and the subordinate position of women (Schippers, 2007). The latter involves characteristics identified as traditionally feminine, reinforcing a hierarchical and complementary

relationship with hegemonic masculinity. Consequently, it guarantees men's dominant position and women's subordination (Schippers, 2007). This points to the idea that features of masculinity and femininity are used as the basis for considering the relationship between men and women as inherently and unavoidably a relationship of dominance. Those features regulate social practices and structure social life in a way that ensures the authority and dominance of men giving them what Connell (1995 cited in Lazar, 2005:7) names as 'patriarchal dividend' through their access to symbolic social, political and economic capital.

Gender ideology, building on Gramsci's notion of hegemony, is seen to be hegemonic in the sense that it is widely accepted by the majority of participants within a specific community, and it often does not appear as domination at all. This is referred to as an invisible form of power which is accomplished by discursive means in contrast to overt forms of power which include, for example in the case of gender, violence against women and sexual harassment. What makes this form of power effective is that it is predominantly cognitive in nature through the internalisation of gendered norms, and it is manifested routinely in everyday textual and verbal expressions (Lazar, 2005). Societal institutions, such as news media, family, workplaces, schools, governments and so on, are observed to be responsible for producing and maintaining patriarchal gender ideology. However, although dominant gender ideology holds a hegemonic status, it is contestable. It can be challenged by other alternative discourses or by means of material practices (Lazar, 2014). That is to say, femininity and masculinity are not fixed roles or a predetermined set of behaviours which individuals, whether women or men, simply take on. Rather, as claimed by Schippers (2007:93) 'the characteristics and practices defined as womanly and manly are constituted through the proliferation of a network of cross-cutting, sometimes contradicting discourses'. Therefore, the primary objective of FCDA is to explore the ways



in which power issues and dominance are created or resisted in discourse through textual depictions of gendered social behaviours as well as conversational strategies (Lazar, 2005).

FCDA takes the same position on discourse as CDA and views discourse as a form of social practice that not only shapes but is also shaped by the social environment. It perceives every instance of meaning making, whether through spoken or written language or other means of semiosis like images, as playing a role in sustaining and perpetuating the social structure. But it also acknowledges the potential for resistance and transformation of that social order. Therefore, FCDA highlights the need to consider both linguistic and non-linguistic modes, including images, gestures and sounds, in analysing discourse which makes the analysis enriching and insightful. The present study integrates both the linguistic and the visual modes to analyse gendered discourse (s) in the Algerian press. The final tenet of FCDA is critical reflexivity. Lazar (2005) indicates that critical reflexivity as praxis is a significant facet to feminist CDA research both at the institutional and individual levels. That is, FCDA is interested in what Lazar (2005:14) calls 'the reflexivity of institutions'. She explains the ways in which institutional reflexivity can bring about progressive institutional practices. This is by demonstrating how awareness of feminist concerns for women's inclusivity and their participation in the public sphere have resulted in some positive transformations in some institutions. For example, many university curricula now incorporate topics related to gender and language offering the potential to raise critical awareness among students. The second aspect of critical reflexivity focuses on individual feminists. Lazar (2005) urges feminist researchers to avoid endorsing elements of classical liberal ideology that contribute to perpetuate hierarchical differences and exclusionary treatment of certain women. This involves refraining from defining equality as merely being 'the same as men' and assuming the uniformity of all women. FCDA acknowledges differences in the situation and experiences of women in different social contexts and that

the category of 'woman' is not universal. This means that '...gender oppression is neither materially experienced nor discursively enacted in the same way for women everywhere' (Lazar, 2007:149). The present study acknowledges differences in women's experience and its findings are not meant to be generalised to other women in other contexts, and it also acknowledges differences in the experiences of Algerian women.

In Algeria, as we have seen in Chapter Two, patriarchal gender ideology is a dominant feature of both colonial and post-colonial times. The aftermath of the war of independence saw the creation of patriarchal laws, in addition to the rise Islamic fundamentalism that targeted women during the Algerian civil war. After the civil war, though some patriarchal laws persist, the Algerian government under the rule of Bouteflika gave women a number of legal rights. This era also witnessed the development of the protest movement, in which women took an active role in the public sphere alongside men. Therefore, within the framework of FCDA, my research project questions the portrayal of women in Algerian newspapers between 2016-2021. The aim is to find out whether the four chosen news outlets, which differ linguistically and ideologically, reproduce or challenge dominant discourses on gender through their representation of women. The main rationale for adopting an FCDA approach lies in the study's central focus on gender, aligning with the core concern of FCDA. Besides, the main objective of the study is to unpack power dynamics within discourses articulated in news media texts in Algeria. FCDA is a well-suited approach, as it provides a framework to question traditional gender roles perpetuated through discursive practices. Besides, the present study has emancipatory goals. It aims to contribute to social change by highlighting and challenging linguistic and non-linguistic practices that sustain oppressive social structures, which is a fundamental tenet of FCDA. Lazar (2007:145) claims: '[a]nalysis of discourse which shows up the workings of power...contributes to on-going struggles of contestation and change through

what may be termed ‘analytical activism’. In the next part of the chapter, I demonstrate how institutions, including the news media, are linked to the concept of power.

### **3.4.1. Institutions and Power**

The term ‘institution’ is given different definitions. People often associate institutions with physical buildings and institutional settings like hospitals, schools, churches, prisons, media organisations and so on. The term ‘institution’ and ‘organisation’ are often used interchangeably, although the former is more used to refer to the public organs of the state, while the latter is more associated with commercial corporations (Mayr, 2008). Discourse is the main means used to establish and shape institutions and organisations, as claimed by Mumby and Clair (1997:181):

[o]rganizations exist only in so far as their members create them through discourse. This is not to claim that organizations are “nothing but discourse”, but rather that discourse is the principal means by which organizational members create a coherent social reality that frames their sense of who they are.

Also, institutions possess the capacity to create, influence and enforce certain discourses upon individuals (Mayr, 2015). They gain their power through their access to and control of public discourse and discourse production which shows that ‘[p]ower is directly exercised and expressed through differential access to various genres, contents, and styles of discourse’ (van Dijk, 1989:22). Hence, institutions are connected to power in the sense that they are not simply ‘...social collectives where shared meaning is produced’ (Mumby and Clair, 1997:182). Rather, they are ‘sites of struggle where different groups compete to shape the social reality...in ways that serve their own interests’ (Mumby and Clair, 1997:182) and this is done by means of discourse. In fact, in contemporary society, there is a high level of integration of social institutions into the task of sustaining dominance (Fairclough, 1989). That’s why analysis of institutional discourse has been given a pivotal place in critical discourse studies. According to Fairclough (1995), achieving emancipatory

objectives is only possible when attention is directed towards social institutions given their control over the means of imposing various discursive and ideological constraints on individuals. In effect, dominant ideas about gender ‘...are so firmly implemented within institutions and they are so commonplace that they are taken for granted that they are true’ (Aoumeur, 2014:14). In the next section, I expand on this point.

### **3.4.2. Media, Power and Gender**

Media (the plural of medium) can be described as any means of communicating and disseminating information. Danesi (2009:192) defines media as ‘the various forms, devices, and systems that make up mass communications considered as a whole, including newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television channels...’. Media in their different forms (print, broadcast and online) have become an essential part of our everyday life. Indeed, people dedicate growing amounts of time to various forms of media to gain news and information or for entertainment. Consequently, their power to influence and shape people’s perception of themselves and different aspects of the world is undeniable. In this respect, Fairclough (1995:2) describes the mass media as having a ‘signifying power’. They have the power to influence people’s understandings, beliefs, social relations and social identities, including gender identity through the way they use language in their representations of things and people. This suggests that the concept of representation takes centre stage in exploring the relationship between the media and society. Indeed, we are constantly surrounded by representation, which plays a pivotal role in shaping our understanding of ourselves and the surrounding environment. The power of the media lies in its ability to control the minds of the public through the discourses that keep circulating in their texts or images about different aspects of the world. van Dijk (1995:10) postulates: ‘[m]edia power is generally symbolic and persuasive, in the sense that the media primarily have the potential to control to some extent the minds of readers or viewers’. In the case

of gender, a large number of discourses about gender are constantly circulating in the media. It is highly unlikely that these discourses would have no impact on the way men and women perceive themselves and are perceived. Lemish (2012:1) suggests that the media are ‘...mechanisms in this process of construction since representations of femininity and masculinity are produced, reproduced and circulated by them as part of a shared culture’.

According to Fairclough (1995), depictions in media texts tend to serve ideological functions as they play a role in perpetuating social relations characterised by domination and exploitation. For example, in the question of race, media are seen to contribute to the perpetuation of racism and the legitimation and maintenance of white group power (van Dijk, 1991). In the case of gender, media are considered by feminists as being one of the means of transmitting stereotypical, patriarchal, and hegemonic beliefs about women (Carter and Steiner, 2004). Media have been considered as reinforcing and upholding gender hierarchies, sustaining the existing social order and the overall subordination of women by perpetuating social perceptions that validate dominant ideologies (Lemish, 2012). However, it has also been argued that media’s portrayal of women undergoes changes over time, as this depends on the particularities of each country (Debbagh, 2012). Hence, this research project sets as its objective the analysis of news media representation of women in Algeria, with regard to the recent laws to advance women’s rights in the country and the protest movement, which witnessed a strong participation of women, challenging dominant gender ideology. The next section deals with gender representation in media discourse.

### **3.4.3. Gender Representation in Media Discourse**

The topic of gender representation in media discourse has attracted significant attention all over the world (Aznur and Rodríguez-Wangüemert, 2017; Elias, 2018; Debbagh, 2012;

Dragaš, 2012; Kjeldsen et al., 2024; Shor et al., 2015). The interest in media representation of gender comes from the fact that the discourse of the media ‘plays a pivotal role in shaping the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals’ (Sinha, 2018:241). Mannila (2017:9) also argues: ‘[t]he media carry significant notions of cultural norms and values in the society and have a powerful role in constructing and reinforcing gendered images of women and men’. Indeed, media narratives both mirror and reinforce deeply rooted gender stereotypes and biases (Sinha, 2018; Santoniccolo et al., 2023). Therefore, the study of media discourse contributes to the understanding of how power dynamics in relation to gender work in society and challenging them.

Research on the representation of gender in media content dates back to the early 1960s (Carter and Steiner, 2003). The American feminist scholar Friedan (1963) analysed the portrayal of women in popular women’s magazines and concluded that the latter predominantly emphasised women’s domestic roles, by depicting women as fulfilled and happy in their roles as housewives and mothers. In effect, Friedan’s work played a crucial role in pioneering the recognition of the importance of media texts as sites of the reproduction of gender stereotypes (Kearney, 2012). Since the publication of Friedan’s book, numerous studies have followed. It has generally been found that (1) women are generally underrepresented in the media despite their increased presence in the public sphere (Shor et al., 2015) and (2) they are primarily portrayed in stereotypical ways in media content (Dragaš, 2012; Elias, 2018), which both reflect and reproduce dominant beliefs and perceptions of gender in society.

In the context of MENA region, however, limited studies have been conducted to explore the representation of women in the media. This section demonstrates some of the research that has been done on the depiction of women in news media in the MENA region. Nayef and El-Nashar (2015) examined the portrayal of women in Egyptian print media

written in Arabic. More specifically, it analysed three specific forms of indirect sexism, namely collocations, transitivity, and presuppositions, in the coverage of the June 30th, 2013, events within the headlines and front-page reports of *Al-Ahram* newspaper. The findings of the study showed that collocations were consistently imbued with negative meanings or were placed in a negative context, thereby constructing an unfavourable image of women. For example, the data referred to women and girls in association with protection and harassment. This association suggests that women are viewed primarily as vulnerable or in need of safeguarding, which reinforces negative stereotypes about their role and status. Besides, even in events where women were key 'Actors,' they were portrayed more as 'Goals' rather than active participants. For instance, female demonstrators were represented as the 'Goal' or recipients of actions such as killing, aggression, and protection. Additionally, the study highlighted that male reporters perpetuated the culturally ingrained separation of public and private spheres, reinforcing presupposed gender roles and perpetuating stereotypical characteristics assigned to both men and women.

Ismail and Harun (2021) investigated the representation of women and men in online news discourse written in Arabic by utilising corpus linguistics tools. The corpus, consisting of news articles, was collected from five different Arabic-speaking news outlets, namely *El Khabar* of Algeria, *Addustour* of Jordan, *Alwatan* of Kuwait, as well as *Alyaum* and *Al-Jazirah* of Saudi Arabia published between November 2014 and October 2015. The quantitative results of the corpus data were analysed using a qualitative approach based on textually-oriented Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The results of the study showed that stereotypes about women were maintained in the news media. Women were portrayed differently when compared to men, considering the adjectives, pronouns, nouns, and verbs associated with them. For example, verbs indicating more active and serious involvement

were predominantly associated with men rather than women. On the other hand, women were represented with verbs related to their traditional roles, primarily housework, as daughters, sisters, and wives, performing tasks for their male counterparts. Furthermore, the findings revealed that men were frequently portrayed as playing a key role in overcoming challenges, particularly in safeguarding the nation's security and stability. In contrast, the news articles rarely depicted women as being actively involved in defending their country.

Another study was conducted by Al-Nuaimi (2022) to explore the way women are represented in Egyptian newspapers during the 2011-2014 uprising that took place in Egypt. The research investigated news articles collected from two prominent Arabic-language news outlets in the nation, namely *Al Ahram* and *Al-Masry Al-Youm* using CDA. Additionally, qualitative interviews were conducted with women who possessed first-hand experiences within the newspaper industry in the country. The findings of the study showed that the selected Egyptian newspapers institutionalised hegemonic masculinity through gendered discursive practices that positioned women in a subordinate role while simultaneously normalising and reinforcing the dominance of the male voice. The results also revealed a prevailing narrative that dehumanised or objectified women, either by denying them a voice or by employing verbal processes that placed them in an 'outsider' role. In addition, the study showed that some media articles in the Egyptian newspapers contested prevailing norms by offering a humanised perspective of women and giving them a voice.

Concerning Algeria, the overview of the literature on the representation of women in Algerian media has revealed a very limited number of studies on the subject. Ahmed Sid (2020) critically examined the representation of female politicians in two Arabophone newspapers in Algeria in electoral campaigns between 1997 and 2017. The study employed



Wodak's discourse historical approach (1991) within CDA as the main tool for data analysis which helps identify patterns of change over historical periods. The analysis uncovered two predominant discourses within the data. The first discourse relates to the victimisation of female politicians by portraying them as victims of terrorism, cultural constraints, and institutional barriers that hinder their political engagement. The implementation of a quota law, ensuring a specific percentage of females in each political party gave rise to a second discourse, which is the discourse of responsibility. Female politicians were no longer seen as passive victims of external circumstances; instead, they were held responsible for women's low representation in politics and the negative public evaluations they received. The newspapers frequently portrayed them as unqualified or as opportunists driven by personal gain, such as power or wealth, rather than genuine political engagement. Another key finding is the portrayal of Louiza Hanoune, one of the biggest political figures in Algeria, as the ideal female politician, characterised by traits associated with war veterans and traditionally masculine qualities. Besides, Zerrifi (2022) examined the portrayal of Muslim women converts in Arabic-language newspapers in Algeria to uncover the ideological representations of women who converted to Islam. It also aimed to assess the credibility of these depictions. The study relied on the FCDA approach (Lazar, 2005) to examine the discursive representations of Muslim women converts in some Algerian newspapers. It also used a questionnaire addressed to women converts in order to check the validity of the discursive representations. The research found that the Algerian newspapers portrayed Muslim women converts as more religious and socially excluded due to their conversion to Islam. The newspapers also portrayed women as dependent on men and perpetually in need of male support, highlighting patriarchal values and obscuring the true reasons behind conversions to Islam. Furthermore, the Algerian newspapers symbolised unity

between born Muslims and Muslim women converts while simultaneously reinforcing divisions by framing born Muslims as the 'Us' and converts as the 'Other.'

The findings of the studies discussed in this section generally showed how the media reinforce traditional perspectives about gender. But the media can also serve as instruments that challenge widespread gendered beliefs. The present study adds to the existing literature on the topic by focusing on the representation of women 'in general' in the linguistic and visual texts of both Francophone and Arabophone newspapers in Algeria by adopting the FCDA approach. The aim is to see whether the newspapers reproduce or challenge dominant beliefs about women in the Algerian society. This study, unlike the studies summarised in this section, provides a thorough qualitative analysis of news articles written in Arabic and French relying on the FCDA approach. It focuses on analysing both linguistic and visual elements of some Algerian news media written in two different languages. The next section provides an overview of the development of the press in Algeria.

#### **3.4.4. Development of the Algerian Press**

Since the present research is concerned with representations of women in the Algerian press, it is worth offering a concise overview of the history of the Algerian press to understand the context of the development of the selected news outlets for the study. The press in Algeria is published in two languages: Arabic and French. During the postcolonial era in Algeria, the development of the press can be divided into two phases. From the independence of the country in 1962 until 1988, the ruling party FLN controlled the Algerian press and freedom of the ownership of publications was severely restricted (Gafaiti, 1999). The national press during this period, i.e. 1962-1988, was limited to one daily French-language newspaper and another published in Arabic alongside a few

periodicals, which were all owned by the government (El-Essawi, 2017). The main government-run newspapers of that period were *El-Moudjahid* (The Freedom Fighter), the weekly *Algérie Actualité* (Algeria News) in addition to *Echaab* (The People) (Azeredo, 2015). Then, the mass protests of October 1988 opened the door to the establishment of political pluralism leading to the end of state monopoly over the national press and, consequently, the emergence of the independent press (El-Essawi, 2017). The 1990s witnessed the foundation of tens of privately owned newspapers, including the ones I have selected for this research project. In this context, Gafaiti (1999:55) claims:

...overnight the country whose sources of information were...limited to a few state-owned and -monitored publications witnessed the stunning phenomenon of the creation of dozens of diverse independent newspapers, competitive magazines, and satirical weeklies, as well as an increasingly important feminine, cultural, and political press.

The development of the independent press between 1990 and 1992 is often described as the 'Golden Age' of the Algerian national press (El-Essawi, 2017:10). However, journalists of the independent press were targeted by the fundamentalists during the civil war in Algeria, which started from 1992 (Taiebi Moussaoui, 2016). The Black Decade witnessed a severe restriction on freedom of expression, which resulted in the closure of several newspapers and the imprisonment, disappearance, and assassination of journalists (Azeredo, 2015).

The mid-1990s saw the move of the newspapers to online platforms (Benammar, 2021). After the 1990s, several other private publications emerged. In 2015, the ministry of communication stated that there were 269 authorised publications operating in Algeria: 140 of these publications are printed daily, including 6 that are government-run (Freedom House, 2016). This suggests that the majority of the national press is composed of independent media outlets. However, despite the establishment of several privately

owned newspapers which make up most of the national press and a guarantee of press freedom in the constitution, media outlets in Algeria are under increasing pressure exercised by the government to contribute to the support of the state (Ould Khettab, 2016). The present study focuses on the analysis of news texts gathered from four Algerian newspapers that emerged in the 1990s: *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* published in Arabic and *El Watan* and *Liberté* published in French. These four newspapers were selected as they hold significance within the Algerian media landscape. In Section 4.2 of the upcoming chapter, I present a description of the four selected news outlets.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I threw light on some important theoretical background relevant for the present study and provided a broad explanation of my stance. This chapter showed how feminist linguists shifted to the study of gender and discourse. The latter is seen as an important element where the category of gender and social meanings reside. This means that gender is socially constructed through discourse, which is a key principle adopted in this research. The present chapter also explained the approach that my study takes, which is FCDA, and defined basic concepts used in my study, including discourse, ideology, and power, which I draw on for my examination of the representation of women in four Algerian news outlets. In the next chapter, I provide and explain the methodology that the study adopts to attain the main aims of the thesis and to answer the research questions.

## Chapter Four

### Research Methodology

#### 4.1. Introduction

The present chapter explains the research methodology adopted in the present study to analyse the way women are represented in Algerian news media. It first describes the four Algerian news outlets that have been selected for the research project in Section 4.2. It then throws light on the methods used for collecting and selecting the data of the study, consisting of news articles, in Section 4.3. The present chapter also shows the methods used for data analysis and explains the analytical frameworks that are used to analyse the news articles in Section 4.5. In this study, Fairclough's (1998; 1992) framework, which involves three levels of analysis, is employed to uncover the main discourses and ideologies regarding women in the newspapers' texts. The framework comprises *description*, *interpretation*, and *explanation*. To identify the key linguistic and visual elements used by the newspapers to express their views, the study applies the features of modality, social actor, and visual grammar to analyse the news articles, as explained in Section 4.5.1. The following section provides a description for the chosen news outlets.

#### 4.2. Description of the News Outlets

As explained in Section 3.4.4, the Algerian media landscape consists of a variety of newspapers written in Arabic and French. In the present study, two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers, which are national broadsheet newspapers, have been selected to investigate the discourses and ideologies surrounding the representation of women in their texts. These are *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* for the former and *El Watan* and *Liberté* for the latter. I took high circulation as an important criterion for the selection of these newspapers, since this suggests that these newspapers reach a large audience.

Consequently, this makes them influential in the Algerian media landscape. The following sub-sections serve to provide a description of each of the chosen Arabophone and Francophone news outlets.

#### **4.2.1. *Echorouk El Yawmi* Newspaper**

*Echorouk El Yawmi*, or 'The Daily Sunrise', is a popular Arabic-language newspaper in Algeria which covers both national and international news. It was founded in 1990 under the name of *Echorouk El Arabi*. However, in 1997, the newspaper ceased publication. Then it reappeared under the name of *Echorouk El Yawmi* in 2000. The *Echorouk El Yawmi* newspaper has an online website ([www.echoroukonline.com](http://www.echoroukonline.com)) launched from 2005. The website offers an electronic version of the newspaper that can be downloaded. It also displays content in three languages: Arabic, French and English. However, upon checking the website, its content is mainly displayed in Arabic, since *Echorouk El Yawmi* is recognised as an Arabophone newspaper in Algeria. In recent years, the newspaper has introduced its own television channels enabling the newspaper to venture into the domain of audio-visual media and make its content accessible to a wider audience.

#### **4.2.2. *El Khabar* Newspaper**

*El Khabar*, or 'The News', is another Arabophone newspaper that is widely read in Algeria. It offers coverage of both national and international news. The first issue of the newspaper was published on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1990. It has 48 offices across Algeria, as well as 7 offices in Arabic-speaking and foreign countries. *El Khabar* has its own website ([www.elkhabar.com](http://www.elkhabar.com)), which presents content in both Arabic and French. Although the government controls the printing and the distribution of newspapers, *El Khabar* has its own printing and distribution networks (Freedom House, 2016).

#### **4.2.3. *El Watan* Newspaper**

*El Watan*, or 'The Nation', is an important French-language newspaper selected for the research study. It was launched on 8 October 1990 by twenty journalists grouped together under the SPA *El Watan*. It is the first independent Francophone newspaper published in Algeria after the introduction of political pluralism at the end of the 1980s, which led to the fall of the state monopoly over the press. The *El Watan* newspaper has its own website ([www.elwatan-dz.com](http://www.elwatan-dz.com)) that covers both national and international news in French. Besides, *El Watan* was the first Algerian newspaper to venture into the online realm in 1997 (Taiebi Moussaoui, 2016). Like *El Khabar*, *El Watan* has its own printing and distribution networks (Freedom House, 2016). SPA *El Watan* has also set up an advertising agency. The economic and industrial independence of the newspaper has strengthened the newspaper's editorial autonomy. *El Watan* has also enhanced its editorial content with the publication of three weekly supplements (*Economie*, *Télévision* and *Immobilier*), in addition to a weekend edition.

#### **4.2.4. *Liberté* Newspaper**

*Liberté*, or 'Freedom', is an important French-language newspaper in Algeria. It was created on 27 June 1992 by three journalists and the well-known businessman in Algeria Issad Rebrab. The latter then took over the newspaper a few years later. The newspaper has its website which is ([www.liberte-algerie.com](http://www.liberte-algerie.com)). In April 2022, after 30 years of its existence, the newspaper ceased publication. In a statement included in its final copy and on its website, the newspaper writes : 'Le rideau est tombé sur Liberté, notre journal, votre journal, qui a porté trente ans durant les idéaux de la démocratie et de liberté...' (the curtain has fallen on Liberté, our newspaper, your newspaper, which for thirty years upheld the ideals of democracy and freedom...). Many Algerian intellectuals and public figures had

signed a petition urging Issad Rebrab, the owner of the newspaper, to change his mind, but their attempt was met with no success (France24, 2022). The owner of *Liberté* stated that the newspaper was to be closed due to economic reasons. It is crucial to highlight that the closure of this newspaper happened after the completion of the data collection process for my study. Consequently, an alternative Francophone newspaper was not chosen as a substitute for *Liberté*.

The next part of the chapter deals with the way the research data were collected and selected from the above-mentioned newspapers.

### **4.3. Data Collection and Selection**

The present study focuses on analysing news articles from the above-mentioned two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria to explore how women are portrayed in their texts. The data collection process involved specifically selecting news articles that deal with gender-related topics in the selected Arabic-language and French-language newspapers. The articles included in this study were obtained from the online editions of the newspapers available on their websites. However, I could not access certain editions on the website of the newspapers. To overcome this limitation, I contacted a media marketing agency in Algeria ([www.mediamarketing-dz.com](http://www.mediamarketing-dz.com)) that maintains digital collections of the daily national press. Subsequently, the agency provided the requested editions via email for inclusion in the study. However, prior to data collection, some important criteria were taken into consideration. Firstly, only articles published between 8 and 9 March. The reason for opting for these dates is that they coincide with IWD, which is a feminist day used to call for gender justice. As seen in Section 2.7 of Chapter Two, IWD was used by Algerian feminists on some occasions to advocate for women's rights. Furthermore, IWD is observed as a public event in Algeria, leading to an increased emphasis



on women's issues within the Algerian press during this time. Secondly, concerning the time period, the articles were collected from the editions published between 2016 and 2021. The reason for opting for this specific time period is attributed to the occurrence of significant social and political upheavals in Algeria. As explained in Section 3.4 of Chapter Two, starting from the early 2000s, the Algerian government took significant steps to promote women's rights within the country. These efforts involved implementing various policies and making amendments that aimed to empower women. The most recent amendment was made in 2016 and it focused on enhancing women's rights in the business sector. In addition to this, a protest movement started in 2019 in Algeria against the political order (and ended in 2021). Algerian women challenged dominant gendered expectations by their active involvement in this movement, which pressed for the elimination of the patriarchal laws within the family code, gender equality and democracy. By focusing on this time period, this research demonstrates whether the chosen news outlets reproduce or contest dominant beliefs about gender in Algeria.

A total of 121 news articles have been collected from the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. However, to ensure a thorough critical analysis of discourses on gender in these news outlets, a random selection process was employed to narrow down the data sample to 40 articles. This approach ensures that a representative range of articles is included for a thorough examination. The following table shows the number of articles that were selected for analysis, along with the number of accompanying images:

	<i>Echorouk Al Yawmi</i>	<i>El Khabar</i>	<i>El Watan</i>	<i>Liberté</i>	Total
<b>Number of Articles</b>	10	10	10	10	40
<b>Word Count</b>	5,544	7,490	8,366	5,445	26,845
<b>Images</b>	7	8	4	4	23

**Table 1:** Number of News Articles and Accompanying Images

As indicated in Table 1, a total of 10 news articles were randomly selected from each of the chosen newspapers. More specifically, the selection process encompassed news articles published between 8 and 9 March from each year within the chosen period of 2016-2021. Besides, the random selection process involved some steps to ensure a representative and unbiased sample of news articles for my analysis. Firstly, the news articles collected from each of the four newspapers were categorised into four lists. Then, a unique numerical identifier was assigned to each news article pertaining to the list of each newspaper. Afterwards, a random number generator in excel was used to generate random numbers within the range of total number of articles of each list. Finally, the random numbers generated were matched to the unique identifiers in the lists. The articles corresponding to the random numbers are the ones selected for my study (10 news articles for each newspaper).

The total word count of the selected articles from the chosen newspapers amounts to 26,845 words. The articles of the Arabophone newspapers consist of 13,034 words, while the ones published within the Francophone newspapers contain 13,811 words. This indicates that the Francophone have slightly more words than their Arabophone counterparts. As for the images, a total of 23 images were collected from the news articles chosen for this research project. As indicated from the table above, the Arabophone newspapers have more images than the Francophone ones. The former has a total of 15 images, while the latter includes a total of 8 images. *El Khabar* is the newspaper that has more images than the other newspapers with a total of 8 images. It is followed by *Echorouk El Yawmi* with 7 images. *El Watan* and *Liberté* each have a total of 4 images. The language and the images of the news articles were analysed using the three-dimensional model developed by Fairclough (1989; 1992) to reveal the discourses and ideologies articulated by selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. Fairclough's framework is

explained in Section 4.5 of the present chapter. The analysis was conducted entirely on Arabic and French texts. This study incorporates extracts in Arabic and French from the selected newspapers, along with their translations into English. The incorporation of translations is intended to enhance readability and provide context for the FCDA analysis in this thesis. All extracts in this work have been translated into English by the researcher and are accompanied by the corresponding article number, as listed in the appendices, along with the year of publication.

Since the present study has its object of study news articles that are written in Arabic and French, it is important to provide a description of the grammar of both languages before proceeding to explain the methods used for data analysis. The following section describes the key features of Arabic and French that are relevant for the present study.

#### **4.4. Description of Relevant Features of Arabic and French Languages**

Since the present study looks at linguistic choices made in news articles written in Arabic and French to articulate different discourses and ideologies about women in Algeria, it is important to provide a brief description of some important features of Arabic and French, which are relevant for the present study. Arabic is a semitic language whose writing system, unlike Latin based languages, is oriented from right to left (Al-Huri, 2015). It has roots in the Afro-Asiatic language family which, alongside Arabic, includes different languages like Hebrew, Ethiopian, and many others (Al-Huri, 2015). The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 letters. It is important to note that Arabic has three forms: classical Arabic (the language of the Quran), Modern Standard Arabic (a simplified form of classical Arabic that is used in formal settings such as schools and the media), as well as Spoken Arabic dialects or Colloquial Arabic (Al-Huri, 2015). The present study focuses on Modern Standard Arabic, as

it is the form of Arabic utilised by the news media in Algeria. The French language, on the other hand, belongs to a group of Romance languages (like Spanish, Italian and Portuguese) that have their roots in the Latin language of the Roman Empire. It is written with a modern variant of the Latin alphabet consisting of 26 letters. In addition to Standard French, there exists many spoken varieties of the French language in French-speaking countries.

Concerning grammar, grammarians of Standard Arabic divide word forms of the language into three broad categories: nouns, verbs, and particles (Al-Khazraji, 2023). The word 'noun' has several subclasses, including adverbs, adjectives, and pronouns. Similarly, the word 'particle' has also subclasses, including prepositions, conjunctions and interjections. As for French, like English, it has 8 parts of speech. Besides, while sentences in French tend to be verbal, sentences in Arabic can be either nominal (containing no verb) or verbal (Ghomri and Souadkia, 2020). Besides, the order of elements in the Arabic clause is VSO and it is more flexible than the order of elements of the English clause (Aziz, 1989). The sentence structure in French follows a subject-verb-object (SVO) word order in declarative sentences, but there are instances where the order may be altered for emphasis or stylistic reasons. In French, a noun can be either singular or plural, whereas in Arabic, it can be singular, dual or plural. Pronouns are separate words in French, but in Arabic, pronouns can be separate words or suffixes attached to a verb (in which they become the subjects of the verbs to which they are attached) or a noun (in which they function as possessive pronouns). In both Arabic and French, all nouns, pronouns and adjectives can identify as feminine or masculine. In Arabic, even verbs can be feminine or masculine. The next section of this chapter deals with the analytical frameworks that are used to analyse the data in Arabic and French.

