“RACIAL DISCOURSE
IN
LEBANON”

E300 Project Report
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of
UNITED KINGDOM OPEN UNIVERSITY/
ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY
for the Degree of

BACHELOR

of

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

to

DR HAYAT AL-KHATIB
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

By

Grace Abou Zeid

ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY
LEBANON
2011
“RACIAL DISCOURSE IN LEBANON”

E300 Project Report

ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY
LEBANON
2011
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project work entitled “RACIAL DISCOURSE IN LEBANON” submitted to the ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY, is a record of an original work done by me under the guidance of Dr. HAYAT AL-KHATIB, Head of the Department of English Language & Literature, ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY - LEBANON, and this project work is submitted in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of English Language & Literature. The results embodied in this thesis have not been submitted to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

GRACE ABOU ZEID
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take immense pleasure in thanking all those who supported me in any respect during the writing of this project work. Without their encouragement and persistent help this dissertation would not have been possible.

I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. HAYAT AL-KHATIB, who had been a source of inspiration and for her continuous support, valuable guidance and useful suggestions, which enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject and helped me in completing the project work, in time.

Finally, yet importantly, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my beloved parents for their blessings, my friends/classmates for their help and wishes for the successful completion of this project report. I also appreciate the cooperation of the informants who were excited about contributing in this research study.
ABSTRACT

The critical issue of the twenty-first century remains the problem of race – racism, race relations, and racial exploitation – in virtually every corner of the globe.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the way a social issue as well as its main participants and their actions are represented in basic news elements (headlines and texts). Employing a number of analytical tools from van Dijk and Halliday’s transitivity model, the study examines the selected headlines and news report on Racism in Lebanon published by a number of online media websites to identify the specific ideology propagated by the news texts. The findings of the study indicate that the online news texts’ coverage of Racism in Lebanon tends to present a negative image of Lebanon and its policies and practices in the context of “Us” and “Them”. The findings provide evidence to support the claim that news media do not simply reflect the social reality but articulate dominant ideologies in representing political events.

Finally, the study contributes to the understanding of the ideological role of language within news discourse in constructing representations of a society.

Key Words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Media discourse, Racism in Lebanon.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CHAPTER – 1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CHAPTER – 2 LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CHAPTER – 3 DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CHAPTER – 4 FINDINGS</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CHAPTER – 5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1 QUANTITATIVE INTERPRETATION</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2 QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CHAPTER – 6 CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>LIST OF REFERENCES</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APPENDIX 1: THE QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APPENDIX 2: HEADLINES</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mass Media play a powerful role in the formation of prejudiced attitudes and beliefs. Numerous studies have shown that media contribute to the marginalization of particular ethnic and cultural groups. Racist discourse in the media consists of a repertoire of words, images and texts that threaded together produce an understanding of the world and of the status of people of color in that world. Racism is also imbedded in our everyday language. A ‘white lie’ has a much different meaning than a ‘black lie’ and in this case, color is the principal indicator of degree of wrongness. It is a way of promoting white purity and designating blackness as something bad, inferior and polluted that should be downgraded, silenced, oppressed and enslaved. Good Guys wear ‘white’ and the bad guys wear ‘black’, the same racially tainted values are passed on.

Throughout the Lebanese community, words in the Arabic language that have historically existed to represent a certain class or ethnic group are also major contributors to this culture of racism. The use of words such as 
*abed* (slave), *aswad* (black) and *aswad fahme* (black/charcoal) is often used in derogatory manor. For instance, the word *serelankiye* (Sri Lankan) often refers to a female domestic worker in Lebanon (housemaid) rather than just to the Sri Lankan nationality. Also, a woman who has a dark tan would be ridiculed and called *serelankiye*.

In this project, I will conduct a research on media discourse and the current state of racism in Lebanon titled *Racial Discourse in Lebanon*. 
There are different purposes for which one may want to analyze a text. The goal of this study is to investigate the social function of language as a powerful social practice in a specific discourse, such as media discourse generally and online media discourse particularly. Moreover, my major purpose is to indicate, by means of discourse analysis, the key role that the media plays in shaping community attitudes and beliefs, and to show how and with what purpose in mind, (online) media is accused of perpetuating racism in Lebanon.

