

CONTRASTING GENDER BIAS LANGUAGES IN PHILIPPINES AND U.S ONLINE NEWS ARTICLES: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the most prevalent gender-biased languages and to identify what type of rhetorical devices were used frequently in Philippines and U.S Online News Articles and to highlight the similarities and differences of rhetoric taken from ten online news websites. The corpus is made up of 20 articles per news outlets which are GMA News, Manila Bulletin, Manila Times, Rappler, and Philippine Daily Inquirer from the Philippines. Politico, LA Times, The Guardian, USA Today, and CBN News from US. All news was contrastively analyzed based on Robert Kaplan's Theory of Contrastive Rhetoric using AntConc software. The findings revealed that there are rhetorical devices found in these articles to filter the used labels for males and females that invoke stereotyping. Results also revealed that both countries are similar in terms of using positive and nice word subtly on describing women. However, a vast contradiction is also depicted due to the fact that news writers utilize words that negatively connotes and has a sharp definition that is associated with women. Thus, the study concludes that there should be a widespread information and practice about the usage of Gender Fair Language in various profession most especially in Media and Journalism.

Keywords: *Corpus-based Study; Contrastive Rhetoric; Gender-biased Languages; Online News Articles*

INTRODUCTION

Gender Bias Languages

The Philippines is glared by various contradictions on its Gender Issues. Despite women advancement in the various area of specialization such as academic, professional success, legislation, and even in politics, there are still a bigger number of women who experiences things, as an example of which, battered wives, economically impoverished women, exploited migrant laborers, and prostituted women which contrasts the latter. It is believed that because of the country's colonialism, women are viewed as full-time homemakers, and violence against them is seen as private, submissive to men, and last as a sexual object. Considering these things, it can be clearly seen that women are heavily objectify and mistreated despite of representations of women in the society (Añonuevo, 2000). Gender bias is extremely apparently in media content on a dataset of millions of articles which causes a rampant utilization of Gender Biased Language which creates Media Bias claimed by Omar et al., (2010). Media biases are defined as distorted news reportage or sometime internal predisposition that oftentimes mirrored in various new bulletin and sections claimed by Hamborg (2018). News media mirrors the society's norm on gender roles which upholds an escalation of social injustices and inequality according to Senden (2014).

Abstracts, news headlines, and stories are considered to creation of news that would garner the reader's attention through using investigative sentences and clauses in news articles headlines to pique reader's attention these biased sentences are categorized into: Ideological Bias; that promotes a particular opinion, Coverage Bias; media take on the stories and persona's prominence in the society, and lastly Presentation and Selection Bias; this type of bias heavily contributes in the rise of the gender bias in news reportage as forwarded by Dacon and Liu (2021). Moreover, the study was based on the Theory of Contrastive Rhetoric by Robert Kaplan (1966) and Deficit Theory by Robin Lakoff (1975). These theories serve as the main theories that were followed by the researchers on crafting the study. The Contrastive Rhetoric is a study of which gives emphasis on the discourse and textual patterns in different languages which has its own distinct cultural milieu and structure. While, the Deficit Theory suggests that "Women's Language" is used to weakly portray women and how does the language contribute to women's low status and weak positions in the society. These theories further helped the researchers on analyzing the study's corpus.

In the study of Tabula and Agbayani (2015), they stated that there are rhetorical pattern found in in the Philippine and American grammatical structures reflected in the forms of news headlines and articles. Thus, gender bias languages arise in headlines, in the front page, local page, and running texts both in American and Philippine news articles. This study was able characterize the micro-rhetorical structure of the Philippine and U.S newspapers and cross-examined whether there is a significant macro-structural variation between these two different countries as it also discovered the rhetorical styles used by Filipino and American writers that publishes online news with the same and/or different discourse schema of writing gender-biased languages.

Sexism represented in language through poor lexical choices (Menegatti & Rubini, 2017), stereotypical gender biases (Brunet, Alkalay-Houlihan, Anderson, & Zemel, 2019), sexist language evaluated in sexist forms (Baranowski, 2002), and media biases because of the gender bias appeared in news bulletins and sections are the societal gender-based issues that should be addressed properly and it should rally talks within society to highlight the need for it to be discussed. Furthermore, the study is sought to follow these objectives: To highlight the micro-genre that predominantly occur in terms of gender biased language in the Philippine News Articles, the micro-genre that predominantly occur in terms of gender biased language in the U.S News Articles, and lastly to derive a Contrastive Interpretation between the Philippine and US News Articles. The similarities and differences between these two were highlighted. This study is unique to other studies for it highlights the Gender Bias Language present on the Online News Articles and as to how does Gender Bias Language in U.S news differ from Philippine news.

