

# A Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Representation in the Language of Independence Day's Speeches Delivered by King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein

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**Abstract**—This study investigates gender representation in the language of nine Independence Day Speeches (IDS) made by King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein (KAII). Since he took power in 1999, KAII delivered nine IDS on May 25th. The speeches were given in 2001, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2022. Aimed at Jordanians, these speeches are concise and relatively short, totalling 6000 words. To analyse gender representation, the study utilises the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. Gender representation is assessed based on how KAII's language addresses both men and women equally. Findings reveal that KAII has incorporated notably gender-representative language in his political discourse. He adopted three linguistic strategies in these IDS to develop this language: using plural lexical units instead of singular ones, simultaneously referring to both genders, and employing gender-neutral lexical units. From a gender standpoint, the results suggest that the language in the IDS differs significantly from the prevailing androcentric political discourses in Arabic-Islamic societies. The findings also imply that Arabic, usually categorised as a gendered language, can indeed be gender-representative if the users exhibit the right attitudes, determination, and apply suitable linguistic strategies to reshape current Arabic usage. In conclusion, this study's findings make a unique contribution to the areas of language and gender.

**Index Terms**—critical discourse analysis, gender representation, gender perspective, linguistic strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is assumed that since language has existed as a means of communication, the interaction between language and gender has also been present. This assumption is grounded in the common understanding that the differences between men and women relate to both biological factors and their social roles, expectations, and the ways they are expected to interact socially, linguistically, or otherwise. The systematic and focused studies of this assumption did not commence in earnest until the early twentieth century (Chamberlain, 1912; Jespersen, 1922; Furfey, 1944; Labov, 1966). Nevertheless, Lakoff's 1973 journal article, titled "Language and Women's Place," marked the beginning of a new area within linguistic research: the investigation of language and gender. Ever since, this field has continued to expand, exploring various facets of the relation between language and gender. Early influential studies include, but are not limited to, works by Lakoff (1973, 1975), Spender (1980), Cameron (1985), Coates (1993), Tannen (1994), and Pauwels (1998). Within these pioneering works, three significant areas of study have emerged. The first concern is whether women use language differently from men. If so, how and why? The second area addresses how women are spoken of (or not spoken of). In other words, how are women discussed or represented in language writing? The focus here revolves around how written and spoken discourse reflect and perpetuate gender inequality. The third area examines the challenge of confronting gender-biased languages. Can biased languages be altered or not?

While these three areas showcase the diversity and depth of research in language and gender, they lack distinct boundaries due to significant overlap. These fields strive to gain a nuanced understanding of the complex interactions between language and gender. Considering the interdisciplinary essence of language and gender studies, researchers can utilise a range of theoretical and methodological strategies that combine both quantitative and qualitative analyses (Alzharani, 2019; Bataineh, 2020).

The study of language and gender is increasingly acknowledged as a significant area in linguistic research. This acknowledgement is evident in four main ways: 1) the rise of several dedicated academic journals, the development of important publications such as *Women and Language* (1976), *Gender and Language* (2007), and *Language and Sexuality* (2012) has been significant. Additionally, the creation of the International Gender and Language Association (IGALA) as a professional organisation has contributed to this field. There has also been a global increase in courses, textbooks, handbooks, seminars, and conferences dedicated to language and gender. Furthermore, many professional resources have been developed to promote non-biased language, including the UNESCO Gender Equality Guidelines (1987), Gender-Free Legal Writing by the British Columbia Law Institute, the Guide to Gender-Neutral Drafting by the UK's

Parliamentary and Government Legal Department, and the 1990 Guidelines on Anti-Sexist Language by the British Sociological Association, along with Non-Sexist Dictionaries.

Cameron (2020) rightly highlights the recognition and expansion of the language and gender field, arguing that the Feminist movement, coupled with a new generation of scholars tackling language and gender inequality, has made scholarship on these issues “mainstream” in various disciplines. This observation complements the trend in linguistic studies over the past two decades, which has shifted from analysing the formal aspects of language systems to exploring how individuals use language in communication. In this framework, Bucholtz (2003) noted: “*The study of language and gender has increasingly become the study of discourse and gender. While phonological, lexical, and other kinds of linguistic analysis continue to be influential, the interdisciplinary investigation of discourse-level phenomena, always a robust area of language and gender scholarship, has become the central approach of the field*” (p. 44).

#### A. The Concept of Gender and Gender Representation

Gender is recognized as a cultural construct that evolves through social interactions. Consequently, while cultural influences shape gender, sex is determined biologically. In this context, gender is seen as a product of culture, whereas sex is regarded as a product of nature. Reflecting on the concept of gender, McConnel-Gient (2013) views gender to refer to “*the complex of social, cultural, and psychological phenomena attached to sex*” and, therefore, “*gender is not simply a matter of individual characteristics (e.g., sex) but also involves actions and social relations, ideology, and politics*” (p. 12).