#### 4.5. Analytical Frameworks for Data Analysis

The present study relies on Fairclough's (1989; 1992) three-dimensional model for the analysis of the selected news articles. According to this framework, every communicative event comprises three dimensions: *text*, *discourse* and *social practice*. Corresponding to these three dimensions, there are three stages of analysis: *description*, *interpretation* and *explanation*. Firstly, description has to do with describing the main linguistic features of the text. Secondly, interpretation refers to the analysis of text production and consumption processes. Finally, explanation relates to the analysis of the text's socio-cultural practice.

The following is the definition of the three dimensions using Fairclough's words:

- Description: is the stage which is concerned with formal properties of the text.
- Interpretation: is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction – with seeing text as the product of a process [of] production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation...
- Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context – with the social determination of the process of the production and interpretation, and their social effects.

(Fairclough, 2001: 21-22).

The following parts of the section elaborate on the three dimensions of Fairclough's framework that have been employed to analyse the data of the present study, with the aim of revealing the main discourses and ideologies drawn upon in the texts of selected news outlets.

##### 4.5.1. Description: Textual Analysis

The analysis at this level is descriptive. It involves looking at the main linguistic features used for the manifestation of discourses in the texts. For Fairclough (1992), the analysis at this stage should focus on choices at the level of vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and text structure. Vocabulary has to do with individual words, grammar relates to how words are

linked together into clauses and sentences, cohesion refers to how words and sentences are linked together, and finally text structure relates to large scale organisational characteristics of the text (Fairclough, 1992). Within each level, Fairclough (2001) proposes a set of useful analytical categories or concepts. For example, in vocabulary, the analyst should focus on features like rewording, overwording, classification scheme, synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy, formality and metaphors. In grammar, the analysis involves looking at the types of process and participant that predominate, nominalisation, modality, agency, logical connectors, modes (declarative, grammatical question, imperative) and so on. However, discourses are also manifested through non-linguistic means. The news articles under study encompass both linguistic and visual means i.e. images. In dealing with the importance of images in newspapers, Fairclough (2001:23) claims that 'a photograph is often as important in getting across the 'message' of a report in a newspaper as the verbal report...'. This suggests that images play a crucial role in conveying the communicative messages of a newspaper report much like the accompanying verbal content. This study, hence, analyses both the linguistic and the visual content of the selected news articles.

In the present study, three parameters are used to sort out the main discourses and ideologies about women in the texts of the newspapers. These are *modality* (Lyons 1977; Palmer, 1986), *social actor* (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008) as well as *representational* and *compositional structures* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006) for analysing the images accompanying the linguistic texts. Features of the text, whether linguistic or visual, can be seen 'on the one hand as *traces* of the productive process, and on the other hand as *cues* in the process of interpretation' (Fairclough 2001: 20 emphasis in original). I did not decide in advance to apply these specific features to the data. Rather, I examined repeated linguistic and visual features and how they functioned within the texts. I then noted their prominence in the articulation of different discourses about gender in selected news

articles. Consistency is maintained throughout the data analysis to ensure that the analysis is conducted in a systematic manner. That is to say, despite differences between the articles of the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in their language, length and style, the analytical parameters have been applied consistently. The quantitative findings of the application of these three frameworks are reported in Sections 5.2 and 6.2, followed by a discussion of the discourses and ideologies articulated by the features. The following parts of this section explains each of the frameworks used for describing the linguistic and visual features of the data.

#### **4.5.1.1. Modality: Definition and Types**

Modality is an important linguistic category that is applied to the data of the study to sort out the main discourses and ideologies regarding women in Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in Algeria. Hence, the aim of this section is to review some of the definitions given by linguists to the notion of modality and its different types before moving to show how modality is expressed in Standard Arabic and French. The notion of modality in English 'is derived from the word 'modus' in Latin, meaning 'measure' or 'manner', i.e., the way of doing something or evaluating it' (Al-Khazraji, 2023:400). In fact, modality is often regarded as one of the most studied subjects in the field of linguistics (Althawab, 2014). It has indeed attracted significant attention from scholars representing different subdisciplines of linguistics, including morphology, syntax, semantics, and discourse analysis. According to Lillian (2008), morphology is concerned with describing the lexical items in which modality is manifested in different languages; syntax studies how modality appears in complex sentence structures; and semantics deals with modal meanings and how they are expressed syntactically and phonologically. The present study, however, takes a discourse analytic approach, or more specifically an FCDA approach, to analyse the discourses and ideologies

articulated in selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers by the feature of modality.

To arrive at a deeper understanding of this notion, I review some of the definitions of modality presented by linguists. Lyons (1977:452) suggests that modality is concerned with the 'opinion and attitude' of the language user. This view is in line with the definition provided by Palmer (1986:16) who claims that modality is the 'grammaticalization of speakers' (subjective) attitudes and opinions'. Similarly, Simpson (1993:43) defines modality as the 'speaker's attitude towards, or opinion about, the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence. It also extends to their attitude towards the situation or event described by a sentence'. Within Halliday's functional approach, modality is located in the interpersonal component of language. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:172) define modality as 'the speaker's judgement, or request of the judgement of the listener, on the status of what is being said'. The definitions of modality discussed in this section show that this notion has to do with the speakers' or writers' viewpoint towards the situation or the event described in the sentence. This is what makes modality an important feature of CDA studies. Fowler (1977:76) argues that 'language does not allow us to say something without conveying an attitude to that something'. This is the case for modality which expresses the speakers' or writers' opinion regarding various aspects of the world discussed in the sentence. Indeed, within the CDA approach, modality is understood as not simply the use of modal auxiliaries such as 'may', 'might', 'can', 'could', 'would', 'should'; rather, modality indicates the writers' or speakers' attitude toward the proposition being presented (Lillian, 2008). It is important to highlight that the full range of linguistic features used alongside modality plays a crucial role in articulating different viewpoints about women in the data. This study takes an FCDA approach to analyse how modality and its accompanying linguistic features are used to express different discourses and ideologies about women in the news articles.



Modality is a semantic-grammatical feature of language (Palmer, 1990). It is classified and categorised differently by different scholars. However, there are broad categories of modality that are recognised by all scholars in the field of linguistics (Lillian, 2008). According to Nuyts (2006:2), there is ‘no unanimity among scholars regarding the list of categories to be called modal, but...modality comprises three basic semantic dimensions: *dynamic*, *deontic* and *epistemic*’ (emphasis in original). In the present study, *epistemic modality*, *deontic modality*, *dynamic modality* in addition to *boulomaic modality* are applied to the data. This is because they constitute important linguistic features in the articulation of different viewpoints about women in the selected news articles. *Epistemic modality* is speaker-oriented as it makes a judgment about the truth of the proposition. Nuyts (2006:6) argues that ‘this dimension can be construed as a scale – from absolute certainty via probability to fairly neutral possibility that the state of affairs is real’. That is, it is concerned with the speakers’ judgment, belief or opinion about the factual status of the proposition. Epistemic modality is subjective ‘in that it relates to an inference by the speaker and is not simply concerned with ‘objective’ verifiability in the light of knowledge’ (Lyons, 1990:7). The examples below illustrate epistemic modality in English, French and Arabic:

1. *Someone is knocking the door. That **must** be Emily.*

*Quelqu’un frappe à la porte. Ça **doit** être Emily.*

*شخص ما يطرق الباب. لابد أنها إيميلي*

In this example, the epistemic modals ‘must’, ‘doit’ or ‘لابد’ express a strong sense of certainty. The second type of modality is *deontic modality* which is addressee-oriented and is concerned with the use of language to convey commands, obligations, and permission. Simpson (1993) argues that deontic modals realise a continuum of commitment from permission (may), through obligation (should) to requirement (must). Palmer (1990:6)

claims that deontic modality is ‘...being concerned with influencing actions, states or events’. Downing and Locke (1992: 332) claim that deontic modality means that the speaker ‘intervenes in the speech event by laying obligations or giving permission’. The definitions of deontic modality discussed in this section indicate that, by using deontic modals, the language user expresses what is obligatory, forbidden or permitted. Therefore, deontic modality is subjective since the language user is the one who obliges, forbids or permits (Palmer, 1990). The following are examples of deontic modality in English, French and Arabic:

**2. I demand that you leave immediately.**

*J'exige que tu partes immédiatement.*

أطلب منك الرحيل فوراً

In these examples, the deontic verbs ‘demand’, ‘exiger’ and ‘طلب’ express necessity.

Another type of modality is *dynamic modality* which is subject-oriented, as it is concerned with the ability and the volition of the subject of the sentence. The examples below show the expression of dynamic modality in English, French and Arabic:

**3. She can play football.**

*Elle peut jouer au football.*

يمكنها لعب كرة القدم

The modals ‘can’, ‘peut’ and ‘يمكن’ in these examples are dynamic verbs which indicate the ability of the subject of the sentence. Finally, *boulomaic modality* is closely related to deontic modality (Simpson, 1993). It relates to the expression of wishes and desires of the speaker. According to Simpson (1993: 43), in English, ‘[m]odal lexical verbs, indicating the wishes and desires of the speaker, are central in the boulomaic system’. Boulomaic modality is mainly expressed by modal lexical verbs that indicate the wishes and desires of the

speaker or the writer. This includes verbs like 'I wish', 'I hope', 'I want' and so on. It can also be expressed in English by means of modal adverbs such as 'hopefully' and 'unfortunately' in addition to expressions like 'it is hoped that' (Simpson, 1993). The following are instances of boulomaic modality:

**4. Unfortunately, I won't be able to come to the party.**

**Malheureusement, je ne pourrai pas venir à la fête.**

للأسف لن أكون قادرا على المجيء إلى الحفلة

In these examples, boulomaic modality is expressed by the adverb 'unfortunately' in English and 'malheureusement' in French. In Arabic, it is expressed by means of the adverb 'للأسف'. The boulomaic modals in these instances convey a sense of regret.

In my examination of modality in the news articles written in Arabic and French, I classified each instance of the occurrence of modality according to the categories of modality outlined in this section. However, the process of categorising modality is sometimes problematic, as modals may encompass more than one category. For instance, the modal *must* in the sentence *he must be joking* does not express an 'obligation' or 'necessity'; rather it expresses an inference or a conclusion (El-Hassan, 1990). This sentence can be translated in Arabic as لا بدّ أنه يمزح *laa budda annahu yamzah*, in which the modal لا بدّ *laa budda* is understood as expressing an inference/conclusion and not an obligation/necessity (El-Hassan, 1990). This sentence can also be translated into French as *il doit plaisanter*. The modal 'must', لا بدّ *laa budda* or 'doit' in these examples can be classified as expressing 'epistemic' rather than 'deontic' modality. To find out the most appropriate meaning of the modal, it is important to take into consideration the context in which the modal appears. In this respect, Kahlaoui (2015) states that modals are too complex to be understood without considering the context in which they are created and received. In the data of the study, most cases of modality were clear and unambiguous.

Moreover, the ambiguous cases found in the data would not have a significant impact on the results of this study, as they are limited in number. The next part of the chapter explains how modality is expressed in Arabic and French.

#### **4.5.1.1.1. Expression of modality in Arabic and French**

Modality, as indicated in the previous section, is a semantic grammatical category. It is expressed differently from one language to another, in the sense that each language has its own means of expressing different modal meanings. In English, a variety of linguistic devices are used to express modality including, but not limited to, modal verbs, modal adverbs, modal adjectives, and modal auxiliaries (such as might, must and can). However, since the present study analyses news articles that are written in Arabic and French, this section focuses on the linguistic manifestation of modality in both languages.

In effect, the expression of modality in Arabic considerably differs from the expression of French modality. Arabic does not have a formal and well-established set of highly grammaticalised modals in the literature (Althawab, 2014). According to El-Hassan (1990), the notion of modality does not appear in any of the standard grammars of Arabic. However, this does not mean that Arabic does not have means of expressing modality (Althawab, 2014). Arabic, indeed, can express a wide range of modal meanings. Kahlaoui (2015:221) argues 'Standard Arabic has a rich modalizing potential'. Modal means used to express modality in Arabic belong to four grammatical categories, namely particles, verbs, nouns and prepositional phrases (Al-Khazraji, 2023). It is beyond the scope of this study to list all the linguistic means used in Arabic for expressing modality. However, this section states some of the means of the expression of the four types of modality applied to the data of the study, namely *epistemic*, *deontic*, *dynamic* and *boulomaic* modality. To begin with, epistemic modality is realised in Arabic by means of modal verbs such as *يمكن* *yumkin*

'can' and *يُحتمل* *yuhtamal* 'may' which express possibility, particles such as *إِنَّ* *inna* 'indeed' and *لابد* *labudda* 'must' which express certainty, in addition to prepositional phrases such as *من المأكّد* *min almu akkad* 'certainly' to indicate certainty and so on (Althawab, 2014). In addition, deontic modality is expressed by means of verbs such as *يجب* *Yajib* and *يلزم* *yalzam* 'must', *ينبغي* *yanbaghi* 'should'; particles such as *لابد* *labudda* and *على* *aala* 'must', and prepositional phrases like *من المفروض* *min al mafrudh* 'it is supposed to', *من الواجب* *min al wajib* 'it is obligatory' and so on. Dynamic modality is expressed in Arabic by means of modal verbs, such as *يستطيع* *yastati3* and *يمكن* *yumkin* 'can', in addition to prepositional phrases like *بإمكان* *bi'imkan* and *بإستطاعة* *bi'istita'a* 'can', which indicate the ability of the subject of the sentence (Al thawab, 2014). Finally, boulomaic modality is expressed by means of verbs such as *يريد* *yurid* 'want', *يتمنى* *yatamana* 'wish', and prepositional phrases like *مع الأسف* *ma3a al asaf* 'unfortunately' and so on. The next part deals with modality in French.

Modality in French is a semantic grammatical category (Banks, 2015). It is realised by a variety of modal means, which express different modal meanings. In fact, modality in French is observed to encompass the same range of resources as modality in English. In this regard, Banks (2015:325) states that, '[i]n general the expression of modality in French has the same range of realizations as in English'. The expression of modality in French is done through adverbs, adjectives, nouns, and verbs. To illustrate how modality is realised through these modal means, I refer to the work of Banks (2015) who summarises the way modality is realised in French through adjectival, adverbial, nominal and verbal forms. To begin with, modality in French can be expressed through adverbs. While English uses words like 'probably', 'possibly' and 'certainly', French employs equivalents such as 'probablement', 'possiblement' and 'certes' (Banks, 2015). Besides, French uses adjectival forms to express different modal meanings. 'Where English has *probable*, *possible*, *certain*

etc., French has, for example, *impossible*, and *capable*' (Banks, 2015:326 emphasis in original). In addition, like English, French has nominal forms that convey different modal meanings: 'English has nominal forms like *probability*, *possibility*, *certainty*, and French does too, for example *possibilité*, and *sans doute*' (Banks, 2015:326 emphasis in original). Furthermore, like English, modality in French can be expressed through verbs. Yet, while English relies on the auxiliary + verb construction, French uses a verb + infinitive construction (Banks, 2015). This includes verbs like *pouvoir* 'can', *falloir*, *devoir* 'must/should' and *vouloir* 'want'. In fact, tense plays an important role in the expression of different modal meanings in French. For example, the verb *devoir* when it is conjugated into the present tense, as in the sentence *tu dois partir* 'you must go', expresses the deontic meaning of 'must'. However, when it is conjugated into the conditional tense, as in the sentence *tu devrais partir* 'you should go', the same verb *devoir* expresses the deontic meaning of 'should'. Additionally, the English modal 'will' is expressed in French through the future tense, whereas the modal 'would' is expressed through the conditional tense.

Epistemic modality in French is expressed through a variety of modal means, including adverbs like *probablement* 'probably', *certainement* 'certainly' and *peut-être* 'perhaps' and so on. Deontic modality is expressed through verbs like *devoir* and *falloir* 'must/should' and so on. As for dynamic modality, it is realised through the verb *pouvoir* in the present tense 'can' and its conditional or imperfect tense 'could', as well as adjectives like *capable* 'capable' and so on. Finally, boulomaic modality is expressed by means of verbs like *vouloir* 'want' and *souhaiter* 'wish', in addition to adverbs like *heureusement* 'fortunately', *malheureusement* 'unfortunately' and so forth. Modality in French is realised through a variety of modal means and providing a comprehensive list of its realisation is beyond the scope of the present study. The next part of the chapter focuses on the second

linguistic category applied for the analysis of news articles, which is social actor representation as presented by van Leeuwen (2008).

#### **4.5.1.2. Social Actor Representation**

van Leeuwen (1996; 2008) proposes a socio-semantic inventory to the analysis of the way social actors or the participants of social practices can be represented in discourse. His framework focuses on sociological categories, such as nomination, agency, functionalisation, and how these are realised linguistically. According to van Leeuwen (2008:28) ‘...representations include or exclude social actors to suit their interests and purposes in relation to the readers for whom they are intended’. Some exclusions are radical in the sense that they leave no traces in the representation, excluding both social actors and their activities. Other exclusions are less radical by leaving a trace in the text. Here, a distinction between suppression and backgrounding is established. In suppression, there is no reference to the social actor. That is, there is no reference to the social actor anywhere in the text, but their actions are included. In the case of backgrounding, the excluded social actors may not be mentioned in relation to a given action, but they are mentioned elsewhere in the text. van Leeuwen (2008) shows various ways in which social actors can be included in the text. The main categories of inclusion of social actors that emerged as prominent in the data are *nomination*, *categorisation*, *functionalisation* and *identification* (*physical and relational identification*).

##### **4.5.1.2.1. Nomination and Categorisation**

van Leeuwen (2008:40) claims that social actors can be represented ‘in terms of their unique identity, by being nominated’. Nomination involves the use of the proper nouns of social actors which can be formal (surname only, with or without honorifics), semiformal (given name and surname) or informal (given name only). As for categorisation, it has to do

with the representation of social actors ‘in terms of the identities and functions they share with others’ (van Leeuwen, 2008:40). In fact, nomination and categorisation can be mixed together. Two types of categorisation are distinguished namely *functionalisation* and *identification*, which are defined below.

#### 4.5.1.2.2. Functionalisation and Identification

Functionalisation is realised when social actors are represented in terms of their activities such as an occupation or role. Identification, on the other hand, relates to representing social actors not in terms of what they do, rather in terms of who they are. van Leeuwen (2008) distinguishes between three types of identification: *classification*, *relational identification*, and *physical identification*.

- **Classification:** in this category, the social actors ‘...are referred to in terms of the major categories by means of which a given society or institution differentiates between classes of people’ (van Leeuwen, 2008:42). This includes age, gender, provenance, class, wealth, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and so forth.
- **Relational identification:** it refers to the representation of social actors in terms of their personal, kinship, or work relations (van Leeuwen, 2008). It is realised by a closed set of nouns denoting such relations like ‘friend’, ‘aunt’, ‘colleague’ and so on.
- **Physical identification:** it refers to the representation of social actors in terms of their physical characteristics. It is realised by nouns or adjectives that denote physical characteristics, as in the example *the blonde woman is waiting outside*. The adjective ‘blonde’ in this sentence identifies the woman in terms of her physical characteristics.



In the present study only *relational identification* and *physical identification* belonging to the category of identification are applied to the data, as they appeared prominent in the manifestation of discourses and ideologies about women in the news articles. The following part of the section focuses on explaining the multimodal framework that is used for analysing the images in the study, which is referred to as ‘visual grammar’ by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

#### **4.5.1.3. Visual Grammar**

Discourses and ideologies are not communicated by means of language only, but also through other semiotic modes including images. Hence, the present study analyses the images accompanying the linguistic texts of the news articles using a visual grammar framework. The latter is a social semiotic theory to visual communication developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996; 2006) to analyse the grammar governing elements of an image. That is to say, just as the grammar of language explains how words come together in clauses, sentences, and texts, visual grammar describes how elements in visuals (people, places, and things) combine to form meaningful wholes (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Visual grammar draws on Halliday’s systemic functional grammar, particularly his system of metafunctions to demonstrate the way visual structures point to different meanings. Within social semiotics, visuals are seen as ‘means -always- for the articulation of ideological positions’ (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:14). This analytical framework is useful for describing the semiotic resources used in the images and understanding their embedded meanings and ideologies. It has three metafunctions, namely: the representational metafunction, interactive metafunction and compositional metafunction. In the present study, only the representational metafunction and the element of ‘salience’ within the compositional metafunction are applied to the news articles, since they are the ones that

appeared prominently in the articulation of discourses in the data. The *representational* and *compositional* metafunctions are explained in the sections below.

#### 4.5.1.3.1. Representational Metafunction

The representational metafunction focuses on the connection between the depicted participants (objects, people, places and so on) in the image. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) distinguish between two types of processes through which presented participants become involved: *narrative* and *conceptual* processes.

- **Narrative Process:**

This process is dynamic and shows participants as doing something to or for each by means of a vector. The latter is a line connecting represented participants which is formed by bodies, limbs, or tools in action. For instance, in an image depicting a firefighter rescuing a child from a burning building, the vector is the line formed by the firefighter's arms holding the child. Narrative process analysis helps in posing questions about which participants take on active roles of doing and/or looking and which participants constitute the recipients of these actions and/or the ones being looked at in visual texts. Accordingly, various types of narrative processes can be identified based on the nature of the vector and the number and type of participants involved.

**Action Process:** This process has two participants *actor* and *goal*. The former is 'the participant from which the vector emanates, or which itself, in whole or in part, forms the vector' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:63), whereas the latter is 'the participant at whom or which the vector is directed...the participant to whom or which the action is done, or at whom or which the action is aimed' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:64). For instance, in an image featuring a girl kicking a ball, the girl is the actor from whom the vector emanates, while the ball is the goal towards which the vector is directed.

The action within this process can be *transactional* or *non-transactional*. When an image involves both participants i.e. actor and goal, the process is transactional and when it has no goal, the process is non-transactional.

**Reactional Process:** In this process, the vector is created by an eyeline, by the direction of the glance of one or more of the depicted participants (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). The participants are named as *reactors* and *phenomena*. Like action processes, reaction processes can be *transactional* or *non-transactional*. In the latter case, there is no *phenomenon*.

**Speech Process:** The vector is the dialogue balloons connecting speakers to their thought. The participants are *sayer* and *utterance*.

**Mental Process:** The vector is the thought balloons that connect the thinkers with their thought. The participants are *senser* and *content*.

- **Conceptual Process**

Unlike the narrative process, which is dynamic, the conceptual process is static as participants are depicted ‘...in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, or structure, or meaning’ (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:79). This indicates that the conceptual process has to do with the state of represented participants rather than their actions. Three types of conceptual processes are identified:

**Analytical Process**

This process establishes a connection between participants through a part-whole structure. It involves two kinds of participants: one *carrier* (the whole) and any number of *possessive attributes* (the parts). Thus, an analytical picture serves to identify a carrier and enables viewers to scrutinise the possessive attributes of the carrier (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

For example, in an image depicting a woman wearing a military costume, the woman is the carrier, while the details of her military costume serve as the possessive attributes.

### **Classificational Process**

This process relates participants to each other in terms of a specific relation, a taxonomy. That is, this process brings 'different people, places or things together in one picture, distributing them symmetrically across the picture space to show that they have something in common, that they belong to the same class' (Jewitt and Oyama, 2001:143-144). There are three different kinds of classificational structures: covert taxonomy, single-levelled overt taxonomy, and multi-levelled overt taxonomy. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) claim that participants who are grouped together in a syntagm, which establishes the classification, are deemed to belong to the same class.

### **Symbolic Process**

This process is about what a participant signifies or represents. It has two categories: *symbolic attributive* and *symbolic suggestive*. In the symbolic attributive process, one participant (the carrier) derives its identity or meaning from another participant (the symbolic attribute). The symbolic suggestive process, on the other hand, deals with the carrier only. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), human participants in a symbolic attributive process often position themselves for the viewers. They just sit or stand in the image to display themselves for the viewers without a specific purpose. The next section explains the compositional metafunction of Kress and van Leeuwen's analytical framework.

#### **4.5.1.3.2. Compositional Metafunction**

As its name suggests, this metafunction relates to the composition of the image. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) propose three interrelated systems within the compositional

metafunction, namely *information value*, *salience*, and *framing*. *Salience* is the element of the compositional metafunction that appeared as important in the data. It is concerned with the striking elements of an image. That is to say, certain elements in an image are considered as more important, more deserving of attention than others. This is realised by means of size, placement in the foreground or background, colour, sharpness of focus and so on (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). The next section of the present chapter explains the second level of analysis of Fairclough's framework that is applied for the analysis of the data which is *interpretation*.

#### **4.5.2. Interpretation: Intertextual Analysis**

Analysing discourse as discursive practice means that after describing the linguistic and non-linguistic properties of the text, analysis should focus on *intertextual* analysis. The latter is described by Fairclough (1995:75) as 'a bridge between the 'text' and 'discourse practice' dimensions in the critical discourse analysis'. The notion of intertextuality is based on the principle that texts cannot be viewed and studied in isolation; instead, they exist in connection to other texts (Richardson, 2007). This is the case with news texts, which constitute the object of study of this research project. Fairclough (2003:30) claims '[j]ournalists write newspaper articles on the basis of a variety of sources — written documents, speeches, interviews, and so forth...'. In dealing with intertextuality, Fairclough (1992), as explained in Section 3.3.3.1.6 of Chapter Three, makes a distinction between *manifest intertextuality* and *constitutive intertextuality* or the so-called *interdiscursivity*. Manifest intertextuality relates to when texts explicitly draw upon other texts, for example, by citing them. In this context, Reisigl and Wodak (2009:90) argue:

Intertextuality means that texts are linked to other texts, both in the past and in the present. Such connections are established in different ways: through explicit reference to a topic or main actor; through reference to the same events...

This shows that manifest intertextuality is explicit. It is 'manifested' in a text using a variety of means such as 'direct speech' and 'indirect speech'. Direct speech explicitly reproduces the original words of the text using quotation marks. Richardson (2007:102) claims: 'reported speech may be included through *direct quotation*. In such a case, the exact words used are included in quotation marks often with a reporting clause'. Indirect speech is when a summary of the content of what was said or written is provided (Fairclough, 2003). Furthermore, Fairclough (2003) indicates that intertextuality can be specifically attributed to a person or non-specifically or vaguely attributed. In this research, instances of manifest intertextuality were examined by looking at how the news texts explicitly draw on other texts.

As for interdiscursivity, as shown in Section 3.3.3.1.6, it refers to the way a text is made up of various elements including genre and discourse types. In effect, '...discourses are interpretively identifiable in part through linguistic 'traces'...' (Sunderland, 2004:31). This suggests that linguistic features are important for the identification of discourses. That is to say, a discourse is not simply 'out there' waiting for identification, rather they are interpretively identified through examining the linguistic (and non-linguistic) features of a given text (Sunderland, 2004). Both textual and extra-textual factors are important for recognising discourses. In the present study, in addition to textual analysis, I drew on my knowledge of the Algerian social context and relevant literature on language and gender to identify different discourses about gender in the analysed texts. In identifying the discourses articulated in the data, I first started examining recurrent linguistic and non-linguistic features in the news articles and then, relying on my knowledge of the Algerian social context and the literature on language and gender, I identified and named the discourses found in the texts. In identifying and naming discourses, Sunderland (2004:47

emphasis in original) makes a distinction between *descriptive* and *interpretive* discourses, as explained in the quote below:

*...descriptive* discourses often take descriptive names such as *classroom discourse, courtroom discourse, legal discourse...* For interpretive discourses, the names which the analyst from a particular standpoint provides are also interpretive (e.g. a 'Sexist' discourse).

The present study is concerned with identifying *interpretive* discourses about gender. The latter is perceived in the present study as being a set of ideas, something that is talked and written about. Consequently, the aim of this study is to conduct a close linguistic and visual analysis of some news articles of selected newspapers to show how women are talked about in the data. Such analysis is 'critical' since it aims at revealing the discourses and ideologies related to gender that are embedded in the texts of Arabophone and Francophone news outlets in Algeria. Concerning genre, this concept is applied to the data by indicating the genre of the selected news articles, such as editorials, interviews, opinions and so on. The next section of the present chapter explains the last level of analysis of the data, which is referred to as *explanation* within Fairclough's approach.

#### **4.5.3. Explanation: Social Analysis**

The concern of this third level of analysis, which is discourse as a social practice, is the relationship of discourses to processes of struggle and power relations (Fairclough, 2001). That is to say, explanation, as the last level of analysis that is applied to the data, relates to the social and ideological effects of the discursive practice i.e. whether it maintains or challenges the status quo. This means that after conducting a thorough examination of a text's formal features and engaging in intertextual analysis, the analysis should reveal whether the discursive practice reproduces or questions unequal power dynamics. The ideological properties of a given text are generally not readily apparent to readers. Hence,

the task of Fairclough's framework is to unveil and demystify the concealed ideological aspects and power dynamics within texts. Fairclough (2001:135) claims that the aim of this third level of analysis is to show how a discourse is 'determined by social structures, and what reproductive effects discourses can cumulatively have on...[social] structures, sustaining them or changing them'. This suggests that linguistic and non-linguistic elements play a role in reinforcing or challenging broader societal norms and power dynamics. The analysis, therefore, should look at the 'social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is part of' (Fairclough, 1995:57). By doing so, the analysis would become 'critical' in nature in that it shows the impact of discourses on social structures. Richardson (2007:42) argues that in dealing with the text's 'socio-cultural practice', we could ask the following questions:

...what does this text say about the society in which it was produced and the society that it was produced for? What influence or impact do we think the text may have on social relations? Will it help to continue inequalities and other undesirable social practices, or will it help to break them down? It is at this point that discourse analysis becomes *critical* discourse analysis...

Addressing these questions while doing a social analysis of the texts helps unveil the broader societal implications of the discursive practices. This level of analysis sheds light on how the linguistic and non-linguistic choices in the text contribute to sustain or challenge the dynamics of power, inequality and discriminatory practices within the specific social context to which the text belongs. Therefore, this goes beyond just understanding the words written on the page; it provides insights on the role of the text in shaping and being shaped by the society in which it is situated. In the present study, after identifying the linguistic and visual features that are prominent in the texts and naming the discourses on gender that are articulated by these features, I used my knowledge of the Algerian social



context as well as available literature on gender to demonstrate the ideological effects of the news texts of selected newspapers.

In summary, Fairclough's third stage of analysis establishes a link between linguistic/semiotic analysis with social analysis, by demonstrating the social consequences of their use to the wider social context where they are produced. The next section serves as a brief conclusion which summarises the main points discussed in this chapter.

