

# Investigating the Role of Discourse Structures in Gender Representation in Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times

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## Abstract

This study tried to investigate “gender representation” in two English newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* focusing on the type of employed discourse strategies. For this to achieve, 7 articles were selected from each newspaper to be investigated using Van Dijk’s (2000) “socio-cognitive model” of text analysis. 286 discourse strategies were used in 7 articles of *Los Angeles Times* while it was just 149 for *Tehran Times* articles; it was demonstrated that the male-female representation is significantly different in *Los Angeles Times* compared with *Tehran Times*; genders were represented differently through employing diverse discourse strategies in these two newspapers. *Los Angeles Times* followed a nearly balanced way in depicting genders in terms of discourse strategies (i.e., the discourse strategies used for females are not significantly different from those which were used for males). On the contrary, *Tehran Times* was shown to represent two genders differently through employing different discourse strategies; hence, it had a sexist attitude for representing both genders.

**Keywords:** Sexist attitude, Socio-cognitive model, Gender representation, Discourse strategies, Media

## 1. Introduction

Fairclough (2001) argued that investigating “discourse” may reveal power relations, inequalities, dominance and discrimination in society. In effect, “discourse” is manifested in different shapes through which different identities, ideology or hegemony may be embedded (Ivanic, 1997). Teo (2002) stated that “discourse does not merely reflect social processes and structures but affirms, consolidates and reproduces existing social structures” (p. 6). McGregor (2003) also acknowledged that discourse analysis addresses social problems and tries to detect the sociopolitical dominance which is hidden.

Considering the fact that media are powerful instruments of educating the society (e.g. Van Dijk, 1991 elaborated on the roles of news reports in ethnic relation, McGregor (2003) about the role of news reports on dominant forces of society, or Kress (2000) about the adoption of particular discourse structure in ideological system), by their analysis invaluable social, linguistic and cultural implications would be attained. Newspapers as Van Dijk, (2006) puts it, “are instruments of power through which the minds of readers, viewers, and their actions are controlled by manipulating language in general and by some changes on the discourse in particular” (p. 34).

Gender as one of the determining social practices depicted in the newspapers may reveal the value of discourse in detecting the social issues. This was the motivation to conduct a study on the gender representation in two newspapers, namely, *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* which are admittedly follow different perspectives in presenting the issue of gender. To this end, Van Dijk’s (2000) “socio-cognitive model” was selected to analyze the 14 selected articles from the two newspapers to reveal the relationship between discourse structures and their functions in gender representation and to make it possible to find reasonable answers to the following questions:

- Is there any difference between the two newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* in presenting the genders?
- Is there any difference between the two newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* in terms of male-female representation?

## 2. Literature Review

“Discourse” according to Van Dijk (1997), is entangled with complex social events in which language is used for commu expressing feelings, ideas and believes to others. In effect, he identified three dimensions for discourse as language use, the communication of believes (cognition), and social interaction (p. 2). Moreover, he pointed to multidisciplinary orientation in discourse studies in which socio-cognitive approach tackle mental representations, the processes language users go through resorting to manifesting the relationships between the structures of discourse and interaction in communicative events in a social structure. In fact, discourse, in Van Dijk’s view, is achievable through the connections among language use, beliefs, and social interactions.

Gee (1999) considered two types of discourse, i.e. small-d-discourse and capital-d-Discourse.

The former refers to actual representation of language (i.e., what is observable in a talk or in a text), whereas the latter represents the knowledge behind the talk or texts (i.e. perspectives, behaviors, the world systems of thoughts, assumptions, beliefs, actions, or social practices). Similarly, Chilton (2004) considered two types of “discourse” through different terminology, namely, small-l-language and capital-L-Language.

Widdowson (2000) considered “discourse” as “the pragmatic process of meaning negotiation” (p. 8). Fairclough and Wodak (1997) pointed out that “discourse” involves language use, meaning-making in the social process, and social action which are “socially-constitutive” and “socially-shaped” (p. 276). Fairclough (1989, 2001) preferring *semiosis*, tried to deal with “discourse” in a different way. In fact, Fairclough (2001) considered *semiosis* as a striking factor in manipulating world action, interaction and identity construction resorting to “perspectives of different groups of social actors” (p. 164). Fairclough and Wodak (1997) indicated that discourses “are partly realized in ways of using language, but partly in other ways, for example visual semiosis” (p. 261). Considering the fact that the Van Dijk’s trend has been pivotal to this study, the following lines try to present his discourse trend albeit briefly.

### *2.1 Discourse and Cognition, Society and Power*

One of the issues considered by Van Dijk in dealing with “discourse” is its relation with cognition. Van Dijk (1997) stated that “discourse” is related to cognition through the cognitive representation people construct in their minds\_ using codes, features or meaning. He continued that brain goes through a complex bundle of processes for understanding a “discourse”; these processes are complicated since the personal experiences and knowledge differ from one individual to another. Furthermore, when the nature of a message is incomplete, unclear, redundant and imprecise these processes become more complex. Van Dijk (1997) exemplified “long-term memory, searching for information, comparing structures that are available in working memory and building structures by adding, deleting, re-arranging, or connecting information” (p. 293). Van Dijk continued that these complex bundles of processes are executed in milli-seconds, mechanically and unconsciously.