Accordingly, Hellinger and Busmann (2001) argued, “*Gender has to do with stereotypical assumptions about what are appropriate social roles for women and men.*” Such a conceptual framework of the term 'gender,' compared to the term 'sex,' is emphasised by Cameron (2005), who indicated that sex is related to the biological traits that distinguish humans and other animals as male or female. In contrast, gender pertains to the cultural traits and behaviours that a specific society deems appropriate for men and women.

From a conceptual and methodological standpoint, differentiating between “sex” and “gender” has important implications, since cultural constructs are more flexible than biological ones. On this implication, Epstein (1988) indicated, “*It seems clear that most gender differences are socially created and therefore may be socially changed*” (p. 5). This distinction facilitates an examination of how, over time, the concept of gender is understood, constructed, and transformed across various settings.

Based on the above, gender representation in language refers to the use of language in written or spoken discourse that equally addresses both women and men, ensuring the visibility of both genders. Therefore, in this study, gender representation is measured by assessing how well KAIJ addresses men and women equally in the language of the IDS. When discussing the type of language, terms such as those used in this study (i.e., gender representation) are often encountered in other research, including gender sensitivity, gender inclusiveness, and gender nondiscrimination. However, gender representation in language differs from gender neutrality, as the latter typically avoids references to gender when the surrounding culture is already relatively equal, eliminating the need to emphasise women's participation. For example, gender-neutral language uses terms such as *firefighter* instead of *fireman*, *supervisor* instead of *foreman*, *flight attendant* instead of *stewardess*, or *police officer* instead of *policeman*.

#### B. Variations in World Languages Regarding Gender

Considering the concept of gender articulated above, major world languages exhibit varying gender orientations. A set of languages is classified as gendered languages (e.g., German, Spanish, French, Italian, and Arabic). In this set, objects are categorised as either masculine or feminine. Another group includes genderless languages such as Hungarian, Estonian, Finnish, Turkish, and Chinese, in which objects are neither classified by gender nor require gendered pronouns. A third category lies between these extremes, known as natural gender languages, such as English and Scandinavian languages. In these languages, gender is indicated only through pronouns (such as he or she), while nouns lack grammatical gender.

Based on the variations of languages regarding their gender orientation (i.e., gendered, genderless, and natural), Prewitt-Freilino et al. (2012) classified 113 countries worldwide according to the nature of the predominant language in each country (i.e., gendered, genderless, or natural). In this classification, Arabic- the official language in Jordan, where KAIJ uses it to deliver his IDS- is generally categorised among gendered languages. This classification of Arabic as a gendered language stems from the observation that the masculine form is often viewed as the norm or the origin. In contrast, the feminine form is perceived as the marked form. Although the masculine form is the prevailing norm when writing or speaking Arabic, it is sometimes used unconsciously or by default.

From a gender perspective, Arabic poses more challenges than English, the second language in Jordan, to which the IDS are officially translated. This is because the rules of grammatical agreement in Arabic are significantly more intricate than those in English. In English, only pronouns are gendered (e.g., he or she), whereas in Arabic, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are gendered depending on the sentence structure, necessitating agreement across these categories. While English shows grammatical gender mainly through pronouns like he, she, or it, Arabic has a more extensive system that affects nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. In Arabic, grammatical gender is determined by the noun's form, usually either masculine or feminine. As a result, the gender of a noun influences the forms of related pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs within a sentence. For example, in English, saying “He or She is a distinguished teacher” only genders the pronoun, while the adjective and noun remain neutral. In Arabic, to match the gender, the noun (*mu?allim*

for a male teacher or muʿallimah for a female teacher), the pronoun (huwa for "he" or hiya for "she"), and the adjective (mutamijiz for "distinguished" or mutamijizah for "distinguished") must all correspond to the gender indicated by the sentence structure.

Having clarified that Arabic, compared to English, poses more challenges from a gender perspective, this should not imply that Arabic users cannot represent gender in their language. With willingness, determination, and serious effort, an Arabic user can address both genders equally by using appropriate linguistic strategies without sacrificing much of their style or grammatical rules. From a gender standpoint, Arabic, as a means of communication, relies on the user's attitudes, values, linguistic capabilities, and techniques. In her study of Arabic from a gender perspective, Schor (2021) posed the question: Is Arabic a gender-inclusive language? In her response, she offered numerous examples and strong arguments to support the claim: "In general, the Arabic language has the necessary tools to be gender inclusive." However, achieving this requires the right mindset, a readiness to adjust current norms and habits, creative language skills, and suitable strategies when appropriate.

### C. *The Subject Matter of the Study*

Understanding any political discourse generally necessitates considering the context in which it is produced and the orientation of its producer (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). Since assuming his constitutional responsibilities in 1999 and continuing until 2023, KAIJ has delivered nine speeches solely on Jordan's Independence Day, observed on May 25. These speeches were delivered in 2001, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2022. (Here, it is worth mentioning that the preparation of this study started in 2023, before KAIJ delivered the independence speech in 2025). These speeches are directly conveyed to Jordanians by the King in the kingdom's official language, Arabic. They are available on the official website of the Royal Court in Arabic and are also translated into English, as English is one of the two official languages of Jordan.