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter of the thesis has dealt with the research data of the present study in addition to the analytical frameworks that have been used for data analysis. The data consist of news articles, which were compiled from two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria. The collected news articles were published on the days of 8-9 March, coinciding with IWD, in the years between 2016 and 2021. Concerning data analysis, Fairclough's analytical framework, consisting of three stages of analysis, is applied to the news articles to sort out the main discourses and ideologies related to gender embedded in the texts of the four selected news outlets. The three levels of analysis are: description, interpretation and explanation. Within the first level of analysis, i.e. description, three parameters are applied, namely modality and social actor for the analysis of the language of the news articles, and visual grammar for the analysis of the images. The application of the three dimensions of the model in my study will show (in the next chapters) the textual choices within the newspaper texts, the meaning encoded through these choices, the meaning decoded by the readers, as well as the embedded ideologies of these meanings by referring to the social and cultural goings-on which the texts are part of. This makes the approach relevant and appropriate for reaching the aims of the study and answering the research questions. After presenting the methodology that the present study

adopts, this thesis proceeds to present and discuss the results of the research, relying on the methods of data analysis explained in this chapter. The next chapter discusses the findings obtained from the analysis of news articles collected from the selected Arabophone newspapers.

## Chapter Five

### Analysis of News Articles in Arabic

#### 5.1. Introduction

This fifth chapter of the thesis discusses the findings obtained from the analysis of news articles collected from *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar*. Fairclough's (1989; 1992) three levels of analysis are used to identify the main discourses and ideologies about women in the data of the two selected Arabophone newspapers. The categories of this framework are *description, interpretation, and explanation* (Fairclough, 1989; 1992). The application of this framework allows for a detailed examination of both the linguistic and visual features that emerged as prominent in the news texts, their realisation and the underlying discourses and ideologies they express. The analysis draws on key categories, namely modality (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1986) and its accompanying linguistic features, social actor representation (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008), as well as representational and compositional structures within visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006). Additionally, the feature of manifest intertextuality is discussed in relation to the discourses identified in the data. The findings of the analysis are crucial in revealing the discursive practices of the newspapers, and whether these practices reinforce or challenge women's subordination and dominant beliefs about gender in Algerian society. To achieve this, I draw on my own knowledge of the Algerian socio-cultural context as well as available sociological research. This chapter begins with Section 5.2, which presents the frequency and realisation of each identified feature in the two selected Arabophone newspapers. This is followed by an in-depth discussion of the discourses and ideologies conveyed by these linguistic and visual structures in Section 5.3.

## 5.2. Frequency and Realisation of Linguistic and Visual Features

This section of the present chapter shows the frequency of the occurrence of the main linguistic and visual features that are used to articulate different discourses and ideologies about women in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar*. It also looks at how these features are realised in the data. The main categories used in the newspapers for their discursive construction are modality (Lyons 1977; Palmer, 1986) and its accompanying linguistic features, social actor (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008), as well as representational and compositional structures within visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006). The following part focuses on the feature of modality.

### 5.2.1. Modality

This part presents the quantitative findings of the category of modality in the articles of the selected Arabophone newspapers. It also examines how this feature is realised in the data. As explained in Section 4.5.1.1, modality has to do with the speaker's attitude towards the content of their proposition expressed in the sentence. The categories of modality applied in this study are *epistemic*, *deontic*, *dynamic* and *boulomaic* modality (explained in Section 4.5.1.1 of Chapter Four). The objective is to examine the total number of modality instances in relation to the overall word count in the news articles of *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar*. The following table gives a summary of the quantitative findings of modality category:

	<i>Echorouk El Yawmi</i>	<i>El Khabar</i>	Total
Word Count	5,544	7,490	13,034
Modality Cases	78	73	151

Percentage	1.4%	0.97%	1.16%
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**Table 2:** Modality Cases in the Arabophone Newspapers

As Table 2 shows, a total of 151 cases of modality have been identified in the data of the two Arabophone newspapers. After identifying and counting the cases of modality in the data, I categorised them in terms of the four types of modality applied to the study, namely epistemic, deontic, dynamic and boulomaic modality. The findings of categorising the instances of modality suggest that epistemic modality and deontic modality are the most used categories of modality in the data for the construction of different viewpoints about women. The frequency of epistemic modality in the two Arabophone newspapers stands for a total of 80 cases (see Table 3 below). Concerning deontic modality, it stands for 44 cases (see Table 4 below). This indicates a tendency for the two chosen Arabophone newspapers to feature more instances of epistemic modality. Furthermore, dynamic and boulomaic modality are the types of modality that are used the least in the newspapers. Dynamic modality comes with a total of 14 cases, whereas boulomaic modality stands for 13 cases in both newspapers. Despite variations in the frequency of each modality type in the data, all play a crucial role in expressing diverse and often conflicting perspectives on gender, ranging from conservative to progressive views (the following part of the chapter illustrates this). At times, the discourses in the data combine multiple forms of modality simultaneously. These perspectives are thoroughly discussed in Section 5.3 of this chapter.

#### **5.2.1.1. Linguistic Realisation of Modality in the Newspapers**

This section discusses the linguistic realisation of modality in the news articles written in Arabic by showing the main modal words and expressions used to express epistemic, deontic, dynamic and boulomaic modality. As shown in Section 4.5.1.1.1 of the methodology chapter, modality in Arabic is mainly expressed through verbs, nouns, phrases

and particles. This part deals with how the four types of modality are realised linguistically in the news articles collected from *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar*. A variety of lexical items are used in the texts of the Arabophone newspapers to express epistemic modality, including particles, verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs and phrases. In order to clearly understand how epistemic modality is realised in the texts, the following table shows all the modal words and expressions used, as well as their frequency of usage in both newspapers:

Epistemic Modal	Type	Frequency of Usage
إن Indeed	Particle	22
قد May	Particle	8
ربما Perhaps	Particle	6
س Will	Particle	7
سوف Will	Particle	1
لعل Perhaps	Particle	1
أكد to emphasise	Verb	5
من المستحيل Impossible	Prepositional Phrase	2
يمكن Possible	Verb	5
مؤكدة Confirming	Adjective	4
بتأكيد / الأكد Surely	Phrase/Noun	4
التأكد to ensure	Noun	1
الواضح / واضح Clear	Noun/Adjective	2
من الواضح Obviously	Prepositional phrase	1
ليس صحيحا/صحيح أن It is (not) true	Phrase	3
من غير الممكن It is not possible	Phrase	1
لاشك Undoubtedly	Adverbial	1
فعلا	Adverb	1

Indeed		
بطبيعة الحال of course	Phrase	1
والله I swear to God	Phrase	1
شدد to emphasise	Verb	1
تعتقد to believe	Verb	2
<b>Total</b>	/	80

**Table 3:** Epistemic Modals in the Arabophone Newspapers

As Table 3 demonstrates, different words and expressions are used in the Arabic-language newspapers to express epistemic modality. It can be noticed that ‘particles’ are the most used words in the news articles. Additionally, the most frequently used epistemic modal in both newspapers is the emphatic particle *إنَّ* (inna), which does not have an exact equivalent in English but can be translated as 'indeed' or 'certainly'. The following is an example of the use of this particle in *El Khabar*:

*إنَّ مبدأ الأمومة يفيض عن فكرة المرأة ليشمل كل دوائر التجمع الانساني 5.*

*Indeed, the principle of motherhood overflows beyond the idea of woman to encompass all circles of human society. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)*

In this example, the particle *إنَّ* ‘indeed’ and other linguistic features are used to emphasise the belief that the concept of motherhood is not limited to women alone, but extends to all areas of human interaction and community. It implies that the qualities and values traditionally associated with motherhood can be embraced and practiced by all individuals, regardless of gender, in all aspects of society. This perspective challenges hegemonic masculinity, which is further discussed in Section 5.3.5.2 of this chapter.

Like epistemic modality, the two Arabophone newspapers used different deontic modals when articulating their discourses about women. The table below shows all the deontic modals and expressions used in the news articles and their frequency of use:

Deontic Modals	Type	Frequency of Usage
ملزمة Required	Adjective	1
في حاجة In need	Prepositional Phrase	1
جاز Permissible	Verb	1
الواجب على Must	Phrase	4
تنصح to advise	Verb	1
ينصح it is advisable	Verb	2
ينبغي Should	Verb	7
يجب Must	Verb	4
يفترض Supposed to	Verb	1
من واجب Must	Prepositional Phrase	1
على Must	Particle	3
طلبت to demand	Verb	2
المفروض من Supposed to	Phrase	1
المطلوب Required	Noun	1
ضروريا Necessary	Adjective	1
الواجب Must	Noun	2
ضرورة Necessity	Noun	5
الأفضل The best	Adjective	2
ملزم Obliged	Adjective	1
لا بد Must	Particle	3
<b>Total</b>	/	44

**Table 4:** Deontic Modals in the Arabophone Newspapers



A notable feature is that the two selected news outlets used more modals that express 'strong obligation', such as *يجب* 'must' and *لا بد* 'must', in their discursive construction. The example below demonstrates the use of deontic modality in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*:

**ينبغي** للزوج ألا ييأس أبدا من إصلاح زوجته. 6.

A husband **should** never give up on reforming his wife. (*Echorouk El Yawmi*, article 10, 2021)

In this example, the deontic modal verb *ينبغي* 'should' is used in conjunction with other linguistic features to express the need for a husband to reform his wife, reinforcing the patriarchal notion of men as the leaders of the family. This is further discussed in Section 5.3.4.3 of the chapter.

Finally, dynamic and boulomaic modality, as shown previously, are the least used types of modality in the news articles of *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El khabar*. Dynamic modality is realised mainly by verbs, namely *استطاع* 'can' and *يمكن* 'can', as well as nouns, namely *إمكان* and *قدرة* 'ability' and the adjective *قادرة* 'capable'. Concerning boulomaic modality, it is conveyed in *Echorouk El Yawmi* through verbs, namely *تريد* 'want', *تفضل* 'prefer', *تخشى* 'fear' and *يتمنى* 'wish', as well as the phrases *للأسف* 'unfortunately' and *مع كل أسف* 'unfortunately'. In *El Khabar*, boulomaic modality is expressed using the verb *ترغب* 'want' and *تريد* 'want'. The following example demonstrates the use of dynamic ability in *El Khabar*:

أكدت المهندسة المعمارية وعضوة حزب "جيل جديد" في أوروبا حليلة سعيداني لـ "الخبر" أنها **لم تستطع**. 7.  
منع نفسها من المشاركة في هذا الحراك الشعبي والمساهمة في بناء مستقبل الجزائر

Halima Saidani, an architect and member of the "New Generation" party in Europe, confirmed to "El Khabar" that she **could not** prevent herself from participating in this popular movement and contributing to building the future of Algeria. (*El Khabar*, article 16, 2019)

In this example, the dynamic verb in the negative tense ‘could not’ is used alongside other linguistic features to express Halima Saidani's inability to resist participating in the popular movement. This challenges traditional notions of traditional femininity by representing women as active agents of social change. While the examples provided in this section offer insight into the linguistic realisation of modality in the selected articles and their underlying ideologies, Section 5.3 will further explore this by linking these linguistic features to broader discourses and ideologies concerning women in the media. The following part deals with social actor representation in the articles in Arabic.

### 5.2.2. Social Actor Representation

This part of the chapter presents the quantitative findings of the articles using van Leeuwen’s (2008) social actor framework. It focuses on the categories of *nomination*, as well as *functionalisation*, *relational identification*, and *physical identification*, all of which fall under the broader category of categorisation (van Leeuwen, 2008). These categories emerged as significant in the data for the construction of discourses about women. According to van Leeuwen (2008), nomination relates to the usage of the social actors’ proper nouns, functionalisation relates to the reference of social actors in terms of what they do, such as an occupation, and relational identification refers to social actors in terms of their personal or kinship relations. Finally, physical identification relates to the representation of social actors in terms of their physical appearance. Below is a table which presents the quantitative findings of these categories in the data of the chosen Arabophone newspapers:

	Arabophone Newspapers
Word Count	13,034

Nomination	58
Functionalisation	92
Relational Identification	83
Physical Identification	18
Total Cases of Nomination and Categorisation	251
Percentage %	1.92%

**Table 5:** Cases of Nomination and Categorisation in the Arabophone Newspapers

As Table 5 indicates, a total of 251 cases of nomination and categorisation were found in the data. In the case of nomination, an interesting feature about this category in the newspapers is the use of titles that indicate the marital status of women, which are mainly present in *El Khabar*. Out of the 58 cases of nomination, *El Khabar* used titles when referring to women 19 times. *Echorouk El Yawmi* used titles when nominating women only twice. Below is an example of nomination in *El Khabar*:

8. تري السيدة مليكة أن الألبسة التقليدية لا تزال تستهوي المرأة الجزائرية

*Mrs. Malika...believes that traditional clothing still appeals to Algerian women. (El Khabar, article 11, 2016)*

The Arabophone newspapers used the nouns 'السيدة' 'Mrs.' and 'الآنسة' 'Miss' to convey titles in their data. As for categorisation, in examining the occurrence of categorisation of women in the news articles, it is possible to identify several points. Both newspapers relied more on the category of functionalisation when categorising women, by functionalising women 92 times. Women are assigned different occupations and roles in the data, as the example below shows:

9. سلمية وحضارية وإنسانية المسيرات المليونية التي شهدتها مختلف المدن الجزائرية منذ 22 فيفري الماضي، شجع المرأة على المشاركة فيها ووضع بصمتها في شعاراتها وتنظيمها ونجاحها، فقد شاركت كطالبة ومحامية وصحفية وطبيبة وموظفة وأما وأختنا وبناتنا

*The marches that have been held in Algerian cities since last 22 February were peaceful and this encouraged women to participate in them...They participated as students, lawyers, journalists, doctors, employees, mothers, sisters and daughters... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 8, 2019)*

The functions assigned to women challenge traditional gender roles by assigning women non-stereotypical roles. This functionalisation in the data is realised through nouns that denote roles or functions. The same example contains instances of relational identification (mothers, sisters, and daughters), which is a category that account for 83 cases in the Arabophone newspapers. This reinforces traditional gender roles by associating women with domesticity. The category of relational identification is realised mainly by means of nouns that denote a relation. In addition to this, the category of physical identification is the one that is used the least in the data. Both Arabophone newspapers contained 18 cases of physical identification, which is realised mainly through adjectives and nouns that describe the physical appearance of women. The different perspectives discussed in relation to the examples included in this part of the chapter are thoroughly examined in Section 5.3. The following part deals with visual grammar analysis.

### **5.2.3. Visual Grammar Analysis**

This part of the chapter presents a summary of the findings of the textual analysis of the images of the two chosen Arabophone newspapers using Kress and van Leeuwen's framework of visual grammar (1996; 2006). In CDA, visual structures, like linguistic structures, carry ideological meanings. Hence, the aim of this part of the chapter is to provide a description and a brief discussion of the main visual structures drawn upon in the images of the selected Arabophone newspapers. As shown in Table 1 in Section 4.3 of Chapter Four, a total of 15 images were collected from the two Arabophone newspapers. The categories of visual grammar framework that emerged as important for the construction of different viewpoints about women (i.e. discourses in the images) are

*narrative* and *conceptual processes* within the representational metafunction and *salience* within the compositional metafunction of Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996; 2006) framework. *Echorouk El Yawmi* has the highest number of narrative images with a total of 5 images, while *El Khabar* comes with 1 narrative image only. This suggests that *El Khabar* may have relied more on conceptual images in its discursive construction by highlighting the essence of depicted participants rather than their actions. It has a total of 7 conceptual images, while *Echorouk El Yawmi* has only 2 conceptual images. These conceptual images primarily fall under the category of analytical images, which relate participants in terms of a part-whole structure, and symbolic attributive images, which serve to indicate what a participant 'means' or 'represents'. The following image of *El Khabar* is an example of a conceptual image:



**Image 1:** Conceptual Image in *El Khabar* (article 14, 2016)

This image is a 'stock' image, which falls under the category of conceptual images. The depicted woman is involved in an analytical process in which the woman is the 'carrier', and her makeup and hairstyle constitute the 'possessive attributes'. This image allows the viewers to scrutinise the woman's possessive attributes: her makeup and hairstyle. It

accompanies an article that provides makeup recommendations for women for the spring season. This image reinforces hegemonic views of women by placing emphasis on the physical appearance of the depicted woman, which is further discussed in Section 5.3.4.2 of this chapter.

Symbolic attributive images are another type of conceptual representation identified in the data. The image below from *Echorouk El Yawmi* exemplifies this process type:



**Image 2:** Symbolic Attributive Image in *Echorouk El Yawmi* (article 2, 2016)

The process in this conceptual image is symbolic attributive in that the objects shown in the image establish the identity of the woman. The desk, laptops and the documents suggest that the woman is an educated woman working in an office. The (traditional) dresses behind the woman suggest that the woman works in the fashion industry. The woman is the 'carrier' and the objects are the 'symbolic attributes'. This image accompanies a news article that focuses on the occupation of the depicted woman as a 'fashion designer' and 'businesswoman'. This image challenges stereotypical beliefs about women by depicting the woman in an office setting, which is further discussed in Section 5.3.5.1 of the present chapter.

Finally, in addition to representational structures, the feature of *saliency* within the compositional structures (explained in Section 4.5.1.3.2) appeared as important in the images of the newspapers in articulating competing viewpoints about women. Saliency is realised in the majority of the images by ‘foregrounding’ the represented participants in order to draw the attention of the readers to the most salient elements in the images. The following section of the chapter provides an in-depth discussion of the discourses and ideologies conveyed by the linguistic and visual features explained in this part of the chapter.

### **5.3. Discursive Practices and their Ideological Implications**

The aim of this section is to discuss the discursive practices of the news articles in Arabic and their ideological effects, based on the prominent linguistic and visual features described in the previous parts of the chapter. In other words, it involves examining the discourses articulated in the data collected from the chosen Arabophone newspapers and their socio-cultural implications, demonstrating whether they reinforce or challenge dominant beliefs about gender in the Algerian social context.

#### **5.3.1. Anti-feminist Discourses**

Anti-feminist discourses identified in the texts of *Echorouk El Yawmi* are hegemonic discourses that oppose feminism and the feminist demand of equality between men and women in Algeria. Modality alongside its accompanying linguistic features are the main means used in the newspaper to express anti-feminist viewpoints. More specifically, 8 modality means are used to express anti-feminist discourses (3 deontic modals, 3 boulomaic modals and 2 dynamic modals). It is important to note that all these modal means are expressed by the journalist in the article, which falls under the category of an

'opinion' piece. The passage below illustrates the anti-feminist perspectives, featuring both deontic modality and boulomaic modality:

10. لذلك **ينبغي** للأئمة والناشطين على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي أن يسعوا لبث الوعي في أوساط المجتمع بحقيقة هذه الجمعيات النسوية وحقيقة الأهداف التي تسعى إليها والمنطلقات التي تنطلق منها، وحقيقة علاقتها بالمنظمات الغربية التي **تريد** لمجتمعنا المسلم أن يتحوّل إلى مجتمع تُنقض فيه عرى الأسرة، وتحوّل أجياله إلى أجيال "لقبيلة" لا ترعى خلقا، ولا ديناً، ولا تراعي عرفاً ولا عادة

*Therefore, imams and activists on social media **should** strive to raise awareness in society about the true nature of these feminist associations, the real objectives they pursue, and their connections with Western organisations that **want** our Muslim society to turn into a society in which the family ties are broken, and its future generations become 'illegitimate' generations, disregarding morals, religion, customs and traditions. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 3, 2017)*

The modal verb **ينبغي** 'should' performs the function of obligation in this example. The use of this modal by the journalist serves to express their viewpoint regarding feminists in Algeria. They urge imams and social media users to bring attention to the objectives of feminist activists and feminist associations in Algeria and what the journalist perceives as their potentially negative intentions. Hence, the use of the deontic verb in conjunction with other linguistic features plays a key role in conveying the anti-feminist stance of the journalist. In the same example, the journalist uses the boulomaic verb **تريد** 'want' and other linguistic features to frame feminist associations and their connections to Western organisations in negative ways by suggesting that their influence will harm Muslim society. The journalist argues that their objectives will lead to the breakdown of traditional family structures and result in future generations losing their religious and cultural foundations. This suggests that due to the cultural and religious beliefs of Algerian society, feminism is considered a 'threat' to Algerian culture by traditionalists, as it challenges traditional gender roles and dominant views and assumptions about gender (Haddag, 2021). In this context, Lahmari (2021: online emphasis in original) states: '...this *imaginary* threat justifies most men's...[opposition] toward feminists in general, and feminist reforms specifically'. This perspective is further underscored in the data of the newspaper in the following two



examples, which depict the negative intentions attributed to feminists by the journalist. More specifically, two boulomaic modals are employed alongside other linguistic features to show the unfavourable desires that are assigned to feminists by the journalist, as the examples below demonstrate:

11. المكانة التي يريدها هذا الصنف من النساء للمرأة، ليست هي المكانة التي خلقها الله -سبحانه وتعالى- كشقيقة للرجل، لها ما له وعليها ما عليه

*The status that this type of women **wants** for women is not the status that God Almighty created for her as a sister of men... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 3, 2017)*

12. يُردن للمجتمع أن ينتكس عن الفطرة ويتنكر للدور الذي خلق له كل من الرجل والمرأة والأعمال التي هيّ لها كل منهما

*They **want** society to deviate from instinct and deny the role that men and women were created for, and the tasks prepared for each of them... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 3, 2017)*

These examples show the journalist's perception of feminist activists. In both examples, the journalist explains that feminist desires conflict with what are considered the natural and inherent roles and behaviours for men and women; and contradict what is perceived as God's will. Therefore, the use of boulomaic modality and other linguistic features serves to highlight what the journalist perceives as the negative desires of feminists. By framing these desires in a negative manner, the journalist reveals their negative evaluation of feminism and their anti-feminist stance. Indeed, in Algerian society, as in many other patriarchal societies, there is a prevailing belief in the inherent differences between men and women. This led to assigning distinct societal roles that are seen to align with the biological characteristics of women and men. That is, because of their capacity for reproduction, women are often associated with domestic responsibilities, while men are linked to activities in the public sphere. Hence, in challenging traditional gender norms that prescribe specific behaviours and expectations on women and men, feminism is considered as a threat to the fabric of society. Besides, women in the Algerian society are considered as

guardians of cultural and religious values (Tlemcani, 2016). Hence, any challenge to these norms is perceived as undermining the fabric of the society. In addition to this, the family is the fundamental building block of society, with men assuming the role of the family's head. This indicates that men hold the position of authority over women, since they are the primary decision makers. Consequently, feminist goals of women's emancipation and gender equality are seen as disruptive to this hierarchical structure within the family. This is referred to in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*, in which the journalist, using the deontic modal verb *يطلب* 'demand' alongside other linguistic features, indicates that feminists demand the abolition of male guardianship and authority over women. According to the journalist, this would transform Muslim homes into Western homes, as the following example suggests:

**13.** *يطلبون بإلغاء القوامة والولاية لتكون حال البيوت المسلمة كحال البيوت الغربية.*

*They **demand** the abolition of guardianship and authority so that the condition of Muslim households becomes like that of Western households. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 3, 2017)*

The sentence draws a direct comparison between 'the condition of Muslim households' and 'the condition of Western households'. This comparison is used to indicate the supposed consequences of abolishing traditional guardianship and authority structures within Muslim households. The journalist, hence, emphasises the maintenance of strong patriarchal control. In this context, El Saadawi (2015) explains that women in these patriarchal societies are confined to the control of men and traditional gender norms to protect men's morals and honour, rather than protecting women themselves. This perspective highlights how patriarchal societies often prioritise controlling women's behaviour and mobility to maintain male dominance and social order, reflecting men's interests.

In Algerian society, there is a strong opposition to feminism among conservative groups. This is seen, for instance, in the opposition of the Islamist and conservative political parties to government-led legal reforms that aimed to advance women's rights in the country. A notable example is when the Islamic and conservative groups in the parliament stood against the bill criminalising violence against women in March 2015 (Issaoun, 2016). These groups tried to stop the passing of this bill because they considered it as intruding on intimacy, legalising Western sexual behaviours, and disrupting the family structure (Tlemcani, 2016). Another example that shows the opposition of feminism by conservative groups in Algeria is when feminists were verbally attacked by a group of men who tore up their signs during the protest movement in 2019 (Ouitis, 2019) (see Section 2.6 of Chapter Two for details about the Algerian protest movement). These conservative perspectives reflect a resistance to change that challenges oppressive traditional values and norms and promote women's rights in the country. Another reason for the opposition of feminism is the lack of understanding or misconceptions about what 'feminism' means. Indeed, many individuals view feminism as synonymous with 'men-hating' or as a movement that seeks the 'superiority' of women over men. In short, anti-feminist discourses oppose women's emancipation and advancing women's rights. The next section discusses the discourses of gender segregation identified in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*.

### **5.3.2. Discourses of Gender Segregation**

The discourses of gender segregation are other hegemonic discourses found in *Echorouk El Yawmi*. In expressing these discourses, the newspaper used 5 modals (3 epistemic modals and 2 deontic modals), alongside other accompanying linguistic features. All the modal features used in relation to these discourses are conveyed by the journalist in the news article, which belongs to the 'opinion' piece genre. In fact, the discourses of gender separation, based on the notion of gender difference i.e. women and men are distinctively

different, rest on the idea that it is inappropriate for women and men to mix with each other. This practice can be linked to the cultural background of the Algerian society, influenced by religious beliefs. The following are two examples of the use of epistemic modality in the newspaper to emphasise the importance of limiting contact between unrelated women and men:

14. *إن لمجتمعنا المسلم خصوصية، ولثقافته خلفية دينية ضببطت العلاقات البشرية وقلصت من احتكاك الجنسين ببعضهما اتقاء للشبهات وسدا لباب المحرمات*

*Indeed, our Muslim society has a special nature, and our culture has a religious background that regulates human relations and limits the contact between the two sexes to protect them from suspicions and prohibitions. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)*

15. *وبطبيعة الحال لربنا عز وجل حكمة في جعل علاقة المرأة بالجنس الآخر محصورة في محارمها.*

*And of course, our God Almighty has the wisdom to limit women's relationship with the opposite sex to only her mahrams. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)*

In these two examples, the particle *إن* 'indeed' and the phrase *بطبيعة الحال* 'of course' function as epistemic modals expressing a sense of certainty. In the first example, the epistemic particle is used alongside other linguistic features to emphasise that the Algerian society has a religious background that limits the contact between men and women to protect them from prohibitions. In the second example, the epistemic phrase *بطبيعة الحال* 'of course' is utilised to emphasise that God limits women's relationship with others to only her unmarriageable relatives (mahrams). However, according to Buisson (2013), the Quran does not explicitly require women to restrict their interactions solely to mahrams (close male relatives), nor does it mandate gender segregation. Rather, it emphasises principles of modesty in social conduct for both men and women (Buisson, 2013). In addressing the issue of non-mixing between men and women, the journalist uses a verse from the Quran to indicate that God's commandments and guidelines are based on His profound and comprehensive understanding of what is best for human beings:

16. ...قال: "أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ".

...He (God) said: "Does He who created not know, and He is kind and fully aware of everything". (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)

The verse highlights God's comprehensive knowledge, kindness, and awareness of all creation, but it does not explicitly address the issue of gender interactions.

In drawing on the discourses of gender segregation, the journalist makes use of deontic modality and other linguistic features to ask women to not build friendship with men, as the example below demonstrates:

17. عليك أختي أن تكوني على حذر وأن لا تقولي أن صداقة الرجل أفضل. وهذا بين قوسين زعم الكثيرات لأن هذا النوع من العلاقات تحيط به الكثير من الشبهات مهما كانت نوايا الطرفين سليمة، والظن الأكبر أنها لن تكون كذلك

*My sister, you **must** be careful and not say that a man's friendship is better, and this is in parentheses, because this type of relationship is surrounded by many suspicions no matter how sound the intentions of the two parties, and the biggest assumption is that it is not. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)*

In this example, the pronoun 'you', embedded in the deontic particle *على* 'must' through the letter *ك*, is used by the journalist to address women, urging them to be careful and avoid forming friendships with men. In fact, the discourses of gender separation identified in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi* are linked to the discourses of 'normative/compulsory heterosexuality' found in the same article of the newspaper. Sunderland (2004) points out that it was Adrienne Rich who introduced the concept of 'compulsory heterosexuality' in her article published in 1980. However, Rich did not employ the term 'discourse' to characterise 'compulsory heterosexuality' because she was not a linguist (Sunderland, 2004). The discourses of compulsory heterosexuality rest on the idea that men and women have innate sexual preference for each other. They are manifested in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*, using 4 epistemic modal items in combination with other linguistic features. The following is an example that illustrates this point:

18. *إن تحول الصداقة إلى حب وانكسار القلب، ليس مشهدا مقتطفا من فيلم درامي أو مسرحية تراجيدية، ولكنه واقع تعيشه الكثيرات ممن يتبعن الطريقة الغربية في حياتهن*

*Indeed, the transformation of friendship into love and heartbreak is not a scene from a drama film or a tragic play, but a reality experienced by many women who follow the Western way in their lives... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)*

The epistemic modal *إن* 'indeed' is used alongside other linguistic features to emphasise that friendship between men and women inevitably turns into love and heartbreak when Algerian women follow the Western way, implying that heterosexuality is unavoidable. It also indicates that the journalist condemns Western behaviours. To support their view on the question of friendship between men and women, the journalist makes intertextual references to the American actor Steve Harvey in his interview on CNN channel, using direct speech. Steve Harvey claims:

19. *أنتِ امرأة جَدَّابة، لذا قد تجددين رجلا يصف علاقتهما معا بالصداقة، ولكني أقول لك: هذا ليس صحيحا... هو يخبرك بهذا، لأنك لا ترين العلاقة إلا في هذا الإطار، لكننا نظل أصدقاء على أمل انفتاح الباب أو انشقاق الدرع بالصورة التي تسمح لنا كرجال من تجاوز مساحة الصداقة*

*You are an attractive woman, so you may find a man who describes your relationship together as friendship, but I tell you: this is not true... He tells you this, because you only see the relationship in this frame, but we remain friends in the hope that the door will open in a way that allows us as men to transcend the friendship space... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)*

In this statement, the actor appears to generalise that all men desire more than a platonic friendship with their female friends. However, while the men's goal is to transcend mere friendship, the statement acknowledges the existence of friendship between men and women. The newspaper also draws on the book of the American writer Shirley Glass, titled 'Not Just Friends', in relation to the question of friendship between women and men. The passage below shows this:

20. *الكاتبة الأمريكية، والمتخصصة في العلاقات الزوجية، "شيرلي جلاس" تناولت هذه المسألة أيضا بكثير من التفصيل في كتاب عنونته بـ"ليسوا مجرد أصدقاء ولخصت نتائج بحوثها بالقول "أن تحقق الانجذاب بين الجنسين يتناسب طرديا مع قدرتنا على التنفس والبقاء أحياء لذلك من المستحيل الجزم ببقاء الصداقة*

*The American writer and specialist in marital relationships "Shirley Glass" also addressed this issue in detail in her book titled "Not Just Friends". She summarised the findings of her research by stating: "attraction between the sexes is directly*

*proportional to our ability to breathe and stay alive, so it is impossible to assert the sustainability of friendship". (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 7, 2019)*

While the statement implies that maintaining a strictly platonic friendship can be challenging given the inherent nature of attraction between the sexes, it does recognise the presence of friendship between men and women.

Based on the belief that women and men have innate heterosexual desire for each other, interactions between women and men should be minimised to prevent temptation (fitnah) and preserve chastity in Muslim societies. This led to the practice of gender segregation in various aspects of Algerian society to limit inappropriate contact between men and women (Awres, 2023). For example, in many Algerian families, it is a common practice for men and women to sit separately at weddings and other social occasions. Besides, in medical practices, there are separate waiting rooms for women and men (Awres, 2023).