Considering this, Van Dijk (2000) rationalized that “discourse” cannot be analyzed comprehensively without resorting to a cognitive framework. In understanding any message, according to Van Dijk (2006), general information and context-related issues should be analyzed and interpreted; after that, the extracted data should be stored in memory to be classified in relation to both previous and new models of situations. In effect, Van Dijk (2006) considered fragments of situation models and relevant information of communicative situations as crucial for discourse production. Furthermore, Van Dijk (2006) stated that “cognitive processes are essential for decoding socially-shared knowledge and beliefs and having a successful and efficient communication” (p. 48). The processes which are acquired, employed, or changed through verbal or non-verbal cultural interactions.

One of the main roles of “discourse” is its social dimension as emphasized by Van Dijk (1997) through the connections between language and society. Van Dijk (1997) stressed that “language” plays a very important role in society through which people express their

identities and assume to be members of a society, cultural group, or community besides using it as a communicative medium. Accordingly, analyzing “discourse” may reveal the way language is used within a particular group, organization, culture or society (Van Dijk, 1997). In Van Dijk’s (1997) view, discourse analysis aims at demystifying the intricate and complex arrangements and categorizations of interaction in a specific context, society and culture in addition to uncovering language as a form, meaning, and mental process. Van Dijk (1997) pointed out that “discourse”, ideologies and social groups are acting as a cycle, in which “discourse” is understood, shared, abstracted and generalized.

Van Dijk (2006) also stated that any social group has their specific way in interpreting understanding, and categorizing different phenomena. He continued that the culture\_ not independent from this issue\_ shares common senses, procedures, strategies, structures and processes. He considered the mentioned issue as inseparable part language in form of social cognition.

Power is another aspect of “discourse” emphasized by Van Dijk (2001) which plays a crucial role in social cognition. In other words, it is this aspect of “discourse” that enables the individuals to use language in representing their individual identities, social identities, classes, institutions and the relationships between the dominant and the less powerful members of any society (Van Dijk, 2006). Van Dijk’s intent of the concept of power in “discourse” is social power which refers to the relations between groups. Van Dijk (1997) considered power as a crucial element in discourse analysis as an instrument for criticizing hegemony and the power held by elites. It means that, the way the elites or dominant people use discourse resulted in the socio-economic, legal or political power, accessible for them.

Van Dijk (1997) distinguished six ways in grabbing the power by elites and dominant ones, namely, forced, persuasive, alleged hegemony, controlling the context, the access people have to certain discourse, and the characteristics of the structures used. Accordingly, he considered “discourse” as a medium for getting results through manipulation and influencing people.

## 2.2 Van Dijk’s Socio-Cognitive Model

Van Dijk’s (2006) socio-cognitive model is an approach for analyzing “discourse” with interconnection among cognition, “discourse” and society. Van Dijk’s model analyzing the linguistic elements incorporated in the texts (spoken or written) makes a comprehensive picture of the elements entangled in psychological model of memory as well as in the *frame* taken from cognitive science. His model especially deals with stereotypes, ethnic prejudice, and power abuse by elites as well as resistance by dominated groups in the media. Van Dijk (2000) argued that ideology and “discourse” are ambiguous terminologies; hence they cannot be adequately studied unless to be studied in three disciplines of the humanities and the social sciences, namely, in *discourse*, *cognition*, and *society*. In Van Dijk’s (2001) view, cognition is central in analyzing a “discourse” for relating “discourse” and social structures. He argued that “discourse” and society are mediated through cognition. He continued,

Typical macro- notions such as group or institutional power and dominance, as well as social

inequality, do not directly relate to typical micro-notions such as text, talk or communicative interactions. (p. 251)

Another main part of Van Dijk's model is its social dimension which elaborates the kind of groups, relations between groups and institutions in which the groups or individuals are involved in the development and reproduction of ideology in the "discourse". In effect, social dimension, according to Van Dijk (1998) answers the question about "why people develop and use ideologies in the first place?" (p. 24).

Finally, the last part of Van Dijk's triangular model is "discourses" which deals with the ideologies by which texts and talks are affected as well as with the processes participants go through in understanding ideological "discourse" and the way it is manipulated in reproduction of ideologies. One of the ways through which ideology is formed is "discourse" (Van Dijk, 1995). "Discourse", according to Van Dijk (2001), is a *communicative event* composed of "conversational interactions, written text, as well as associated gestures, face work, typographical layout, images and any other 'semiotic' or multimedia dimension of signification" (p. 98).

Van Dijk (2000) argued that the ideologies covered in the text may be revealed through a vast variety of discourse structures. In effect, Van Dijk's (2000) model is composed of forty-two strategies from a vast variety of areas and disciplines which are used for analyzing "discourse" to demystify the ideology. Figure 2.1 illustrates these strategies introduced by Van Dijk (2000, pp. 62-85) in his model of analysis.