METHODOLOGY

This research utilized a qualitative approach which involves naturalistic approach and interpretive approach; it also studied the things that sits on their natural site, to interpret or to make an attempt to conceive, an occurrence in rappers of the meaning that people convey them as per put forth by Denzin and Lincoln which was cited by the work of Sonia Ospina

(2004). The study incorporated Corpus Analysis, which helped the researchers to transform written language into word frequencies and patterns; moreover, defined as a computer-aided linguistic pattern analysis in and across naturally-produced texts this was based on an article written by Aull (2013). The researchers may apply these theories in their current study by using it as a guide on how they may improve and arrange their paper through the information that are presented in the study of Ospina (2004) and Aull (2013).

Furthermore, the study was focused only on attaining the data from five (5) news media companies of both countries online which were free of charge on reading their articles or story that will be used as the source of the online news articles that will be analyzed. The online news articles that were analyzed were only delimited from the first six (6) months of the implementation of the Quarantine in which the news articles focus on COVID-19 news that correspondingly tackles about Gender Issues. The companies were chosen because of accessibility of the articles for the public to use as an instrument of information, for the Philippines news media outlets are the following: GMA News, Manila Bulletin, Manila Times, Rappler and lastly Philippine Daily Inquirer. While on the U.S.A; Politico, L.A Times, The Guardian, USA Today and lastly CBN News.

The researchers went over the articles through the AntConc to answer research questions. AntConc is software used for conducting linguistic research which is the main instrument of this study. Next, after gathering the concordance of the articles, identifying the Gender Bias Language on the articles the researchers will interpret the data through the use of Descriptive Analysis for constructing a summarized interpretation of each country's corpus. After analyzing the corpus result, the researchers interpret the data based on the Deficit Theory that was proposed by Robin Lakoff. The data analysis and data interpretation will be the same. Then, the researchers contrastively interpreted the biases in the articles from U.S and Philippines based on the result of the corpus. The researchers analyzed the corpus using Lexical Analysis method to derive and create a sequence of symbol or lexical tokens that are unique to both countries; furthermore, the researchers utilized Contrastive Analysis method to properly guide them on contrasting the Gender Biases present in the Philippines and U.S news articles while using the Contrastive Rhetoric Theory which was proposed by Robert Kaplan in 1966 to highlight the differences of the use of language of both countries.

RESULT/FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Philippine Collocations

This part investigated the collocations of the words "*Woman*" and "*Women*". The words "*Woman*" and "*Women*" were acknowledged as the collocate that is worthy of inspecting as A.) it constitutes part of a catchphrase that represents a gender partiality then B.) by dint of linguistic scrutiny of its collocation, "*Woman*" and "*Women*" divulge how women are perceived within the online news articles that circulates on the society every day. Moreover, based on the statements made by Commissions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (2007), the Philippines is the only country in Asia that was able to diminish the gender gap on health and education. Moreover, the Philippines' political empowerment continues to rise based on its estimated income, income equality for similar work, and labor force participation. Women empowerment nowadays are becoming a thing within the Philippine Society, thus considering this claim, it is visible that the Philippines is

slowly taking small steps on achieving an unbiased treatment of gender in various aspects of the society to have a better representation and treatment on genders in a respectful and empowered lens and will benefit each gender a safe space and equal opportunities.

Table.1. Philippine Colocation of Woman

COLLOCATIONS	FREQUENCY	RANK
Merely	4	1.5
Looking	4	1.5
Old	3	3
Outcry	2	6.5
Remove	2	6.5
Threatened	2	6.5
Arrested	2	6.5
Told	2	6.5
Last	2	6.5
Rape	1	10

The Table 1 shows the adjectives that collocates with the word “*woman*” the news authors in the Philippines are mostly using words that has a negative effect on the perception of readers towards woman. The words *Merely*, *Old*, *Remove*, *Threatened*, *Arrested*, and *Rape* are words that negate the image of a woman in the society though its association towards woman as it affects heavily the woman in general because readers of online news articles absorbed a negative perception towards woman without considering what notable changes and advancement were made by women in the society. Bordalo et al., (2019) believed that due to the gender stereotypes, women tend to lose their confidence and question their abilities to such extent. They also claimed that personal beliefs over gender are stimulated by two factors: Stereotyping where beliefs are overly exaggerated over what is reality and Overestimation of ability or the feeling of difficulty-influenced mis-estimation or DIM. The women stereotypes and lens that is used to see and describe women intensifies the doubtful thinking of a women about their individual capacities and capabilities that lessens their belief on themselves which hinders them to try and take risks about something that they can do however, they do not believe on themselves and do not think of achieving bigger dreams and brighter future.