The speeches are concise, totalling no more than three pages each, around 6,000 words. The themes generally revolve around 1) congratulating Jordanians on their Independence Day, 2) reflecting on the past Hashemite leaders who made Independence possible, 3) encouraging Jordanians to embody the spirit of Independence, and 4) urging citizens to be active and participatory in the development of their country and to rely on themselves in this endeavour. Therefore, the IDS, taken as a singular unit, constitutes the subject matter of this study, which will be analysed using the CDA approach. This analysis will assess whether KAIJ's language in the IDS is gender-representative and addresses both genders equally. It will be based on the original language (i.e., Arabic) in which KAIJ delivered the IDS. While references to the English-translated versions will be included during the analysis, the findings and conclusions will focus on the Arabic text delivered to Jordanians.

The producer of the IDS is widely recognised among Jordanians and internationally as KAIJ, a reformist leader dedicated to modernising Jordan into a truly democratic and developed nation. KAIJ has emphasised that the constitutional monarchy he envisions for his son, the Crown Prince of Jordan, will differ from the one he inherited in 1999 from his father, the late King Hussein bin Talal.

To this end, several constitutional and legal amendments were recently introduced (e.g., the Election Law of 2022 and the Parties Law of 2022) to accelerate political and democratic reforms in Jordan. This initiative aligns with various royal initiatives aimed at empowering women and youth, which have been implemented in Jordan over the past few years (e.g., the Youth Empowerment Window for Democratisation and Youth Empowerment). Reflecting the seriousness of these amendments and initiatives, the last parliamentary election (2024) was regarded by both national and foreign observers as unprecedented in terms of transparency and integrity.

As such, it is expected that the language used by KAIJ, as reflected in the IDS, will represent all genders equally and address all Jordanians, men and women, without offending or excluding anyone, regardless of their religion, race, class, ethnicity, age, or gender. This expectation arises because one cannot foresee a reformist leader like KAIJ producing discourse that might trivialise, exclude, or devalue one gender in favour of another, especially when the excluded gender is often women. Given its subject matter, this study is expected to be among the first, as most available studies in the field of language and gender are primarily focused on English in Western culture. Furthermore, except for the study by Jaradat (2025), studies on language and gender in Arabic or Jordanian contexts remain rare, with a primary focus on gender representation in textbooks. This implies that studying gender representation in political discourse within Arabic-Islamic contexts, such as the present study, remains a relatively rare endeavour.

The originality of the present study becomes more salient when considering that, although gender representation in written or spoken discourses may vary from one culture to another, from one circumstance to another, and from discourse to discourse, it is generally accepted that such representation is the exception rather than the norm. In this context, Cameron (2005) concluded that: "*our languages are sexist: that is, they represent or 'name' the world from a masculine viewpoint and in accordance with stereotyped beliefs about the sexes*" (p. 9). This overall male orientation of languages worldwide (i.e., androcentric) prevails particularly explicitly in the political and social discourses of Arab-Islamic countries such as Jordan, where Arabic is the primary language, as women in such discourses are generally invisible or unrepresented.

Therefore, the originality of this study lies in its attempt to determine whether the political discourse produced by KAIJ, as represented in the IDS, deviates from the prevailing political discourse, which is typically gender unrepresentative. Accordingly, this study is anticipated to make significant and original contributions to the literature on language and

gender in general, as well as to the literature specifically regarding gender and language in Arabic. Moreover, this study aims to pave the way for further linguistic studies on language and gender within the Arab-Islamic context, particularly in Arabic.

#### *D. The Aim and Questions of This Study*

The present study is part of the continuous growth in language and gender studies. As such, it examines the nature of the language used in the nine IDS delivered by KAIJ from a gender perspective. Given this goal, the key questions are: (1) Does KAIJ's language in the IDS accurately represent gender? Specifically, to what degree does KAIJ's IDS address Jordanian men and women equally? If it does, (2) what linguistic strategies do KAIJ use to create such gender-inclusive discourse? The study utilises the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to answer these questions. In doing so, it will employ a qualitative methodology to critically analyze and deconstruct the linguistic content of the IDS from a gender perspective.

#### *E. Theory of the Study*

Within linguistic studies, language is regarded as a means of communication and interaction through which the world is understood and interpreted. Therefore, the language employed in communication from a gender perspective significantly influences gender norms, opportunities, expectations, and equality within societies. Accordingly, the language utilised in communication can be instrumental in sustaining or overcoming the prevailing gender inequality (Tukhtaeva, 2021). This point was initially articulated by Lakoff (1973), who argued that the social status of women can be observed in how women are expected to speak and how they are discussed. This study is grounded in the dynamic or constructionist theory of language and gender. According to this approach, the relationship between language and gender is constantly evolving and shaped by social interactions. These interactions typically occur through written or spoken communication, whether among men and women, among women, or among men.

Halliday (1985) suggests that language is a system for creating meaning through relationships and interactions among people. Similarly, Fowler (1996), another key figure in this framework, describes language as a highly constructive mediator. Building on this view, the study of gender in written or spoken communications (i.e., discourses) seeks to determine the gender representation in such discourses. Therefore, the study of gender and language in discourses such as the IDS aims to examine how gender identities are created, constructed, reinforced, and transformed through language in these discourses.