The ideological implication of the practice of gender segregation is that, with the aim of keeping women and men apart, society has assigned them with separate responsibilities according to their supposedly natural abilities. Men are expected to work outside home and provide for themselves and their families, whereas women are responsible for housekeeping tasks and raising children. This indicates that gender segregation is an instrument of inequality, as it reinforces the domesticity of women in its rigid separation of the private and public spheres. Solati (2017: 46) explains that '[p]ublic spheres which include economic[s], politics, military, the legal system and even ideology are the domain of men while the appropriate space for women is the private sphere'. In addition, gender segregation tends to oversexualise gender relations in society, as it fills any interaction between women and men with sexual connotations (Buisson, 2013). Indeed, this practice reinforces the idea that men and women are incapable of self-control and

mutual respect in mixed-gender environments. Consequently, 'the more non-mixing is imposed, the more voyeurism intensifies, and violence is increasingly acted out against women' (Awres, 2023: online). This is evident in mixed-gender public settings, where Algerian women are often subject to harassment by men. Women in these environments are often perceived as trespassing in the men's world (Solati, 2017), leading to harassment against them. An example of this can be observed in situations such as mixed buses where women often encounter sexual harassment and verbal abuse. In the streets, women are also subject to these forms of violence. In this context, Lahmari (2021: online) argues:

...sexual harassment, with the smallest example of catcalling in the Algerian streets, is normalized to the point where Algerian men feel entitled to get a response from the women that they approach.

This suggests that gender segregation impacts women more than men and serves as a tool for maintaining the patriarchal social order. In sum, the practice of gender segregation reinforces traditional gender roles, restricts women's access to public spaces and perpetuates men's dominance over women. The next section of the chapter deals with the discourses of women's outperformance of men found in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*.

### **5.3.3. Discourses of Women's Outperformance of Men**

Other hegemonic discourses present in the texts of *Echorouk El Yawmi* relate to the notion of 'women outperforming men', which has become widespread in Algeria due to the significant presence of women in higher education and some professional fields. Modality and its accompanying linguistic features are important in the articulation of these discourses in the news articles of the newspaper. 17 instances of modality are used in relation to these discourses in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*. These instances include 10 epistemic modals, 6 deontic modals, and 1 dynamic modal. The linguistic features that accompany these modal words and expressions play a crucial role in the journalist's



articulation of these discourses through the meaning they express. Notably, all instances of modality related to these discourses are employed by the journalist to communicate their stance on the matter in the article, which belongs to the 'opinion' genre. Deontic modality is sometimes used by the journalist to indicate their duty to inform the reader about this important matter, and it is used in other times to express the obligation to take the matter seriously, as the example below indicates:

21. **أجد نفسي كمراقب ومتابع مهتم ملزم بالإفادة عن هذه المسألة والدعوة الصادقة الجادة إلى ضرورة الانتباه**

*I find myself as an observer and an interested follower **obliged** to report on this issue and sincerely and seriously call for the need to pay attention (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 9, 2020).*

In this example, the journalist uses the first-person singular pronoun 'I', indicated by adding the prefix *أ* to the verb root *وَجَدَ* 'to find' in the present tense, to express their personal involvement and perspective within the article. The deontic adjective *ملزم* and the deontic noun *ضرورة*, along with other linguistic features, are used to indicate a sense of duty of the journalist and the need for readers to pay attention to the issue at hand. In addition to deontic modality, epistemic modality is used alongside other linguistic features to highlight the belief that Algerian universities are female dominated, as the following examples show:

22. **نعم إننا نرى بسهولة جيوشا من الإناث في مقابل أعداد قليلة تكاد تكون رمزية من الذكور.**

*yes, **indeed, we** easily see female armies in comparison to a small number of males that is almost symbolic... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 9, 2020)*

23. **هذا واضح ثابت، إن معظم الاختصاصات الدراسية في الجامعات وبالأخص... في العلوم الإنسانية والعلوم الاجتماعية (آداب ولغات . آداب وفنون . علوم الاتصال . علم الاجتماع . علم النفس فلسفة . تاريخ الخ...) يغلب عليها غلبة كبيرة العنصر الأنثوي**

*...**this is clear**, that **indeed** most university subjects especially humanities and social sciences (arts and languages, communication sciences, sociology, psychology, philosophy, history etc.) are dominated by females... (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 9, 2020)*

24. يجب أن نضيف هنا أن هذا الزحف سيوسع ويتمدد مع الوقت فماذا يمكن أن نقول بعد عشر سنوات أو عشرين سنة؛ حيث يُتوقع أن تكون الجامعات مثلا نسوية ربما مائة بالمائة؟

*We must add that this creeping will expand, so what can we say in ten or twenty years? universities are expected to be 100% feminine, maybe? (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 9, 2020)*

In the first example, the journalist uses the epistemic particle *إن* 'indeed' and the metaphor 'armies of females' to emphasise that Algerian universities are invaded by females. The metaphor suggests that women in higher education are powerful and organised like a military force, which highlights their significant presence at universities. The journalist also uses the pronoun 'we', which is embedded in the particle *إننا*. This particle combines *إن* for emphasis and *نا*, which is the pronoun 'we'. By using this pronoun, the journalist creates a sense of collective observation of the predominance of females in higher education. In the second example, two epistemic modals of certainty are used: the epistemic particle *إن* 'indeed' and the epistemic phrase *هذا واضح* 'this is clear'. These modality markers emphasise that most university subjects in Algeria, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, are predominantly occupied by women. In the third example, the journalist uses a combination of modal words and other linguistic features to express their viewpoint about the matter. The deontic modal verb of necessity *يجب* 'must' indicates a strong sense of obligation, and it is employed by the journalist to stress their responsibility to inform the readers about the significant presence of women in higher education. The epistemic modal of certainty *س* 'will' shows the journalist's conviction regarding the expansion of women's presence in higher education. In the same example, the metaphor 'creeping' is employed to convey the idea of a gradual and steady progress in women's presence in higher education, akin to the movement of a creeping animal. Furthermore, the journalist employs the epistemic verb *يمكن* 'can' and the epistemic particle *ربما* 'maybe' alongside other linguistic features to imply their belief in the possibility, albeit exaggerated, of the university

becoming 100% feminine. This usage serves as a hyperbolic projection of the current trend into the future.

When we relate these discourses to the Algerian context, we find that women make up around 60% of university graduates (Ouitis, 2019). Furthermore, women in high schools are outperforming boys. For instance, in 2018, 65.29% of girls compared to 34.71% graduated with a baccalaureate diploma (Benfodil, 2018). This resulted in girls going to university in larger numbers (Tripp, 2019a). The increased number of women obtaining university degrees has opened opportunities for them to enter various work domains. For example, women account for around one half of the judges, 44% of magistrates as well as 66% of justice professionals in lower courts (Tripp, 2019a). In addition to this, there is a significant number of women teachers and medical doctors. Nevertheless, the success of women is perceived as a 'threat' to men's position in Algerian society. This is evident in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*, in which the growing presence of women in higher education is valued negatively by the journalist, as the example below shows:

كيف سَتُدار شؤون المجتمع والدولة؟ وكيف سَتكون تغطية القطاعات الحيوية من الرجال الذين هم 25. في حكم الانقراض

إن الأمر يصير خطيرا إذا لم تكن هناك يقظة استراتيجية تدرس هذا المعطى الوطني بكل أبعاده الحالية والقادمة، وتضع حلولاً مستقبلية حقيقية له

*How will the affairs of society and the state be managed? And how will the vital sectors be covered by men who are on the verge of extinction? Indeed, the matter becomes dangerous if there is no strategic vigilance that studies this national situation in all its current and future dimensions and develops real future solutions for it. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 9, 2020)*

The journalist in these examples relies on the epistemic modal particles *س* 'will' and *إن* 'indeed' alongside other linguistic features to emphasise their viewpoint about women's significant presence at universities. The epistemic modal *إن* 'will' is employed in the form of two questions to prompt consideration and reflection on future scenarios regarding the

management of society and the state, as well as the impact of the scarcity of men in vital sectors. On the question of scarcity of men, the journalist uses the hyperbole 'on the verge of extinction' to exaggerate the situation and indicate the severity of the issue. The epistemic modal *إن* 'indeed' is used by the journalist to express a strong sense of certainty. By utilising this epistemic modal and other accompanying linguistic features, the journalist demonstrates a strong belief in the potential risks associated with the significant increase of women in higher education in Algeria.

Yet, despite the progress made by Algerian women at the level of higher education and some professional occupations, the percentage of women's presence in the labour market is low. Tripp (2019b:67) argues: '...[Algerian] women...constitute only 18 percent of the total workforce'. This indicates that Algeria is among the countries that are characterised by a low degree of women's economic participation in the world. In this context, Solati (2017:1) claims '...women in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have the lowest rate of female labor force participation (FLFP) in the world'. In addition, Algerian women's presence in decision making positions remains weak (Lassel, 2020). Therefore, these discourses work against women's interests, as they conceal the imbalanced power relations that exist between men and women in Algeria. These discourses can be attributed to the traditional patriarchal beliefs of Algerian society that still consider women's primary role as linked to the domestic sphere. Indeed, these attitudes often prioritise women's responsibilities within the household and family, limiting their participation in the public sphere and hindering their career opportunities. According to Solati (2017) one of the major obstacles to women's success in the labour sector is the breadwinner model, in which men are the breadwinners in families, while women are mainly responsible for managing household tasks and raising children. The next section discusses the discourses of femininity identified in both *Echorouk El Yami* and *El Khabar*.

#### **5.3.4. Discourses of Femininity**

The 'discourses of femininity' found in the data of the selected Arabophone newspapers also reflect hegemonic perspectives that serve to strengthen dominant beliefs about women in society and perpetuate existing power dynamics, where men maintain dominance over women. Femininity, as explained in Section 3.3.4.1, relates to the traits that are traditionally associated with women that establish a hierarchical relation with hegemonic masculinity. The discourses of femininity identified in the data cover three aspects: 1) virginity, 2) physical appearance/beauty, and 3) marital/family relations. These aspects are articulated by both linguistic and visual structures. The following sub-sections discuss these aspects of femininity and their ideological implications in society.

##### **5.3.4.1. Virginity**

The Arabophone newspaper *Echorouk El Yawmi* draws on femininity discourses by referring to women's virginity. The reference to women's virginity is expressed in the data of the newspaper by means of modality and its accompanying linguistic features. There are 6 instances of modality related to women's virginity (3 boulomaic, 2 epistemic and 1 deontic). Among these, 5 instances are articulated by a genealogist in the 'opinion' article, while the journalist expresses 1 instance. It is important to note that sexuality is a taboo subject in Algeria and this section deals with sensitive issues related to women's virginity and sexuality. In the Algerian context, women are expected to remain virgin until marriage. Indeed, the preservation of a woman's virginity is highly valued and viewed as a matter of the woman's purity and family honour. In this context, Mernissi (1982:183) writes: '[t]he concepts of honour and virginity locate the prestige of a man between the legs of a woman'.

Women's virginity relates to the presence of a hymen, and virginity loss is associated with the occurrence of the first vaginal intercourse (Abboud et al., 2015). In showing the

importance of the hymen in patriarchal societies, El Saadawi (2015:51 emphasis in original) describes it as ‘...one of the most essential, if not *the* most essential, part of [a girl’s] body...’. Since virginity is associated with the presence of a hymen, this concept in Algerian society, as in many other patriarchal societies, is related to girls/women only and never boys/men. Indeed, failure to preserve the hymen till marriage is seen as a dishonourable act that brings shame to the family (Benboulabah, 2020). The importance of the hymen is highlighted in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*, as the following example shows:

**مؤكدَة** أن معظم الفتيات اللواتي يقصدنها من أجل اختبار العذرية يبدو عليهن الخوف بسبب حوادث 26. تعرضن لها في الصغر أو في الكبر، ويخشين أن تكون سببا في فقدانهن لبكارتهن

...**emphasising** that most of the girls who visit her for virginity testing seem to be afraid because of accidents they experienced in childhood or adulthood because they **fear** that it is a reason for losing their virginity (hymen). (*Echorouk El Yawmi*, article 6, 2019)

In this example, the epistemic adjective **مؤكدَة** ‘emphasising’ and other linguistic features are used to highlight the gynaecologist’s belief that many of the girls seeking virginity testing express fear that they may have lost their hymen due to past incidents in their childhood or adulthood. The boulomaic verb **يخشين** ‘fear’ is also used in this example to indicate the girls’ emotional state and their apprehension regarding the possible loss of their hymen due to past incidents. This shows the significant societal emphasis placed on the hymen, which is considered as a symbol of the woman’s purity and her family’s honour and reputation. Besides, *Echorouk El Yawmi*, by using the boulomaic verb **يفضلن** ‘prefer’, suggests the preference of girls to undergo virginity testing without the groom's request. The example below illustrates this:

فأغلبية الفتيات **يفضلن** إجراء فحص اختبار العذرية دون طلب من أحد حسب ما أشارت إليه 27. الدكتورة بوبيادة ليلى

the majority of girls **prefer** to undergo virginity testing without being asked to do so, according to what Dr. Boubyada Leila indicated... (*Echorouk El Yawmi*, article 6, 2019)

The preference of women to undergo the practice of virginity testing can be attributed to some important reasons. The first reason is that many brides-to-be want to ensure that their hymen is intact. The second reason is that many others fear that the absence of blood on the wedding night may lead to false accusations from the groom of not being a 'virgin'. In this vein, El Saadawi (2015:51) indicates '...the mere existence of the hymen is not in itself sufficient. This fine membrane must be capable...of letting out red blood that can be seen as a visible stain on a white bed sheet...'. Consequently, many brides-to-be consider a certificate of virginity as a form of protection against false accusations that they may face if they do not bleed on their wedding night. Those who do not bleed may even risk being rejected (Benboulerbah, 2020). Additionally, it is also common for brides-to-be to be asked to provide virginity certificates to the groom prior to their wedding. This indicates how society treats women as commodities and relates their worth to the presence of an intact hymen, with bleeding supposedly perceived as evidence of virginity.

*Echorouk El Yawmi* made intertextual references to claims made by five Facebook users about the issue of virginity testing. The opinions were split between those supporting and opposing the idea of virginity testing. However, both stances convey a common understanding that virginity is associated exclusively with women, as men's virginity is unaddressed. Below is an example of the intertextual references made by the journalist:

ويقول مروان من باتنة " تريدون تشجيع الفاحشة بحجة رفع الإهانة عن الفتاة وأنتم تعلمون أنه لولا اهتمام المجتمع بعذرية الفتاة لوقعت الكثيرات في فاحشة الزنا قبل الزواج

*You want to encourage immorality under the pretext of removing the insult to the girl, and you know that if society did not place value on a girl's virginity, many would fall into the sin of fornication before marriage. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 6, 2019)*

This example primarily concentrates on women's virginity and highlights societal double standards and expectations regarding the sexual behaviour of men and women, despite Islamic teachings emphasising the importance of chastity for both men and women (Sadatmoosavi and Shokouhi, 2016). This indicates the inconsistency between religious

teachings and societal expectations, particularly in how chastity is enforced and perceived differently for men and women, which reflects patriarchal cultural norms. *Echorouk El Yawmi* also referred to the statement made by another Facebook user which highlights this view, as the following example shows:

بينما يخالفه معاد الرأي ملفتا إلى أنّ إلغاء شهادة العذرية للفتيات قبل الزواج، لا يغير في الموضوع شيئا. 29. وسيظل المجتمع حريصا على التأكد من عذرية الفتاة واعتبارها شرف العائلة

*Imad disagrees with him, pointing out that abolishing the certificate of virginity for girls before marriage changes nothing in the matter and society will continue to be keen in ensuring the girl's virginity and considering it as the honour of the family. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 6, 2019)*

This statement indicates the speaker's belief that society is inclined to maintain its vigilance regarding the virginity of the girl and its association with the honour of the family. This reinforces the significant emphasis placed on women's virginity, or more specifically the hymen in the Algerian context, which is associated with the honour of the family. Conversely, men's virginity is overlooked as it is not mentioned in the data. In the Algerian context, as in other patriarchal societies, even if a man engages in multiple sexual relationships outside marriage, it is not perceived as an act that would bring shame to the family. This is because the concepts of shame and family's honour are associated with women only. In this regard, El Saadawi (2015:64) states '...sexual experience in the life of a man is a source of pride and a symbol of virility, whereas sexual experience in the life of women is a source of shame and a symbol of degradation'. El Saadawi (2015:64) further argues that a man '...can be a womanizer of the worst calibre and yet be considered an honourable man as long as his women-folk are able to protect their genital organs'. This shows that a man's honour is linked to a woman's behaviour and not his own behaviour. It also indicates that women do not own their bodies; rather, it is owned by their men-folk.

The journalist expresses their point of view by using the deontic adjective *ضروريا* 'necessary' and other linguistic features to indicate the necessity of virginity certificates for



girls or women who have lost their virginity, associated with the presence of a hymen, due to accidents or rape. The example below demonstrates this:

وان كان هناك من يعتبرها إهانة وتشكيكا في أخلاق المرأة، فمن زاوية أخرى تبقى دليل براءة لمن تطالهنّ. 30. التهم الباطلة من رجال متلاعبين. وإجراء ضروريا لمن فقدن بكرتهن جراء الحوادث أو عمليات الاغتصاب

*If some consider it an insult and questioning of women's morals, from another perspective, it remains evidence of innocence for those unfairly accused by manipulative men. It is also a **necessary** measure for those who have lost their virginity due to accidents or rape. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 6, 2019)*

This example reinforces the harmful practice of virginity testing and the discriminatory societal norms which impose stricter standards on women, thereby perpetuating gender inequality. Although *Echorouk El Yawmi* primarily highlighted the practice of virginity testing, it is important to note that there are other dehumanising practices related to women's virginity that impact women's dignity. For example, there is a practice in some ultra-conservative regions and families in Algeria (also in Morocco and Tunisia) that is known as 'Tsfah' (Ferhati, 2007:2) (or also Tasfih). The practice of 'Tsfah' involves taking young girls, before the age of puberty, to older women who use magical rituals to block the intimate part of the girls from having any sexual intercourse for the aim of preserving girls' virginity until their wedding day. On the practice of Tasfih, Gervais (2014:64) explains: '...[I]e but est de protéger et de contrôler la sexualité des jeunes filles jusqu'à leur mariage' (the aim is to protect and control the sexuality of young girls until marriage). This instance clearly shows society's obsession with women's virginity to the extent of using harmful practices to control women's bodies and force them to conform to societal ideals of modesty and sexual restraint. This stems from the belief that women's bodies should be exclusively reserved for their husbands (Ferhati, 2007). In addition to this, nowadays, many women who have lost their virginity before marriage choose to undergo hymen reattachment surgery (hymenoplasty). This is because women face shame and stigma for engaging in premarital sexual intercourse and not maintaining their virginity. The consequences of

losing virginity before marriage for women can include repudiations, suicides, and honour killings (Charpentier, 2012). In sum, the concept of women's virginity is a myth created by patriarchal societies to reinforce women's oppression and perpetuate men's dominance over women, by limiting women's autonomy over their bodies and violating their human rights.

#### 5.3.4.2. Physical Appearance/Beauty

Another aspect within the discourses of femininity found in the data of the Arabophone newspapers relates to women's physical appearance. The main categories drawn upon in the news articles to refer to women's physical appearance are physical identification, modality and its accompanying linguistic features, as well as representational and compositional structures in images. In the Algerian context, women are expected to take care of their physical appearance. In referring to women's physical appearance, the Arabophone newspapers contain 18 cases of physical identification, which is realised mainly through adjectives and nouns that describe the physical appearance of women. The following examples show the way the category of physical identification is used in the data of the two newspapers:

31. نجد في الواجهة آراء ودراسات علمية تنفي وجود علاقة بريئة بين امرأة ورجل أجنبي عنها، خاصة إن كانت جذابة ومغرية

*We find scientific opinions and studies that deny the existence of an innocent relation between a woman and a strange man, especially if she is **attractive** and **seductive**. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 17, 2019)*

32. وأضافت متحدثتنا أن المرأة وخاصة المقبلات على الزواج أصبحن يتنافسن ليكن الأجمل في حفلات الأعراس

*Our spokeswoman added that women, especially brides-to-be, are competing to be the most **beautiful** in wedding parties. (El Khabar, article 11, 2016)*

The adjectives 'attractive', 'seductive' and 'beautiful' in these two examples refer to women's physical appearance and beauty. In the first example, the journalist employs the

pronoun 'we', manifested through the prefix 'ن' in the verb نجد, to include themselves and foster a sense of shared understanding with the audience. In addition to physical identification, modality and its accompanying linguistic features serve as another means for referring to women in terms of their physical appearance. *El Khabar* contains 9 modals to articulate different viewpoints on women's beauty and physical appearance (7 deontic modals and 2 epistemic modals), while *Echorouk El Yawmi* features 2 instances of modal usage (2 boulomaic modals). These modality means express the viewpoints of women working in the fashion and beauty industry in articles that belong to the 'lifestyle news' category. The following is an instance of the use of modality and other linguistic features to refer to women's physical appearance in *El Khabar*:

33. قالت مصممة الأزياء كسال أمينة إن المرأة الجزائرية عادت للباس التقليدي على الموضة ...

*The fashion designer Kassal Amina said that, **indeed**, Algerian women have returned to the traditional dress. (El Khabar, article 11, 2016)*

In this example, epistemic modality is expressed through the emphatic particle إن 'indeed', which is used to emphasise that Algerian women have become more interested in traditional dress. This indicates the speaker's strong belief in the increased interest of Algerian women in traditional dress. Unlike men, women in Algeria have many forms of traditional dresses. These dresses are, for example, showcased in wedding events where the bride tends to wear various traditional dresses to exhibit her beauty. Besides, the newspaper draws on a combination of modality types and other linguistic features to convey how women can take care of their beauty and physical appearance:

34. ومن بين النصائح التي قدمتها الخبيرة لقراء حواء "الخبر" في الصالون الدولي للمرأة

ضرورة اختيار مرطبات البشرة المكونة من زيت الأركان وزبدة الكاريتي المفيدتين جدا لكل أنواع البشرة

*Among the tips given by the expert to the readers of Hawaa El Khabar at the International Women's Salon: the **necessity** to choose skin moisturizers consisting of argan oil and karite butter, which are very useful for all skin types. (El Khabar, article 13, 2016)*

35. يمكن استخدام الألوان الجريئة في ماكياج الربيع

*Bold colours can be used in spring makeup. (El Khabar, article 14, 2016)*

In the first sentence, the deontic modal noun ضرورة 'necessity' and other linguistic features are used to express the need to use moisturisers that have argan oil and karate butter. In the second example, epistemic modality alongside other linguistic features is used to suggest that it is possible for women to use bold colours for spring makeup. The use of the epistemic modal يمكن 'can' indicates that the speaker believes that it is a potential option for women to use bold colours for their makeup during the spring season to enhance their appearance. This shows the importance given to women's beauty.

The reference to women's physical appearance is also conveyed in the data of *El Khabar* through visual means. *El Khabar* contains 4 images that represent women in terms of physical appearance and beauty, as the following image shows:



**Image 3:** Conceptual Representation in *El Khabar* (article 17, 2019)

This 'stock' image is conceptual, in which the woman is involved in a symbolic attributive process. The makeup depicted on the right side of the image establishes her identity as a woman working in the domain of modelling. Salience is given to the appearance of the woman depicted in the image by placing her in the foreground. This stock image is used in

a news article that deals with cosmetic products in Algeria. Image 1, previously discussed in Section 5.2.3 of this chapter, also depicts women in terms of their physical appearance, in which the represented woman is the 'carrier' and her makeup and hairstyle constitute the 'possessive attributes'. The representation of women in these images of *El Khabar* highlights the issue of objectification of women in the media, where women are portrayed primarily as decorative 'objects' rather than as individuals with their own identities and capabilities (Santoniccolo et al., 2023). This perpetuates gender stereotypes and traditional roles by linking women's worth to their physical appearance. Additionally, the representation of women in the images of *El Khabar* promotes the 'ideal woman' stereotype. In this respect, Berberick (2010:2) argues: '[t]he representation of women in the media has...created a definition of beauty that women compare themselves to. Also, men compare the women in their lives to what they see on... [the media]'. This suggests that the media play a powerful role in shaping societal standards of beauty and influencing how women view themselves and how men view women. *El Khabar* also contains another image, which refers to women in terms of their physical appearance:



**Image 4:** Analytical Image in *El Khabar* (article 12, 2016)

This image has two kinds of participants: carrier (the whole) and possessive parts. The woman in the image is the 'carrier', while her outfit: the dress, the scarf and jewellery, function as possessive attributes or the parts that constitute the whole. The image is used in an article that speaks about the traditional dress worn by the depicted woman.

*El Khabar* made some intertextual references related to women's beauty. For example, it drew on a discussion made by an owner of a shop and some female clients about beauty products. This indicates that linking women to beauty can contribute to a culture of consumerism, where the beauty industry seeks to sell products that alter women's appearance to meet societal beauty expectations. Another instance of manifest intertextuality in the data is made by a fashion designer interviewed by *El Khabar*, who mentioned that many brides-to-be demand a traditional dress to be more beautiful than their relatives, as the example below indicates:

36. استقبلت الكثير من المقبلات على الزواج اللواتي **يطلبن** تصميمًا للباس تقليدي على الموضة ليكن أجمل من قرياتهن

*I have received many brides-to-be who **demand** a traditional dress to be more beautiful than their relatives. (El Khabar, article 11, 2016)*

The use of the verb 'demand' in this example suggests that the news institution is portraying women, particularly brides-to-be, as being highly focused on beauty and appearance. In explaining the importance of women's beauty in the Algerian context, Hadda (2023: 248) maintains: '[l]a femme est souvent jugée par son apparence physique et son intelligence réside dans sa beauté' (women are often judged by their physical appearance and their intelligence lies in their beauty). This suggests that women's value is linked to their physical characteristics. This is because the intelligence of women is perceived as a threat to patriarchal social structures (El Saadawi, 2015). This reinforces traditional stereotypes about gender that place emphasis on women's external appearances rather than their skills,

intelligence, and achievements. It is important to note that feminine traits of 'modesty' and 'shyness' are also seen as symbols of women's beauty in the Algerian context.

#### 5.3.4.3. Family/ Marital Relations

*Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* referred to women in terms of their family relations drawing on the categories of relational identification, nomination, and modality along with its accompanying features. In the Algerian context, women are highly associated with domesticity or the private sphere, making marital and familial relationships important aspects of femininity. In the category of relational identification, 83 instances were found in the data of the selected Arabophone newspapers, with *Echorouk El Yawmi* accounting for 66 of these cases. Among the relations that are assigned to women in the news articles of *Echorouk El Yawmi* are 'married woman', 'unmarried women', 'mother', 'sister', 'daughter', 'widow', 'fiancé', 'brides-to-be', 'spinster' and so on, with the role of 'wife' being the most repeated one in the articles of this newspaper (27 times). Similarly, *El Khabar* referred to women in terms of their marital and family relations in 17 instances in the data. Women are assigned the role of mainly 'mother', 'brides-to-be', 'wife', 'daughter' and 'widow'. The following are examples of relational identification in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi*:

37. إنها السيدة "أم وليد" متزوجة وأم لأولاد من الغرب الجزائري.

*She is Mrs. Oum Walid, married and a mother of children from Western Algeria. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 5, 2018).*

38. لبنت والأُم "العجوزة" والكنة يدا بيد خلال المسيرات.

*The daughter and the mother, the mother-in-law, and the daughter-in-law hand in hand in the demonstrations. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 8, 2019)*

In these examples, the nouns 'متزوجة' 'married', 'البنت' 'daughter', 'الأُم' 'mother', 'العجوزة' 'mother-in-law' and 'الكنة' 'daughter-in-law' are used to refer the marital and family relations of

women. This reinforces patriarchal social structures which associate women with domesticity and the gendered division of labour, thereby perpetuating systemic inequalities between men and women. In addition to this, the category of nomination is significant in the manifestation of this aspect of femininity by referring to women in terms of their marital status using titles. Out of the 58 cases of nomination, *El Khabar* used titles when referring to women 19 times, while *Echorouk El Yawmi* used titles when nominating women only twice. The following are examples of nomination in the data of *El Khabar*:

39. ترى السيدة مليكة أن الألبسة التقليدية لا تزال تستهوي المرأة الجزائرية.

*Mrs. Malika believes that traditional clothing still appeals to Algerian women. (El Khabar, article 11, 2016)*

40. تركنا ورشة وردة واتجهنا لمكان آخر في ذات المنطقة، لنتقي بالآنسة ريم خبيرة الدهانات والديكورات.

*We left Warda's workshop and headed to another place in the same area to meet Miss Reem, an expert in paints and decorations. (El Khabar, article 19, 2021)*

The nouns *السيدة* 'Mrs' and *الآنسة* 'Miss' are used to convey the marital status of women in the data. In the second example, the use of pronoun 'we' shows the journalist's involvement in the actions being described, suggesting a group experience and adding a sense of inclusiveness to the narrative.

*Echorouk El Yawmi* highlights the significance of having a 'righteous' wife by employing 10 modals along with other linguistic features. All the modal expressions are used by the journalist to convey their stance on the issue in the 'opinion' article. The journalist describes a 'righteous' wife as one who upholds moral integrity and strong religious faith, practices modesty, obeys her husband and remains loyal to him, manages the household efficiently, and raises children with strong moral and religious principles. The following examples illustrate the use of modal expressions and other linguistic features to emphasise the importance of having a righteous wife:

41. صحيح أن التهاون في اختيار الزوجة الصالحة قد يكلف صاحبه فاتورة باهظة في دينه ودنياه.



*It is true that negligence in choosing a righteous wife may cost a person dearly in both their religion and life. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 10, 2021)*

لكن مع كل أسف والحق يقال إنّ هذه الأوصاف ما عادت تخطر على بال كثير من شبابنا في هذا الزّمان. 42.

*But unfortunately, the truth is that these characteristics (of a righteous wife) are no longer on the minds of many our young people at the present time. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 10, 2021)*

In the first example, the epistemic phrase صحيح أنّ 'it is true that' and the particle قد 'may', along with other linguistic features, are used to express the journalist's belief in the negative outcomes that result from not choosing a righteous wife. In the second example, the boulomaic phrase مع كل أسف 'unfortunately' and other linguistic features are used by the journalist to express their feelings of disappointment concerning the issue of not choosing a righteous wife by many young men. In this context, Echorouk El Yawmi made some intertextual references, using direct speech, to emphasise the importance of women maintaining their dignity and modesty:

كما قالت العباسة أخت الخليفة العباسي هارون الرشيد: "نحن نساء مع رجالنا، رجال مع غيرهم. 43.

*As Al-Abbasa, the sister of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, said: "we are women with our husbands, men with others". (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 10, 2021)*

This statement suggests that women can embody traditional feminine qualities with their husbands or within the household, while also exhibiting masculine traits when engaging with those outside their immediate familial or domestic circles. This highlights the notion that gender is not a fixed category but can be performed differently based on the context.