Working from this perspective, the framework research on ‘race in Lebanon’ is designed and implemented to explore the following questions:

* What is the role of the media in the reproduction and motivation of racism? In particular, how does the media discourse in effect accentuate racial differences, and legitimize ‘inequity, exclusion or domination’?

* How important is the effect of media on the beliefs and values of the audience (ideological implications)?

* How can racial discourse be reframed to evoke a different way of thinking and using language?

* What does the media write or not write about racial or ethnic affairs and why? In other words, what themes re-occur when reporting ethnic affairs?

* What does the public think about race in Lebanon?

However, before attempting to understand racism and mass media, one must understand the history of racism, discussed thoroughly in the Literature Review section.
“RACISM” is one of the most critical issues facing the modern world. It is often considered as the ultimate violent act a person can commit towards another individual of another race. Racism is a social and ethical problem that has been a part of our world since the beginning of time and has been transmitted from one generation to the next. It may not be as apparent as it used to be, but racism is still very much prevalent today, in the West and the East. The timeline table below depicts the major events and changes concerning racism in World History, starting from the first European contact with dark-skinned people to the furtherance of the Civil Rights Movement.

<p>| Renaissance and Reformation 1400 | The period of the Renaissance and Reformation was the time when Europeans came into close contact with people of darker skin color in Africa, Asia, and America. At that time, Europeans believed that the latter were heathens, and thus began enslaving them. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Marriage Laws 1600</strong></th>
<th>Intermarriage(^1) bans arose in North America in the late 1600s.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Virginia Decree 1667</strong></td>
<td>In 1667, Virginia enacted a decree that allowed keeping slaves in bondage, not because they were actual heathens but because they had heathen ancestry. Hence, slavery was changed from religious status to a race thing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enlightenment 1700</strong></td>
<td>The Enlightenment ethnologists of the 1700s began to think of human beings as part of the natural world and subdivided them into three to five races: the ‘American race’ (red-skinned), the ‘Asiatic race’ (yellow-skinned), the ‘African race’ (black-skinned), the ‘European race’ (white-skinned), and the ‘Monstrous race’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) “Intermarriage is the marriage between two people of different backgrounds”. Often known as ‘mixed marriage’, intermarriage can be either religious, for example, marriage between Christians and Jews, or racial, for example, marriage between Africans and Native Americans (“Intermarriage”).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emancipation, Imperialism, and Nationalism 1800</td>
<td>The Nineteenth century was an age of emancipation, nationalism, and imperialism – all of which contributed to the growth and aggravation of ideological racism in Europe and the United States. Although slaves were to be freed by the Emancipation Proclamation, the consequence of this reformation was to reinforce rather than moderate racism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth of Nationalism 1870</td>
<td>The growth of Nationalism encouraged the growth of racist thought, especially in Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climax of Western Imperialism 1880</td>
<td>The climax of Western Imperialism in the late nineteenth century constituted a claim that Europeans had the right to rule over (mythical humanoid creatures).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Discourse in Lebanon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africans and Asians.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climax of Racism 1900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The climax and turning point in the history of racism came in the twentieth century when racial discrimination laws and restrictions were passed on African Americans voting rights, lowering thus their social class status. An extreme racist representation of African American men as rapist-beasts also served to rationalize the practice of execution by hanging.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racist ideology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racist ideology was of course carried to a more extreme point in Nazi Germany through Hitler’s emphasis on the importance of racial purity, and his beliefs in the superiority of the Germanic race, or what he called an Aryan master race.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racist Regime 1948</td>
<td>The one racist regime that survived the Second World War and the Cold War was the South African in 1948.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Rights Movement 1960</td>
<td>The Civil Rights movement in the United States, which succeeded in outlawing racial apartheid in 1960s, gained public sympathy and wide support for its cause, “all men are created equal”, and its advocacy of nonviolence. The civil rights movement's influence has been extensive and enduring; its success influenced other world-wide civil rights movements, such as the “Anti Racism Movement” established in Lebanon in 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

History of Racism (“Extreme Racism”).