#### *F. Approach of the Study*

Given the study's goal to analyse gender representation in IDS language and its underlying theory (i.e., dynamic or constructionist theory), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is the most fitting method for this research. The founders of CDA, such as Fairclough (1989, 1992), Van Dijk (1993, 1997), and Wodak (1999), consider it a powerful tool for uncovering the subtle and often overlooked ways in which language interacts with social power dynamics (Fairclough, 2001). In contrast to stylistic discourse analysis, the CDA approach is generally better suited for written texts, such as IDS, which are composed before being presented. Bucholtz (2003) stated that "*the dominant strain of critical discourse-analytical work on gender concentrates on written discourse.*" The use of the CDA approach in studies of the interaction of gender and language is the norm and, therefore, is very widespread. This is evident, as several books share the title "Gender and Discourse" (e.g., Tannen, 1994; Sunderland, 2006). Moreover, many articles apply the CDA approach to understand the interaction between language and gender (Coates, 1993; Cameron, 2005; Fairclough, 2013).

Using CDA to examine the interaction between language and gender is quite valuable in illustrating how a given discourse influences either the maintenance or alteration of its users' attitudes and values concerning gender. Thus, effectively utilising CDA implies that the researcher employing this approach is more active and involved than when conducting stylistic discourse analysis. This is due to the more pronounced evaluative role of the researcher in the former compared to the latter, which facilitates the uncovering of hidden or subtly perceived dimensions of the discourse under analysis.

The evaluative role of the researcher using the CDA approach has been viewed by Heberle (2000) as essential in understanding how explicit linguistic elements of texts contribute to either reinforcing or challenging the existing status quo, social practices, and inequalities among different ethnic, economic, social, or intellectual groups. Similarly, Batstone (1995) argued that CDA users strive to deconstruct covert ideologies often concealed within the text. In emphasising this point, Van Dijk (1997) claimed that while the CDA approach centres on political discourse, it is also considered a critical enterprise. Moreover, Foucault (1981) advanced this idea further by suggesting that CDA users often 'draw on,' invoke,' produce,' reproduce,' and even 'insert themselves' within discourses.

Therefore, this approach should be considered a viable and valuable alternative for analysing discourse. It transcends mere decoding of the propositional content of texts to encompass socially relevant issues. According to the CDA approach, language is seen as situated within its context, reflecting how it is used in different social settings rather than in abstract linguistic forms. In this study, the CDA approach aims to reveal whether KAIJ, in his IDS, aimed to reinforce the existing unrepresentative gender discourse or deviate from it, i.e., does the political discourse of KAIJ, as presented in the IDS, reinforce the status quo regarding gender non-representation or attempt to change it?

## II. METHODOLOGY

To derive its findings, the study uses a qualitative content analysis method. This approach systematically examines textual, visual, or audio data through a detailed classification process that involves coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Combined with the CDA framework, this method aims to uncover hidden aspects of the language used by KAI in his IDS, particularly in terms of whether this language addresses both genders equally.

This is done by analysing the nature of lexical units- such as words, phrases, terms, and expressions related to Jordanians- to determine if they equally target Jordanian men and women. Lexical choice plays a key role in evaluating language from a gender perspective (Schäffner, 2004). Unlike quantitative content analysis, which is deductive and tests hypotheses based on theories, qualitative content analysis is inductive, seeking to interpret the data (Schreier, 2012). Accordingly, based on this qualitative analysis of the IDS text, conclusions are drawn about the degree of gender representation in the language of this political discourse IDS).

## III. RESULTS

Before presenting the results, it is instructive to reemphasise that world languages vary in terms of their gender orientation (i.e., gendered, genderless, or natural). Therefore, the more gendered the language is, the more difficult it is for its users to be gender-representative. For example, Arabic, compared to English, is a highly gendered language because, in English, only the pronouns have different gender forms, whereas in Arabic, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs have different gender forms depending on the sentence structure. Accordingly, producing gender-representative language is generally more challenging when using Arabic than English (Jaradat, 2025). Thus, from a research perspective, it becomes rather important to examine how KAI faced this challenge to produce a gender-representative language that addresses all Jordanians, including women and men. To this end, the question becomes, what linguistic strategies are KAI implementing to face this challenge?

In answering this question, it is essential to clarify that, depending on the language's gender orientation, users generally have several linguistic strategies available to produce a gender-representative language. According Lindqvist et al. (2019) these strategies include but are not limited to: The use of paired forms (i.e., he/she), the use of the word “they” as a singular pronoun, the use of the third-person pronouns, the use of gender-neutral lexical units (i.e., *police officer* instead of *policeman*), the use of passive voice constructions (e.g., “*Preparation of the homework is required*” instead of saying “*The student should prepare his/her homework*”), the use of examples representing men and women equally, and the simultaneous use of feminine and masculine forms.