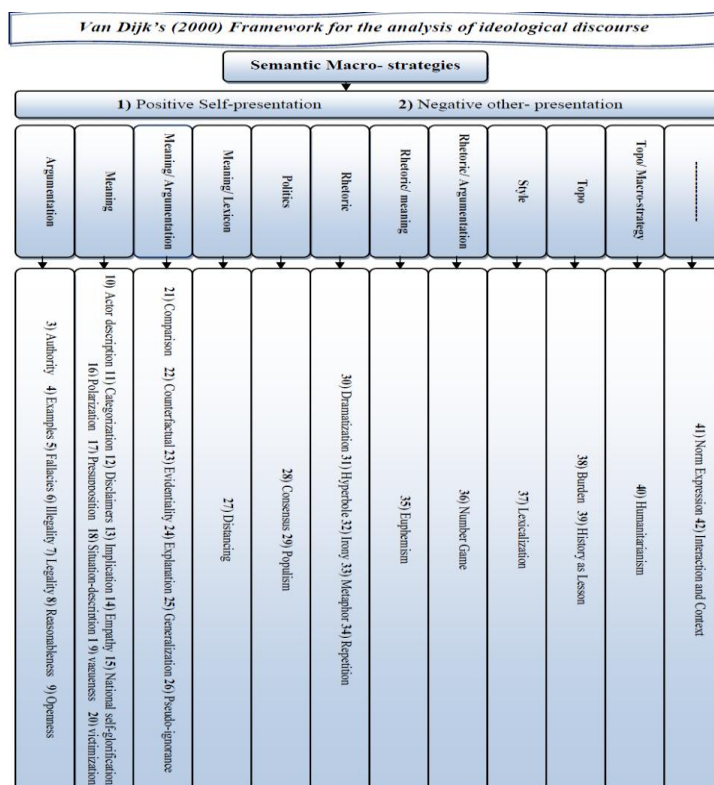


Figure 1. Strategies employed in Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive model

*Positive-self presentation* and *negative-other presentation* are the chief focuses of this analysis model. Van Dijk's (2000) framework is based on the premise that in the "discourse" of language producers positive points of "Us" are emphasized and the negative points of "Us" are de-emphasized. Furthermore the positive points of "Others" are de-emphasized and the negative points of "Others" are emphasized.

### 2.3 Media and Bias

There is no doubt that there are complicated relationships between thought, language and reality since language is a crucial factor in communicative events through which "our ideas and feeling about the world around us are conceptualized" (Esmaili, 2011, p. 25). Nowadays, people are exposed to a vast variety of language and "discourse" transmitted to them through the mass media. One of the main sources of the mass media which is the place of much discourse manipulation and ideological strikes is newspaper. Fowler (1991) argued that:

Institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated, all news is always reported from some particular angle. The structure of the medium encodes significances which derive from the respective positions within society of the publishing or broadcasting organizations" (p. 10)

Fowler's (1991) statement implied that newspapers are not neutral. In effect, newspapers seem to represent and interpret different events based on their own perspective and biases through which their attitudes and perspectives are depicted. Studies in the past four decades showed the existence of gender-bias even in EFL materials (e.g. Hartman and Judd, 1978; Jones et al., 1997; Johansson, 2009). In a study Teo (2002) extracted five million words from American children's textbooks and showed that most of these words were used to describe males. Porreca (1984), in his study found that males' designations nearly always exceed from the ones of females. In effect, outnumbering of any gender, according to Carroll and Cowlitz (1994), denotes the greater significance of that gender.

Several other studies revealed the existence of prejudices against females (e.g. Coles, 1977; Nilsen, 1977; Peterson and Kroner, 1992). Esmaili (2011) argued that biased attitudes and values represented through textbooks is a sociolinguistic fact exposed to the learners, that according to Reisegl and Wodak, (2001) plays a crucial role in molding perspectives and attitudes of the learners as the next generation.

Atai and Adriani (2009) made an investigation on Iran's nuclear issues in forty editorials of American newspapers, after the declaration of 1696 resolution by the United Nations Security Council on July 31, 2006. To this end, Van Dijk's (1998) model was selected to investigate the articles at two phases of headlines and news stories in terms of "lexical choices", "nominalization", "passivization", "over-completeness" and "voice". They found that there was biased representation of positive-Us and negative-Others.

Yaghoobi (2009) using Halliday's (1994) systemic-functional linguistics studied the way through which Hizbullah-Israel war in 2006 are depicted differently in terms of journalist's linguistic choices. He found that journalists specially use "backgrounding" and "foregrounding", "repetition of negative actions", "justification", and "nominalization", to

hide their real meanings and influence the readers' judgments.

Caldas-coulthard (2003) investigated the visual and verbal aspects of news discourse in the UK and Britain in order to reveal the way in which social discrimination was manifested in the news "discourse". To this end, she adopted an interdisciplinary approach of corpus linguistics and systemic-functional linguistics. She argued that news are "the report or re-conceptualization of an event" not the event itself (p. 273), and also as the "partial, ideologically framed report of the event" (p. 274).

Teo (2002) is another researcher who investigated ideological construction of new racism in two Australian newspapers. He distinguished two types of racism, i.e. new and old one. He argued that old racism is physical and verbal abuse which is overt but the new one is more covert and subtle but no less pernicious.

### 3. Method

In this section the quality of employing Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive model for analyzing the selected articles of two English newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* is described. The reports which were written on gender-related issues were collected from the websites of these newspapers or their published articles. The main reason for the selection of these newspapers is that *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* are two ideologically different English newspapers; admittedly, these newspapers follow different perspectives in representing the issue of gender. Furthermore, the two newspapers are popular among EFL learners in Iran and can be easily accessed via their websites.

#### 3.1 Procedure

In order to have a better comparison of how the two newspapers are dealing with the issue of gender, the following steps in data collecting and sampling were adopted. A period of 55 days, April 5 to May 30 in 2013, was selected to collect news reports relating to gender issues from the websites and their published articles. During this period, many news reports from *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* were studied and those culture-flavored news reports dealing with gender were collected. Hence, it became possible to look at the types of vocabularies and expressions and their connotations in order to reveal that whether there is favoritism in depicting men or women. It is worth mentioning that this study has not investigated the articles pictorially but has focused exclusively on their linguistic representation. The following depicts the list of the topics of the articles selected as the corpus of the study.