The journalist also expressed the need for a man to reform his wife if she lacks attributes of a righteous wife, as the following example indicates:

لا يجوز ولا يليق أبدا بزواج عاقل أن يرى زوجته تسير في طريق الهلاك وهو ساكت لا يحرك ساكنا؛ لا. 44. يأمرها بمعروف ولا ينهاها عن منكر

*It is impermissible and inappropriate for a sensible husband to see his wife heading towards destruction and remain silent without taking any action; neither*

*commanding her to do good nor forbidding her from doing wrong. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 10, 2021)*

In the second example, the deontic modal لا يجوز 'it is impermissible' is used alongside other linguistic features to indicate that it is unacceptable for a man to neglect his duty to reform his wife. This perspective is further highlighted in Example 6, explained in Section 5.2.1.1, in which the journalist expresses the need for the husband to reform his wife. This underscores the patriarchal concept that men are the leaders of their families. It reinforces the expectation that men should make decisions regarding marriage and family, including choosing a wife who embodies traditional feminine qualities and strong religious faith. The journalistic expressions reflect entrenched patriarchal norms, suggesting that not selecting a 'righteous' wife can lead to negative outcomes, thereby reinforcing the importance placed on traditional gender roles within the family. In this context, Solati (2017:55) indicates:

...within the household in patriarchal societies...[m]en are responsible for the financial support of their wives and children, while the wife's main obligations are to maintain a home, care for her children, and obey her husband. The husband thus is entitled to exercise his marital authority by restraining his wife's movement.

This indicates that this discourse serves to uphold the patriarchal social order, where men maintain a dominant and authoritative role within the family. The following part of the chapter deals with feminist discourses articulated in the data of both Arabophone newspapers.

### **5.3.5. Feminist Discourses**

Despite the presence of hegemonic discourses that sustain unbalanced power dynamics between women and men in society, the Arabophone newspapers, mainly *El Khabar*, exhibit 'feminist discourses' in their data. This is achieved by challenging traditional conceptions about gender and depicting women in non-stereotypical roles through a combination of both linguistic and visual structures. The following sections discuss the way

the Arabophone newspapers challenged hegemonic femininity and hegemonic masculinity in their texts.

### 5.3.5.1. Challenging Hegemonic Femininity

One way of expressing feminist discourses in *El Khabar* is by indicating the capabilities of women and their active participation in the country's struggles, which challenges traditional beliefs about femininity. In expressing this view, *El Khabar* makes use of 11 modals (6 epistemic modals, 3 dynamic modals and 2 boulomaic modals) alongside other linguistic features. These modality means reflect the viewpoints of some Algerian activists within the article, which belongs to the genre of 'news reporting'. The examples below emphasise the agency and role of Algerian women in societal and political movements, questioning traditional gender roles and norms:

45. وإظهار بأن المرأة الجزائرية قادرة على الانتفاض والخروج إلى الشارع بكل حرية للتحرر من القيود.

...to show that the Algerian woman **is able to** rise up and go out to the streets freely in order to free herself from restrictions. (*El Khabar*, article 16, 2019)

46. أوضحت متحدثة "الخبر" أن الجزائر بلد ثوري ومن غير الممكن أن تتم هذه الثورة دون الجزائريات ومؤكدة بأنهن لسن بصدد متابعة الحراك، وإنما هن جزء لا يتجزأ من هذا الحراك الشعبي

The spokeswoman explained that Algeria is a revolutionary country and **it is not possible** for this revolution to take place without Algerian women, **stressing** that they are not just following the movement, but they are an integral part of this popular movement. (*El Khabar*, article 16, 2019)

47. وقالت النسوة اللائي تحدثن لـ "الخبر" في باريس بأنهن يرغبن في إعطاء صدى دولي للحراك الشعبي داخل الجزائر وللجزائريات اللواتي يُنتظر أن يتظاهرن اليوم بمختلف المدن الجزائرية

The women who spoke to "Al-Khabar" in Paris said that they **want** to give an international echo to the popular movement in Algeria and to Algerian women who are expected to demonstrate today in various Algerian cities. (*El Khabar*, article 16, 2019)

In the first example, the dynamic modal adjective *قادرة* 'capable' is used along with other linguistic features to indicate the capability of the Algerian woman to rise up and demonstrate freely in the streets. In the second example, the epistemic phrase of

possibility غير الممكن 'it is not possible' is employed with other linguistic features to suggest that a revolution cannot take place without Algerian women. The epistemic adjective مؤكدة 'emphasising' is also used to express certainty or a strong conviction that Algerian women are an integral part of the popular movement. In the third example, the bouloimatic modal 'want' is used alongside other features to express the desire of Algerian women in Paris to give an international dimension to the popular movement. The modals utilised in these examples in combination with other linguistic features are important in articulating viewpoints that highlight women's crucial role in the struggle for societal change. As discussed in Chapter Two, during the war of independence, Algerian women challenged gendered expectations by their active participation in the war. They also played an important role in the protest movement against the political order by their active involvement in the movement. By indicating women's involvement in the country's struggles, *El Khabar* challenged traditional notions associated with women, such as weakness and passivity. In highlighting women's important roles, the newspaper referenced a quote from the former Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika on 8 March 2018, in which he stated:

48. ادعو المرأة الجزائرية الى مضاعفة جهودها حتى تكون في مستوى الآمال المعلقة عليها والمسؤولية الموكلة إليها في بناء مستقبل الجزائر، فهي اليوم في طليعة قوى الإصلاح والتغيير، وحصن من الحصون الضامنة لاستقرار البلاد، وكسب التحديات والرهانات القادمة في دعم مقومات المجتمع، مجتمع مرتكز على دولة القانون والحس المدني

*I urge Algerian women to increase their efforts to meet the expectations placed on them and the responsibility they have in building Algeria's future. Today, they are leading the forces of reform and change, a stronghold ensuring the country's stability, and overcoming future challenges to support the foundations of a society based on the rule of law and civic responsibility. (El Khabar, article 16, 2019)*

In this quote, the president praises Algerian women and acknowledges their role in building the country, which aligns with the narrative that celebrates women's contributions. However, it is used in the article to indicate the dissatisfaction of Algerian women with this rhetoric. The quote frames the reasons behind their participation in protests, as they seek

not only acknowledgment but also to challenge the existing system and advocate for genuine democratic reforms.

*El Khabar* and *Echorouk El Yawmi* newspapers also contested traditional perceptions of women by portraying them in non-stereotypical roles in their images. Through representational and compositional structures, women were represented as participating in marches, working in office settings, and even as blacksmiths in the images of the chosen Arabophone newspapers. Hence, this representation challenges preconceived notions that emphasise women's domestic roles in Algeria. The following image illustrates this:



**Image 5:** Narrative Image in *El Khabar* (article 19, 2021)

The image is narrative. The depicted woman is holding an object. The presence of iron tools within the image, and the woman's actions collectively imply her function as a blacksmith. This visual representation accompanies an article that explores the experiences of the woman depicted in the image, who is the only female blacksmith in the Algerian city of Constantine. *Echorouk El Yawmi* also includes an image which challenges dominant beliefs about women:



**Image 6:** Narrative Image in *Echorouk El Yawmi* (article 8, 2019)

This image is narrative. It shows a group of women holding the Algerian flag marching in the street. The group of women in the picture is involved in two action processes and one reactional process, playing the roles of ‘actor’ and ‘reactor’. The actions of these women suggest that they are demonstrating. This image accompanies an article that deals with the participation of women on 8 March demonstration in 2019 against the political order in the protest movement. The same news article includes another image which challenges hegemonic perspectives about women:



**Image 7:** Conceptual Image in *Echorouk El Yawmi* (article 8, 2019)

This image is conceptual. It falls under symbolic attributive images, in which the woman's attire and the flag that she is holding function as attributes that establish her identity as an 'Algerian woman'. The white garment worn by the woman, known as 'Haik', is an Algerian traditional (non-religious) attire that is rarely worn today in Algeria (Tripp, 2019b). It was used during the Algerian protest movement by some women to evoke nationalist sentiments (Tripp, 2019b). The news article containing this image referred to the hashtag used by Algerians on Twitter, which is *حراك بالحايك* or 'protest movement with Haik'. Image 2 of *Echorouk El Yawmi*, included in Section 5.2.3, also challenges hegemonic beliefs about women by depicting the represented woman in an office setting.

Social actor representation through the category of functionalisation is also important in challenging the beliefs that prioritise women's traditional roles. Although women were assigned traditional roles in this category, they were depicted more in non-stereotypical roles, mainly in *El Khabar*. In both *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar*, women were functionalised 92 times with *El Khabar* having more cases of functionalisation. Interestingly, they were assigned non-stereotypical roles in 61 cases of functionalisation. Hence, the number of non-stereotypical functions attributed to women in both newspapers is higher than the one of stereotypical roles. Among the non-stereotypical roles assigned to women in the data of the Arabophone newspapers are 'taxi driver', 'businesswoman', 'militant', 'blacksmith', 'architect', 'member of association', 'demonstrator', 'lawyer', 'leader', 'journalist' and so on. The following are some instances of functionalisation of women in both newspapers:

كانت المرأة الجمعة بطلة وقائدة ومؤطرة ومهندسة ونجمة المسيرات المليونية التي اجتاحت الشوارع والمدن والقرى

*On Friday, the woman was a heroine, a leader, an organiser, an engineer, and the star of the marches that swept the streets, cities and villages. (Echorouk El Yawmi, article 8, 2019)*

أوضحت الحقوقية ورئيسة مجموعة "قفي الجزائر" فائزة مناعي ل "الخبر" أن تجمع 8 مارس يأتي 50. للتضامن مع وقفات الجزائريات داخل البلاد وأيضا تضامنا بصفة عامة مع الحراك الشعبي الوطني

*Faiza Mannai, a human rights advocate and head of the group "stand up Algeria", explained to "El Khabar" that the March 8 gathering is in solidarity with the Algerian women inside the country and also in solidarity with the national popular movement. (El Khabar, article 16, 2019)*

51. حرفية حدادة، تمارس هذه الحرفة منذ عشرين سنة ورثتها عن العائلة، لتكون بذلك المرأة الوحيدة. في قسنطينة التي تمتهن الفولاذ وتصوغه،

*A blacksmith who has been practicing this craft for twenty years. She inherited it from her family to become the only woman in Constantine who fabricates steel... (El Khabar, article 19, 2021)*

This shows that the category of functionalisation in the Arabophone newspapers is an important way of challenging dominant stereotypical views of women. The next section discusses the way *El Khabar* challenged hegemonic masculinity in their data.

#### 5.3.5.2. Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity

*El Khabar* challenged pervasive gender norms by critiquing the patriarchal system characterised by violence, dominance, and control. It highlights the importance of men adopting qualities traditionally associated with femininity and motherhood, such as compassion, affection, tenderness, and care, while abandoning traits of domination, violence, and control, traditionally associated with masculinity. The text emphasises that motherhood extends beyond reproduction and advocates for the integration of its principles into contemporary society. It explains that these principles have been abandoned by societies when they transitioned from matriarchy to patriarchy. The adoption of these principles, according to the journalist, can help create a more peaceful, calmer, and balanced world. In constructing these viewpoints, the journalist uses 14 modals (6 epistemic and 8 deontic) along with other accompanying linguistic features to express their stance on the matter in their 'opinion' article. The examples below illustrate this:



على الرجل أن يبحث عن الأمومة الدفينة فيه ليرى الآخر بعيون القلب لا بعيون التسلط عسى العالم 52. يهدأ قليلاً

Men **must** look for the motherhood buried within them to see the others through the eyes of the heart, not through the eyes of domination, so that the world may calm down a little bit. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)

لا بد من تأنيث العقول وتأنيث الأرواح ليغسل الإنسان الحديث بعضها من آثامه في تخريب هذا الكون. 53.

The minds and souls **must** be feminised, so that the modern humans wash away some of their sins in destroying this universe. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)

لا بد من تصيير المبدأ الأمومي إلى قوة إنوجداد في عالم اليوم. 54.

**It is necessary** to transform the maternal principle into a force of existence in today's world. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)

على البشرية أن تتصالح مع أمومتها، وأنوثتها. 55.

Humanity **must** reconcile with its motherhood and femininity. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)

In these examples, the deontic particles على and لا بد 'must' are used to express the necessity for men to embrace femininity and motherhood. In the first example, deontic modality is employed along with other linguistic features to indicate the necessity for men to seek out their maternal qualities. Men are also metaphorically described as the ground where motherhood is buried, suggesting that they possess maternal qualities hidden within their character. This challenges traditional beliefs about masculinity. In the second example, the journalist uses deontic modality and other linguistic features to show the need and the urgency to feminise the minds and souls of individuals. In the third example, the journalist uses the particle على 'must' in combination with other linguistic features to emphasise the necessity of transforming the principle of 'motherhood' into an existential force in today's world. In the last example, the journalist uses the deontic particle على 'must' to urge society to recognise and embrace aspects traditionally associated with women and the maternal role. The use of deontic modality in these examples and other linguistic features suggests that the journalist believes in the social construction of gender and advocates for the

expression and adoption of feminine traits by individuals. This challenges traditional gender norms. Epistemic modality is also used to emphasise that motherhood applies to all humans, as the example below shows:

56. *إن المبدأ الأمومي هو الذي ينقذ الإنسان من شره الدفين.*

*Indeed, the maternal principle is what saves humans from their deep-seated evil. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)*

In this example, the journalist, using the particle *إن* 'indeed' and other linguistic features, emphasises that the qualities and values associated with the maternal principle have the power to address the darker aspects of human nature. Example 5, discussed in Section 5.2.1.1 of this chapter, also suggests that the concept of motherhood is not exclusive to women. Hence, by expressing the importance for embracing motherhood, the newspaper questions preconceived ideas associated with hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is referred to in Algerian dialect or Dardja as 'radjla' (Belkaid, 2023:113), and it is often associated with characteristics of dominance, authority, violence, roughness, and aggressive behaviour. Hence, demonstrating the importance for men to exhibit characteristics of affection, nurturing and caring behaviour, traditionally associated with femininity and motherhood, challenges the binary distinction of femininity and masculinity, and questions the negative stereotypes associated with men. To support their claim for the need to adopt motherhood principles, the journalist made a few intertextual inferences to show the importance of feminine traits, which are traditionally associated with women. For example, it referred to the scholar Robert Briffault, using direct speech, who praised matriarchal society and believed that male society had permanently lost peace by abandoning matriarchal values, as the passage below shows:

57. *يذهب بريفو إلى أن "المناخ الذي فقده الإنسان بظهور مجتمع الذكر هو أقرب إلى فردوس، حيث اضطربت السلامة والدعة ربما إلى الأبد*

*Briffault asserts that: “it was a climate resembling paradise that humans lost with the rise of male society, which lost peace and serenity, perhaps forever”. (El Khabar, article 18, 2020)*

The newspaper also draws on the quote of the scholar Muhayiddin Ibn Arabi, who claims *المكان الذي لا يُؤنث لا يُعول عليه* ‘the place that is not feminine is not to be relied upon’, to indicate the importance of feminine energy in ensuring peace and stability. The next section is a conclusion which summarises key points discussed in the present chapter.

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has dealt with the discursive practices of the selected Arabophone newspapers for the study and how they work in the Algerian social context. It specifically showed how the categories of modality alongside other accompanying linguistic features, social actor representation, and representational and compositional structures are used together for the manifestation of different viewpoints about women in the data. It also discussed whether the discursive practices of the newspapers reinforce or challenge the status quo i.e. women’s subordination in society. The discussion of the findings has indicated that the Arabophone newspapers present a range of conflicting views of women. *Echorouk El Yawmi*, while it includes non-hegemonic perspectives on gender, generally leans toward a more conservative stance on gender relations, reinforcing traditional and patriarchal norms. This newspaper primarily depicted women in non-traditional roles in 2016 and 2019, coinciding with the protest movement. *El Khabar*, on the other hand, exhibits both hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses in its data. Non-hegemonic perspectives are primarily evident in the years of 2019, 2020 and 2021, coinciding with the protest movement. This chapter is crucial in demonstrating how linguistic and non-linguistic features are combined to construct hegemonic and non-hegemonic viewpoints about women in the texts of the selected Arabophone newspapers. The next chapter discusses the findings from the analysis of the data in French.

## Chapter Six

### Analysis of News Articles in French

#### 6.1. Introduction

This sixth chapter of the thesis discusses the findings of the analysis of news articles collected from the two Francophone newspapers *El Watan* and *Liberté*. Fairclough's (1989; 1992) framework, consisting of the three categories of *description*, *interpretation*, and *explanation*, is applied to the news articles in French to explore the main discourses and ideologies about women. The examination of the representation of women in the newspapers is conducted by focusing on the main linguistic and visual features used in their texts and how these features are realised to construct different discourses about women, given that linguistic and non-linguistic choices are not neutral. The main linguistic and visual features that emerged as significant in the data include modality (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1986) and its accompanying linguistic features, social actor (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008), as well as representational and compositional structures within visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006). The findings of manifest intertextuality are also discussed along with the interdiscursive analysis in this chapter. By conducting a critical examination of the news articles using appropriate tools, this chapter demonstrates whether the selected Francophone newspapers maintain or challenge patriarchal beliefs in Algeria, relying on my knowledge of the Algerian social context and available sociological research. The chapter starts with Section 6.2, which deals with the frequency and realisation of the linguistic and visual features in the data. Subsequently, Section 6.3 provides a thorough examination of the discourses and ideologies articulated in the news articles in French.

## 6.2. Frequency and Realisation of Linguistic and Visual Features

This section presents the frequency of key linguistic and visual features used to convey various discourses and ideologies about women in the data collected from *El Watan* and *Liberté*. The features analysed include modality (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1986) and its accompanying linguistic elements, social actor representation (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008), and representational and compositional structures within visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006). The following section focuses on the frequency of modality and how it is realised in the data.

### 6.2.1. Modality

This part presents the quantitative findings of the category of modality in the news articles. It also examines how this feature is realised in the data written in French. The categories of modality examined in this study include *epistemic*, *deontic*, *dynamic*, and *boulomaic* modality (explained in Section 4.5.1.1 of Chapter Four). The aim is to analyse the total number of modality instances in relation to the overall word count in the news articles collected from *El Watan* and *Liberté*. The following table summarises the quantitative findings of modality:

	<i>El Watan</i>	<i>Liberté</i>	Total
Word Count	8,366	5,445	13, 811
Modality Cases	90	54	144
Percentage	1.07%	0.99%	1.04%

**Table 6:** Modality Cases in the Francophone Newspapers

As Table 6 demonstrates, a total of 144 cases of modality were found in the data of the two Francophone newspapers. It is noteworthy that the Francophone newspapers, despite

having a higher word count, they seem to have slightly fewer cases of modality cases compared to their Arabic counterparts (see Table 2 in Section 5.2.1 for modality cases in the Arabophone newspapers). After identifying and quantifying the instances of modality in the data, I classified them into the four types relevant to the study, namely epistemic, deontic, dynamic and boulomaic modality. The results of this categorisation reveal that, like the Arabophone newspapers, epistemic modality and deontic modality are the most frequently employed in the data of the Francophone newspapers to express various perspectives on women. However, the Francophone newspapers rely on deontic modality more frequently than the Arabophone newspapers, which tend to use more instances of epistemic modality (as discussed in Section 5.2.1). The frequency of epistemic modality in the Francophone newspapers accounts for 56 instances (see Table 7 below), while deontic modality accounts for 64 instances (see Table 8 below). This indicates that the Francophone newspapers seem to rely more on a commanding stance to influence the readers with their viewpoints, while the Arabophone newspapers appear to adopt a more persuasive tone in their discursive construction (see Section 5.2.1). Additionally, similar to the Arabophone newspapers, dynamic modality and boulomaic modality are the least used types in the Francophone newspapers. Dynamic modality appears a total of 10 times, while boulomaic modality accounts for 14 instances. Despite the variations in the frequency of each modality type within the data, all are essential for articulating different perspectives on women, primarily progressive views. These perspectives are explored in detail in Section 6.3 of this chapter. The next part examines the linguistic realisation of modality in the news articles in French.

#### **6.2.1.1. Linguistic Realisation of Modality in the Newspapers**

This part demonstrates the linguistic realisation of modality in the news articles written in French. As shown in Section 4.5.1.1.1 of Chapter Four, modality in French is mainly

expressed through adverbs, adjectives, nouns and verbs. The following table shows all epistemic modals that are used in the news articles of *El Watan* and *Liberté*:

Epistemic Modals	Type	Frequency of Usage
<b>Certainement</b> Certainly	Adverb	1
<b>La probabilité</b> Probability	Noun	1
<b>Pouvoir</b> Can	Verb	4
<b>Sans doute</b> Undoubtedly	Adverbial	2
<b>En effet</b> Indeed	Adverbial	2
<b>Évidemment</b> Obviously	Adverb	1
<b>Insistance</b> Insistence	Noun	1
<b>C'est vrai</b> It is true	Phrase	1
<b>Affirmer</b> To affirm	Verb	7
<b>Future tense</b> Will	Verb	12
<b>Present conditional tense</b> would	Verb	3
<b>Affirmant</b> Affirming	Present participle	2
<b>Confirmant</b> Confirming	Present participle	1
<b>Estimer</b> To believe	Verb	5
<b>Peut-être</b> Maybe	Adverb	3
<b>Penser</b> To think	Verb	2
<b>Insistant</b> Insisting	Present participle	3
<b>Véritablement</b> Truly	Adverb	1
<b>Certes</b> Indeed	Adverb	3
<b>Sans conteste</b> Undoubtedly	Adverbial	1
<b>Total</b>	/	56

**Table 7:** Epistemic Modals in the Francophone Newspapers

As the table indicates, different epistemic modals are used in the news articles, namely verbs, present participle, adverbs, adverbials, and nouns. The following example shows how epistemic modality is used in the data of *El Watan*:

**58. Certes, la femme a arraché par ses luttes des acquis considérables, mais beaucoup reste à faire.**

***Certainly, women have obtained considerable gains through their struggles, but much remains to be done. (El Watan, article 21, 2016)***

In this example, the adverb *certes* ‘certainly’ is used along with other linguistic features to indicate certainty about women's achievements through their struggles. It also sets up a contrast to highlight the idea that, despite these achievements, much work remains to be done. This perspective is further explained in Section 6.3 of this chapter.

Regarding deontic modality, an examination of the modals used to express this type in the data reveals that, similar to the Arabophone newspapers, the Francophone news outlets also use more deontic modals that express strong obligation in their discursive constructions. The two verbs *falloir* and *devoir* in the present tense are the most frequently used modals in the data to express the deontic meaning of necessity. The following example demonstrates the use of deontic modality in *Liberté*:

**59. Il ne s'agit pas ici d'épiloguer sur le rôle qu'a joué la femme algérienne à travers la longue histoire du pays, mais force est de reconnaître que sa contribution a toujours été importante, voire décisive, à chaque étape.**

***It is not a question here of going over the role played by Algerian women through the long history of the country, but it **must** be recognised that their contribution has always been important, even decisive, at each stage. (Liberté, article 38, 2020)***

In this example, the deontic noun *force* ‘must’ and other linguistic features are used to emphasise that Algerian women's contributions have always been crucial at every stage in the country's history. This challenges stereotypical depiction of women by depicting them



as agents of change. This is further discussed in Section 6.3.1.2. The table below summarises all the deontic modals used to express necessity in *El Watan* and *Liberté*:

Deontic Modal	Type	Frequency of Usage
<b>Falloir</b> Must	Verb	16
<b>Obliger</b> To oblige	Verb	2
<b>Revendiquer</b> To demand	Verb	7
<b>Revendication</b> Demand	Noun	2
<b>Faudrait</b> Should	Verb (conditional)	1
<b>Devoir</b> Must	Verb (present)	14
<b>Devoir</b> Duty/Obligation	Noun	2
<b>Devrait</b> Should	Verb (conditional)	4
<b>Impératif</b> Imperative	Adjective	1
<b>Nécessité</b> Necessity	Noun	2
<b>Exiger</b> To require	Verb	3
<b>Imposer</b> To impose	Verb	1
<b>Demander</b> To demand	Verb	4
<b>L'insistance</b> Insistence	Noun	2
<b>Convient</b> Must	Verb	1
<b>Force</b> Must	Noun	2
<b>Total</b>	/	64

**Table 8:** Deontic Modals in the Francophone Newspapers

Like the Arabophone newspapers, dynamic and boulomaic modality are the types of modality that are used the least in the Francophone newspapers. Dynamic modality is realised mainly by the verb *pouvoir* 'can'. As for boulomaic modality, it is realised in *El Watan* by the verb *vouloir* 'want', interjection *hélas* 'unfortunately' and the adverb

*malheureusement* ‘unfortunately’. In *Liberté*, bouloimaic modality is conveyed through the verb *vouloir* ‘want’ and *souhaiter* ‘wish’, as well as the adverb *heureusement* ‘fortunately’.

The following is an example of bouloimaic modality:

**60. *Heureusement*** *qu’il y a ces battantes qui ont sacrifié leur vie pour le pays depuis des millénaires et que vient nous rappeler un manifeste signé par des femmes qui ne se sont pas sous les feux de la rampe.*

**Fortunately,** *we have these women fighters who sacrificed their lives for the country for thousands of years, and we are reminded of this by a manifesto signed by women who have not been in the spotlight. (Liberté, article 38, 2020)*

In this example, the adverb ‘fortunately’ and other linguistic features are used to express gratitude and admiration for the Algerian heroines who played crucial roles in the nation's history. After dealing with the linguistic realisation of modality in the newspapers, the next section of this chapter presents the quantitative findings of social actor analysis.

### 6.2.2. Social Actor Representation

This part of the chapter presents the quantitative findings of social actor representation in the news articles in French. It focuses on the categories of *nomination*, as well as *functionalisation*, *relational identification*, and *physical identification*, which fall under the broader category of categorisation (van Leeuwen, 2008). The following table summarises the findings of social actor analysis:

	Francophone Newspapers
Word Count	13,034
Nomination	83
Functionalisation	90
Relational Identification	22

Physical Identification	10
Total Cases of Nomination and Categorisation	205
Percentage %	1.57%

**Table 9:** Cases of Nomination and Categorisation in the Francophone Newspapers

As Table 9 above indicates, a total of 205 cases of nomination and categorisation have been found in the data. In the case of nomination, out of the 83 cases of nomination, *El Watan* used titles indicating the marital status of women 25 times, whereas *Liberté* nominated women using titles only twice. The following example illustrates the use of nomination in *El Watan*:

**61. *Mme*** *Chouitem a rappelé qu'en 1984, il y a eu une grave régression à travers la mise en œuvre du code de la famille qui était en contradiction totale avec la Constitution et le combat des femmes.*

***Mrs.*** *Chouitem recalled that in 1984, there was a serious regression through the implementation of the family code which was in total contradiction with the Constitution and the fight of women. (El Watan, article 21, 2016)*

This reinforces traditional views by associating women with marital roles, which is further discussed in Section 6.3.2. The newspapers primarily used the title *Mme* 'Mrs.' in their data. In addition to this, both newspapers relied more on the category of functionalisation when categorising women, by functionalising women 90 times. Women are assigned various occupations and roles in the data, as illustrated by the example below:

**62. ...nous sommes enseignantes, cadres, chefs d'entreprise, journalistes, étudiantes, écrivaines, poétesses, ingénieures, infirmières, médecins, femmes au foyer**

**...we are *teachers, managers, entrepreneurs, journalists, students, writers, poets, engineers, nurses, doctors, housewives.* (Liberté, article 32, 2017)**

The functions assigned to women in this example are mainly non-stereotypical. Functionalisation in the news articles in French is realised by nouns that denote a role or a function. Furthermore, the category of relational identification and physical identification are the ones that are used the least in the data. Both Francophone newspapers contained 22 cases of relational identification and 10 cases of physical identification. This suggests that in the Francophone newspapers, women's function is given prominence more than their family relations or their physical appearance, whereas in the Arabophone newspapers, as seen in Section 5.2.2, both the function and the relation of women are highlighted. Relational identification is realised mainly through nouns that denote a relation, whereas physical identification is realised through adjectives and nouns that describe physical appearance. The following section deals with the analysis of images.

### **6.2.3. Visual Grammar Analysis**

This section of the chapter provides a summary of the findings obtained from the textual analysis of the images accompanying the news articles in French, using Kress and van Leeuwen's framework of visual grammar (1996; 2006). In CDA, visual structures, like linguistic structures, convey ideological meanings. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to describe the key visual structures utilised in the images from the selected newspapers. Then, Section 6.3 of this chapter provides a more in-depth explanation of the messages conveyed by these structures. As shown in Table 1 in Section 4.3 of Chapter Four, a total of 8 images were collected from *El Watan* and *Liberté*. Like the Arabophone newspapers, the categories of visual grammar framework that emerged as important for the construction of different viewpoints about women in the Francophone newspapers are *narrative* and *conceptual processes* within the representational metafunction, as well as *salience* within the compositional metafunction of Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996; 2006) framework.

In analysing the images, it was found that the Francophone newspapers relied more on narrative images, which represent participants as engaged in an action. *El Watan* has 3 narrative images, while *Liberté* has 2 narrative images. The following image is an example of a narrative image found in *El Watan*, which challenges stereotypical depiction of women:



**Image 8:** Narrative Image in *El Watan* (article 25, 2019)

The image is narrative. It shows a woman in the middle of the street, with a group of people in the background holding the Algerian flag. Saliency is given to the depicted woman by placing her in the foreground of the image. Her posture and gesture indicate that she is a ballet dancer, with vectors emanating from her hands and legs. It accompanies a news article that deals with the impact of this image of Melissa Ziad, a ballet dancer and model, taken in a march against the political regime in the capital city Algiers. In fact, this image went viral in the early days of the Algerian protest movement as a symbol of female courage (Tripp, 2019b).

Concerning conceptual images, *Liberté* has a total of 2 conceptual images, whereas *El Watan* has only one conceptual image. These conceptual images primarily fall into the category of analytical images and symbolic attributive images, which serve to convey what

a participant 'means' or 'is'. The following image taken from *Liberté* is an example of an analytical image:



**Image 9:** Analytical Image in *Liberté* (article 40, 2021)

The woman depicted in this image is the 'carrier' (the whole) and her referee costume functions as the 'possessive attributes' (the parts). Saliency is given to the woman by placing her in the foreground and centre of the image. The latter accompanies a news article that deals with the experiences and journey of Asma Ferial Ouahab, an Algerian international referee, who referees both national and international matches. In effect, this image challenges dominant beliefs about gender, as the depicted woman is portrayed as a 'football referee', an occupation traditionally associated with men.

The feature of *saliency* (explained in Section 4.5.1.3.2) within the compositional structures is crucial in the newspapers' images for articulating competing viewpoints about women. It is mainly achieved by foregrounding the represented participants, drawing the readers' attention to the most prominent elements in the image. The meanings conveyed by these visual structures are thoroughly discussed in the next sections of the chapter.

### **6.3. Discursive Practices and their Ideological Implications**

This section of the chapter examines the discursive practices of the news articles in French and their ideological implications, drawing on the linguistic and visual features discussed in the preceding sections. It links the discourses identified in the data to the broader Algerian socio-cultural context, demonstrating whether they reinforce or challenge dominant gender norms in Algeria.

#### **6.3.1. Feminist Discourses**

This section of the chapter discusses the feminist discourses that are identified in *El Watan* and *Liberté*. In effect, feminist discourses are the predominant discourses articulated in the texts of both newspapers. They primarily revolve around the issue of women's rights and gender equality, in addition to representing women in non-traditional gender roles. The use of modality (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1986) and its accompanying linguistic features, social actor representation (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008), as well as visual structures plays a significant role in the manifestation of feminist discourses in the selected Francophone newspapers. All 144 instances of modality found in the data (56 cases of epistemic modality, 64 cases of deontic modality, 10 cases of dynamic modality and 14 cases of boulomaic modality) serve to articulate a feminist stance that questions traditional gender norms in the Algerian social context. These instances of modality reflect the viewpoints of both journalists and activists, which are illustrated and explained in the following sections of the chapter. The findings of manifest intertextuality also align with the feminist discourses identified in the data. The following sub-sections discuss the feminist aspects highlighted in the data of the two Francophone news outlets.