After the Civil Rights Movement, what will the future bring for Racism? Can we get a hold on racism throughout the world or will we face more self-destruction? Racism is a social and cultural cancer of mankind that persists in many forms. Thus, this statement indicates that racism will not come to an end in the near future.
What is Racism, really? What is the exact definition of racism? There are a variety of definitions of racism that currently exist, as many researchers have attempted to define it. According to Beverley Naidoo (2005), “racism [is] a highly complex phenomenon of discrimination and oppression, which is historically specific in both its structural and ideological forms in each society, and which is based on, as well as sustained by, a socially constructed belief in the existence of inherently different ‘races’” (55). In other words, racism is a set of personal attitudes, beliefs and practices towards people of another race, based on skin color, language, customs, place of birth, or any factor that supposedly reveals the basic nature of that person. Racism has also been defined as a system consisting of a social and a cognitive subsystem. The social subsystem differentiates between two levels of racism: the macro and the micro level. On the macro level, racism is understood as a structure of ethnic group dominance and superiority, while on the micro level, racism is a daily discriminatory behavior and procedure (van Dijk 1993). The second subsystem of racism is cognitive. This cognitive system of racist prejudices and ideologies is at the basis of the racist social practices of the dominant group. One of these social practices is discourse, which plays a fundamental role in the reproduction of racist ideologies (van Dijk 1984, 1987, 1998).

A discourse is a set of utterances which constitute any specific communicative event, in general, (such as a conversation, a joke, a sermon, an interview, etc.), and a written or spoken form of verbal interaction or language use, in particular. Different types of discourse may be distinguished, for instance, when we speak of ‘medical discourse’, ‘political discourse’, or indeed of ‘racist discourse’. Discourse is an expression of the prevalent ideology, as it involves not only social interaction and practices, but also
expresses and conveys meanings, and may thus influence our beliefs and attitudes towards people of different races. Discourse analysis has two purposes; it is aimed to examine the detailed features of a particular form of social discrimination, as well as, to gain deeper understanding or insight in the way discourse expresses and manages our thoughts.

**Critical discourse analysis (CDA),** as van Dijk (2003) says, “is 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 in the social and political context”. It is an approach concerned with the ways in which texts may shape the way we see and understand the world, and with the potential of texts to reflect the more basic beliefs (ideologies) and assumptions of our society and culture (White 2005, p. 114). Accordingly, this critical framework is an obvious framework in exploring the role of the mass media in the construction and reproduction of dominant ideologies of sexism, classism, and racism (White 2005, p. 115). Among CDA researchers, van Dijk is one of the most often referenced and quoted in critical studies of media discourse (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21). He has focused specifically upon the reproduction, communication, and maintenance of racism in Western communities, and the central role of the press in that social process; the application to these theories to concrete cases are provided, respectively, in his works *Elite discourse and the reproduction of racism*² (1995) and *Racism and the press*³ (1991) (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21).

What distinguishes van Dijk’s framework for the analysis of news discourse is his call for a thorough analysis not only of the textual and structural level of media discourse but also

---

for analysis and explanations at the production and reception (comprehension) level (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21).

- By ‘structural analysis’, van Dijk refers to the analysis of structures at various levels of description: the grammatical, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and the lexical level (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21).

- By ‘production features’, van Dijk refers to the journalistic practices of news making at all stages of news gathering, processing and presentation.

- Van Dijk’s other dimension of analysis, ‘reception processes’, involves taking into consideration the comprehension, memorization and reproduction of news information.

The relationships between the three levels of news text (structure, production and comprehension processes) and their relationship with the wider social context they are embedded within takes place at two levels: the microstructure and macrostructure level.

At the microstructure level, topics are analyzed in terms of propositions, which are usually employed to provide coherence in the text (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21). The analysis is also focused on other rhetorical elements, such as quoting and direct or indirect reporting, in order to present written evidence and truth claim to the news reports.

At the macro level, themes and topics are realized in the headlines and lead paragraphs (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21). Headlines and the lead paragraphs express the general idea of what the news is about. They define how journalists see the social world, and hence news events. Furthermore, the headlines define the overall semantic unity and coherence of
discourse, and suggest the most important information that the readers can best memorize and recall from a news report, as van Dijk argues.