Table.2. Philippine Colocation of Women

COLLOCATIONS	FREQUENCY	RANK
Prostituted	21	1
Offshoot	4	3.5
Quoting	4	3.5
Stresses	4	3.5
Skepticism	4	3.5
Overshadowed	3	6
Decriminalization	2	7.5

Treats	2	7.5
Suspiciously	1	9.5
Underprivileged	1	9.5

The Table 2 showed how the word “women” has its collocated words which are used by News Authors in the Philippines, the corpus results show how *women* is being described through their treatment as women in the society being described as *prostituted*, *suspiciously*, *underprivileged*, *decriminalization*, while their abilities are described as *offshoot*, *overshadowed*, *treats*, *stresses*, *skepticism*, and *quoting*. The result also elicited a noticeable frequency of the collocations in which, the word *prostituted* has a frequency of 21 thus, implying that there is a great number of articles that uses this word to portray and describe women on their articles that leaves a negative impression to the readers about women within the society making them subject of discrimination and unfair treatment. While other words have a frequency of 4 (*Offshoot*, *Quoting*, *Stresses*, and *Skepticism*), 3 (*Overshadowed*), 2 (*Decriminalization* and *Treats*), and 1 (*Suspiciously* and *Underprivileged*). Moreover, Heilman & Caleo (2018) stated that due to Descriptive Gender Stereotypes, women oftentimes encounter gender discrimination in the workplace in addition that they are perceived as unequipped to take on traditional male positions and/or titles. They also claimed that a discriminatory behavior is seen when women succeed a male dominated position whether it is implied explicitly or implicitly.

U.S Collocations

This part discussed the collocations of “Woman” and “Women” in the U.S News Articles. The words “*Woman*” and “*Women*” were identified as a collocate worth investigating as A.) it constitutes part of the phrase that denotes a gender bias and B.) through a linguistic analysis of its collocation, “*Woman*” and “*Women*” can reveal how women are perceived within an online news that circulates on the society every day. Additionally, England et al., (2020) in which they claimed that despite of the drastic progress of various movement towards gender equality however a few decades back these changes brought by the gender movement it changed and started to improve slowly and stalled some gender improvement indicators.

Table.3. U.S Collocation of Woman

COLLOCATIONS	FREQUENCY	RANK
Old	14	1
Killed	7	2
Shot	5	3
Beheaded	3	4.5
Angry	3	4.5
Stray	2	6
Smuggled	1	8.5
Mindfulness	1	8.5
Hindrance	1	8.5

Assassinate	1	8.5
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In table 3, it depicts U.S News Writers reports woman in the daily news, woman collocations are being described through their treatment in which they are labelled *as Old, Stray, Smuggled, Hindrance, and Assassinate*, their existence are also described as *Killed, Shot, Beheaded, Angry, and Mindfulness*. This table shows how cruel can be the portrayals of woman on the news articles, this has a direct effect on the society’s understanding about the existence of woman. A frequency hit of 14 (*Old*) takes the first rank for how prevalent its existence is on the online news articles followed by frequency of 7 (*Killed*), 5 (*Shot*), 3 (*Beheaded and Angry*), 2 (*Stray*), 1 (*Smuggled, Mindfulness, Hindrance, and Assassinate*). These words that are associated with woman are words that have a negative resonance on the readers thus, making them as vulnerable as possible and subject for discrimination that leads to not taking seriously their stories, sufferings simply because they are conditioned by media to be fragile, weak, and unassuming. Furthermore, Del Zotto (2002) claimed that there is a misrepresentation on media about women’s experiences. She further claims that the news media inadvertently hide vital stories of women’s suffering. This table further stresses a more advanced linguistic capability and understanding because most collocations are regarded as a negative word that illicit negative notion to the society.

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^aCOLLOCATIONS	FREQUENCY	RANK
^b Disadvantaged	5	1
^l Inferiority	3	2.5
^s Suffrage	3	2.5
[.] Snub	2	5.5
⁴ Incomplete	2	5.5
Restrictive	2	5.5
Productivity	2	5.5
Subjected	1	9
^l Stereotyped	1	9
Strain	1	9

S Collocation of Woman

In table 4, it depicted what are the words that collocates the word “women” in the U.S news articles, as it shows the word that describes *women* based on their treatment in the society are being *Snub, Productivity, Incomplete, and Suffrage*, while their skills are mostly associated with words as *Inferiority, Disadvantaged, Restrictive, Subjected, and Strain*. These associations of women create an imbalance representation over women in the society, it does not represent what women are in general however, since it is published online as an article it further exacerbates the situation and portrayals of women on the society. Moreover, the table illustrates a list of frequencies which Rodriguez (2009) concluded her study by noting that notions of control demonstrate clues of stereotypical views on womanhood which further implies that there is an imaginary restraint that should be exercised on women. These

restraints cause the arousal of imbalanced rights, representations and opportunities on a specific gender specifically women as they are negatively labeled on the society.

