

Abstract Dominance: Linguistic investigation of gender orientation in vernacular Cairene Arabic

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Abstract: Arabic, like many other gendered languages, displays a grammatical and semantic gender bias that led some researchers to describe it as 'androcentric' in nature. Yet, while sexism in modern standard English has been the subject of a lot of academic research work over the past forty years, little attention has been given to linguistic gender bias in Arabic, and none, to the best of my knowledge, to Vernacular Cairene Arabic (VCA). The objective of this paper is to provide a linguistic description of the andocentric nature of VCA both on the grammatical and lexical levels. Through a qualitative approach, the paper shows the heavy male domination characterising Cairene Arabic, as illustrated in the various morphological, lexical and syntactic features. It examines two major types of institutionalised linguistic sexism in VCA: structure-embedded sexism, and ideological and cultural sexism.

Key words: linguistic sexism, gender bias, Vernacular Cairene Arabic, sociolinguistics, ideology, feminism