### 6.3.1.1. Advocacy for Women's Rights and Gender Equality

The first aspect of feminist discourses identified in the data collected from *El Watan* and *Liberté* relates to the issue of women's rights and gender equality. Specifically, this aspect focuses on the emancipation of women and advocates for equal rights in the political, economic, and socio-cultural spheres, challenging patriarchal beliefs within Algerian society. Modality, in its different types, and accompanying linguistic features are important linguistic features used by both newspapers to communicate different feminist ideas. In *El Watan*, deontic modality is the main form of modality that is employed to construct feminist beliefs. One of the ways in which deontic modality is used in the data of *El Watan* is to express the necessity for women to fight to gain their rights, as the following examples indicate:

**63.** *D'autres femmes estiment que la bataille qu'il **faut** aujourd'hui gagner c'est la bataille politique.*

*Other women believe that the battle that **must** be won today is the political battle. (El Watan, article 21, 2016)*

**64.** « Nous **devons** gagner la bataille de la société », pense Mme Salhi.

*« We **have to** win the social battle », says Mrs. Salhi. (El Watan, article 21, 2016)*

**65.** *Quelle que soit la région du monde, le pays, y compris les démocraties les plus avancées, les femmes **doivent** continuer à déployer leur énergie pour conquérir des droits, comme les droits élémentaires à la vie, à la santé, à l'instruction, à la formation, à la reconnaissance professionnelle, à la dignité, à la citoyenneté.*

*Whatever region of the world and the country including the most advanced democracies, women **must** continue to deploy their energy to conquer rights, such as the basic rights to life, health, education, training, professional recognition, dignity and citizenship. (El Watan, article 23, 2017)*

**66.** *Le ton a été donné sur les réseaux sociaux, où des dizaines de vidéos sont postées sous le hashtag « le 8 Mars n'est pas une fête » et dans lesquelles des femmes expliquent les raisons pour lesquelles la lutte des Algériennes **doit** se poursuivre.*

*The tone was set on social media, where dozens of videos were posted under the hashtag "March 8 is not a celebration" and in which women explained why the struggle of Algerian women **must** continue. (El Watan, article 28, 2020)*



In the above examples, the deontic modal verb *devoir* 'must' and other linguistic features are utilised to convey a strong sense of necessity, urging women to fight and advocate for their rights. The usage of this deontic modal emphasises that actively engaging in the struggle for women's rights is not merely an option but a duty for women. The first two examples reflect the opinions of women's rights activists in Algeria, highlighting the importance of political will and societal change in achieving gender equality. These viewpoints are presented in an 'opinion' article that deals with the progress and ongoing challenges in the fight for women's rights in Algeria, emphasising the need for continued advocacy and legislative reform to achieve true equality and address societal discrimination. The term *bataille* 'battle' in these examples is used metaphorically to describe the struggle for political and societal change in women's status as being akin to fighting a battle. The third example reflects the journalist's viewpoint in an 'opinion' article about the importance of fighting for women's rights. The phrase *conquérir des droits* 'to conquer rights' is metaphorically employed to suggest that securing these rights involves a battle or struggle, highlighting the active and challenging nature of the process rather than being a simple or passive achievement. The final example involves the perspective of Algerian women who advocate for the continuation of the struggle for women's rights, as presented in an 'opinion' article. In this context, the newspaper references the statements of some feminist activists in Algeria, such as Amel Hadjadj, who claimed in a Facebook video:

**67.** *Nous ne pouvons pas faire la fête, alors que nous avons un code de la famille méprisant, faisant des femmes des mineures à vie ; nous ne pouvons pas faire la fête, alors qu'il n'y a que 18% de femmes sur le marché du travail ; nous ne pouvons pas faire la fête alors que nous n'avons pas trouvé une solution radicale à la violence et au harcèlement à l'encontre des femmes.*

*We cannot celebrate while we have a contemptuous family code that makes women minors for life; we cannot celebrate when there are only 18% of women in the labour market; we cannot celebrate when we haven't found a radical solution to violence and harassment against women. (El Watan, article 28, 2020)*

The statement challenges stereotypical depictions of women by highlighting the systemic issues they face and arguing that celebrations are inappropriate given the ongoing discrimination and inequality. The examples discussed clearly indicate the presence of a feminist perspective in the data, which challenges traditional assumptions about gender in Algeria. Deontic modality and other linguistic features are also used in *El Watan* to express the need to recognise women as full citizens by granting them their rights, as illustrated by the examples below:

**68.** *Et si l'Etat de droit est un objectif à atteindre, il **ne saurait** se construire sans elles ni à leurs dépens. Il **devrait** consacrer l'abolition du code de la famille, instrument discriminatoire et son remplacement par des lois civiles égalitaires.*

*And if the rule of law is an objective to be achieved, it **cannot** be built without them or at their expense. It **should** incorporate the abolition of the family code, a discriminatory instrument, and its replacement with egalitarian civil laws. (El Watan, article 26, 2019)*

**69.** *N'est-ce pas que l'Algérie telle qu'esquissée par la Proclamation du 1er novembre 1954 **devait** être démocratique consacrant la citoyenneté des Algériens, hommes et femmes, et la pluralité des origines, des religions de ses enfants*

*Is it not the case that Algeria, as sketched by the Proclamation of November 1, 1954, **should** be democratic, enshrining the citizenship of all Algerians, men and women, and the plurality of origins and religions of its children? (El Watan, article 23, 2017)*

**70.** *« Il s 'agit d'un combat pour la citoyenneté. Sur cette question, **force** est de constater que malgré les dispositions constitutionnelles, légales et les conventions internationales dûment ratifiées par l'Algérie, tout reste à construire », précise Sadat.*

*«It is a fight for citizenship. On this issue, it **must** be noted that despite the constitutional, legal provisions and international conventions duly ratified by Algeria, everything remains to be built», specifies Sadat. (El Watan, article 29, 2020)*

In the above examples, the deontic modal verb *devoir* in the imperfect tense 'should' and the deontic noun *force* 'must' are employed to express a sense of obligation. In the first example, 'should' is used alongside other linguistic features to suggest that it is obligatory for the rule of law to abolish the Algerian family code, as it reinforces inequality between women and men, and replace it with egalitarian civil laws. In the same example, the epistemic modal verb *ne saurait* 'cannot' is used alongside other linguistic features to state

that it is not possible to achieve the rule of law without the inclusion of women. In the second example, the journalist refers to the Proclamation of November 1, 1954, which marked the start of the Algerian war of independence against French colonial rule. The sentence uses the modal verb 'should' and other linguistic features to communicate the principles and goals outlined in the Proclamation. More specifically, the deontic modal 'should' and other linguistic features are utilised to assert that it is obligatory and crucial for Algeria to be democratic and inclusive, in line with the values and principles expressed in the Proclamation of 1954. Both examples show the importance of the modal verbs and their accompanying linguistic features in conveying a sense of obligation regarding the issues at hand. They reflect the journalists' belief, within their 'opinion' article, in the importance of taking these actions to achieve an equitable and inclusive society, which challenges dominant beliefs in Algerian society. As explained in Chapter Two, after the end of the Algerian revolution in 1962, the new independent state of Algeria did not give importance to advancing women's rights in the country, despite the active participation of women in the struggle for national liberation. The aim was to rebuild the country after a long and harsh war that lasted nearly eight years. In this respect, Tlemcani (2016:244) states: '[e]conomics was deemed the real issue, a much more pressing issue than gender and citizenship'. This is seen in the introduction of discriminatory laws against women in the 1984 family code, which reinforces men's dominance over women. Though the code was amended in 2005 under the pressure of feminist groups, there are still discriminatory laws within it (see Section 2.5 of Chapter Two for more details about the amended family code). Hence, expressing the need to abolish the family code and enshrine the citizenship of Algerian women challenges patriarchal beliefs and practices in the Algerian social context. In this context, the newspaper, using direct speech, references the statement of the combatant Zoulikha Bekaddour from her autobiographical book, in which she claims:

*Notre combat a été trahi* or 'Our battle has been betrayed'. This statement shows how Algerian women, who fought in the war of independence, have been relegated to a subordinate position after the war by the introduction of discriminatory laws, which the writer views as a betrayal of their nationalist commitments.

In Example 70, the use of the modal verb 'must' and other linguistic features suggests that, despite existing laws and agreements, much work still needs to be done regarding the issue of achieving full citizenship. This reflects the viewpoint of an activist on the progress and ongoing challenges faced by Algerian women, as articulated in an 'opinion' piece that highlights these issues. The following examples also show how deontic modality alongside other linguistic features are used in the data of *El Watan* to articulate a feminist perspective:

**71.** *Il **faut** que la peur change de camp, que l'agresseur soit reconnu comme tel et puni par la loi...*

*Fear **must** change sides; the aggressor **must** be recognised as such and punished by the law... (El Watan, article 30, 2021)*

**72.** *Le travail **doit** se faire à tous les niveaux, école, famille, mouvement associatif, médias. Il **faut** une politique publique qui mette un terme aux inégalités, sources de toutes les violences...*

*The work **must** be done at all levels: schools, families, associations, and the media. There **must** be a public policy that puts an end to inequalities, which are the source of violence. (El Watan, article 30, 2021)*

These examples are used in the context of violence against women. In the first example, the verb *falloir* 'must' is used alongside other linguistic features to advocate for a legal and societal shift, where aggressors are held accountable, and victims are protected from fear and harm. The second example uses the verb *devoir* 'must' and other linguistic features to call for a comprehensive approach to combating violence. It emphasises the need to take action in schools, families, associations, and the media, and to implement public policies that address the underlying inequalities driving violence. This challenges patriarchal norms

by rejecting the notion of women as passive victims and asserting their right to justice. Both examples are expressed by an activist from a women's rights organisation in a 'news report' article. To illustrate the issue, the newspaper includes an image depicting violence against women, as shown below:



**Image 10:** Conceptual Image in *El Watan* (Article 30, 2021)

This 'stock' image falls under the category of conceptual images. It is suggestive attributive, with the fist in the foreground represents the violence inflicted on the woman depicted in the background. The image accompanies an article that aims to inform and raise awareness about the issue of violence against women. It attributes this violence to entrenched patriarchy and ineffective legal measures, calling for systemic reforms to combat gender-based violence advocated by activists.

*El Watan* also employs epistemic modality and other accompanying linguistic features to express a feminist stance, as illustrated by the examples below:

**73. *Elle*** met en cause le code de la famille qui « demeure un obstacle à l'émancipation des femmes algériennes. Son abolition ***serait sans aucun doute*** un grand pas pour l'affirmation des droits des femmes et pour asseoir la démocratie et la justice sociale.

***She*** calls into question the family code which remains an obstacle to the emancipation of Algerian women. Its abolition **would undoubtedly** be a big step for the assertion of women's rights and to establish democracy and social justice. (*El Watan*, article 22, 2016)

**74.** *Aussi, la mobilisation, l'engagement et la résistance des femmes **ne prendront pas** fin, tant que les violences sous quelque forme que ce soit continuent à les frapper, tant que l'égalité des droits ne leur est pas reconnue. Ce combat est universel. Ce jour-là, le 8 Mars **sera véritablement** un jour de fête et de partage hommes-femmes.*

*Also, the mobilisation, commitment and resistance of women **will** not end as long as violence in any form continues to affect them, and as long as their equal rights are not recognised. This fight is universal. On that day, March 8 **will truly** be a day of celebration and sharing between men and women. (El Watan, article 23, 2017)*

In the first example, the conditional tense of the verb *être* 'to be' and the phrase *sans aucun doute* 'without any doubt' are used, alongside other linguistic features, to indicate a sense of certainty and conviction in the belief that the abolition of the family code would be a significant step towards advancing women's rights and achieving social justice. This viewpoint is expressed by an activist within an 'opinion' article. In the same example, the phrase *un grand pas* 'a big step' is used metaphorically to indicate progress or an important move forward in affirming women's rights through the abolition of the family code. In the second example, the use of the future tense in the verb *prendre* 'to take' serves to convey the journalist's certainty about the continuation of women's resistance in an 'opinion' article. Additionally, the usage of the future tense in the verb *être* 'to be' and the adverb *véritablement* 'truly' are used to reinforce the idea that 8 March will become a day of celebration when women's rights are recognised and the issue of violence against women is resolved. These examples challenge patriarchal beliefs in Algerian society by advocating for women's rights. In addition to deontic and epistemic modality, *El Watan* relies on boulomaic modality, along with other linguistic features, to communicate feminist ideas, as indicated by the following instances:

**75.** *Et à côté des islamo-conservateurs qui pensent que tout droit arraché par les femmes est un « intrus occidental », il y a ceux qui, dans la classe politique et les associations féministes, **veulent** toujours plus.*

*And alongside the Islamo-conservatives who think that every right won by women is a 'Western intrusion', there are those in the political class and feminist associations who always **want** more. (El Watan, article 22, 2016)*

**76. *Las!*** *Le combat n'est pas fini.*

***Alas!*** *the fight is not over. (El Watan, article 23, 2017)*

**77.** *Reste la mobilisation contre les violences domestiques et les traditions rétrogrades qui **hélas** sont portées par les femmes elles-mêmes.*

*There remains the mobilisation against domestic violence and the retrograde traditions that, **unfortunately**, are perpetuated by women themselves. (El Watan, article 23, 2017)*

The first example shows the tension between conservatives who view women's rights as foreign and activists advocating for greater gender equality in Algeria. By using the boulomaic verb *veulent* 'want' and other linguistic features, the journalist indicates that individuals in the political class and feminist organisations are pushing for further advancements in women's rights. Indeed, as explained in Chapter Two, the introduction of discriminatory laws, following the end of the Algerian war of independence, led to the development of the Algerian women's movement, through the creation of several associations to advocate for women's rights. Thanks to the efforts of these feminist groups, significant gains have been achieved, such as the amendment of the family code in 2005 and the implementation of quota laws in 2012, which increased women's representation in parliament. Nevertheless, discriminatory laws remain in place, and activists in Algeria continue to push for further progress. In the second example, the interjection *las* 'alas' expresses the journalist's disappointment, within the 'opinion' article, that women are still facing challenges in achieving full equality and justice. It underscores the ongoing struggle against discrimination, violence, and gender hierarchy. Similarly, the interjection *hélas* 'alas' conveys the journalist's regret over the persistence of outdated customs among women that hinder progress in securing their rights. These examples illustrate how boulomaic

modality and other linguistic features are used to express various feminist beliefs, that question patriarchal norms in Algeria. The following examples further illustrate this:

**78. ...Malheureusement, beaucoup de femmes ne connaissent pas leurs droits », indique Farida Guerfi.**

*... **Unfortunately**, many women do not know their rights», says Farida Guerfi. (El Watan, article 24, 2018)*

**79. ...l'avènement du Hirak a permis, certes, à la gent féminine de récupérer l'espace public, elles sont présentes, elles sont visibles, elles parlent et revendiquent, mais est-ce qu'elles sont entendues? Est-ce qu'elles sont écoutées ? Non. C'est malheureusement, la réalité et c'est ce que pensent les femmes structurées dans des associations et organisations qui militent pour l'abolition de la discrimination et de la violence à l'égard des femmes.**

*...the advent of the Hirak has, **certainly**, allowed women to reclaim the public space. They are present, they are visible, they speak up and demand their rights. But are they being heard? Are they being listened to? No. **Unfortunately**, this is the reality, and it is what women within associations and organisations that fight for the abolition of discrimination and violence against women **believe**. (El Watan, article 29, 2020)*

In these examples, the adverb *malheureusement* 'unfortunately' is used, alongside other linguistic features, to convey a sense of regret and disappointment. The first example, from a 'feature' article, expresses an activist's disappointment that many women are not fully aware of their rights. The second example, from an 'opinion' article, shows the journalist's dissatisfaction that despite the significant involvement of women in the Hirak movement, their demands have not yet been fully met. This questions patriarchal attitudes by highlighting the gaps in women's rights awareness and the ongoing struggle for gender equality despite significant activism in Algeria. Additionally, *El Watan* employs dynamic modality, along with other linguistic features, to express feminist ideas, as demonstrated in the example below:

**80. La démocratie ne peut se réaliser sans accorder les droits à toutes les catégories de la société...**

*Democracy **cannot** be achieved without granting rights to all categories of society... (El Watan, article 28, 2020)*



In this example, dynamic ability is expressed through the verb *pouvoir* 'can' to emphasise the importance of granting equal rights for all individuals in society to achieve democracy. Dynamic ability refers to the capacity to perform actions and in this case the verb *pouvoir* 'can' is used to express the ability or capability to achieve a certain outcome, which is democracy that ensures equal rights for all social groups. It is important to note that this study classifies the verb *pouvoir* in this example as expressing dynamic ability, but it can also indicate epistemic possibility (in the sense that it is not possible to achieve democracy without granting rights for all individuals in society). As explained in Section 2.6, democracy and women's rights were key demands of the Algerian protest movement (Tripp, 2019b). Therefore, expressing the need to grant women their rights to achieve democracy in Algeria aligns with the broader demands of the protest movement and challenges the status quo.

In addressing women's rights, *El Watan* features an image that shows the unequal power dynamics between men and women:



**Image 11:** Narrative Representation in *El Watan* (Article 22, 2016)

This 'stock' image is a narrative image. The man in the image is an actor and sayer in both action and speech processes, while the woman wearing a burqa is the goal. The vector in the action process is formed by the hand of the depicted man. As for the speech process,

the vector is the dialogue balloon that connects the man to the content of his speech. The man tells the woman: *tu peux sortir aujourd'hui* or 'you can go out today', indicating her subjugation. It accompanies an article that advocates for women's rights by critiquing the Algerian family code and calling for its abolition, as well as urging continued activism by activists. For example, the article includes an intertextual reference to the statement of the political party *Le Mouvement démocratique et social (MDS)*, which stated in a communiqué that:

**81.** « *Le code de la famille maintient l'inégalité à travers ses dispositions en matière d'héritage, de répudiation ou de polygamie* ».

*«The family code maintains inequality through its provisions regarding inheritance, repudiation and polygamy».* (*El Watan*, article 11, 2016)

This statement critiques the family code by demonstrating how its laws and provisions reinforce patriarchal structures in society.

Like *El Watan*, *Liberté* employs different forms of modality, alongside other linguistic features, in its texts to express feminist beliefs. The main forms of modality used in the texts of *Liberté* are epistemic modality and deontic modality. The following examples show the use of epistemic modality alongside other linguistic features in *Liberté*:

**82.** ***Nous** n'avons délégué personne pour parler en notre nom, mais si une discussion **doit** avoir lieu pour apporter des solutions à la dégradation de l'image de la femme, ce n'est **certainement** pas avec des discours misogynes.*

***We** have not delegated anyone to speak on our behalf, but if a discussion **must** take place to find solutions to the degradation of the image of women, it is **certainly** not with misogynistic discourses.* (*Liberté*, article 32, 2017)

**83.** *La classification mondiale établit par l'Union parlementaire classe, **en effet**, l'Algérie, qui enregistre un taux de 31,6% de sièges occupés par les femmes à l'APN, à la 26e place, soit la plus forte représentation dans la région Mena...*

***Indeed**, Algeria, which has 31.6% female representation in the AFN, is ranked 26th in the global rankings established by the Parliamentary Union - the highest in the MENA region...(*Liberté*, article 31, 2016)*

In the first instance, the epistemic adverb *certainement* 'certainly' is used alongside other features to strongly emphasise that there is no tolerance for sexist or prejudiced discourses when addressing women's issues. The pronoun *nous* 'we' indicates the collective involvement of a group of Algerian women in expressing this view in a 'manifesto' article. The second instance highlights that Algeria, with 31.6% of its parliamentary seats occupied by women, is ranked 26th globally according to the Parliamentary Union, making it the country with the highest female representation in the MENA region.

Deontic modality is also an important form of modality that is drawn upon in *Liberté* to articulate feminist ideas, as the examples below show:

**84.** *Mais, faudrait-il encore que cette loi et d'autres d'ailleurs connaissent une traduction concrète.*

*But it is still **necessary** for this law and other laws to be concretely implemented. (Liberté, article 31, 2016)*

**85.** *Nous exigeons le respect total dans notre quotidien, notre travail, notre foyer, la place publique ou l'espace intime, comme nous exigeons des pouvoirs publics d'intervenir afin que cesse la discrimination de la femme non voilée dans les lieux publics ou des gérants, propriétaires lui interdisent l'accès à leurs restaurants, hôtels, salons de coiffure, etc.*

***We demand** total respect in our daily lives, our work, our home, public spaces, and intimate spaces, and **we demand** that the authorities intervene to put an end to the discrimination against unveiled women in public places, where managers and owners deny them access to their restaurants, hotels, hair salons, etc... (Liberté, article 32, 2017)*

**86.** *Nous demandons que les médias lourds contribuent à valoriser l'image, le travail, le vécu de la femme et d'arrêter de stigmatiser les veuves, les divorcées, les étudiantes, les femmes non voilées, les femmes voilées, les femmes célibataires vivant seules, ouvrant la porte à toutes les dérives.*

***We demand** that the mainstream media contribute to valuing the image, the work and the experience of women and to stop stigmatising widows, divorcees, students, unveiled women, veiled women and single women living alone, opening the door to various forms of discrimination. (Liberté, article 32, 2017)*

**87.** *En ce 8 Mars, l'Algérienne peut se passer d'une rose qui ne vit « que l'espace d'un matin ». Ce qu'elle revendique, c'est le respect au quotidien dans tous les lieux publics. Et cela est du ressort de l'État. Car si d'un côté, il y a des pseudo-imams obscurantistes, de l'autre, il devrait y avoir un État fort par ses lois et réglementations et protecteur, car c'est une citoyenne à part entière.*

*On this 8 March, the Algerian woman **can** do without a rose that lasts «only for the span of a morning». What she **demand**s is daily respect in all public places, and that is the responsibility of the state. Because if, on the one hand, there are obscurantist pseudo-imams, on the other hand, there **should** be a state that is strong in its laws and regulations and protective, because she is a full citizen. (Liberté, article 33, 2017)*

In these examples, the deontic verbs *falloir* in the conditional tense 'to be necessary', *exiger*, *demander* and *revendiquer* 'demand' are employed to express a sense of obligation or necessity. In the first example, from an 'opinion' article, the journalist indicates the need for translating legislative measures into tangible improvements in women's political representation and rights. It specifically refers to the law on gender quotas, which mandates the inclusion of quotas for women on electoral lists, and Articles 35 and 36 of the Constitution, which promote women's political rights and gender parity in the labour market. This challenges traditional gender norms by advocating for the effective implementation of laws that support gender equality. The second example, from a 'manifesto' article, calls for respect for women in all aspects of life and for public authorities to take action to stop the discrimination against non-veiled women. The third example, also from a 'manifesto' article, urges the mainstream media in Algeria to play a crucial role in valuing the image of women through their portrayal, aiming to challenge discriminatory practices against women. In both Examples 85 and 86, the pronoun *nous* 'we' is used to show the collective involvement of a group of women in the article. The last example indicates the necessity of respecting Algerian women in all public spaces and emphasises the state's responsibility and duty to enact strong laws and regulations to protect women's rights. This perspective is expressed by the journalist in their 'editorial' article. These instances demonstrate how deontic modality and its accompanying linguistic features play a key role in indicating the urgency and the need to address discrimination and promoting women's rights, challenging dominant gendered norms in Algeria.

*Liberté* makes use of boulomaic alongside other linguistic features to express different feminist viewpoints, as observed in these examples:

**88. Nous voulons** que le statut de la femme citoyenne soit respecté et que de vrais efforts soient déployés pour la mise en place d'une batterie juridique **réellement** protectrice de toutes les femmes.

**We want** the status of the citizen woman to be respected, and genuine efforts to be made to implement a truly protective legal framework for all women. (*Liberté*, article 32, 2017)

**89. Nous souhaitons** que nos doléances soient prises en charge, sans que nous ne soyons renvoyées à la religion, aux coutumes ou aux discours machistes.

**We would like** our grievances to be taken into account without being referred to religion, customs or chauvinistic discourses. (*Liberté*, article 32, 2017)

In the first example, the boulomaic verb *vouloir* 'want' is used to express a desire to see the status of women as full citizens to be respected. The sentence also indicates a desire to take concrete actions to establish laws that provide protection for all women. In the second example, the verb *souhaiter* 'would like' shows a desire or wish to see the injustices encountered by women addressed impartially, without being justified by cultural norms, religious beliefs, or sexist ideologies. This questions long-standing societal structures and practices that perpetuate inequality and discrimination against women. In both examples, the pronoun *nous* 'we' suggests the collective involvement of a group of Algerian women in articulating these views within a 'manifesto' article. Dynamic modality and its accompanying linguistic features are also important means used by the newspaper to articulate a feminist stance, as illustrated by the examples below.

**90. Nous ne pouvons** accepter un tel affront, celui d'encourager des personnages loufoques, radicaux et obscurantistes à ternir davantage l'image de la femme lui ôtant toute dignité et l'exposant à toutes les formes de dérives et violences.

**We cannot** accept such an affront, that of encouraging crazy, radical and obscurantist individuals to further tarnish the image of women, depriving them of all dignity and exposing them to all forms of abuse and violence. (*Liberté*, article 32, 2017)

91. ***On ne pourra jamais*** se prévaloir d'une quelconque avancée démocratique si ***on*** continue à refuser le statut de citoyenne à part entière à la moitié de la société.

***We will never be able*** to claim any democratic progress if we continue to deny half of society the status of full citizens. (*Liberté*, article 39, 2021)

The first instance, from a 'manifesto' article, uses the modal verb *pouvoir* 'can' in the negative present tense, along with other linguistic features, to express disapproval of supporting individuals who are perceived as absurd, radical in their views, and opposed to progress and the dissemination of knowledge. It specifically condemns their actions that contribute to the mistreatment and degradation of women. It, hence, advocates for a respectful and fair treatment of women. The pronoun *nous* 'we' is employed to show the involvement of a group of women in articulating this viewpoint. In the second example, the dynamic verb *pouvoir* 'can', in the negative future tense, and other linguistic features are used to convey that achieving true democracy in Algeria cannot be realised if women are not recognised as full citizens. This indicates the importance of granting women their full rights to establish a democratic state in Algeria. The pronoun *on* 'we' in this statement, from an 'editorial' article, is used by the journalist to foster a sense of shared responsibility and involvement. It indicates the need for collective effort to achieve democratic progress and gender equality.

In sum, the examples discussed in this part of chapter show the importance of modality and its accompanying linguistic features and visual structures in expressing viewpoints that aim at advancing women's rights in Algeria. The next section discusses how the two Francophone newspapers challenged hegemonic femininity in their texts.

### **6.3.1.2. Challenging Hegemonic Femininity**

*El Watan* and *Liberté* also contested traditional notions about women by portraying them in non-stereotypical roles, using the features of modality and its accompanying linguistic features, functionalisation, and visual structures. The following examples show the use of

different forms of modality and other linguistic features to question hegemonic beliefs about women in Algeria:

**92. Heureusement** qu'il y a ces battantes qui ont sacrifié leur vie pour le pays depuis des millénaires et que vient nous rappeler un manifeste signé par des femmes qui ne se sont pas sous les feux de la rampe.

**Fortunately**, we have these female fighters who sacrificed their lives for the country for thousands of years, and we are reminded of this by a manifesto signed by women who have not been in the spotlight. (*Liberté*, article 33, 2017)

**93.** Il ne s'agit pas ici d'épiloguer sur le rôle qu'a joué la femme algérienne à travers la longue histoire du pays, mais **force** est de reconnaître que sa contribution a toujours été importante, voire décisive, à chaque étape.

It is not a question of going over the role that Algerian women have played throughout the country's long history, but it **must** be recognised that their contribution has always been important, even decisive, at every stage. (*Liberté*, article 38, 2020)

**94.** C'est **peut-être** une lapalissade que d'asséner une telle vérité, mais il **ne faut** jamais se lasser de la ressasser pour prévenir contre l'amnésie qui a fait et fait encore des ravages chez nous : la femme algérienne a toujours été au cœur de toutes les luttes majeures que le peuple a eu à mener tout au long de son histoire millénaire.

It **may** seem obvious, but we **must** continually emphasise and remember this truth to combat the amnesia that has caused damage among us: the Algerian woman has always been at the heart of all major struggles that the people have faced throughout the millennial history. (*Liberté*, article 39, 2021)

**95. L'insistance** sur l'engagement fort de l'Algérienne dans tous les combats visant l'émancipation de son peuple n'a rien d'une coquetterie ou d'un simple exercice festif, en cette Journée internationale de la femme. Elle vise plutôt à rappeler les Algériens à leur **devoir** d'honorer leur dette envers cette femme...

**The insistence** on the strong commitment of Algerian women in all struggles for the emancipation of their people is not a mere affectation or a simple festive exercise on this International Women's Day. Rather, it serves as a reminder to Algerians of their **duty** to honour their debt to these women. (*Liberté*, article 39, 2021)

The first example employs the boulomaic adverb *heureusement* 'fortunately' along with other linguistic features to express gratitude for the courageous Algerian women, who sacrificed their lives for the country over the centuries. In the second sentence, the deontic noun *force* 'must' and other linguistic features are used to emphasise that Algerian

women's contributions have always been crucial at every stage in the country's history. The third example uses the epistemic adverb *peut-être* 'maybe' and the deontic verb *falloir* 'must' and other linguistic features to suggest that, while it is obvious that Algerian women have always been central to major struggles throughout Algeria's long history, it is necessary to keep acknowledging and emphasising this truth. In the last example, epistemic noun *insistance* 'insistence' and other linguistic features serve to reinforce the idea that Algerian women played an important role in all the struggles of Algeria. It conveys a strong sense of certainty towards women's involvement in the country's struggles throughout history. The same example also highlights the duty of Algerians to honour Algerian women. All the examples discussed are expressed by the journalists in three different 'editorial' articles. Indeed, throughout Algeria's history, women have played an important role. This is evident, for example, in the Algerian war of independence against French colonial rule, where women were integral to the struggle for independence. They performed different roles, including combatants, spies, and nurses. They also played a crucial role in the Algerian protest movement against the political regime, as explained in Chapter Two. Therefore, highlighting the significant contributions of women throughout Algerian history challenges the traditional view of gender that confines women to the domestic sphere and depicts them as passive and vulnerable. The data of *Liberté* contains some intertextual references that highlight the important role played by Algerian women in different phases of Algerian history. For instance, it draws on the statement of the sociologist Nacer Djabi regarding women's participation in the protest movement, using direct speech, in which he claims:

**96.** *La femme algérienne investit l'espace public et contribue à changer l'image de la société algérienne. Elle mène une révolution culturelle sur le terrain. Elle prend la parole devant le public et défend ses avis politiques. Le hirak est une opportunité historique pour afficher les transformations positives que vit la société depuis des années.*

*Algerian women are taking over the public space and helping to change the image of Algerian society. They are leading a cultural revolution on the ground. They speak*



*in public and defend their political views. The hirak is a historic opportunity to show the positive transformations that society has been experiencing for years. (Liberté, article 37, 2020)*

The statement challenges traditional gender roles by positioning Algerian women as 'active' participants in the public sphere and as 'agents' of change. It is included in an 'opinion' article that discusses the significant role of Algerian women in the protest movement. The article underscores the importance of acknowledging their contributions to the protests and their role in challenging traditional norms.