#### Los Angeles Times Headlines:

- Veronica Mars' lovers kick start new path to film in Hollywood
- Veronica Mars': Kristen Bell, Rob Thomas launch movie Kickstarter
- Jaden Smith wants to be emancipated? You've gotta be kidding
- Britney Spears wants another baby, preferably a daughter
- Selena Gomez rocks a teeny bikini, confirms single status
- Zoe Saldana talks androgyny, raising kids with a woman
- Nicki Minaj reportedly the next to leave 'American Idol'

**Tehran Times Headlines:**

- Mokhtarnameh” director returns with “The King Eared“
- Aa-Seid Kazem” to go on stage in September
- Iranian translator to attend Goethe Medals ceremony
- A good mother or a clown
- Women and earth: symbols of fertility and love in ancient Iran
- The ‘working mom’ dilemma
- Tehran to open women-only restaurants

Van Dijk (2001) argued that “concrete methods of research depend on the properties of the context of scholarly investigation: aims, participants, setting, users and their beliefs and interests” (p. 98). This study applied the Van Dijk’s (2000) model inspired by the justifications and suggestions made by Rahimi and Sahragard (2007) as it follows.

The first justification Rahimi and Sahragard (2007) provided is that Van Dijk’s (2000) model is more appropriate semantically and syntactically\_ a crucial point which is ignored at least by syntactic-based models. Furthermore, they argued that “the paucity of the CDA researches on the semantic and rhetorical devices and the preponderance and bewildering frequency of such elements in ideological moves has made research with this orientation just what the doctor orders!” (p. 67). The second positive point is related to its interdisciplinary nature in which its discursivity is manifested through a bundle of strategies from a vast variety of fields (e.g. politics, rhetoric, argumentation, education, etc.) and thirdly its strength in dealing with news, language and ideology.

Justification for selecting Van Dijk’s (2000) model is obvious since the present study has accentuated on the “discourse” of the two newspapers in representing each gender. Van Dijk’s (2000) model is designed based on an ideological framework encompasses four crucial factors of emphasizing positive things about “Us”, negative things about “Others”, de-emphasizing negative things about “Us” and positive things about “Others”.

### 3.2 A Sample of Analysis

Data were analyzed in two phases of headlines and body. Believing in that headlines are precursors for reports particularly reveal the social, cultural and national dimensions of any phenomenon covered by the newspapers. Admittedly, the headlines are selected in such a way to be eye-catching to reach the audience. In other words, newspapers attempt to select the catchy headlines to attract that attention of passersby or casual readers to have a glimpse on the headlines to evoke some emotion inside them to buy a newspaper. Teo (2002) argued that “headlines are strategically used by the editor, who chooses emotive vocabulary, rhetorical and graphological devices to make an impact on the readership” (324). Consider the two following headlines—one from Los Angeles Times and the other from Tehran Times:

- Veronica Mars’: Kristen Bell, Rob Thomas launch movie **Kick starter** (*Los Angeles Times*)
- Artist admires Asal Badiei’s altruism (*Tehran Times*)

Both headlines are simple statements describing the phenomena in a simple way. The bold



vocabularies highlighted the key and ideological lexis. Considering the vocabularies designated to each gender in headlines of these two newspapers seem to be different in terms of surface structures. It seems that *Los Angeles Times* depict the headlines in a more complicated and professional way.

One of the main features entangled in headlines is “evaluations” and “judgments” through which the perspective of the newspaper is depicted. In effect, the types of terminology and grammatical structures are totally different in these two articles. It seems that the headlines are molded in such a way to evoke some particular emotions on the part of readers to buy a newspaper. Generally, the of this two articles differ in terms of surface structures as well as linguistic features in which *Los Angeles Times* are laden with adjectives and phrases or expressions but *Tehran Times* with simple sentences avoid of any complicated or idiom-like phrases. Here a paragraph of each article is presented in order to have a more comprehensive picture of the discourse structures allocated to each gender.

***Los Angeles Times:***

Thomas and Bell say <u>Warner Bros</u> has agreed to <b>fund</b> production of the film version	Interaction & context & Authority (argumentation) (males)
had a small but devoted following that loved the <b>adventures</b> of Bell as a <b>brainy teen sleuth</b> , solving mysteries in her small town of Neptune, Calif	Hyperbole & explanation & Categorization (meaning) & Counterfactuals (meaning, argumentation) (female)

***Tehran Times:***

“I found <b>her</b> human soul in this decision,” <b>he</b> added.	Interaction & context
Presenting an artwork to <b>her</b> family is undoubtedly incapable of honoring <b>her</b> great devotion,” <b>he</b> stated.	Hyperbole & explanation & Categorization (meaning)
<b>Master of Iranian miniature painting</b> <u>Mahmud Farshchian</u> previously presented a <b>carpet tableau</b> based on one his works to <u>Badie’s family</u> to show <b>his</b> respect for her <b>altruism</b> .	Authority & actor description & context description

Considering the given example it seems that the Los Angeles Times using different types of strategies tried to represent the issue of gender mixed with some traces of sexism and capitalism. In effect, *Los Angeles Times* apparently resorted to different types of strategies

“function to legitimate domination, articulate resistance in relationships of power” (Van Dijk, 2006, p. 115). About *Tehran times*, it seems that the two genders have been associated with a vast variety of strategies in which females seem to be neglected. The lexical choices as well as the grammatical structures used in the two news reports are in stark contrast to each other which accentuates the differences between the way a native speaker writes and the way a non-native speaker does. It means that the two newspapers resorting to the manipulation of the “discourse” influenced by their favorite ideologies and perspective. Fowler’s (1991) claim that, “news is not just a value-free reflection of facts; anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position” (p.101).