Contrastive Rhetoric

The corpus of the two online newspapers were found to be different in terms of applying certain rhetorical devices. One of the rhetorical devices used in Philippine News Articles is dysphemism which describe women or a woman as being a subject is explicitly offensive and something uncomfortable that stands in contrast with euphemism. In the case of women, there is no richness of euphemism. As often noted from the table above, terms for women are very sexual. Moreover, U.S News Articles are less offensive and is more careful on describing and characterizing women, their rhetorical characteristics often use persuasive multimodal moves which draws a quantifiable amount of visual, spatial and textual manipulation Guzman (2018).

Lakoff argued that women are weaker and less certain than with the men, that justifies women's low status and how men treated women. Thus, they are denied from their power, treated as a sexual object, abused and are target of domestic violence as being the subject in the result in the figure above such as "woman not having the highest position, was being murdered, was being beheaded, was being accused, being threatened and so on".

Table.5. Similarities of Collocations

Philippines Collocations	U.S Collocations
Virtues	Wounded
Empower	Exceptional
Decent	Qualified
Laude	Bright
Important	Acknowledged
Offshoot	Strides
Laud	Recognizable
Decriminalization	Mobilization
Worsen	Harsher
Underprivileged	Disadvantaged

The collocations stipulated on the table 5 were grouped according to their similar meaning and to analyze which of these countries uses fewer offensive words even they share the same meaning. Among these 20 words, it shows that the collocations portraying women both have a positive description or how the image of woman between the news articles in the Philippines and U.S have an optimistic characterization to woman or women. The words "wounded" and "virtues" describing woman as a "warrior" and a woman with "virtue", "empowered", and "decent" in which they belong to the terms that have the highest or frequently used in the corpus result. This depicts that despite the negative narratives of women within the society, their stories still matter and they are still represented in a very subtle way for it is still essential for the society to associate them with positive words to sort of break their stereotype. Women are treated as an object of which overshadows their leadership capabilities and skills thus, this simultaneously contravene boundaries when women are associated with positive and regarded with a high position Mavin & Grandy (2016).

Table.5. Differences of Collocations

Philippines Collocations	U.S Collocations
Susceptible	Mindfulness
Lucky	Defeated
Threatened	Determined
Comfort	Terror
Exploitation	Accountability
Observes	Snub
Weeping	Heather
Skepticism	Undeniable
Objectified	Stereotyped
Hindered	Overseen

While Table 6 are the collocations that was grouped according to their opposite meaning to know which of these countries uses mostly used offensive words describing woman shows that the collocations of woman in the Philippines differentiating to U.S the term which is mostly used to woman is "susceptible" which best described a woman to be easily influenced, affected, and tricked with an exact opposite meaning to the word "mindfulness" as the most coined in the U.S that described women as conscious or being aware of something. The first five terms used in the Philippines have three negative connotations to women which are “susceptible, threatened, and exploited” than with U.S that the first five terms only two have negative descriptions to women which are “defeated” and experiences “terror”. Women objectification and subject of sexualized contents and malice are prevalent in the society thus it is expected that there shall be an instance where women are seen as an object. These lens of where women are seen as such are a part of an observer’s perception towards women of which the more, they acknowledge the negative stereotypes of women the more negative the judgement and treatment on women. (Kellie (2019)

CONCLUSION

The researchers concluded that Philippines showed a dominant use of *Dysphemism* on the micro-genre that was displayed on their online news articles. The collocations about women are offensive, which it emphasizes the sexual depravity of and singularity of women. Moreover, it forwards the image of women’s societal roles as a wife and maternal issues which fell unto domestic violence. These media representations should rally talks within groups about the situation of women within the Philippine Society. While on the other hand, the U.S. showed how women are represented on their own society. Despite the fact that they are a 1st world country they still have violent narratives about women. The topics that they often focus are highlights the violence against women and abuses however they sugar-coat such news to still appear fair however, the context of the articles is not as fair as they wanted to be. Women do progress in various areas however, this progress come off as invisible because of the misrepresentations of women in media. This progress is also ignored due to the contradictions of what women really are within the news and in reality. The realized that there should be an advancement program onto disseminating information about Gender Fair

Languages usage on the news media industries so that women advancement, efforts, and existence are being heard, represented, and celebrated to avoid biases over one gender.

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