All these strategies aim to minimise the use of gender-discriminatory language as much as possible, i.e. these strategies are available to language users to treat men and women fairly and equally, promoting gender equality through language. These strategies do not necessarily need to be used together in a discourse. Still, using some depends on the gender orientation of the language and the user's willingness, determination, and creativity to make their language gender-representative. Regarding Arabic, the language in which the IDS were written and delivered, it seems that its users should maximize their efforts to explore the most effective strategies since Arabic tends to be male-oriented (i.e., androcentric).

Based on the above, a thorough qualitative analysis of the language used in the nine IDS reveals that KAI employed three major linguistic strategies to create a gender-representative language that addresses both men and women equally. These strategies include 1) using plural lexical units instead of singular ones, 2) referring simultaneously to both men and women, and 3) employing neutral lexical units. The analysis below illustrates these strategies and their application.

### A. The Strategy of Using Plural Lexical Units Instead of Singular Ones

This strategy is often employed to create a gender-representative language in contexts where the language is considered highly gendered, such as Arabic. In this approach, the discourse producer, as in the IDS, aims to utilise plural lexical units (i.e., words, phrases, terms, and expressions) such as 'we', 'us', 'our', 'they', 'them', and 'you', among others. This strategy enables the discourse producer to minimise references to particular lexical units in the singular form. Thus, it is frequently regarded as an excellent option for users of a given language, such as Arabic, to maximise gender representation as much as possible. This strategy provides recipients of discourse with a sense of representation, regardless of their age, class, religion, or gender. As such, it provides the addressed individuals with a sense of belonging and togetherness, which helps them avoid feelings of alienation or exclusion. In analysing the linguistic and lexical content of the IDS, it is clear, as shown in Table 1 below, that KAI implemented this strategy very effectively.

The strategy of using plural lexical units instead of singular ones, when employed correctly, can be effective in producing a gender-representative discourse. However, it is crucial to bear in mind that while the linguistic strategy of using “they” to refer to a singular noun in English is prevalent, particularly in spoken discourse, its application is challenging in Arabic. In English, the use of the lexical unit “they” and its other grammatical forms, such as “them”, “their” or “themselves” with a singular antecedent referring to singular indefinite nouns, is common, especially in spoken discourse, as it appropriately addresses both genders. This is clear in the following two examples: in English, one might say, “*At the airport, you can look for our agency’s representative; they are holding a sign with your name on it*”, and “*Every student shall submit their homework before the end of this week; otherwise, they will not be able to take the final exam next week*”. These two examples can be used effectively to create a gender-representative language. However, if the same examples are used in Arabic, they will, by default, reflect the masculine forms only. In the first example, the

word “you”, in English, represents both genders, whereas in Arabic, “you” has a gender identity (i.e., “*?anta*” - the masculine form - and “*?anti*” – the feminine form). Likewise, in the second example, the word “student” in the English language does not possess a gender identity, as it refers equally to both genders, while in Arabic, this term is either used in the masculine form (i.e., *Ta:lib*) or the feminine form (i.e., *Ta:libah*). Therefore, in Arabic, compared to English, if your discourse is to be gender-representative, it is challenging to use the words “they”, “them”, “their” or “themselves” to refer to singular nouns or pronouns.