For van Dijk, the news schemata are structured according to a specific narrative pattern that consists of the following: “summary (headline and lead), main events, backgrounds (context and history), consequences (evaluation and prediction) and comment” (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 21). These elements are sequenced in terms of ‘relevance’ to produce “more noticeable”, “memorable and effective” news stories (Boyd-Barrett 2005, p. 22).

Van Dijk (1995) essentially perceives discourse analysis as ideology analysis, because according to him, “ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication, including non-verbal semiotic messages, such as pictures, photographs and movies” (17). His approach for analyzing ideologies has three parts: social analysis, cognitive analysis, and discourse analysis (van Dijk 1995, p. 30).

Cognitive Analysis

Social Analysis

Discourse Analysis

Figure 1. Discourse-Cognition-Society triangle

However, the scope of critical linguistic analysis extends well beyond these approaches. CDA researchers such as Trew (1979, p. 155) aimed at “isolating ideology in discourse”
and showing “how ideology and ideological processes are manifested as systems of linguistic characteristics and processes”. This aim was pursued by developing CDA’s analytical tools based on Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Much critical linguistic work relies on SFL for its analytical framework (White 2005, p.121). “Systemic functional grammar provides a systematic way of describing and analyzing the links between grammatical choice and sociocultural context” (White 2005, p.121). Following Halliday (1994), these CDA experts view language in use as simultaneously performing three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions.

- The ‘ideational function’ uses language to represent experience. This indicates the experiential and logical meanings.
- The ‘interpersonal function’ uses language to encode interaction, and thus expresses interpersonal meaning.
- The ‘textual function’ uses language to organize our experiential and interpersonal meanings into a coherent spoken or written discourse.

Halliday’s view of language as a ‘social act’ is central to many of CDA’s experts. According to Fowler et al. (1979), another central assumption of CDA and SFL is that speakers make choices at the level of vocabulary and grammar and that these choices must be consciously or unconsciously “principled and systematic” (188). Thus choices are ideologically based. In sum, language is a social act and it is ideologically driven.

Applying these two methodological frameworks, the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the focus of my research will be on how language, in general, and media texts, in particular, can have an immense impact
Racial Discourse in Lebanon

and influence on people's personal attitudes, beliefs and behavior towards other races, and thus perpetuate racism.
DATA COLLECTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Collected Data

Data are special type of information, generally obtained through observation, surveys, enquiries, or are generated as a result of human activity. Data collection methods are of two types: primary and secondary.

- The ‘primary data’ was collected through multiple-choice questionnaires answered by 50 different informants of both genders. All these respondents were randomly selected and personally interviewed.
- The particular media focus of this study, the internet, is one of the newest forms of mass media. Hence, the ‘secondary data’ that was used in this report was collected through Internet website.

Ethical Issues

No ethical issues are to consider regarding my research project:

The main data source of my research, online news texts, is a published data. Articles selected and analyzed, and other references used will be respectively acknowledged under the References section, thus fulfilling the ethical code required in referencing.

As for my participants;

* First, I introduced myself as an AOU student at the Faculty of English Language & Literature and then informed them about my research topic.
Second, I told them that this survey is set up to get their opinion on where society, along with themselves, stands as far as racism, notifying them that respondents will remain anonymous.

Third, I asked them if they could spend a few moments filling in the questionnaire in a complete honesty, as answers to these questions will yield important results in explaining whether or not media outlets institutionalize racism.

Lastly, respondents’ participation was greatly appreciated.

Methodology
Two broad approaches to follow when undertaking a research project: the quantitative research and the qualitative research.

- Quantitative research generates statistics through the use of large-scale survey research, using methods such as questionnaires or structured interviews.
- Qualitative research relies heavily on researcher ‘readings’ and interpretation of media texts.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis methodologies is necessary to fully understand the meanings and possible impacts of media texts. Therefore, a combination of these two methodologies seems to be the ideal approach.