#### 4. Data Analysis and Discussion

Van Dijk (19869) emphasized that newspapers manipulate the “discourse” on two phases of headline and content. He clarified the point that headlines should be considered as an informative resource memorized in the minds of readers which portray the unity of discourse. Hence, headlines are designed in such a way to evoke the interest and emotions of the readers by selecting eye catching phrases, emotional lexis as well as rhetorical and graphological elements. Headlines are forerunners for the news story follow them and represent rich sources of cultural and social information. The following table illustrates the headlines of the selected articles.

Table 1. List of the selected headlines from both newspapers

<i>Los Angeles Times Headlines</i>	<i>Tehran Times Headlines</i>
Veronica Mars’ lovers kick start new path to film in Hollywood	Mokhtarnameh” director <b>returns with</b> “The King Eared”
Veronica Mars’: Kristen Bell, Rob Thomas launch movie Kick starter	Aa-Seid Kazem” to <b>go on stage</b> in September
Jaden Smith wants to be emancipated? You’ve gotta be kidding	Iranian translator <b>to attend</b> Goethe Medals ceremony
Britney Spears wants another baby, preferably a daughter	A good <b>mother</b> or a <b>clown</b>
Selena Gomez rocks a teeny bikini, confirms single status	<b>Women and earth: symbols of fertility</b> and love in ancient Iran
Zoe Saldana talks androgyny, raising kids with a woman	The ‘ <b>working mom</b> ’ dilemma
Nicki Minaj reportedly the next to leave ‘American Idol’	Tehran to open <b>women-only restaurants</b>

The bold vocabularies in Table 1 are the key and ideological vocabularies applied in presenting eye-catching headlines in the both newspapers. The bold vocabularies along with the types and themes of the headlines depicts the differences between the view angles of the both newspapers regarding the issue of gender in which *Los Angeles Times* tended to depict women in equality with men; although it still maintained the stereotypes and prejudices (e.g. *raising kids with a woman, rocks a teeny bikini, to be emancipated, etc.*). *Tehran Times* has also selected the headlines based on its perspective and the culture of Iranian society in which

the stereotypes are still maintained\_ the main duty of a woman is to raise children, to be fertile like earth along with the challenges a women go through by working outside home, etc.

One of the main characteristics of the headlines is related to linguistic features which denote the ideological perspectives of the newspaper regarding an issue. The linguistic features like “thematization”, “passivization”, “presupposition”, “nominalization”, “topicalization” or using some adjectives or some figurative information are the fundamental devices any newspaper resorted to in order to present an ideological slant of view (Van Dijk, 1999). A headline may utilize several linguistic features simultaneously; *Tehran Times* for example, heavily utilizes “passivization”, “pre-supposition” and “agency” (e.g. the headline of *Small number of female MPs disappointing: ex-lawmaker* is a type of pointer headline which using agency is represented to the readers in order to remove the responsibility on the part of the newspaper, or in *The ‘working mom’ dilemma* presupposes the issue that a mother who is working has many challenges and dilemma—a perspective that the main duty of a mother is to raise children and not working). Furthermore, *Tehran Times* is using figurative language or some examples denote its perspective regarding females (e.g. *Women and earth: symbols of fertility and love in ancient Iran* in which woman is compared with earth in which the planets are grown up and is kind; though using this headline criticizes the current society of Iran). *Los Angeles Times*, on the other hand, using “topicalization”, “thematization”, and “nominalization” manipulate language based on its interests (e.g. the headline of *Jaden Smith wants to be emancipated? You’ve gotta be kidding* expresses two different attitudes using figurative “discourse” at the same time, it uses “topicalization” and “thematization” to express the main theme of the news story).

#### 4.1 Samples of Analysis

In this section two samples of analysis (one sample for each newspaper) are presented. The same procedure has been done for all the selected articles of both newspapers.

**Los Angeles Times\_ " Veronica Mars': Kristen Bell, Rob Thomas launch movie Kick starter"** published on 13 May, 2013.

Table 2. Discourse features of *Veronica Mars': Kristen Bell, Rob Thomas launch movie Kick starter* from *Los Angeles Times*

Term	Discursive strategies	
1	Star <u>Kristen Bell</u> and creator <u>Rob Thomas</u> have <b>paired up</b> to launch a <b>Kick starter</b> campaign and hope to raise <b>\$2 million</b> by April 13.	Actor description & number goal & metaphor
2	There are enough fans willing to <b>fork over money</b> for a product they haven't yet seen	Metaphor (Rhetoric) & generalization
3	Thomas and Bell say <u>Warner Bros</u> has agreed to <b>fund</b> production of the film version	Authority & explanation
4	had a small but devoted following that loved the <b>adventures</b> of Bell as a <b>brainy teen sleuth</b> , solving mysteries in her small town of <b>Neptune, Calif</b>	explanation & Categorization & metaphor
5	Thomas gives a hint as to what the movie <b>would be about</b> .	Actor description & explanation
6	In the years since <b>spoiling</b> Keith's chances to be <b>reelected sheriff</b> , Veronica hasn't taken a case	
7	But <b>something big</b> is about to <b>bring</b> her <b>back</b> home and <b>back</b> to her <b>calling</b>	Explanation & comparison
8	It is, after all, time for Veronica's 10-year high school <b>reunion</b>	Situation description & Reasonableness
9	And to <b>drum up</b> as much <b>buzz</b> as possible, Thomas reminds fans, "Keep in mind that the <b>more money</b> we raise, the <b>cooler movie</b> we can make	Hyperbole, Repetition & vagueness
10	There's a <b>Bollywood end-credit dance</b> number! I've always wanted to <b>direct</b> Bill Murray."	Hyperbole & Authority & Categorization
11	as with any Kick starter <b>campaign</b> , there's a complex series of rewards <b>for anyone willing to pony up</b> the <b>cash</b>	comparison & consensus & populism
12	The <b>rewards</b> get better all <b>the way up to \$10,000</b> , which gets you a <b>speaking role</b> in the movie	Number game & metaphor
13	The line will be " <b>Your check</b> , sir," <b>but</b> don't bother practicing it. The role has been taken	Hyperbole & generalization & number game
14	We have a really good chance of <b>going through</b>	Vagueness & Hyperbole
15	Anyone wanting Hobbits or Bill Murray <b>should think</b> about boosting the Kick starter <b>a few million</b> over the <b>\$2 million</b>	Number game & norm expression
16	The good news is that it appears Thomas and Bell's efforts will be	Explanation