TABLE 1  
THE PLURAL LEXICAL UNITS USED IN EACH OF THE NINE IDS

| The Arabic Plural Units                  | Translation                                      | Year of the Speech |
|--|--|--------------------|
| wa qad kunna                             | We were  | 2001               |
| wa hay?ana al ?rdijah                    | We prepare the background                        | 2001               |
| fa ?inana nu?min                         | We believe                                       | 2001               |
| La: budda lana                           | We must  | 2001               |
| laqad bad?ana                            | We started                                       | 2001               |
| ?inna muqbiloun                          | We are moving forward                            | 2003               |
| nahnu fi: ?alurdun                       | We in Jordan                                     | 2003               |
| nas?a lita?zi:z                          | We seek to reinforce                             | 2003               |
| nahnu nudrik                             | We realize                                       | 2003               |
| falabudda lana                           | We must  | 2003               |
| allati: tumakinna                        | Which empowers us                                | 2003               |
| ?an ?u?amin ald?ami:ʕ                    | To assure all                                    | 2003               |
| bi ?anana qad ?id?tazna                  | We all overcome                                  | 2003               |
| laqad waʕdtukum                          | I promise you                                    | 2003               |
| likul wahidin minna                      | For each of us                                   | 2006               |
| wa nhnu ?abna:? ?al?usrah ?alwahidah     | We as one family                                 | 2006               |
| wa nhnu naʕmal                           | We work  | 2006               |
| Nastafi:d min ʕalaqatina bilʕalam        | We benefit from our relationships with the world | 2006               |
| nuri:d ?an naʕtamid ʕala ?anfusna        | We need to depend on ourselves                   | 2006               |
| wa bihimatikum wa ʕazjmatukum            | With your will and resolve                       | 2006               |
| taʕqi:q ru?ijtuna                        | Achieving our vision                             | 2007               |
| ?ald?ami:ʕ furaka:?                      | We all are partners                              | 2007               |
| wa nahnu kuluna ?alurdun                 | We are all Jordan                                | 2007               |
| wa nahnu kuluna lil?urdun                | We are all for Jordan                            | 2007               |
| mawariduna al bafarijjah                 | Our human resources                              | 2007               |
| kuluna naʕmal                            | We all work                                      | 2007               |
| La: nuri:d                               | We do not want                                   | 2007               |
| fanahnu hari:Su:n                        | We are keen                                      | 2007               |
| wa kuluna jaʕrif                         | We all know                                      | 2007               |
| wanahnu la: naqu:l haða                  | We do not say so                                 | 2007               |
| wala nuri:d                              | We do not want                                   | 2007               |
| haða waðgibuna                           | This is our duty                                 | 2007               |
| wa sawfa tastamir dzuhuduna              | Our efforts will continue                        | 2007               |
| wa nahnu d?ami:ʕan                       | We are all                                       | 2007               |
| ?ilijkum d?ami:ʕan                       | To you all                                       | 2007               |
| kuluna jaʕrif                            | We all know                                      | 2008               |
| ladjjina alkaθi:r                        | We have a lot                                    | 2008               |
| Tarijjuna                                | Our path   | 2008               |
| ?adʕu: ?ald?ami:ʕ                        | I call upon all                                  | 2008               |
| wa naʕkur allah                          | We thank God                                     | 2008               |
| fanahnu multazimu:n                      | We are committed                                 | 2008               |
| qijamuna wa mabadi?una                   | Our values and principles                        | 2016               |
| wa ?antum d?ami:ʕan                      | You are all                                      | 2017               |
| fi: qulubina d?ami:ʕan                   | In all our hearts                                | 2017               |
| wa nahnu biʕawn allah                    | We, with the help of God                         | 2017               |
| wa nahnu naʕiiʕ                          | We all live                                      | 2020               |
| laqad tabaʕadna d?asadijjan              | We have been physically distant                  | 2020               |
| lakin taqarubna bi qulu:bina wa ahdafina | But our hearts and goals have grown closer       | 2020               |
| likaji nanad?ah                          | In order for all of us to succeed                | 2020               |
| jad?ib ?an nartaqi lil mas?ulijjah       | We all must rise to the responsibility           | 2020               |
| wa ?atmana lil d?ami:ʕ                   | I wish you all                                   | 2020               |
| sijjadatt alqanu:n ?ala ald?ami:ʕ        | The rule of law on all of you                    | 2022               |
| ?ana faxu:r bild?ami:ʕ                   | I am proud of all of you                         | 2022               |
| min haqina                               | It is our right                                  | 2022               |

Based on the findings in Table 1, the KAI employed numerous plural lexical units to ensure his language was as representative as possible in addressing all Jordanians, both men and women. This strategy appears to function effectively in avoiding the exclusion of one gender at the expense of the other. These findings indicate that KAI’s language in these

IDS diverges from most other political discourses prevalent in Arabic-Islamic societies, which, as indicated earlier, often tend to exclude one gender, typically women, at the expense of the other.

### B. The Strategy of Referring Simultaneously to Men and Women

This strategy is the most effective one for achieving completely gender-representative language. In this strategy, the text producer addresses both men and women to ascertain the equitable representation of both genders. By deliberately and intentionally using this strategy in the IDS, KAIJ seems to disagree with the common and widely held view that the masculine form in Arabic signifies both masculine and feminine. Therefore, KAIJ attempts to avoid using masculine forms to refer to both men and women whenever possible. As shown in Table 2, KAIJ attempts to use both masculine and feminine forms simultaneously to address Jordanians. For example, he deliberately uses the words /sha:b/ (young man) and /sha:bah/ (young woman) simultaneously to reflect that he addresses both young men and young women. Table 2 shows the phrases or expressions in the IDS which reflect the effective use of this strategy to represent both men and women simultaneously.

TABLE 2  
THE PHRASES REFLECTING THE SIMULTANEOUS USE OF REFERRING TO MEN AND WOMEN

| The Arabic Words Address Both Men and Women. | Translation                                    | Year of the Speech                 |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
| likul ?ax wa ?uxt                            | To each brother and sister                     | 2001 + 2003                        |
| ?al ?ixwa wal ?axwa:t                        | My brothers and sisters                        | 2003+2006+2007+2008+2017+2020+2022 |
| likul muwaTijn wa muwaTijnah                 | To each citizen man and citizen woman          | 2003+2006+2007                     |
| likul ?urdunijj wa ?urdunijjiah              | To each Jordanian man and each Jordanian woman | 2006+2022                          |
| ?alna?ama wal na?mijja:t                     | The active men and women                       | 2006+2008+2020+2022                |
| ?abna:??i wa bana:ti                         | Sons and daughters                             | 2008+2016+2017+2022                |
| likul ja:bin wa ja:bah                       | For each young man and each young woman        | 2017                               |
| ?ala?ba:? wal ?umaha:t                       | Fathers and mothers                            | 2020                               |
| lil ridza:l wa ?alnisa:?                     | For men and women                              | 2016                               |
| ?al ?urdunijjin wa ?al?urdunijjia:t          | For all Jordanian men and all Jordanian women  | 2022                               |

