

IMAGE OF MUSLIM WOMEN REPRESENTED BY MEANS OF MODERN ENGLISH

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study is to show the image of Muslim women and to identify their position at the language level.

Methodology: In this research, the following materials were used for conceptual and semantic analysis: scientific articles including Scopus and WOS bases, the Quran, scientific research findings, dictionaries, etc. Conceptual analysis included several approaches: logical, psycholinguistic and philosophical approaches. Also, descriptive, comparative-historical, and structural analysis were used.

Main Findings: As a result, a new woman has another new image in all aspects of life and at the language level as well. In conclusion, there has been a change in the generally accepted view of the place of women, one of the reasons for this phenomenon has been the resettlement of migrants from the countries of the Middle East to English-speaking countries, in particular to Great Britain.

Applications: This research can be used by women's rights organizations, Muslim women's organizations as well as human rights organizations.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, Muslim women representation reflection and influence on modern English language has been studied.

Keywords: *Gender Linguistics, Flow of Migrants, Loans.*

INTRODUCTION

During the beginning of the second part of the 20th century, a new women's movement appeared in Germany and the USA. Development of a new branch in linguistic study – feminist criticism of language - was one of the main results of this movement. It deals with overcoming male dominance in language. One of the first authors to focus on this aspect is [Lakoff \(1975\)](#). She wrote the book, "Language and woman's place"; wherein, she confirms that in language a man's worldview is reflected and it is imposed on the woman. Women who are socially capable of playing a role in a patriarchal society usually do not take all their social identities from their femininity and adapt themselves to some extent with the social functions of men, but these women also pay some money, which men face them as a threat for themselves as they resist changing their behavior. Western feminism, as a producer and source of texts and cultural messages, can rely on the power of the means of transmitting messages, texts, and media that has in a variety of ways, such as publishing products (books and magazines) in original or translated, visual productions (films, photographs and the like), audio production (radio programs), Internet websites, etc., as well as the dissemination of news of the actions of feminists in the world media and the influence of international organizations on the mentality of women. There is a growing form of discourse to organize and actually turn to the hegemonic discourse of the enlightened women of the world. But the arrival of immigrants to a country can be a serious challenge to the concept of woman and feminism in a country, because the linguistic and cultural differences between host countries and immigrants make the views of both groups change ([Zare, 2015](#)). The list of Muslim immigrants to the United Kingdom is one of these, because both Muslim immigrants revisit their views on women and the British people are influenced by their language and culture. Recently, a huge flow of refugees from the Middle East countries to the English-speaking countries was observed and that is why there is an interest in Muslim women representation in language. Over this process, we can name some changes in the English language. First, from the point of view of traditional linguistics, in English, new Arab loans and changes at the grammatical and morphological levels appear. Secondly, from the point of view of feministic approach, Muslim woman representation has its reflection and influence on modern English language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of gender is a social and linguistic term that is used for the designation of sexual differentiation. In modern society, behavior stereotypes (including at the linguistic level) were formed and it depends on gender as this division of society is the most obvious. Nowadays a new branch of linguistics (feminist criticism of language) has appeared as a result of the new women's movement in the USA and Germany in the late sixties and in the early seventies. One of fundamental works in this aspect is the work of Lakoff, "Language and woman's place". In this book, certain features of women's language behavior were observed and it was noted that women try to be softer and reserved in dialogue, while men dominate and control the situation. In the English language, the following features of women's dialogue were observed: the frequent use of disjunctive question, use of intonation of rise instead of fall, use of semantic neural words, emphasis and modal particles. If women begin to use men's speech models, it may sound rough and unladylike ([Hoad, 1993](#); [Serjeantson, 1937](#)).