In following van Dijk’s approach to critical discourse analysis, I will be analyzing how racism is reinforced through media texts and exploring the following sections:

A. Headlines:
   - Macroproposition
Racial Discourse in Lebanon

* Lexicalization

* Processes and Participants (Halliday's transitivity framework)

* Thematization

B. News Texts

* Transitivity Patterns

* Quotations
FINDINGS

In media texts, a close textual analysis is conducted upon the headline and the text as a whole to identify the role of the discourse in producing, sustaining, or transforming ideologies and hegemony. Studying and analyzing these two main elements of media texts in this research report, the sampled headlines were analyzed in terms of the discourse features of topics, lexical choices, grammar of transitivity, and thematic patterns, while the selected article ‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs (13 August 2009) was analyzed only in terms of the concept of transitivity and through linguistic systems of direct and indirect quotations.

- At the headlines level,

Macroproposition:
Despite differences in style and emphasis all news texts share similarities in terms of prominent themes and topics. Themes that emerge from the news stories can be divided into two groupings: a) topics projecting a negative picture of Lebanon as a racist country and b) topics presenting a (less negative) positive picture of the African/Asian migrant domestic workers as victims craving for sympathy and compassion.

Lexicalization:
Lexical choices construct specific ideological representations of events and experiences. The lexical items in the 10 analyzed headlines present two ideologically significant motifs: Lebanon as an abuser (racist) and the African/Asian migrant domestic workers as the abused ones (victims of racism).
Participants and Processes:

Findings of the transitivity analysis of the headlines demonstrate that transitive structures are dominated by the material processes. Thus, in the headlines selected, Lebanese society and Lebanese beach clubs participants are mainly depicted in the active role, acting upon them (African/Asian workers).

Thematization:

The nominalizations which occur in thematic position in the headlines are presupposed and taken for granted: Lebanon abuses African/Asian migrant domestic workers.

- At the news texts level,

Participants and Processes:

The transitivity analysis of ‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs (13 August 2009) demonstrates that the relational processes (28) are the most employed in the text. Relational processes serve to represent the acts of classification and judgment. This can provide the grounds for biased identifications and descriptions to be built into discourse (Hodge et al. 1993).

Quotations:

Lastly, it is through direct and indirect quotations that discrimination and racism claims practiced by the Lebanese society against African/Asian migrant domestic workers are justified.

However, the percentages represented in the quantitative analysis indicate clearly that these allegations cannot be generalized or attributed to all Lebanese people.
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Quantitative Interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Tool</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Design</td>
<td>Simple Random Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Questions</td>
<td>5 General Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>50 Anonymous Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female &amp; Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questionnaire Questions

The 5 questions are divided into 3 sections:

Part A: 2 questions answered by 30 Lebanese participants;

Part B: 1 question answered by 10 American/European participants;

Part C: 2 questions answered by 10 African/Asian participants.
Respondents

The following chart presents the 50 anonymous participants:
Racial Discourse in Lebanon

Graphical & Percentage Analysis

**Part A**

Have you ever used an offensive term (*Abed, Aswad, Fahme*, etc.) toward someone of another race?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Interpretation:*

Lebanese women (10/15) tend to use derogatory terms more often than men (12/15) do.
Have you ever witnessed an African or Asian person being rejected to enter a restaurant, a swimming pool or any other leisure center?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation:

8 out of 15 Lebanese women witnessed a situation where people were forbidden to enter a leisure center because of their race, while only 6 out of 15 men (6/15) did.
Part B

Do you think there are racial problems or have you come across any racial discrimination in Lebanon?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation:

Only 4 out of 15 American/European foreigners, from both genders, stated that there is racism in Lebanon.
**Part C**

Have you ever been verbally or physically abused and/or assaulted because of your race by Lebanese people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interpretation:**

The majority of African/Asian foreigners from both genders (14/15 females; 12/15 males) have been abused either verbally or physically.
Have you ever been forbidden to enter a Lebanese leisure place (hotel, restaurant, swimming pool, etc.) based upon the color of your skin?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation:

14 out of 15 African/Asian women and 10 out of 15 African/Asian men experienced racial discrimination as they were not allowed to enter a leisure center because of their race.
Qualitative Interpretation

Critical Discourse Analysis

A. Headlines

The first step that is normally taken in textual analysis is to analyze the headlines of the collected articles. A good headline shows the most prominent and relevant information of the news discourse. It never implies more nor too much less than what actually appears in the story. It does not contain misleading suggestions and it does not leave false impressions. The summary of the events, given in the lead, conforms to the topics selected in the headlines, and thus serves as the expression of its macrostructure, which is best recalled by readers (van Dijk 1988b, p. 226). Therefore, headlines and the leads not only construct the dominant meanings of the news texts for the readers, but also identify the most prominent ideological perspectives in the texts. In order to investigate the most important and specific ideological frameworks in news discourse on ‘race in Lebanon’, the headlines of 10 articles are thus examined. These headlines are given in the Appendix, and are analyzed below.