Utilising this strategy to address both men and women simultaneously emphasises the equal representation of both genders. Table 2 shows that KAIJ repeated the lexical units targeting men and women together 63 times, underscoring that Jordanian women and Jordanian men are equally addressed. Accordingly, addressing readers in masculine and feminine forms enhances their sense of belonging. However, when a language addresses only one gender, the non-addressed may feel alienated, marginalised, excluded, or even offended. These findings reveal that KAIJ, known as a reformist, endeavoured in his language to avoid offending any of his audiences, ensuring that both genders are equally visible and fairly represented. From a gender perspective, the language (i.e., Arabic) employed by KAIJ in the IDS can be viewed as a progressive step towards liberating Arabic from the prevailing classification as an endocentric language. This strategy of referring simultaneously to both genders is common in several other languages (e.g., "Ladies and Gentlemen" in English or "Sir and Madam" in French). Therefore, this implies that any language generally labelled as highly gendered, such as Arabic, can be rendered genderless if its user possesses the will and determination on one hand and employs the appropriate linguistic strategies on the other.

### C. The Strategy of Using Gender-Neutral Lexical Units

In this strategy, KAIJ attempts to avoid using specific gender lexical units in masculine or feminine forms. Using gender-neutral words in speech or writing is an effective way to promote more inclusive language. In the IDS, KAIJ demonstrated strong skill in applying this approach. Table 3 shows examples of some gender-neutral lexical units that KAIJ used during the IDS.

This strategy is based on the linguistic technique of using gender-neutral alternatives to gendered words, terms, phrases, or expressions. Once effectively employed, this strategy may liberate the used language from being labelled as gender discriminatory. Accordingly, the producers of political discourse effectively utilise this strategy to help them be gender representative in their language. Examples of gender-neutral lexical units as compared to gendered units include the use of "person" instead of "man", "people" or "humanity" instead of "mankind", "first-year students" instead of "freshmen", "police officer" instead of "policeman", or "chairperson" instead of "chairman". As shown in Table 3, KAIJ successfully employed this strategy in the language of his IDS.

TABLE 3  
THE USE OF GENDER-NEUTRAL LEXICAL UNITS

| Expressions of Gender-Neutral Lexical Units       | Translation  | Year of the Speech |
|---|--|--------------------|
| ʔusratuna ʔalʔurdunijjah                          | Our Jordanian family                                     | 2001               |
| haijjat ʔalna:s                                   | The life of people                                       | 2003               |
| kul fard  | Each person  | 2003               |
| ʔalʔabab  | The youth  | 2003               |
| ʔalfarijjq ʔalwahid                               | Our path   | 2003               |
| ʔal ʔusrah ʔal ʔurdunijjah<br>ʔlwahidah           | The one Jordanian family                                 | 2003               |
| ʔlusrah ʔlurdunijjah<br>ʔlwahidah                 | Our one Jordanian family                                 | 2006               |
| masoulijjat ʔlʔabab                               | The responsibility of youth                              | 2006               |
| lil ʔabab ʔalʔurdunijj                            | For the Jordanian youth                                  | 2007               |
| mawaridnna ʔlbasharijjah                          | Our human resources                                      | 2007               |
| madʔlis al-nwa:b                                  | The parliament   | 2007               |
| ʔalʔabab ʔalʔurdunijj<br>kulluhum                 | All the Jordanian people                                 | 2007               |
| haðih ʔal ʔummah                                  | This nation  | 2007               |
| ʔmma ʔalʔabab                                     | As for the youth   | 2007               |
| ʔalʔabab ʔalʔurdunijj                             | The people of Jordan                                     | 2007               |
| ijhtijadʔa:t ʔahlaha                              | The needs of its people                                  | 2008               |
| ʔalʔadʔijjal ʔalqadimah                           | New generations  | 2008               |
| ʔal ʔabab ʔalʔurdunijj                            | The Jordanian youth                                      | 2008               |
| ʔalusrah ʔalʔurdunijjah                           | The Jordanian family                                     | 2008               |
| ðawi ʔaldaxil ʔalmahdoud                          | The low-income people                                    | 2008               |
| ʔal ʔabab ʔalʔurdunijj                            | The Jordanian youth                                      | 2008               |
| tumuha:t ʔababuna                                 | The aspirations of our people                            | 2008               |
| hamalataha ʔalʔadʔijjal                           | Carried out by the generations                           | 2016               |
| jadʔib ʔan taʔrif ʔadʔijjaluna                    | Our generation should know                               | 2016               |
| ʔindʔaza:t ʔalbuna:t ʔalʔwaʔil                    | The achievements of the building founders                | 2017               |
| ʔabab hatha ʔalwaʔan                              | The youth of this nation                                 | 2017               |
| ʔalshabab ʔalʔurdunijj                            | The Jordanian youth                                      | 2017               |
| ʔababuna jastahiqu:n                              | Our youth deserves                                       | 2017               |
| dʔaijjuna wa ʔadʔhizatuna<br>ʔalʔamnjjiah         | Our army and security forces                             | 2020               |
| ʔalʔaʔfa:l  | The children   | 2020               |
| tumuha:t ʔababuna                                 | The aspirations of our people                            | 2022               |
| wihdat ʔababuna                                   | The unity of our people                                  | 2022               |
| qwat dʔaijjuna                                    | The strength of our army                                 | 2022               |
| ʔadʔhizatuna ʔalʔamnjjiah                         | Our security forces                                      | 2022               |
| maka:n lil ʔadʔijjal<br>ʔalqadimah                | A place for the coming generations                       | 2022               |
| li tawafi:r furaS ʔal ʔamal li<br>ʔala:f ʔalʔabab | To provide thousands of work opportunities for the youth | 2022               |