*El Watan* also makes intertextual references to the participation of women in different political events in Algeria, namely the Algerian revolution and the demonstrations in 1988, 1989, 1990 and 1991, as the following passage indicates:

*97. Comme elles **ont répondu** présentes à l'appel du 1er Novembre 1954, jouant un rôle déterminant dans le combat pour la Libération nationale. Comme elles sont sorties dans la rue en Octobre 1988 **pour dénoncer** l'hégémonie du FLN et **réclamer** un État de droit fondé sur la justice sociale et les libertés individuelles et collectives... Elles étaient dans les manifestations **qui réclamaient** la démocratie en 1989, 1990, 1991.*

*As they **responded** to the call of 1 November 1954, playing a decisive role in the fight for national liberation. As they took to the streets in October 1988 to **denounce** the hegemony of the FLN and **demand** a state of law based on social justice and individual and collective freedoms... They were in the demonstrations **calling** for democracy in 1989, 1990, 1991. (*El Watan*, article 26, 2019)*

The verbs 'respond', 'denounce', 'demand' and 'call' in the above passage clearly demonstrate instances of manifest intertextuality, as they show what was already said by the Algerian women. The passage is included in an 'opinion' article that discusses the significant role played by Algerian women during key events, as well as their struggle for dignity and equality throughout the country's history. It advocates for a democratic and egalitarian society where women's rights are fundamental.

*Liberté* also challenged hegemonic femininity in the data by referring to the conference delivered by the researcher Mohamed-Cherif Aghbalou on the life of the

Algerian Francophone writer and historian Assia Djebbar, as well as her commitments during and after the war of national liberation. The article, classified as a 'biographical reporting', provides information about this prominent figure in Algerian literature. The following is an example of the statements made by the researcher about Assia Djebbar:

*98. Avant d'être l'historienne et écrivaine qu'elle était, Assia Djebbar fut une jeune fille émancipée, curieuse de tout et surtout portant des idéaux de liberté et des valeurs propres à la femme algérienne.*

*Before being the historian and the writer that she was, Assia Djebbar was an emancipated young girl, curious about everything and above all having the ideals of freedom and values specific to Algerian women. (Liberté, article 34, 2018)*

The statement portrays Assia Djebbar as an independent and inquisitive young girl with ideals of freedom and values central to Algerian women. This questions traditional views that often confine women to passive and domestic roles by highlighting her pursuit of knowledge and progressive ideals from an early age.

Functionalisation is another important means for the articulation of a feminist stance in the news articles of *El Watan* and *Liberté*, by depicting women as occupying non-traditional and non-stereotypical positions. Both newspapers contain a total of 90 cases of functionalisation in their texts. In effect, women are assigned non-stereotypical roles in the majority of cases of functionalisation in the Francophone newspapers (83 times). There are only 7 instances of women being depicted in traditional roles, such as 'housewives', in these newspapers. In *El Watan*, women are functionalised mainly as 'freedom fighters', 'activists', 'militants', 'feminists', 'entrepreneurs', 'members of parliament', 'lawyers', 'presidents of associations', 'trade unionists', 'members of a political party', 'writers' and so on. Concerning *Liberté*, women are primarily functionalised as 'ministers', 'leaders of a political party', 'militants', 'feminists', 'engineers', 'combatants', 'journalists' and so forth. The following are instances of functionalisation in the Francophone newspapers:

99. Djamila Bouhired, Zohra Drif, Louissette Ighilahriz et toutes **les moudjahidate** le savent d'expérience...

*Djamila Bouhired, Zohra Drif, Louissette Ighilahriz, and all the **female freedom fighters** know this from experience... (El Watan, article 26, 2019)*

100. Depuis la promulgation du code de la famille, **les militantes féministes**, encouragées et soutenues par **les moudjahidate**, n'ont eu de cesse de lutter pour des lois civiles égalitaires...

*Since the enactment of the family code, **feminist activists**, encouraged and supported by the **female freedom fighters**, have continually fought for equal civil laws... (El Watan, article 26, 2019)*

101. Un autre constat aussi sévère est dressé par **la militante et activiste** Nadia Chouitem, qui estime que « ce 8 Mars sera très résistant, très révolutionnaire et très prometteur ».

*Another such severe observation is made by the **millitant and activist** Nadia Chouitem, who believes that "this 8th March will be very resistant, very revolutionary and very promising". (El Watan, article 9, 2020)*

102. Dignes héritières de nos **ancêtres royales** et **princesses, contemporaines révolutionnaires** et **intellectuelles**, telles que Dihya (Kahina), Tin Hinan, Roba la Berbère, Lalla Fatma N'Soumer...

*Worthy heirs of our **royal ancestors** and **princesses, contemporary revolutionaries** and **intellectuals**, such as Dihya (Kahina), Tin Hinan, Roba the Berber, Lalla Fatma N'Soumer... (Liberté, article 32, 2017)*

103. ...Il y a tout un débat qui, pour l'heure, relève de la polémique. C'est une belle avancée", analyse Tin-Hinane Makaci, **féministe et journaliste**.

*...There is a whole debate that is controversial at the moment. It's a great step forward." analyses Tin-Hinane Makaci, **feminist and journalist**. (Liberté, article 37, 2020)*

In these examples, women are functionalised as 'freedom fighters', 'feminists', 'activists', 'royals', 'revolutionaries', 'intellectuals', and 'journalists', which are non-traditional gender roles. This non-stereotypical depiction of women is also found in the images of the two Francophone newspapers by depicting women as participating in demonstrations, as the following image indicates:



**Image 12:** Narrative Image in *Liberté* (article 36, 2019)

This image is narrative. It depicts a group of women, with a woman in the middle gazing at the camera and holding a placard, featuring pictures of two women who were combatants and martyrs of the Algerian war of independence. The vector emanates from the hands of the woman holding the placard. The latter reads in French: *reposez en paix, la relève est arrivée*, which translates to 'rest in peace, the new generation has arrived'. The image is included in a news article describing the third Friday of popular mobilisation in the city of Oran, which coincided with the celebration of IWD and saw significant participation of women. The following image also depicts women as participating in a demonstration:



**Image 13:** Narrative Representation in *Liberté* (article 37, 2020)

This image, which is a narrative image, shows a group of people protesting. Saliency is given to two women who are actors in relation to the action of protesting by placing them in the foreground. The vector emanates from the hands of the two women which shows that they are demonstrating. The text in the image is not easily legible. This image accompanies an article that discusses the active participation and crucial role of Algerian women in the protest movement. Similarly, the image below of *El Watan*, represents women as actors in relation to the action of demonstrating in the street:



**Image 14:** Narrative Image in *El Watan* (article 28, 2020)

In this narrative image, the gestures of the women, who are the focus of the image, form the vector. This image accompanies an article that discusses the call from feminist activists in Algeria to reclaim March 8<sup>th</sup> as a day of political activism, rather than a celebratory event. Images 8 and 9, discussed in Section 6.2.3 of this chapter, also depict women in non-stereotypical roles, participating in the public sphere and as a football referee, respectively.

The images and all the examples discussed above show the way women are represented in a progressive way in the two Francophone newspapers by performing non-traditional gender roles. The next section of the chapter deals with the femininity discourses identified in the data of *El Watan* and *Liberté*.

### 6.3.2. Discourses of Femininity

The two selected Francophone newspapers contain some traces of femininity discourses, manifested through the features of physical identification, relational identification, and nomination within the social actor framework (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008). Specifically, women are referred to in terms of their physical appearance, family relations, and titles in the texts of the newspapers. There are 10 instances of physical identification, 22 instances of relational identification, and 83 cases of nomination. Of these, *El Watan* used titles indicating the marital status of women 25 times, while *Liberté* used titles only twice. The following instances indicate the use of physical identification in *Liberté*:

**104.** *Si vous rêvez qu'une **belle** femme entre dans votre maison, cela indique que la joie et la prospérité entreront dans cette dernière...*

*If you dream of a **beautiful** woman entering your home, it signifies that joy and prosperity will enter it... (Liberté, article 35, 2018)*

**105.** *Ainsi, rêver d'une **belle** jeune femme représente une année heureuse et prospère...*

*Thus, dreaming of a **beautiful** young woman represents a happy and prosperous year... (Liberté, article 35, 2018)*

**106.** *Voilà une Algérienne, une **jeune** fille, consciente, **belle** et rebelle, fière de son pays, qui exhibe et résume tout un mouvement, le « hirak », tout un message.*

*Here is an Algerian, a **young** girl, conscious, **beautiful** and rebel, proud of her country, who embodies and summarises an entire movement, the «Hirak», and an entire message. (El Watan, article 25, 2019)*

These examples clearly show traces of a femininity discourse in *Liberté* and *El Watan* by its reference to women in terms of their physical appearance, through the use of the adjective *belle* 'beautiful', which reinforces traditional views of women as primarily defined by their physical appearance. Furthermore, the selected Francophone newspapers include instances of relational identification (mothers, sisters, and daughters), expressed through nouns that denote family relations, which reinforce traditional gender roles that associate women with domesticity. This perspective is further highlighted in the data through the use of titles indicating a woman's marital status. The following examples illustrate this :

**107.** *A la question de savoir pourquoi la femme n'est pas écoutée et s'il s'agissait d'une omission. Pas du tout réplique, **Mme** Aït Zaï...*

*Regarding the question of why women are not heard and whether it is a matter of omission, **Mrs.** Aït Zaï responded that it is not the case at all... (El Watan, article 29, 2020)*

The instances of physical identification, relational identification, and nomination discussed in this section collectively convey notions traditionally associated with women. However, feminist discourses remain the prevalent discourses projected by the two Francophone newspapers. The next section is a conclusion that briefly summarises the main points covered in this chapter.

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the discursive practices of the selected Francophone newspapers by showing how various linguistic features, including modality and its accompanying features, social actor categories, and representational and compositional structures, are employed to convey different perspectives on women. It also considered whether these practices reinforce or challenge patriarchal norms in the Algerian social

context. The results show that, while the two selected newspapers incorporate elements of femininity discourses, they generally take a progressive stance on gender relations. This challenges traditional and dominant beliefs about women in Algeria by advocating for women's rights and gender equality, and by depicting women in non-traditional roles. This chapter highlights how both linguistic and non-linguistic elements are integrated to construct progressive viewpoints about women in the selected Francophone newspapers. The next chapter shows similarities and differences between the discourses/ideologies constructed in the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers.



## Chapter Seven

### Comparison of Gender Representations in the Newspapers

#### 7.1. Introduction

After discussing the findings of the FCDA analysis of data collected from the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers for the study, this chapter aims to compare how women are represented in these publications. Specifically, it examines the similarities and differences in the discourses and ideologies about gender in the chosen Arabophone and Francophone newspapers for the study: *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* (published in Arabic), and *El Watan* and *Liberté* (published in French). The chapter starts with Section 7.2, which demonstrates the similarities in the representation of women across and within the two types of newspapers. This is followed by Section 7.3, which addresses the differences in how women are represented across and within the two types of newspapers.

#### 7.2. Similarities in Gender Representations in the Newspapers

The fundamental principle underpinning this research is that gender is an effect of discourse. The latter encompasses the use of both linguistic and non-linguistic means, including images, to express different assumptions about gender. In effect, gender is conceptualised as an ideological structure that perpetuates imbalanced power dynamics between women and men. Language and other semiotic modes play a key role in reproducing or challenging hegemonic perspectives about gender. Hence, the aim of this study is to examine the workings of gender, power, and ideology in Algerian news texts by analysing the way the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers represent women on IWD between 2016 and 2021. This period witnessed changes in women's status in Algerian society by the introduction of new laws in favour of women and the active participation of women in the protest movement. The examination of the representation of women in the newspapers is done by paying attention to the main linguistic and visual

features that are drawn upon in their texts to construct different discourses about women, since linguistic and non-linguistic choices are not neutral. In the present study, as discussed in Chapters Five and Six, the main linguistic and visual features that played an important role in the articulation of different discourses and ideologies about gender are modality (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1986) and its accompanying linguistic features, social actor representation (van Leeuwen, 1996; 2008), as well as representational and compositional within visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006), with modality being the feature that dominated in the articulation of these discourses. The aim of this section of the chapter is to examine the main similarities in how women are represented both across and within the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers.

First, both *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* featured femininity discourses that focused on two key aspects: physical appearance and family relations. These aspects reinforce patriarchal traditional norms by linking women's value primarily to their physical attributes and familial roles. Regarding physical appearance, both newspapers, particularly *El Khabar*, promoted patriarchal values by associating women's worth with their physical attributes rather than their skills or intellect. They used physical identification and modality, along with its accompanying features, as important tools to refer to women's beauty and physical appearance. *El Khabar* further highlighted this aspect by using images that focus on women's physical attributes and portray them as decorative objects. For instance, in Image 4 of *El Khabar* discussed in Section 5.3.4.2, the woman was represented as static in terms of her physical appearance. She was the 'carrier' while her outfit, specifically the dress and jewellery, functioned as her possessive attributes. This portrayal reinforces the objectification of women and perpetuates traditional beauty stereotypes. Furthermore, both Arabophone newspapers depicted women in terms of their family relations using relational identification and titles that indicate the marital status of women. This reinforces

traditional patriarchal norms that prioritise women's roles within the family. *Echorouk El Yawmi* placed stronger emphasis on this aspect by consistently referring to women in familial and marital roles and using modal expressions to stress the importance of having a 'righteous wife' and the responsibility of men to guide their wives. This perspective reinforces patriarchal values by presenting men as the decision-makers in the family. While the Francophone newspapers also included traces of femininity discourses by referring to women's physical appearance and family relations, they did so to a lesser extent compared to their Arabophone counterparts. The Arabophone newspapers seemed to place greater emphasis on these aspects, as evidenced by their higher number of instances of relational and physical identification. Specifically, the category of relational identification appeared 83 times in the Arabophone newspapers, with *Echorouk El Yawmi* having the most cases, compared to 22 occurrences in the Francophone newspapers. Similarly, physical identification was more frequent in the Arabophone newspapers, with 18 cases, while the Francophone newspapers contained 10 cases. In contrast, the Francophone newspapers, particularly *El Watan*, featured more instances of nomination with titles, with 27 cases compared to 21 cases in the Arabophone newspapers (see Table 5 in Section 5.2.2 and Table 9 in Section 6.2.2 for cases of categorisation and nomination in the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers).

Another point of similarity between the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers is the presence of feminist discourses in their data, particularly through the representation of women in non-traditional gender roles. The portrayal of women in these roles serves to challenge traditional beliefs and stereotypes about women in the Algerian social context. Both types of newspapers relied on the category of functionalisation to depict women in non-stereotypical roles. In the Arabophone newspapers, although the number of non-stereotypical roles varies, with *El Khabar* showing a higher number, both newspapers

challenged dominant views of women through this category. Examples include women being portrayed as taxi drivers, lawyers, leaders, and protesters. In addition to this, both newspapers utilised images that depict women in empowering roles. For example, as seen in Section 5.3.5.1, *El Khabar* included an image of a female blacksmith, while *Echorouk El Yawmi* featured an image of women marching and participating in protests. The Francophone newspapers also relied on the category of functionalisation when referring to women. However, they had more instances of functionalising women in empowering roles, including functions like feminists, activists, freedom fighters, and heads of political parties. The Arabophone newspapers functionalised women 92 times, with 61 cases referring to women in non-traditional roles (see Table 5 in Section 5.2.2), whereas the Francophone newspapers referred to women in terms of their functions 90 times, with 83 cases of functionalising women in non-traditional roles (see Table 9 in Section 6.2.2). Like the Arabophone newspapers, the Francophone newspapers included images representing women in non-traditional roles, as discussed in Section 6.3.1.2. *El Watan*, for example, presented images of women protesting in the streets, while *Liberté* included images of women participating in protests, as well as an image depicting a woman as a football referee. These depictions challenge traditional gender roles that associate women with domesticity and passivity. Furthermore, the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers stressed the crucial contributions of Algerian women in the country's history. *Liberté*, for example, used different forms of modality alongside other linguistic features to demonstrate the importance of women's contributions and their active involvement in the country's struggles. Similarly, *El Khabar* employed different types of modality along with other linguistic features to indicate women's significant role in the struggle for societal change, including during the protest movement. However, it appears that the selected Francophone newspapers, mainly *Liberté*, generally placed greater emphasis on women's

roles across different phases of Algerian history, such as the national liberation struggle and the protest movement, compared to the Arabophone newspapers. Both *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* emphasised the important role played by Algerian women in 2019, coinciding with the protest movement, whereas the Francophone newspapers emphasised women's roles in different years throughout the selected 6-year period. By referring to women's active involvement and impact, both types of newspapers contested traditional views that confine women to passive domestic roles. Additionally, both selected Francophone newspapers focused on the issue of women's rights and gender equality by advocating for equal rights for women. This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the next section of the chapter.

### **7.3. Differences in Gender Representations in the Newspapers**

Although the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers share some similarities in their portrayal of women, they also exhibit several differences. This section of the chapter explores the main differences both across and within the chosen Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. Indeed, the newspapers present varying and conflicting viewpoints about women. Notably, the Arabophone newspaper *Echorouk El Yawmi*, while incorporating some progressive perspectives on gender, tends to adopt a more conservative stance on gender relations. This is evident in the discourses articulated by this newspaper, which support traditional gender roles and aim to reinforce the patriarchal social order. In contrast, the Arabophone newspaper *El Khabar* presents a blend of both traditional and non-traditional perspectives on women. Meanwhile, the Francophone newspapers adopt a more progressive stance on gender relations, as reflected in their discourses that seek to advance women's rights in Algeria. The notion of modality, with its different types and accompanying linguistic features, played an important role in shaping these discourses, which are summarised below.

*Echorouk El Yawmi* presented an anti-feminist stance that critically views feminist activists and associations in Algeria, claiming that they seek to undermine traditional values and push for reforms that could disrupt family structures and societal norms. The newspaper argued that feminist agendas, which it viewed as a form of Western influence, threaten established gender roles and social structures that it considers vital for preserving cultural and moral integrity. In contrast, both selected Francophone newspapers embraced a feminist perspective, challenging patriarchal norms in Algerian society and advocating for equal rights for women across political, economic, and socio-cultural domains. The newspapers called for the recognition of women as full citizens through the implementation of laws designed to protect their rights and address discriminatory practices. They stressed that acknowledging women's rights is crucial for realising the democratic aspirations of Algerians and is a key step toward creating a more inclusive and equitable society. This stance aligns with the broader push for democratic reforms and social justice, as reflected in the protest movement. Besides, while *Echorouk El Yawmi* justified its anti-feminist stance with cultural and religious reasons, presenting feminism as a threat to the established social order, the selected Francophone newspapers, particularly *Liberté*, countered this view by indicating the need to address the injustices faced by women without being constrained by cultural norms, religious beliefs, or sexist ideologies. Likewise, *El Watan* criticised traditional customs as outdated and regressive and expressed regret over their continued adherence by women. This indicates that *Echorouk El Yawmi* represented a conservative viewpoint by associating women's roles with cultural and religious values, while *Liberté* and *El Watan* advocated for gender equality, rejecting the notion that women's rights should be subject to traditional customs or religious interpretations. These perspectives demonstrate a distinct ideological divide between conservative and progressive viewpoints on women's rights in Algeria.

In addition to this, *Echorouk El Yawmi* reinforced traditional family structures by stressing the need for a husband to reform his wife if she does not embody the qualities of a good and righteous wife. This discourse upholds traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms, positioning men as decision-makers and leaders in the family. However, the selected Francophone newspapers, particularly *El Watan*, criticised the Algerian family code for its discriminatory provisions and advocated for its abolition, viewing it as an obstacle to gender equality. Thus, while *Echorouk El Yawmi* supported traditional patriarchal roles, the selected Francophone newspapers challenged these norms and called for legal reforms to promote gender equality in the country. This aligns with the activism of feminists in Algeria, who have identified the family code as the primary focus of their campaigns (Hierons, 2020). The Francophone newspapers linked the recognition of women's rights to the nationalist contributions of Algerian women throughout the country's history. They underscored the significant and often decisive roles that Algerian women played in Algeria's major struggles and their sacrifices for the nation. For example, *El Watan*, as seen in Section 6.3.1.1, quoted a female freedom fighter who claimed that the new independent state had betrayed the battle fought by Algerian women during the war of independence by enacting discriminatory laws. Indeed, Algerian women played an important role in the national liberation struggle. According to Salhi (2003:27) '...their contribution ranged from fighting beside men, planting bombs, and carrying weapons, to nursing the sick and wounded in the maquis (fighting fronts)...'. After their active participation in the war, women expected to be recognised as equal to men. Leonhardt (2013:52) argues: '[w]omen believed that because they had sacrificed and fought alongside men they had earned the right to be recognized as equals in the new independent state they had fought for'. However, in 1984, a discriminatory family code was passed into law. In this vein, Mihalache (2007:408 emphasis in original) states: '[l]e Code de l'Infamie entered the political scene at a time

when Algerian women were assured of their equal position to men as a natural result of the Algerian War of Independence'. Hence, by emphasising their pivotal role in the nation's past, these newspapers view the recognition of women's rights as an acknowledgment of their dedication to the country's struggles. For instance, *Liberté*, as discussed in Section 6.3.1.2, expressed the obligation of Algerians to recognise and honour the contributions of Algerian women in the country's struggles, given the legal and societal challenges they continue to face.

*Echorouk El Yawmi* articulated discourses of women's outperformance of men that serve to uphold the patriarchal social order. The newspaper showed concerns about the implications of increasing female dominance in academic fields and the potential impact on traditional societal roles. It raised questions about the future consequences of this trend and suggested that it might lead to imbalances or challenges in various sectors, particularly in terms of male representation. However, this perspective obscures the deeper issue of gender inequality in Algeria, where women make up only about 18% of the workforce and are significantly underrepresented in decision-making positions. In contrast, the Francophone newspapers, particularly *Liberté*, called for the concrete implementation of laws to address gender inequality. It particularly emphasised the need for the effective implementation of constitutional provisions designed to promote women's political rights and gender parity in the workforce. The newspaper, for example, referred to Article 35 in the Constitution, which aims to increase women's representation in elected assemblies and Article 36, which focuses on achieving gender parity in the job market and supporting women's advancement in public and private sectors. *El Watan* also suggested that women are facing significant challenges in their economic endeavours due to ongoing social obstacles. Thus, while *Echorouk El Yawmi* expressed concerns about potential negative



consequences of women's success in higher education, the Francophone newspapers called for measures to address systemic issues affecting women.

Additionally, *Echorouk El Yawmi* advocated for gender separation by cautioning against close friendships between men and women to uphold cultural and moral values. The practice of gender segregation supports the patriarchal social order by preserving traditional power dynamics through its rigid separation of public and private spheres and subjecting women to harassment in mixed public settings. Conversely, the chosen Francophone newspapers took a feminist perspective, challenging these patriarchal norms. They advocated for equal rights for women across all areas of life: political, economic, and socio-cultural. This includes recognising women's rights to participate fully in public life without facing discrimination or harassment. For instance, *El Watan* underscored the importance of respecting Algerian women in all public spaces and highlighted the need for the state to take active responsibility in protecting women's rights by enacting and enforcing robust laws and regulations. In addition to this, the *Echorouk El Yawmi* newspaper reinforced the deep-rooted patriarchal views on women's virginity in Algerian society, where virginity is equated with the presence of the hymen. This perspective functions as a mechanism for controlling and regulating women's bodies, reinforcing societal norms that judge women primarily based on their sexual purity. It also perpetuates the notion that women's bodies are possessions of male relatives or husbands. By focusing exclusively on women's virginity, the newspaper reinforced gender inequality in Algeria and highlighted societal double standards, imposing strict moral standards on women while largely overlooking or ignoring men's sexual behaviour. The obsession with women's virginity leads to harmful practices such as virginity testing, which is referred to in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi* using modality and accompanying linguistic features. Although the data specifically refers to virginity testing, there are other dehumanising rituals practiced in some ultra-

conservative regions and families in Algeria, such as 'Tsfah,' which aims to control women's bodies. In contrast, *Liberté* and *El Watan* supported gender equality and advocated for legal reforms that protect women's rights and promote their full participation in society.

The Arabophone newspaper *El Khabar* also adopted a progressive perspective on gender relations by challenging hegemonic masculinity and critiquing the patriarchal system, which is characterised by exploitation, violence, dominance, and control. It advocated for the recognition of feminine and maternal principles, such as nurturing, care, and peaceful coexistence, which have been overshadowed by patriarchal norms. For example, as explained in Section 5.3.5.2, the newspaper employed deontic modality in conjunction with other linguistic features to urge men to embrace motherhood, redefining it as a universal human value that encompasses compassion, love, and care, extending beyond mere biological reproduction. It argued that these qualities are not confined to women alone; rather, they should be embraced by everyone, particularly men, who often approach relationships with control rather than empathy. *El Khabar* suggested that embracing these maternal principles throughout society can lead to a more harmonious, peaceful, and balanced world. This contrasts with *Echorouk El Yawmi's* stance, which reinforced hegemonic masculinity by adopting an anti-feminist perspective and emphasising men as dominant, authoritative, and in control of women. *Echorouk El Yawmi* justified male dominance through both cultural and religious reasons, presenting it as essential for maintaining social stability and moral integrity. *El Khabar*, on the other hand, emphasised the significance of maternal and nurturing traits as universal human values, encouraging men to adopt these characteristics and thereby promoting a more egalitarian view of gender relations. This suggests that the two selected Arabophone newspapers adopted different views on gender relations, with *Echorouk El Yawmi* supporting hegemonic masculinity and *El Khabar* criticising it.

To sum up, the analysis of discourses and ideologies about gender in the Algerian press and their ideological implications reveals a complex interaction of diverse perspectives on women within Algerian society. The use of modality in conjunction with other linguistic features, social actor representation, and visual structures are crucial for uncovering these viewpoints and ideologies about women in the data. Hegemonic discourses that reinforce imbalanced power dynamics, with men being dominant, are particularly prominent in the Arabophone newspaper *Echorouk El Yawmi*. This reflects the conservative ideological orientation of this newspaper. *El Khabar* includes both hegemonic and non-hegemonic perspectives on gender. The Francophone newspapers *El Watan* and *Liberté*, unlike the selected Arabophone news outlets, predominantly adopt a progressive stance on gender relations. This is evident in their focus on the question of women's rights and gender equality, reflecting their liberal ideological orientation. Differences in the representation of women in the selected newspapers reflect and represent the struggle between conservative and progressive groups in Algeria over the question of women's rights. Progressive groups advocate for women's emancipation and support their rights, while conservatives, who adhere to cultural traditions and religious beliefs, consider women's emancipation as a threat to these values.

The focus on IWD significantly influenced how the selected newspapers represented women and discussed gender issues, making the findings of the study logical given the day's purpose of advocating for women's rights and gender equality. As explained in Section 1.2 of Chapter One, IWD, observed each March 8, is a day dedicated to advocating for gender equality. Consequently, it provides a unique opportunity for the media to engage with gender issues. The study shows that the conservative newspapers, particularly *Echorouk El Yawmi*, used IWD to mainly emphasise and uphold traditional values. In contrast, *El Khabar* both reinforced and challenged traditional gender norms. The selected liberal newspapers,

on the other hand, used the occasion to promote gender equality and women's rights, aligning with the broader goals of the day. Thus, the focus on IWD highlights the ideological divide between conservative and progressive perspectives, with each side using the day to advance its views and shape public opinion.

*Echorouk El Yawmi* consistently reinforced traditional roles throughout the study period (2016-2021). However, it articulated non-hegemonic perspectives, particularly in 2016, coinciding with the last constitutional amendment in favour of women, and in 2019, corresponding with the protest movement. *El Khabar* also articulated non-hegemonic perspectives on gender mainly in 2019, 2020, and 2021, aligning with the protest movement. Conversely, the Francophone newspapers, while incorporating some traces of hegemonic views, consistently maintained a progressive stance throughout the study period, reflecting recent government reforms in favour of women and their active participation in the protest movement for social and political change. Indeed, the emergence of non-hegemonic discourses in the data challenges hegemonic perceptions of gender by portraying women in non-stereotypical roles and advocating for women's rights. The presence of hegemonic perspectives, therefore, does not contribute to changes in women's role in Algerian society, in light of recent governmental efforts to advance women's rights and the active participation of Algerian women in the protest movement. Hegemonic perspectives, as discussed in this chapter, reinforce traditional gender norms and power dynamics, which lead to men's dominance over women, i.e. patriarchy. Therefore, they act as barriers to advancing women's rights and hinder progress in challenging traditional gender roles and norms. Although recent government reforms are an important step toward change, they may not be sufficient to eliminate patriarchal beliefs and practices that persist in powerful societal institutions like the media. The latter should play a crucial role in portraying women in a non-stereotypical manner to contribute to

efforts made to change the status of women in society and challenge patriarchy. The next section of the chapter is a conclusion which summarises the main points discussed in the present chapter.

#### **7.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the key similarities and differences in the representation of women across and within the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. The comparison indicated that the newspapers presented varying and competing perspectives on gender, ranging from conservative to progressive views. While conservative discourses serve to reinforce male dominance over women, progressive discourses challenge this dynamic and seek to promote women's rights and their roles in society. A key similarity is that both types of newspapers depicted women as occupying non-stereotypical roles and highlighted their significant contributions to the nation's history, though the Francophone newspapers tended to emphasise this more broadly across various historical periods. Despite these similarities, the newspapers displayed several differences in their depiction of women. The Arabophone newspapers, especially *Echorouk El Yawmi*, reinforced traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms, emphasising women's virginity, family roles, and conservative values. In contrast, the selected Francophone newspapers *Liberté* and *El Watan* adopted a progressive stance, advocating for gender equality, critiquing discriminatory practices, and calling for legal reforms to support women's rights. *El Khabar* also supported progressive views by challenging hegemonic masculinity and advocating for the adoption of traits traditionally associated with femininity and motherhood. This chapter thus reveals the presence of competing discourses within the chosen Algerian news outlets, which compete for influence and stability within the Algerian social context.

The present research is crucial for understanding how power and ideology are expressed in news texts written in two different languages in Algeria. It demonstrates how

the news media are sites for the articulation of different discourses and ideologies about gender through both linguistic and non-linguistic elements. The choices made in the texts of Algerian news outlets are far from neutral; rather, they are meant to convey various meanings about gender. Hence, this study is important in showing how linguistic and non-linguistic features are combined together to construct both hegemonic and non-hegemonic perspectives on gender in the texts of some Algerian newspapers. The next chapter is a general conclusion for the present research.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **General Conclusion**

#### **8.1. Introduction**

This final chapter of the thesis serves as a general conclusion to the present study. It first starts by providing a summary of the main aims and the methodology of the research in Section 8.2. It then moves on to answer the research questions presented in the introductory chapter, based on the findings of the research project, in Section 8.3. After answering the research questions, this chapter deals with the implications of the present study in Section 8.4. This is followed by a discussion of some of the limitations of the research project in Section 8.5. The last section of this concluding chapter gives some suggestions for future research on the representation of gender in media discourse within the Algerian context.