- Macroposition

A general ideological picture of ‘race in Lebanon’ is shown by the topic analysis of news articles. Topics are propositions contained in a subject concept, they are “routinely expressed in the ideal headline of a single news report” (van Dijk 1988a, p. 170), and therefore, are the essential information within a text. The topics, however, should be identified at the level of ‘semantic macrostructure’, which makes explicit the overall
topics or themes of a text. The analysis of macropropositions is crucial for understanding the properties of headlines; it describes the basis of the news reports. Therefore, to show the most valuable meanings of the news texts, the macropropositions or topics of all 10 headlines are analyzed, as shown below in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macropropositions</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African and Asian migrant domestic workers are abused in Lebanon.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese beach resorts practice racial profiling.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon is a deeply racist country.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Macropropositions of headlines

According to the collected reports, Lebanon is a deeply racist country; its beach resorts practice racial profiling against African/Asian migrant domestic workers, which are usually abused.

- Lexicalization

The choice of words is important in defining how we perceive the actions and the intentions of the participants in specific events, and thereby convey the message that the producer of the text intended readers to receive. Lexical items construct particular
ideological representations of experiences or events. Apart from this experiential function, vocabulary, has expressive value implying the producer's negative or positive evaluation of actions, participants, and events. Therefore, the structure of vocabulary can be regarded as ideologically based. The selection of word-meanings through lexicalization is one of the major dimensions of news discourse fashioned by ideologies. The lexical choices in the headlines present two ideologically significant motifs: Lebanon as a racist (an abuser) and African/Asian workers as victims (the abused ones). A recurrent ‘racist-abuser’ motif is used to arouse fear and evoke condemnation from the world community against Lebanon’s policies while that of ‘victim-abused’ is used to enhance sympathetic and compassionate feelings towards African/Asian workers.

As for Lebanon, over wording around the concepts of ‘racist’, ‘abuser’, and ‘fear’ through the interrelated words such as ‘racism’, ‘spate of suicides’, ‘abuse’, ‘discrimination’, ‘deeply racist’, ‘slavery’, etc. indicates a worrisome human rights situation created by Lebanon’s racial practices. Lexical choices made in the texts of the news stories, therefore, provide us with a key to unravel the ideological construction that underlies the texts. Like the other discursive strategies, over-lexicalization is exploited to create a dichotomous ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ reality that conjures up a negative image of Lebanon.

The choice of verbs establishes an expressive value. Verbs are used to either support or invalidate the participants. For instance, the relational process ‘is’ is used to indicate the ‘strong’ relationship between the Lebanese community and racism: *Lebanese society is deeply racist* and must tackle discrimination, EU-funded report says (22 March 2011). The negative evaluation of the writer is thus implicit in this verb.
Participants and Processes

The analysis of participants and processes of texts reveals the way language users manipulate language to represent their perceptions of reality (Fowler 1991). It is concerned with the ideological significance which choices between different grammatical process and participant types bear in a particular context. In this theoretical model, it is, in fact, the transitivity system (‘processes’, ‘participants’ and ‘circumstances’) which “specifies the different types of processes that are recognized in the language and the structures by which they are expressed” (Halliday 1985, p. 101). The processes are of the following types (Halliday 1985/1994):

1. ‘material’, or the process of ‘doing’ involves some physical action and shows that something is going on in the external world;
2. ‘mental’ indicates that something goes on in the internal world of the mind;
3. ‘relational’ is a process of ‘being’ and is concerned with the relationship set up between two things or concepts;
4. ‘verbal’ indicates the process of ‘saying’; “it covers any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning”;
5. ‘existential’ shows that something exists or happens;
6. ‘behavioral’ refers to the process of human physiological and psychological behavior.