The findings presented above indicate that across all the IDS, the KAI has effectively implemented the strategy of using gender-neutral lexical units. This strategy is crucial for freeing languages from being categorised as gendered or viewed as gender discriminatory. This is significant because, in male-dominated societies, it is anticipated that the predominant languages reflect this domination by employing discriminatory language, in which one gender (typically women) is less visible and represented than the other. Furthermore, from a gender perspective, these findings affirm that any language, as a means of communication, hinges on how it is utilised by its producer, which can render it either gender discriminatory or gender representative. As indicated earlier, this strategy is frequently used in English to avoid excluding one gender at the expense of the other, where women are often the excluded gender.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study have three significant implications for comparative linguistic studies of gender in general, and for the Arabic language in particular. The first implication is that any language, regardless of its gender classification or orientation, can be gender-representative if its user possesses the will and determination to do so while employing appropriate techniques and effective linguistic strategies. This means that languages such as German, Spanish, French, Italian, and Arabic, which, as indicated, are classified as gendered languages, can be gender-representative if their users intend to be so and utilise the proper linguistic techniques and strategies. However, achieving gender representation may be more challenging in one language than in another due to the extent of gendered orientation inherent in the language, particularly in its grammatical rules. As demonstrated, the gender representation is significantly higher in the English translated version of the IDS than in the original Arabic version. This implication suggests that the linguistic strategies employed to produce a gender-representative language may vary from one language to another. This, as shown, is clear in that while in both Arabic and English, the linguistic strategies of addressing both genders simultaneously and using

neutral lexical units can be used, the strategy of using the singular “they” can only be used in English, as if it is used in Arabic can only reflect the masculine form.

The second implication of these findings is especially relevant to Arabic. Given that Arabic is predominantly endocentric, with the masculine form serving as the default to represent both genders, this situation can change if Arabic users are willing and motivated to adopt appropriate linguistic techniques and strategies. Consequently, to overcome gender inequality and achieve meaningful social and political reform, Arabic speakers need to treat both genders equally in their written and spoken discourse. This, as argued, is because what is culturally constructed, as in this case, gender inequality, can be more easily changed than what is biologically determined. In Arab society, educational curricula, religious discourse, media discourse, and political discourse must address both genders, as excluding or alienating one of them does not serve the well-being of society nor help in the achievement of social development and political reform.

The third implication of the study's findings is that it is time for our Arabic societies to develop guidelines to avoid using non-representative language in the prevailing educational, political, religious, and legal discourses. Such guidelines have been developed in the West and are generally more applicable to the English language, as they have contributed to producing a more balanced language from a gender perspective. Such guidelines could be adapted to meet the nature of the Arabic language and its grammatical rules, which, as indicated, are highly gendered compared to English.

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the three linguistic strategies implemented by KAI in IDS have been highly influential in producing a political discourse that can be labelled as gender representative. The findings show that the overall language KAI uses in the IDS addresses both genders equally. As such, both genders are visible in KAI's political discourse and are fairly represented. The overall implication of these findings is that, although Arabic, in which the IDS were written and delivered, is often labelled as a gendered language, it can be used to produce a gender-representative political discourse when the producer, as in this case, KAI, has the right attitude to employ the appropriate linguistic strategies. These findings align with a previous study conducted by Jaradat (2025), in which the KAI employed four linguistic strategies to produce a gender-sensitive language in his Discussion Papers.

Accordingly, the political discourse of KAI, as reflected in the IDS, is significantly different from the prevailing political discourse in Arab-Islamic countries, where the language used in such discourse is often androcentric. This conclusion should be understandable if it is realised that KAI had been educated and trained in the West and has, since assuming power in 1999, been seen as a reformist attempting to modernise Jordan to transform it to be a genuinely democratic and developed State in which both genders should have equal chances and responsibilities. The gender-representative language used by KAI should be viewed as respectful of both genders in the sense of addressing them fairly and equally. The will on the part of leaders to avoid gender-discriminatory language should be seen as a step in the right direction to eliminate or at least reach a better degree of gender equality.

In summary, due to the limited research on gender in the Arabic language, this study aims to encourage further exploration of language and gender within Arabic contexts, promoting the investigation of new aspects of the relationship between the Arabic language and gender through phonological, semantic, and syntactic perspectives.

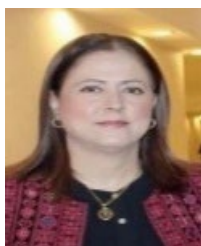
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