Tannen was a follower of Lakoff and wrote the best-seller "You Just Don't Understand." The main theme of this book is the description of communicative misunderstanding between man and woman during a conversation with a heterosexual group. With the help of various situations, the author explains a communication problem which appears because of personality formation in various language environments (male or female). The term gender in English language was initially used for the designation of grammatical aspect. With the development of humanitarian knowledge, the word meaning extends and gets connotative and denotative components. An analysis of the British dictionaries of the middle of the 20th century was done. It was based on the feminist criticism of language theory about the sexist use of language. The research was conducted on the illustrative contexts material of the Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English ([Hornby, 1965](#)) (ALDCE). It was found that: Woman has a secondary status unlike man, i.e. manifestation of gender asymmetry. The listed aspects have the following manifestation in a context: Woman obscurity in language is shown by means of more frequent use of he and man; A person writes his name in an application form; We should not judge a man by his appearances; A certain word order while telling social roles like husband, wife and children; Stereotypical presentation of man and woman in the context; Politeness is an attribute of a gentleman; and Every woman should learn to cook.

Cognitive features of verbal behavior in the linguistic aspect are of great interest. It should be noted that man and woman have various language consciousness. This fact is explained by biological distinctions, the distinction of language communication spheres and language consciousness. The analysis of English-speaking men speech and even those who study English shows that in men's speech, there is a tendency to use the pronoun "I". For women, it is typical to use on the contrary. Such replacement of pronouns may be considered from a psychological point of view. There is a statement that women have more blurred outlines of the concept of ego while men have clear lines of the ego concept ([Crystal, 2003](#); [Sears, 2018](#); [Oliveira et al., 2018](#); [Salimi et al., 2019](#)).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The following materials were used in the current study: scientific articles, including Scopus and WOS bases; the Quran; scientific research findings; dictionaries; etc. The materials were used for conceptual and semantic analysis. Conceptual analysis has several approaches: logical, psycholinguistic and philosophical approaches. Also, descriptive, comparative-historical, and structural analysis were used ([Kovalev & Sharbatov, 2008](#); [Ajallooeian et al., 2015](#); [Al-Hameed et al., 2018](#)).

RESULTS

English has been recognized as an international language for a long time, as a consequence of which, the influence of other languages on English is being observed for several years. The Arabic loans in English are one of the most numerous consequences. A large number of the Arab loans is caused by several facts:

1. First of all, the Arab loans began to appear in English because of different religious worldviews. Now the religious worldview in English language is focused on Christianity, and in Arabic language on Islam.
2. Great Britain is in close political and economic relations with East countries for a long time already.
3. During the XV-XVII centuries, the Arabic language had a great influence on French, which in turn was the language of the English nobility. Thus, many loans have come to English not directly but by means of another language ([Kartashkova et al., 2002](#)).
4. Recently, the flow of migrants from the Arab world is amplified which not only brought new words to English but also made big changes in grammar and phonetics.

Migrants from the Middle East countries have made changes not only to the English language but also at the same time, brought their culture and ancient traditions. One of the main points in this aspect is the attitude towards women in Islam. The status of women in Islam is observed by many researchers as the most controversial and at the same time serious problem not only for Muslims, but also for those who are in the sphere of protecting the rights of Muslim women ([Alkaisy, 1986](#)).

In general, the true attitude of Islam towards the women is caused by the Arab tribe's nomadic way of life. It is characterized by the following:

1. Woman is an independent being who, undoubtedly, is a person, has a soul and free will to make decisions on marriage or commission or evil actions. The price for living a righteous life for women is not different from the price for men and pays off by the same principles.
2. At the same time, a woman, undoubtedly, is weaker than a man; therefore, in certain cases (marriage, minority or woman's old age) he can act as her trustee, but he cannot order her ([Kuprieva, 2012](#)).

The above characteristics follow only from nomadic traditions, as women were really weaker than men at that time. The early Islamic society did not reject women at all and allowed them to participate in all men's activities; therefore, no restrictions existed on Islamic women. The Muslim woman has respect and status not because of her physical appeal and participation in social life on equal terms with a man, but because of her piety and aspiration to hide the beauty and sexuality, the female charm and to store it for her future husband. Actually, Islam orders hijab not only for protecting the society from sexual desire and honoring woman and protecting their dignity, but also for the neutralization of her sexuality to be positive and constructive. Thanks to her modest attire and respectability, men can treat her for her personality, but not as a sexual object. Woman's value for society is defined not by her physical appearance but by her human advantages. For the Muslim women, the source for their public respect and status are her character and personal qualities, her modesty and piety, education and for her roles as wife and mother ([Maududy, 1993](#); [Tannen, 1991](#)).