Participants have different names in terms of the process type with which they are associated. For instance, material processes have an ‘actor’ (e.g. Lebanese society), and a ‘goal’, while verbal processes have a ‘sayer’ (e.g. EU-funded report) and a ‘receiver’.

The presence, absence or high/low frequency of these processes and/or participants may have different implications. According to Fairclough (1989), “selection between process
types has an effect of highlighting or backgrounding agency, and such choices are ideological because motivated obfuscation of agency results in leaving attributions of causality and responsibility unclear”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Doing</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td><em>Spate of suicides by foreign maids in Lebanon sheds light in abuse</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td><em>Flight ET409 Exposes Lebanon’s Racist Underbelly</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>LEBANON: Beach clubs blatantly discriminate against African and Asian workers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Lebanese society is deeply racist and must tackle discrimination,...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Saying</td>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td><em>Lebanese society is deeply racist and must tackle discrimination, EU-funded report says</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Receiver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Verbiage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>Being</td>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td><em>Lebanese society is deeply racist...</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Processes of Headlines

As shown in Table 2, the processes used in the headlines of the selected articles are of three types: material (4), verbal (1), and relational (1).

- Thematization

The theme is what a text is about. It is the most important information in the clause, and thus appears in the first part of the clause. The analysis of the thematic patterns of the headlines not only reveals what information the writer considers would catch the eye, but also gives insight into common assumptions taken for granted about social reality (Halliday, 1985).

The thematic patterns in the headlines are oriented either to participants: Flight ET409 Exposes Lebanon’s Racist Underbelly/ Lebanese society is deeply racist…; or processes in the reduced form of nominalization: ‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs / Racism Legitimised by Law.

According to Hodge and Kress (1993), nominalizations turn processes into states, and concrete into abstract, creating a new category of abstract entities. The creation of new entities is of considerable cultural and ideological importance, because nominalizations themselves take on the role of presupposed, commonsensical, and taken for granted entities or social realities (Hodge et al. 1993). Consider the following headline:
“Spate of suicides by foreign maids in Lebanon sheds light in abuse”; the nominal group in the thematic position is the information which is presupposed and taken for granted: Lebanon abuses African/Asian migrant domestic workers.

B. The News Texts

This part of textual analysis focuses on two significant features, used to generate particular ideological meanings: the representations of participants and processes, and quotations. ‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs (13 August 2009) is the article chosen for this specific part of the analysis.

- Participants and Processes

As indicated before, an analysis of participants and processes through a transitivity system refers to how certain meanings are represented in the clause, on the one hand, and shows how language users encode in language their mental picture of reality, on the other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Doing</td>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>... 17 out of 27 beach clubs enforce some kind of restriction on migrants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Carrie was taken on by another household but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Racial Discourse in Lebanon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Sensing</th>
<th>Senser</th>
<th>Senser</th>
<th>Yet critics say it is symptomatic of a widespread culture of discrimination and of the abuse many of these migrants working in Lebanon <strong>suffer</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phenomenon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Saying</td>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td>Receiver</td>
<td>The Lebanese office of campaign group <strong>Human Rights Watch</strong> says...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>Behaving</td>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>Being</td>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td>Summer is at its peak in Lebanon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identified</td>
<td>However, it <strong>seems</strong> not everyone is welcome at the clubs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identifier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existential</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Existent</td>
<td></td>
<td>Every year there are reports of domestic maids in Lebanon committing suicide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>... there is &quot;a lot of...&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 3, the processes used in the news text, ‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs (13 August 2009), are of five types: material (14), mental (6), verbal (17), relational (28), and existential (6).

- **Quotations**

An analysis of (direct and indirect) quotations, in the news texts, shows that the information, provided as the main topic of the analyzed article, is reliable. Thus the claims that the Lebanese society in general, and the Lebanese beach resorts in particular, practice “an act of discrimination and racism” are correct and justified.

- **Direct Speech Examples:**

“It's a clear manifestation of the racism that exists in large parts of Lebanese society,” says Nadim Houry of Human Rights Watch…

“You can call it that, if you want, from a foreigner's point of view,” he said.