	rewarded.	
17	The <b>Kick starter</b> was launched on Wednesday and by mid-morning <b>more than \$800,000</b> had been raised.	Number Game & vagueness

The following table illustrates the distribution of discourse strategies used in this article.

Table 3. Frequency of diverse discourse strategies in the selected article from *Los Angeles Times*

<b>Discursive strategies</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Number game	5
Actor description	2
Authority	2
Hyperbole	4
Populism	1
Reasonableness	1
Consensus	1
Situation description	1
Metaphor	4
Repetition	1
Vagueness	3
Generalization	2
Categorization	2
Explanation	5
Comparison	2
Norm expression	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

As it is discernible, “number game”, “explanation”, “hyperbole” and “metaphor” are the dominant discursive strategies utilized in the article. Moreover, the main theme of the article is on the issues related to money. The article tries to convince the readers in order to get the due financial support.

**Tehran Times\_ "A good mother or a clown"** published on April, 22, 2013.

Table 4. Discourse features of *A good mother or a clown* from *Tehran Times*

Term		Discursive strategies
1	<b>If</b> I am angry, I am not allowed to express myself; <b>if</b> I am tired I should pretend that I am energetic, <b>if</b> I'm sick I should act as a healthy mom.	Empathy, hyperbole & implication & context and interaction
2	If I am sad and I cannot <b>stand my tears</b> , I should wait until I'll find my <b>loneliness to cry</b> ; <b>so</b> that they <b>neither</b> hear my <b>weeping</b> nor see my tears.	Explanation, hyperbole, Implication & context and interaction
3	“ <b>Where</b> shall I express my feelings? Where is my <b>safe zone</b> ? How long can I <b>tolerate</b> to hide my bad feelings <b>for the sake</b> of their happiness?!”	Interaction & context & hyperbole & implication & context and interaction
4	My mother behaved me the same and I am doing alike for <b>the sake of my kids</b> .	explanation & Categorization & comparison
6	My little girl <b>who</b> is getting older day by day gradually understands my bad feelings <b>hidden behind</b> my happy face and she'll learn not to express her sadness when she becomes a mother.	Actor description & Comparison & hyperbole
7	<b>What about</b> my son?! <b>Will he</b> become a role-playing happy father or he will become a husband expecting his wife to <b>tolerate every suffering with a happy face</b> ?	implications & explanation & hyperbole & context and interaction
8	<b>How much</b> can I tolerate to pretend as a happy mother in bad situations?	Implication & context and interaction
9	<b>Does my family</b> feel better to see my happy face <b>despite</b> my inner sadness? <b>Is it valuable</b> for my kids to see me always happy although they may become worry about the reality of my happy face?	context and interaction & implication
10	Am I a good mother or a clown?	context and interaction

It seems that the article is mostly using "context and interaction" strategy. The following table showed the frequency and distribution of the utilized discursive strategies in this article:

Table 5. Frequency of diverse discourse strategies in the selected article from *Tehran Times*

Discursive strategies	Frequency
Empathy	2
Hyperbole	5
Implication	7
Explanation	3
Actor description	1
Interaction and Context	9
Comparison	2
Categorization	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

As Table 5 shows "context and interaction" and "implication" are the most dominant strategies utilized in this article. It is worth mentioning that the article is mainly asking rhetorical questions tries to evoke the feelings of the readers about the challenges a mother go through.

#### 4.2 Discussion

Table 6 summarized the distribution of the discursive strategies in the selected articles. The range, distribution and frequency of the employed strategies differ in the two newspapers. In effect, investing the 14 articles of the two newspapers resulted in 286 discourse strategies in *Los Angeles Times* and 149 in *Tehran Times*. Furthermore, "metaphor", "explanation", "interaction and context" and "hyperbole" were the most dominant strategies in *Los Angeles Times* while "explanation", "implication", "interaction and context" and "comparison" were the most frequent used strategies in *Tehran Times*.

Table 6. Frequency and distribution of strategies found in the selected articles of both newspapers

	Discursive strategies	Los Angeles Times	Tehran Times
1	Actor description	15	12
2	Authority	7	0
3	Burden	2	0
4	Categorization	5	5
5	Comparison	12	13
6	Consensus	3	0
7	Counterfactual	2	0
8	Disclaimer	4	0
9	Distancing	2	1
10	Dramatization	3	0
11	Empathy	1	0
12	Evidentially	4	4
13	Example/illustration	2	1

14	Explanation	38	41
15	Fallacies	4	1
16	Generalization	8	0
17	Humanitarianism	1	0
18	Hyperbole	33	11
19	Implication	7	27
20	Interaction and context	36	14
21	Irony	1	0
22	Metaphor	45	3
23	Norm expression	2	0
24	Number game	10	0
25	Openness/honesty	2	4
26	Populism	4	0
27	Pseudo-ignorance	1	0
28	Reasonableness	5	4
29	Repetition	8	0
30	Situation description	9	0
31	Vagueness	9	2
32	Total	286	149

Using a chi-square the similarities and differences between the two newspapers in employing different strategies for different genders were investigated. The chi-square revealed a significant difference between the two newspapers in representing genders through utilizing different discourse strategies for different genders.