#### **8.2. Summary of the Research**

This section of the chapter aims at summarising the main objectives of the research study, the methodology adopted for analysing the way women are depicted in Algerian news media, in addition to the main results of the study. As discussed in the previous chapters, the key aim of the present research is to investigate the representation of women in news media written in Arabic and French within the Algerian social context. More precisely, it has analysed the main discourses and ideologies surrounding women in two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria between 2016-2021. To achieve the main objectives of the study, 40 news articles were collected from four Algerian news outlets and analysed by adopting a Feminist CDA perspective. The research project focused on news articles that were published between 8 and 9 March in the time period between 2016-2021,

as it saw some important changes in Algerian women's role that challenged gendered widespread beliefs in the country. The objective is to see whether the newspapers, through their linguistic and visual depiction of women, reproduce or challenge hegemonic perspectives about women in Algeria. The Francophone and Arabophone newspapers in Algeria have distinct ideological affiliations, with the former being liberal and the latter being conservative. Hence, the research study aims at comparing between the two types of newspapers to see whether their representation of women in their texts aligns with their ideological orientations. The research combined a Feminist CDA approach (Lazar, 2005) and Fairclough's (1989; 1992) analytical framework to attain the objectives of the study and answer the research questions. The results of the study have concluded that the data drew on different and competing discourses about women. The Arabophone newspaper *Echorouk El Yawmi*, although it incorporated traces of non-hegemonic perspectives on gender, adopted a more conservative stance on women by constructing hegemonic discourses that reinforce women's subordinate position in society. The Arabophone newspaper *El Khabar* combined both hegemonic and non-hegemonic perspectives on women. The Francophone newspapers, namely *Liberté* and *El Watan*, took a more progressive stance on women's role by challenging hegemonic perspectives on women in Algeria. The main findings of the study are further discussed in the following section of the chapter, which summarises the results of the study by addressing the research questions.

### **8.3. Answering the Research Questions**

The present study applied Fairclough's (1989; 1992) framework, which comprises three levels of analysis, to reveal the main discourses and ideologies about women drawn upon in the texts of two Arabophone and two Francophone newspapers in Algeria. The categories of these framework are *description*, *interpretation* and *explanation*. By applying these categories to the data, each of the research questions are answered below:



❖ **What are the main linguistic and visual features drawn upon in the data of selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in their construction of discourses and ideologies about gender?**

To answer this research question, the first level of Fairclough's (1989; 1992) framework was applied to the data of the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. In Feminist CDA, linguistic and visual choices are not neutral; instead, they carry ideological viewpoints. Therefore, in order to reveal the main ideologies embedded in the texts of Arabophone and Francophone news outlets, three different parameters have been employed within the description level in order to analyse the data. These parameters are modality (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1986), social actor (van Leeuwen, 2008) and visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). They were selected for application in the present study because they were repetitive in the analysed texts and emerged as important in constructing different views about women. Modality relates to the expression of the attitude of language user towards the aspect discussed in the sentence. This suggests that modality is significant for investigating the different viewpoints about women manifested in the news articles. Within the category of modality, four main types of modality were applied to the data, namely *epistemic*, *deontic*, *dynamic* and *boulomaic* modality. Epistemic modality deals with what is necessary, possible, or probable. Deontic modality expresses obligations and permissions. Dynamic modality relates to the expression of abilities. Finally, *boulomaic* modality has to do with expressing wishes and desires. The main types of modality used in the data of both Arabophone and Francophone newspapers for the articulation of discourses about women were epistemic and deontic modality. By applying the feature of modality, different discourses and ideologies about women were uncovered in the data, which are summarised in relation to the second research question below. In effect, the selected news outlets

conveyed different perspectives about women in their texts through the expression of possibilities, obligations, necessities, abilities, and desires.

As for the social actor framework (van Leeuwen, 2008), the categories that were applied to the analysis of the data were functionalisation, relational identification, physical identification, and nomination. Indeed, van Leeuwen's (2008) framework provides a comprehensive way to analyse the representation of women in the news articles by looking at their functions, relationships, physical attributes, as well as names. By employing these features, different discourses about women were communicated by the selected newspapers in their texts. As regard visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006), representational and compositional metafunctions were used for the analysis of the images. These metafunctions provide a framework for analysing visual communication. The representational metafunction helps interpret what the visuals are depicting, while the compositional metafunction helps understand how these depictions are organised and presented. That is, the representational metafunction relates to the relation between the represented social actors in the image. It looks at the choices made in terms of depicting people, objects, actions, and the relationships between them. In exploring the relation between the participants depicted in the image, two main types of processes are distinguished, namely narrative and conceptual processes (van Leeuwen, 2008). The former is dynamic and represents participants as involved in actions, while the latter is static and represents social actors in terms of their essence. Within the narrative process, three types of processes emerged as important in the analysed images, namely the action process, reactional process and speech process. As for the conceptual process, two types of processes were applied to the data, namely analytical and symbolic processes. Within the compositional metafunction, the analysis focused solely on the category of salience, which is concerned with identifying the visually striking or attention-grabbing elements within the

image. Salience is the visual structure within the compositional metafunction that appeared as important in the data. All of these visual structures indicate different discourses and ideologies about women.

The discourses identified in the data are not articulated by a single feature. Rather, they are expressed by means of a combination of different linguistic and visual devices. The response to the next research question shows which discourses were identified in the news articles, and how the linguistic and visual parameters applied to the data played an important role in the articulation of these discourses.

❖ **What are the main discursive practices about gender drawn upon in the texts of the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers?**

To answer this research question, the feature of *interdiscursivity* within Fairclough's (1989; 1992) second level of analysis was applied to the data. This feature is a form of intertextuality which involves the interaction of different discourses within a particular text. However, the interdiscursivity feature needs linguistic and visual analysis, since choices made for any particular text are not neutral; rather, they serve as means for articulating different perspectives about aspects of life. Moreover, the discourses expressed in a text are not explicitly indicated but are inferred from the linguistic and visual choices made within the text. Hence, an examination of important linguistic and visual elements in a text is needed. The present study examined the features of modality and its accompanying linguistic features, social actor, as well as representational and compositional structures. The findings of the study showed that the data of the study drew upon various discourses about women. I first start by summarising the discourses expressed in the two selected Arabophone newspapers, and then I will move on to the two Francophone newspapers. In *Echorouk El Yawmi*, the texts primarily conveyed discourses of gender segregation, compulsory heterosexuality, femininity, anti-feminism, and women's outperformance of

men. There were also traces of feminist discourses in the same newspaper. *El Khabar*, on the other hand, predominantly featured discourses on femininity and feminism. As for the Francophone newspapers, the prevailing discourses were feminist, accompanied by some elements of discourses of femininity.

To start with, the discourses of gender segregation, based on the idea of keeping unrelated men and women physically apart, were articulated by means of different forms of modality and their accompanying features in *Echorouk El Yawmi*. These discourses are related to the discourses of compulsory heterosexuality, articulated in the same newspaper by means of epistemic modality and its accompanying linguistic features. Other discourses evident in the texts of *Echorouk El Yawmi* pertain to anti-feminist views. Deontic modality and its accompanying linguistic features are the main features used for the manifestation of these discourses. The discourses on women outperforming men, articulated by *Echorouk El Yawmi*, were primarily conveyed through epistemic modality, along with its accompanying linguistic features, to emphasise the significant presence of women in higher education and the predominance of females in Algerian universities. In addition to that, discourses of femininity were found in the texts of *Echorouk El Yawmi*. One aspect of the discourses of femininity pertains to women's physical appearance, expressed through the category of physical identification within the social actor framework. Another aspect related to the discourses of femininity found in the data from *Echorouk El Yawmi* is women's virginity. The newspaper used modality and its accompanying linguistic features as significant tools to discuss this issue. The third aspect of the discourses of femininity in *Echorouk El Yawmi* is family relations, which were primarily expressed through relational identification, as well as modality and its accompanying linguistic features. In addition, traces of feminist discourses were found in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi* by depicting women in non-traditional stereotypical roles through the category of functionalisation, as

well as visual structures. Concerning *El Khabar*, femininity and feminist discourses are the main discourses articulated in its texts. Like *Echorouk El Yawmi*, within the discourses of femininity, *El Khabar* referred to women in terms of their physical appearance and beauty through a combination of the category of physical identification, modality and its accompanying linguistic features, in addition to visual structures. Furthermore, *El Khabar* referred to women in terms of their family relations, by means of the category of relational identification and nomination by adding titles that show the marital status of the women. As for the feminist discourses, they were manifested in the data of *El Khabar* by means of modality alongside its accompanying features, functionalisation and visual structures. In the category of functionalisation, women were depicted in non-stereotypical functions, such as blacksmiths, taxi drivers and journalists. The category of modality and its accompanying linguistic features were also significant in the articulation of feminist discourses in *El Khabar*. For example, through the use of deontic modality, the journalist expressed the necessity to feminise the world including men, which challenges traditional notions of masculinity associated with men. In addition to that, the newspaper, using different forms of modality and other linguistic features, highlighted the capabilities of women and their active participation in the country's struggles, which challenges traditional expectations about gender.

Regarding the Francophone newspapers, feminist discourses were the primary focus of their texts. These discourses centred on women's rights, gender equality, and the representation of women in non-traditional roles. They were articulated through a combination of modality and their accompanying linguistic features, visual structures, and the social actor framework. Within the category of modality, all types were used in the data of the two Francophone newspapers to communicate feminist discourses. For example, through the use of deontic modality alongside other features, *El Watan* expressed the need

for women to fight to gain their rights. *Liberté*, for example, through the use of epistemic modality and other features, indicated a strong emphasis that there is no place for misogynistic discourses when addressing women's related issues. Besides, feminist discourses were expressed by means of the category of functionalisation, by assigning women non-stereotypical gender roles, such as feminists, militants, activists, journalists, combatants, heads of political parties and so on. Visual structures also played a key role in articulating feminist discourses in the Francophone newspapers, by portraying women in non-traditional roles, such as football referees and protesters. However, despite the predominance of feminist discourses in the two newspapers, traces of traditional femininity discourses were also found. These were conveyed through the depiction of women in terms of their physical appearance and family relations.

In addition to this, *manifest intertextuality*, which refers to explicit references to other texts, was an important feature of the texts of the selected newspapers. The findings of manifest intertextuality showed that there are differences in the intertextual links made by the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers. The instances of manifest intertextuality in the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers generally align with the discourses articulated in their texts. The response to the next research question focuses on the ideological implications of the discursive practices of the chosen Arabophone and Francophone newspapers.

❖ **Do the discursive practices of the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers support and/or undermine women's rights in Algeria?**

To answer this research question, the third level of Fairclough's (1989; 1992) framework was applied to the data, by examining the ideological implications of the discursive practices to the wider Algerian social context. The aim was to see whether the discursive practices of the texts of the Arabophone and Francophone newspapers reproduce or challenge unequal

power relations between women and men, i.e. whether they support or undermine women's rights. Thus, an examination of the Algerian social context is necessary at this level of analysis.

The discourses of women's outperformance of men articulated in *Echorouk El Yawmi* are hegemonic and serve to undermine women's rights in Algeria. The newspaper employed different linguistic features to emphasise the belief in female dominance in Algerian universities and the potential negative consequences of this phenomenon. This reflects a perspective that perceives women's success as a threat to men's societal positions. Despite advancements in higher education, the low representation of women in the labour market and decision-making positions in Algeria reveals persistent injustices. The discourses of gender segregation articulated in the same newspaper serve to reinforce women's subordination in society. This practice limits contact between unrelated women and men to prevent temptation and preserve chastity. However, gender segregation, practiced in various settings in Algerian society, reinforces traditional gender roles by confining women to domesticity through its rigid separation of private and public spheres, and by subjecting them to sexual harassment in mixed-gender settings, such as buses. Besides, the discourses of femininity articulated in the data of the selected news outlets reinforce societal norms that uphold male dominance. To begin with, the reference to women's virginity in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi* reinforces women's subordination in society and undermines their rights. Virginity, linked to the preservation of the hymen, is highly valued and associated with family's honour within the Algerian social context. This concept leads to unequal treatment of men and women regarding sexual experiences, reflecting patriarchal norms in which women bear the burden of family's honour. The consequences of losing virginity before marriage for girls/women can include repudiations, suicides, and even honour killings. Another aspect highlighted within the discourses of

femininity is women's physical appearance and beauty. The Arabophone newspapers, particularly *El Khabar*, emphasised women's physical appearance. This discourse uses categories, such as physical identification, modality, and visual structures, to convey societal expectations regarding women's beauty. In the Algerian context, beauty is highly valued, and women's worth is often linked to their physical characteristics, reinforcing traditional stereotypes that prioritise external appearances over skills and intelligence.

The anti-feminist discourses articulated in the data of *Echorouk El Yawmi* strengthen traditional gender roles and oppose feminist ideals. Modality and its accompanying linguistic features are key tools used to express opposition to feminism, with cultural and religious beliefs cited as reasons for considering feminism a threat to Algerian culture. Despite the presence of anti-feminist discourses, feminist discourses are also evident in the data of the study. These discourses, primarily articulated in the Francophone newspapers, challenge traditional beliefs about gender in society. In the Arabophone newspapers, feminist discourses are mainly expressed by challenging traditional conceptions about gender and depicting women in non-stereotypical roles. Both *Echorouk El Yawmi* and *El Khabar* newspapers used visual structures as a powerful means to depict women in non-stereotypical roles, such as protesting and working in office settings. Functionalisation is an important category used by the Francophone newspapers to depict women in non-stereotypical ways, which challenge traditional views that associate women with domesticity. *El Khabar* also contested common ideas about women by emphasising their abilities and active role in Algeria's struggles. This echoes the historical contribution of Algerian women during the war of independence and their significant involvement in the recent protest movement.

The Francophone newspapers communicated feminist discourses by focusing on women's rights and gender equality, as well as representing women in non-traditional roles.



This was achieved through the use of modality and its accompanying linguistic features, the social actor framework, and visual structures. For example, in dealing with the issue of gender equality, the Francophone newspapers focused on the legal rights of Algerian women. The newspapers utilised different forms of modality, including epistemic and deontic modality alongside other linguistic features, to emphasise achievements in women's legal rights, such as the quota law regarding women's political representation. Despite progress, there is still a call for further reform. *El Watan*, for instance, expressed the need for the abolition of discriminatory clauses in the family code, using deontic modality and its accompanying linguistic features. The role of feminist associations and their ongoing activism, especially within movements like Hirak, is emphasised as crucial in advancing women's rights. Feminist discourses are also articulated in the two Francophone newspapers through the portrayal of women in non-stereotypical roles and the emphasis on their crucial contributions in the country's struggles. *Liberté*, through the use of deontic modality and other linguistic features, indicated the necessity of continually acknowledging Algerian women's significant roles in the country's struggles. This challenges traditional gender expectations by portraying women as active participants in societal movements. Social actor representation deviates from traditional norms by assigning women non-traditional functions in the majority of instances of functionalisation.

Moreover, the intertextual references in both types of newspapers align with the discourses articulated in their texts. In the Francophone newspapers, the intertextual links focused on women's rights and gender equality by, for example, referencing statements of feminists and activists. In short, the Arabophone newspaper *Echorouk El Yawmi* tend to embrace a more conservative stance on gender relations. *El Khabar* articulated both hegemonic and non-hegemonic perspectives on gender. In contrast, the Francophone newspapers lean towards a more progressive view on gender relations. This generally

reflects the ideological affiliations of the newspapers. The next section of the chapter focuses on the important implications of the study.

#### **8.4. Research Contributions and Implications**

This section of the thesis deals with the contributions and implications of the present research at the theoretical, methodological, and practical levels. To begin with, the literature review has revealed that there are limited studies addressing the portrayal of women in media from a (feminist) critical perspective, specifically in the North African region and more broadly in the MENA region. Notable studies conducted in this region include Ahmed Sid (2020), Al Nuaimi (2020), Elyas et al. (2020), Harun (2021), Ismail and Harun (2021), Lida (2016), Nayef and El-Nashar (2015) and Zerrifi (2022). Indeed, studies adopting a (feminist) critical perspective to examine media portrayals of gender are predominantly conducted in Western contexts. Hence, the present study contributes to the existing literature by applying the FCDA approach (Lazar, 2005) to a non-Western context to uncover issues of power within Algerian news media texts. More specifically, it combines the FCDA approach (Lazar, 2005) along with Fairclough's (1989; 1992) three-dimensional model of CDA to provide a systematic and in-depth analysis of the representation of women in news texts written in Arabic and French. Hence, the present study makes an important contribution to the literature on gender and media studies by expanding the application of the FCDA approach to a non-Western context i.e. North Africa. The application of the FCDA approach and CDA tools for the analysis of news media texts in Algeria is valuable, as it presents a critical perspective on gender in Algeria by revealing discourses that either reinforce or challenge the existing gender norms. In addition, the literature review covering North Africa specifically, and the MENA region more generally, indicates the issue of women's stereotypical portrayal in the media. For example, studies conducted by Nayef and El-Nashar (2015), Ahmed Sid (2020) and Ismail and Harun (2021) revealed that women were

portrayed in the media as victims and in passive, traditional roles. In Western contexts, numerous studies have also highlighted stereotypical depictions of women in the media, including the reinforcement of traditional roles (Garcia-Blanco and Wahl-Jorgensen, 2012), sexualisation and objectification (Tartaglia and Rollero, 2015), as well as victimisation (Aznar and Rodríguez-Wangüemert, 2017). However, some studies, such as De La Paz (2018) and Kjeldsen et al. (2024), have identified aspects of positive portrayal of women in the media. De La Paz (2018) demonstrated a shift away from traditional depictions, noting that words deemed 'sexist' or negative towards women were minimal. Similarly, Kjeldsen et al. (2024) highlighted some progress in the depiction of women by offering a more balanced representation of women, with equal emphasis on their expertise and authority alongside men. The present study captures a more nuanced and varied representation of women than what has been shown in previous studies, as it incorporates both conservative and progressive perspectives on gender. While the study revealed viewpoints about gender that align with previous research, such as family roles, physical appearance, and objectification, it also uncovered progressive viewpoints that portray women in non-stereotypical roles and as agents of change, critique the patriarchal social order, and advocate for gender equality and women's emancipation. The study, hence, not only reveals the ways in which media discourse reinforces stereotypes about gender, but it also shows how it can challenge and reshape perceptions through a detailed analysis of linguistic and visual elements across two languages in a North African context. This represents a significant theoretical contribution of the research project to the existing literature on gender and media studies in the region.

The review of the literature in Algeria and the MENA region in general has also demonstrated that most existing studies are mainly centred on Arabic and/or English media texts. This includes works conducted by Ahmed Sid (2020), Al Nuaimi (2020), Debbagh (2012), Elyas et al. (2020), Harun (2021), Ismail and Harun (2021), Tabaza (2022) and Zerrifi

(2022). In the Algerian context, the few studies available on the subject, specifically those conducted by Ahmed Sid (2020) and Zerrifi (2022), have primarily focused on Arabic media texts. This study is original in its analysis of the portrayal of women in news media texts in both Arabic and French during a period characterised by social and political upheavals in Algeria (2016-2021), relying on the FCDA approach (Lazar, 2005) and CDA tools. In effect, this research project makes a valuable contribution to the literature on gender and media studies by being the first to apply the FCDA approach to analyse both the linguistic and visual discourse on women in Arabophone and Francophone newspapers, with a focus on the Algerian context. By considering both Arabophone and Francophone newspapers in Algeria, the study shows the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Algerian social context. It offers a comprehensive and constructive analysis of the gender category by identifying and showing discourses that perpetuate traditional views on gender, thereby sustaining imbalanced power dynamics between women and men in Algeria, which are more prevalent in the Arabophone newspapers, as discussed in Chapter Five. The study also demonstrates that non-hegemonic perspectives are also present in these newspapers by representing women in non-stereotypical roles and critiquing the patriarchal system. Moreover, the research study highlights discourses that challenge hegemonic perspectives and actively advocate for women's rights and gender equality, which are mainly articulated in the Francophone newspapers, as demonstrated in Chapter Six. Thus, this study points out how media discourses in the selected Arabophone and Francophone newspapers reflect broader societal tensions between tradition and modernity in Algeria. It shows the role of language in reflecting and constructing different viewpoints about gender that compete for stability and influence in the Algerian social context.

The review of the literature in the MENA region has also indicated that studies dealing with the portrayal of women in the media concentrated mainly on analysing the

linguistic mode of communication. However, it is crucial to recognise that discourses and ideologies are conveyed through both linguistic and non-linguistic means. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of how media express their perspectives to the audience can be achieved by examining both modes of meaning-making. In contrast to previous research that mainly concentrated on linguistic analysis, this study takes a holistic approach by incorporating both linguistic and visual elements. Indeed, by integrating both modes of communication, the research provides a thorough account of how news media texts communicate discourses and ideologies about gender through their linguistic and visual choices. Discourses and ideologies are coded in both linguistic and visual modes of communication and dealing with the two will help gain a holistic view of the representations of women in the media. As Lazar (2005:5) suggests: '...a multimodal view of discourse has great value for holistic feminist critique of constructions of gender'. The methodology employed in this study is eclectic, combining linguistic and visual tools, namely modality, social actor, and visual grammar. This eclectic approach is essential in studying the complex phenomenon of gender construction in discourse. It enables a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the role of news media in articulating various discourses and ideologies about gender through their choices in language and images. Also, through an analysis of linguistic choices employing modality and social actor features, the study effectively demonstrates the applicability of these tools to both Arabic and French languages. This not only enhances our understanding of the distinct linguistic characteristics of Arabic and French, but also shows how these linguistic categories are utilised across two different languages to express varied and competing perspectives on gender in the texts of the Algerian press. The study shows the value of integrating various linguistic and visual analysis tools to reveal the discourses and ideologies about gender that influence people's thoughts, speech, and behaviour, yet often remain unnoticed.

This study also holds practical significance by raising critical awareness among Algerian journalists about the role of media, particularly news media, in shaping gender-related discourses and ideologies. Through a critical analysis of the data, the findings demonstrate key injustices faced by women in Algerian society. Addressing power dynamics in discourse is essential for raising awareness, as these issues subtly influence societal perceptions. Indeed, media constitute one of the most powerful institutions that can shape and change people's attitudes about gender. Therefore, this study is useful for Algerian journalists in showing how the news media are sites for transmitting different images of gender. It serves as an invitation to Algerian journalists to construct images that support women's rights and challenge patriarchal and misogynistic societal beliefs that contribute to women's subordination in society. The research findings could guide policymakers to implement training programmes for journalists that aim to enhance the journalists' critical assessment of their portrayals of women. The training should specifically focus on equipping journalists with the skills to avoid perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing gender injustices in their reporting. However, it is essential to emphasise that such training must also address subconscious biases and potential overt resistance from professionals in media outlets, as these factors can pose significant barriers to achieving meaningful impact of the training workshops.

This research also raises the awareness of Algerian women about taken-for granted beliefs about their gendered selves. It encourages them to be critical about dominant gendered discourses in the Algerian social context and how they are powerful means for maintaining and reinforcing women's subordination in society. This research argues that gender ideology is acquired through the process of naturalisation through discourse. This could be changed through alternative discourses about gender that challenge dominant gender norms and promote women's rights. The media can play a crucial role in

transmitting alternative views about gender that challenge imbalanced power dynamics between women and men. The present study emphasises the importance of discursive change by demonstrating the crucial role that language and semiotic modes can play in challenging patriarchal beliefs that sustain women's subordination in society.

### **8.5. Limitations of the Research**

While this study addressed its intended objectives, it is important to acknowledge some of its potential limitations. The first limitation relates to the closure of one of the selected news outlets, which is *Liberté* in 2022 after the completion of data collection. This Francophone newspaper holds substantial importance in the Algerian media landscape, and its closure poses a limitation to the concentration of the study on the most influential newspapers in Algeria. Another limitation is the small size of the data selected and analysed to attain the objectives of the research study. Since the present study adopted both linguistic and semiotic parameters for textual analysis, I opted for analysing smaller sample of news articles published over a six-year period to achieve an in-depth analysis of the data. This decision was also influenced by time constraints, which prevented the selection and examination of a larger sample of news articles. Besides, due to the nature of the study, which adopted a bottom-up approach for analysing the data, the study concentrated on only some elements of selected analytical frameworks of the study. For instance, in social actor representation, not all classifications were applied, as they did not contribute significantly to the objectives of the study. The constraints were strategic choices made to prioritise depth and relevance in the analysis.

### **8.6. Suggestions for Future Research**

This final section of the thesis concentrates on providing some suggestions for future research. Firstly, while the present study specifically examined the representation of

women the Algerian news media, further research could investigate the representation of both women and men in the texts of news media to provide a comparative study of the way women and men are portrayed in Algerian news media. Such an investigation would deepen our understanding of gender dynamics in media discourse in Algeria. Future research could also investigate the representation of gender in other forms of media, such as social media (including Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram), which are powerful sites for transmitting different discourses about gender in the Algerian context. Furthermore, the current study concentrated on examining the representation of women in news articles published between 8 and 9 March within the time period between 2016 and 2021. Subsequent research could explore the representation of women in articles published on different days and within different time periods, such as post-Hirak era. In addition to that, while the present study analysed written language and static images, other studies could deal with spoken language and moving images by, for example, examining the portrayal of gender in both private and public TV channels broadcast in Tamazight/Berber, Arabic, or French in Algeria. Last but not least, I would suggest that future research could investigate the representation of women in Algerian media using alternative data analysis approaches, such as a corpus-based method, to analyse a more extensive set of data. Such an analysis would provide a more nuanced understanding of the portrayal of gender in Algerian media. With these suggestions, it is hoped that future research on gender representation in Algerian media will benefit from the insights provided in this thesis.



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**Appendix 1: News Articles of Echorouk El Yawmi**

Article Number	Title	Date of Publication	Page	Word Count	Image(s) Accompanying the Article
1	صراع الأفكار يشتعل بين الطالبات المنقبات والمتحزرات في عيد المرأة A clash of ideas be- tween veiled and emanci- pated women on women's day	08/03/2016	10	324 words	/
2	سهام .. ابنة تقرت التي تحلم أن تكون سفيرة الجنوب Siham.. a daughter of Tugurt who dreams of be- ing the am- bassador of the south	08/03/2016	9	329 words	
3	يوم المرأة والنآئحات !المستأجرة Women's day and the pro- fessional mourning women (wail- ing women)!	08/03/2017	12	564 words	
4	ماذا بعد تاء التأنيث؟ What after ت for the femi- nine form?	08/03/2018	4	353 words	/
5	جزائريات يصلن إلى العالمية ويحققن النجومية عبر الفضاء الإفتراضي	08/03/2018	17	570 words	/


	Algerian women reached the world through the virtual space				
6	شهادة إثبات العذرية ضمان و اطمئنان للفتيات المقبلات على الزواج Certificate of virginity is a reassurance for brides-to-be	09/03/2019	12	521 words	
7	!لا تصادقني رجلا! Don't be-friend a man!	09/03/2019	12	493 words	/
8	مسيرات وردية كسرت هاجس الخوف Pink and rosy demonstrations broke the fear.	09/03/2019	19	533 words	  
9	تساؤلات في موضوع الزحف النسوي Questions about the issue of women's progress	09/03/2020	20	470 words	/

10	بين مشروع الزوجة الصالحة و مشروع إصلاح الزوجة Between the project of 'the good wife' and the pro- ject of 're- forming the wife'	08/03/2021	12	1387 words	
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**Appendix 2: News Articles of *El Khabar***



Article Number	Title	Date of Publication	Page	Word Count	Image(s) accompanying the article
11	الكاراكو و الفرقاني و الشدة تنافس الأزياء العصرية Karako, Al- Furgani and Al-Shidda compete with modern fashion	08/03/2016	12	353 words	/
12	البونشو يستهوي المحجبات في السهرات The poncho attracts veiled women in soirees	08/03/2016	12	102 words	
13	المرأة الجزائرية أصبحت تنفق على نفسها Algerian women are now spend- ing more on themselves	08/03/2016	12	120 words	

14	ماكياج الربيع Spring Makeup	08/03/2016	13	92 words	
15	أحزاب تمنح القوامة للنساء في التشريعات Political parties grant women leadership in legislative elections	09/03/2017	3	520 words	/
16	جزائريات فرنسا يتجندن لبناء مستقبل الجزائر Algerian women of France are mobilising to build Algeria's future.	08/03/2019	7	1155 words	 
17	حذار من مستحضرات التجميل المغشوشة و الضارة Beware of harmful cosmetic products	08/03/2019	18		
18	في تفكيك ذكورة المعنى في سن اليأس Deconstructing masculine meanings in menopause	08/03/2020	20	2312 words	/


19	جزائريات استثنائيات Exceptional Algerian Women	08/03/2021	15	1173 words	
20	من يكتب عن يوم المرأة بعد رحيلك Who would write about Women's Day after you've gone?	08/03/2021	15	450 words	/

### **Appendix 3: News Articles of El Watan**


Article Number	Title	Date of Publication	Page	Word Count	Image(s) Accompanying the article
21	<i>La loi à l'épreuve de la pratique sociale.</i>  The law put to the test of social practice.	08/03/2016	2	692 words	/
22	<i>Le réquisitoire des associations</i>  The indictment of associations	08/03/2016	3	612 words	
23	<i>Résistance</i>  Resistance	08/03/2017		532 words	/
24	<i>Un combat de tous les jours</i>  A daily fight	08/03/2018	2	1256 words	/



25	<p><i>Melissa Ziad, la ballerine de l'espoir.</i></p> <p>Melissa Ziad, the ballerina of hope.</p>	09/03/2019	5	659 words	
26	<p><i>Dignes héritières des moudjahidates</i></p> <p>Worthy heirs of the Freedom Fighters</p>	09/03/2019	5	699 words	/
27	<p><i>Un 8 Mars Particulier pour les femmes</i></p> <p>A Special March 8 for Women</p>	09/03/2019	5	878 words	/
28	<p>« <i>Le 8 Mars, journée de lutte, pas de fête</i> »</p> <p>8 March, a day of struggle not celebration.</p>	08/03/2020	3	814 words	
29	<p>« <i>Citoyenne à part entière et non un enjeu politique</i> »</p> <p>A full Citizen, not a political pawn.</p>	08/03/2020	3	1243 words	/



30	<i>Les femmes de plus en plus victimes de violences.</i>  Women increasingly victims of violence	08/03/2021	2	981 words	
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#### **Appendix 4: News Articles of *Liberté***

Article Number	Title	Date of Publication	Page	Word Count	Image (s) accompanying the article
31	<i>Le discours et la réalité</i>  The discourse and Reality	08/03/2016	3	682 words	/
32	<i>Manifeste pour la dignité et l'intégrité de la femme algérienne.</i>  Manifesto for the dignity and integrity of Algerian women	09/03/2017	2	1113 words	/
33	<i>Citoyenne?</i>  Citizen?	09/03/2017	3	339 words	/
34	<i>Le fabuleux destin d'une immortelle!</i>  The fabulous fate of an immortal woman!	08/03/2018	13	692 words	
35	<i>La femme en songe</i>  The woman in a dream	08/03/2018		245 words	/

36	<i>La mobilisation encore plus importante avec les femmes</i>  The mobilisation is more important with women	08-09/03/2019	2	454 words	
37	<i>La femme un acteur majeur dans du Hirak</i>  Women are major actors in the Hirak movement	08/03/2020	3	632 words	
38	<i>Luttes algériennes</i>  Algerian struggles	08/03/2020	3	523 words	/
39	<i>Actrice majeure</i>  A Major Actress	08/03/2021	3	352 words	/
40	<i>La femme qui arbitre les hommes</i>  The woman who referees men.	08/03/2021	13	413 words	