- **Indirect Speech Examples:**

The Lebanese office of campaign group Human Rights Watch says a majority of beach clubs it surveyed are preventing many migrant workers from Asia and Africa from using their facilities.
As a private club, Mr Abu Nassar said, it is up to the management to decide on the rules.
Yet critics say it is symptomatic of a widespread culture of discrimination and of the abuse many of these migrants working in Lebanon suffer.
Attitudes, he says, need to change.
CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

In this research, I have examined the linguistic structures used for propagating specific ideologies through which discourses of online news texts construct ideological representations of social events and situations in Lebanon to the readers. Both the quantitative and the qualitative analysis contributed to the understanding of the ideological role of language within news discourse in constructing representations of the social world. However, the interpretation in this research is limited, as there are more sections at the level of verbal and visual media features deserving to be analyzed and presented.

Throughout the examination of the selected media news texts, Lebanon – its society, people, policies, and establishments – are represented as a racist entity practicing racial segregation and discrimination against African and Asian migrant domestic workers. However, recent studies on media discourse with the critical discourse analysis perspective have demonstrated how news media linguistically play significant role in shaping information and have the ability to create, influence and perpetuate racist discourses. Thus racial discrimination is not only practiced in Lebanon but in the entire Middle East and even in the whole world.

After all, Racism is a global issue that affects every human being in every culture, country, and community. It is not confined to any one ethnic or social group. Racism is one of the most damaging and dangerous issues facing the world today, fuelling hatred and anger on a local and global scale.
REFERENCES


Internet References


‘Intermarriage’ in New World Encyclopedia. Copyright © 2009 URL: http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Interrmarriage
Headlines’ References


Lebanese society is deeply racist and must tackle discrimination, EU-funded report says (22 March 2011), Equality law :: Promoting Equality, URL: http://www.equalitylaw.co.uk/news/980/66/Lebanese-society-is-deeply-racist-and-must-tackle-discrimination-EU-funded-report-says/


No Magic Wand for this Cinderella (31 January 2011), Anti Racism Movement, URL: http://antiracismmovement.blogspot.com/2011/01/no-magic-wand-for-this-cinderella.html

‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs (13 August 2009), BBC News, URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8200001.stm

Racial Discourse in Lebanon


Racial Discourse in Lebanon

QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Grace Abou Zeid and I am a senior student at The Arab Open University of Lebanon majoring in English Language & Literature. I am doing a research report, titled “Racial Discourse in Lebanon”, as part of my course curriculum, on the ideological role of language within media texts in constructing racial representations of a society as well as its influence on the beliefs and values of the audience. For this it would be greatly appreciated if you could spare a moment to answer the following questions below with complete honesty.

Background

Gender: ___________________________ Nationality: ___________________________

Questions

Part A

Have you ever used an offensive term (Abed, Aswad, Fahme, etc.) toward someone of another race?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you ever witnessed an African or Asian person being rejected to enter a restaurant, a swimming pool or any other leisure center?

☐ YES ☐ NO
Part B

Do you think there are racial problems or have you come across any racial discrimination in Lebanon?

☐ YES  ☐ NO

Part C

Have you ever been verbally or physically abused and/or assaulted because of your race by Lebanese people?

☐ YES  ☐ NO

Have you ever been forbidden to enter a Lebanese leisure place (hotel, restaurant, swimming pool, etc.) based upon the color of your skin?

☐ YES  ☐ NO

Thank you for your time!
The Analyzed Headlines

1. ‘Racism’ claims at Lebanon beach clubs (13 August 2009)
2. Spate of suicides by foreign maids in Lebanon sheds light in abuse (2 December 2009)
3. Flight ET409 Exposes Lebanon’s Racist Underbelly (27 January 2010)
4. Racism in Lebanon: ‘No maids allowed’ at swimming pool (13 July 2010)
5. Racism Legitimised by Law (6 August 2010)
6. LEBANON: Beach clubs blatantly discriminate against African and Asian workers (23 August 2010)
8. No Magic Wand for this Cinderella (31 January 2011)
9. Lebanese society is deeply racist and must tackle discrimination, EU-funded report says (22 March 2011)
10. Slavery in Lebanon: S L A V E R Y (12 April 2011)