Table 7. Comparing *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* in usage of discourse strategies

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Phi	2.809	.068
Cramer's V	.847	.087
N of Valid Cases	31	



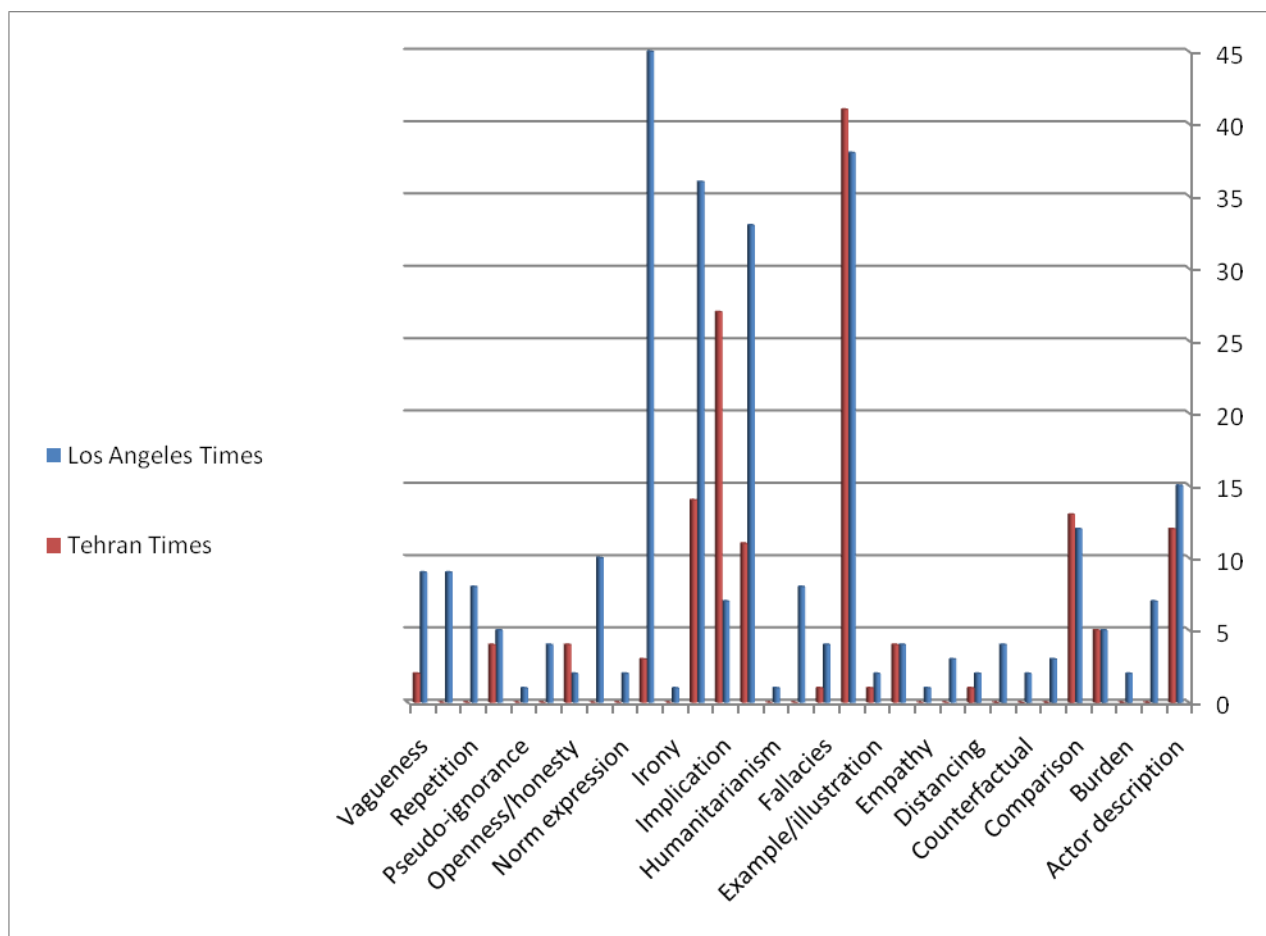


Figure 2. Comparing the two newspapers in using discourse strategies for different genders

The results of the chi-square showed that the representation of gender is significantly different; some particular strategies seem to make significant differences between the two genders in *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times*. It was also revealed that the two newspapers using different types of strategies still maintained some stereotypes. This issue is represented even in terms of the selected headlines in which the women are confined to be a good mother and raise good children in the both newspapers; and the men are depicted in association with money-related issues. In effect, the two newspapers apparently resorted to different types of strategies "function to legitimate domination, articulate resistance in relationships of power" (Van Dijk, 2006, p. 115).

It was found that the two genders were not depicted equally in the two newspapers. Hence, the both genders were depicted in association with some stereotypes. The basic premise is that the two newspapers using a vast variety of discourse strategies apparently demonstrate different perspectives. These differences impact significantly on the types of headlines, content selection as well as on the type of structures and strategies by which females and males were represented. In fact, both newspapers associate both genders with some stereotypes in which the articles talk about the achievements of men and about the private

and husband- or mother-related issue of females.