From a religious aspect, woman plays the role of a mother, and a faithful and loving wife. This image acquires much significance in a religion. Man has another role that dominates woman. The problem is that woman has an image as a housewife and man has an image as a breadwinner. There is a stereotype that housewives are weak and breadwinners are strong and independent. That is why women are considered to be less intellectual, individual and assertive in comparison with men. In many respects, these stereotypes come from a religious tradition. Many Muslims compare the position of woman in Islamic countries to the objected woman's position in the West. They note that in the West, women work for many hours because of their need for money. Besides, they are responsible for house duties and children's education. Western ideologists claim that it is difficult to exempt them from these works! They also add that "It is unworthy for the Muslim women to be housewives only. Society needs women specialists in many spheres: female lecturers, journalists, and doctors. The Muslim woman who is professional in medicine, for example, can make very good earnings" ([Breitborde, 1993: 12](#)).

Islam respects the rights of woman to work that is good for the society and family. Khadijah, the wife of Prophet Muhammad, as we know, did business successfully. There is no absolute ban on female labor in Islam, but, in view of the special nature of the woman, Sharia has defined several conditions that provide for the protection of a woman's honor, health and safety:

1. Women have to work separately from men, if it is possible, as mixing is harmful for both women and men.
2. A woman who wants to work has to obtain an agreement from her husband, father, brother or trustee.
3. Labor should not have a negative effect on the physical and spiritual condition of a woman.
4. Women are recommended to work in those areas where it would be more efficient and expedient:
 - Sector of care and education, in particular, for girls.
 - Health sector, especially gynecology.
 - Women's clothes production, etc.
 - Consulting services in business, psychology, design, etc.
 - Authorship.
5. The work should not take too much time. Women need to find time for themselves, their children and husband.
6. It is prohibited to use cosmetics and perfumery outdoors. It is necessary to dress decently and to behave with strangers as it befits a strong believer.

According to social networks, quizzing today in the European countries, there exists the following opinions about Muslim women: woman in the Islamic world follows traditions, she wears the long not so fitting clothes, and covers her head. A woman conducts herself decently, does not afford a loud talk, laughter, or coquettish intonation. There is a widespread opinion that the Muslim women do not work, she is engaged in her house and with her children, besides, for her, it is forbidden to leave the house without a man (father, brother or husband). However, today Muslim women are very active. Women in the Islamic world study new computer technologies, they are engaged in politics, teaching, journalism, and medicine. It is obvious, that education and work are available and allowed for Muslim women, contrary to the cliché.

Recently, there has been a large inflow of immigrants from the Middle East to Europe, including the United Kingdom. According to The United Nations, there are currently over 65 million people who have had to leave their homes. Some have settled in new countries; many more are living in refugee camps, waiting for it to be safe enough to go home or to be resettled in a different country. Many countries are facing the worst refugee crisis in history. Fifty-five percent of refugees worldwide come from Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan. Since the start of the war, more than 5.6 million Syrians have escaped the country and 6.1 million are still living in Syria but have had to leave their homes. Around half of these 11 million people are children ([Darwish, 2004](#)).

Most of the refugees are Islamic women. Al-Arabiya English reported that the British Prime Minister called on Muslim women to learn English. British Prime Minister David Cameron expressed the need to help Muslim women from immigrant communities in the study of English. The prime minister said that it was time to challenge the backwardness of a small minority of men in the Muslim community and help women to increase their literacy levels. Liberal Democrats support English language classes for anyone, regardless of race, religion or gender and blocked these plans to cut the funding for them in coalition. According to the Prime Minister, migrants may be required to know English at a good level, otherwise they may be faced with the inability to obtain the right to permanent residence in the country. According to Cameron, 190,000 Muslim women in Britain, more precisely 22% of the total number of followers of Islam in the country, does not speak English or owns it poorly ([Eckert & Mcconnellginett, 2003](#)).

Let us look at the image of a woman in Islam. According to the report of the World Economic Forum on the global gender gap — 2013, there is a huge gap between men and women in key areas such as health care, education, economy and policy in the Muslim countries. Any Muslim country with the highest index of gender equality has not got to the top ten countries. On the contrary, 9 of 10 countries at the end of the rating are countries of the Muslim world. According to the World Bank data, the gender gap in the MENA region is gradually reduced. Today there are more women at universities than men, and female mortality during childbirth is lower than the average world figures. But despite progress in education and health care spheres, women do not have enough opportunities in economic and political life. They make only one fourth of the labor market, while in other countries women participation in the labor market makes about fifty percent. Islamic culture is characterized by the preservation of ancient traditions and following them. However, times change, and women are increasingly fighting against the yoke of hard traditions and customs. The position of Islamic woman is best characterized by the verses from the Quran and the statements of Prophet Muhammad ([Badauy, 1980](#)).

The Quran says that both of the sexes were vested with the divine spirit because both were created with one human and spiritual nature. It further states that when God give him a proportional appearance and breathed into him from His spirit, he fall down before Him. A man and a woman have the same spirit, so it is natural that the Quran places equal religious and moral obligations on them. The Quran says: "I will not destroy the deeds committed by any of you, whether male or female. Some of you have descended from others." It is reported that the second caliph of Islam, Umar ibn al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "By Allah, we are not accustomed to think that a woman has anything, until Allah has shown us this in the Quran, and gave them, than has been allocated" ([AlKanady, 1991: 22](#)).

These words show that the message of the Quran brought cardinal changes in the gender norms of the Arabs of the 6th-7th centuries. The message of the Quran had a radical transformative character in terms of gender equality, at least for the first generation of Muslims. The first person to believe in the message of the Prophet Muhammad was a woman - his first wife Khadija. The first martyr for Islam, too, was a woman, Zumaia. The two wives of the Prophet Muhammad, Aisha and Umm Salam, were among the greatest transmitters of the hadith. Many of today's Muslim rituals have come down to us thanks to the messages of these two great women. The world's first institution of higher education - the University of Karaouine (Al Quaraouiyine) in Fez, Morocco - was also founded by a woman named Fatima al-Fikhri ([Saurykova et al., 2018; Ameen et al., 2018](#)).

Many Muslims, more often through ignorance, lead to the proof of the superiority of men, 34 verses 4 of the Qur'an. However, in his book, *Gender Equality in Islam*, Jamal Badawi writes: The Quran does not state anywhere that one sex surpasses the other. Some mistakenly translate *kivama* as superiority, whereas in fact it implies a higher degree of responsibility. The problem of domestic violence is as acute in Muslim countries as it is in the rest of the world. The International Health Organization affirms that violence against women is a global problem. The London-based organization *Imams against Domestic Abuse* produced the report 'The End to Hitting Women,' which states: Under no circumstances and in no way does Islam encourage or tolerate violence against women. An inexplicable obsession with conservative Muslims and many non-Muslims is caused by such a simple thing as a headscarf in a woman. Conservatives use the hijab to determine the piety of a woman. Many non-Muslims consider it a symbol of oppression.

The Ayat of the Quran refers to the hijab as a sign of feminine modesty and begins with an exhortation of the men: Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their sexual organs. Nevertheless, some men disregard these rules and, to top it off, blame women, although they themselves are victims of male immodesty. Like all other aspects of Islam, hijab is the right of a woman, through which she identifies herself and expresses her devotion to the Almighty. This applies only to her and God. To force to wear or not to wear a hijab is unacceptable. The most important while following the rules and expansion of women opportunities is to realize that they need to have freedom and a chance to choose their own way of life without fear, intimidations and coercion from religious aspects.

CONCLUSION

A distinctive feature of the Islamic religion is the adherence to traditions and customs, which practically did not change. A woman is of great importance, according to the Quran, as she has a significant role. However, a man has a higher position and is endowed with more rights and powers. Recently, there has been a change in the generally accepted view of the place of the woman, one of the reasons for this phenomenon has been the resettlement of migrants from the countries of the Middle East to English-speaking countries, in particular to the Great Britain. Against the backdrop of such a sociopolitical situation, women received the right to education, work and independence.

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