It is worth mentioning that there are some differences between the perspectives of the two newspapers in which *Los Angeles Times* has broken many taboos which seem to utilize the private life or even sexuality of females just in order to present some eye-catching headlines and articles to promote selling. *Tehran Times*, on the other hand, is dealing with issue of gender based on its perspective rooted in cultural Islamic society of Iran in which the main duty of females is to be good mother and raise good children. *Tehran Times* apparently emphasized that a working mother may go through many challenges. It seems that at the two newspapers perceived the issue of gender differently through manipulating vocabularies, structures, headlines as well as strategies. The following table shows the utilized discourse strategies in the selected articles for each gender in both newspapers.

Table 8. Frequency and distribution of the discourse strategies for each gender in both newspapers

	Los Angeles Times		Tehran Times	
	Male	Female	Male	female
Actor description	5	10	7	4
Authority	7	0	0	0
Burden	2	0	0	0
Categorization	3	2	1	4
Comparison	7	5	4	9
Consensus	3	0	0	0
Counterfactual	2	0	0	0
Disclaimer	1	4	0	0
Distancing	1	1	0	1
Dramatization	3	0	0	0
Empathy	0	1	0	2
Evidentially	4	0	0	4
Example/illustration	2	0	0	1
Explanation	15	25	18	21
Fallacies	0	4	1	0
Generalization	6	1	0	0
Humanitarianism	0	1	0	0
Hyperbole	20	13	3	8
Implication	0	7	3	23
Interaction and context	1	33	5	9
Irony	1	0	0	0
Metaphor	9	36	3	0
Norm expression	3	0	0	0
Number game	10	0	0	0

Openness/honesty	1	1	2	2
Populism	4	0	0	0
Pseudo-ignorance	1	0	0	0
Reasonableness	5	0	2	2
Repetition	4	4	0	8
Situation description	6	3	0	0
Vagueness	9	0	2	0
Total	135	151	51	98

The following chi-square tables shed light on the representation of genders in the two newspapers:

Table 9. Comparing male/female representation in *Los Angeles Times*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	156.439	121	.017
Likelihood Ratio	72.646	121	1.000
N of Valid Cases	31		

As Table 9 shows *Los Angeles Times* seems to follow a nearly balanced way in depicting genders in terms of discourse strategies. On the contrary, *Tehran Times* was shown to represent two genders differently through employing different discourse strategies.

Table 10. Comparing male/female representation in *Tehran Times*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	101.883	49	.000
Likelihood Ratio	46.6771	49	.568
N of Valid Cases	31		

Generally speaking, the findings support earlier pronouncements of Koosha and Shams (2005), Khosravinik (2008), Atai and Adriani (2009), and Yaghoobi (2009) on the biased representation of events and social groups in media. The results also lend supports to van Dijk's (2000) belief that "discourses express, confirm, instantiate or constitute ideologies" (p. 86). Furthermore, this study argued that ideologies are injected in discourse by the use of different kinds of discourse strategies like the ones which are included in van Dijk's (2000) framework.

## 5. Conclusion

The main purpose of the study was a comparison between two newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* vis-à-vis gender representation. In effect, this study aimed at investigating the discursive strategies ascribed to each gender as well the similarities and differences between the two newspapers in depicting gender in order to extract the ideologies leading the way in which both females and males are depicted. To this end, Van Dijk's (2000)

“socio-cognitive model” was employed. Hence, 14 articles were selected during a five-month period and their discourse strategies were put under focus. The gathered data were classified and summarized in terms of discourse strategies, gender and newspapers. Using a few chi-squares, the significance of the observed differences between the two newspapers in depicting gender as well the differences between females and males representation in each newspaper were determined. The following statements are the results of the study;

- It was demonstrated that the male-female representation is significantly different in *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times*; genders were represented differently in these two newspapers through employing diverse discourse strategies. It was also revealed that the two newspapers using different types of strategies still maintained some stereotypes.
- *Los Angeles Times* seems to follow a nearly balanced way in depicting genders in terms of discourse strategies (i.e., the discourse strategies used for females are not significantly different from those which were used for males).
- Unlike *Los Angeles Times*, *Tehran Times* was shown to represent two genders differently through employing different discourse strategies; the types of discourse strategies used for females were very different from those employed for males.

There were some differences between the perspectives of the two newspapers in the way that *Los Angeles Times* has broken many taboos (dealing with the private life or even sexuality of females) just in order to present some eye-catching headlines and articles to promote selling. *Tehran Time*, on the other hand, was dealing with issue of gender based on its perspective rooted in cultural Islamic society of Iran\_ the main duty of females is to be good mother and raise good children while the men are supposed to support the family economically. *Tehran Time* apparently emphasized that a working mother may go through many challenges.

The study confirmed that ideological manipulation of language can be exercised by the use of the two overall semantic macro-strategies of van Dijk’s (2000) framework: *positive self-presentation* and *negative other-presentation* realized in types of discursive strategies used in text. Events are not faithfully mirrored in the newspapers but they undergo journalistic practices which involve linguistic re-conceptualization in language. Focusing on the relationship between language and society, this study and other similar CDA studies may shed light on the need and importance of critically reading of passages and being able to read between the lines in order to be able to comprehend the basic intentions of the writer and also equip them with tools to “demystify” the manipulative and biased language. This study can also raise students’ awareness of the importance of being careful about every word and grammatical structure they choose to use in their speech and writings and negative or positive consequences they may bear.

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