TO DRIVE OR NOT TO DRIVE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SAUDI FEMALE ADVOCATES’ DISCOURSE

By

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To all Saudi women
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The present study is an in-depth analysis of Saudi female advocates’ discourse regarding the ban on women’s car driving in Saudi Arabia. The study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in a fine-tuned examination of how these advocates demand the right to drive. The study hypothesizes the existence of a relationship between the discursive practices of Saudi female advocates and the negative attitudes of Saudi society towards the advocates and their demands. Therefore, the main goal of the study is to reveal the discursive practices that reconcile the conflicting relationship between Saudi female advocates and Saudi society and reinforce Saudi women’s rights.

The data of the present study includes ethnographic interviews, Twitter posts, YouTube videos and articles by the Saudi female advocates. The analysis toolkit incorporates elements from Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), Sociocognitive Approach (SCA), Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), and Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA). The analysis is conducted at three levels: a textual level, a discursive level and a sociocultural level.
The three levels of analysis portray Saudi female advocates and link their discourse to their identity construction, power relations and ideologies.

The analysis indicates that utilizing social media to empower women and spread awareness towards women’s rights enables advocates to cope with and resist the Saudi sociocultural context. However, going behind the wheel and driving cars without official regulations fails to solve the problem since both the government and the society reject it. The dissertation expands the use of CDA to include the discourse of Saudi female advocates and link their discourse to the wider Saudi context. In addition, the study contributes to our understanding of the advocates, highlights the demands of Saudi women, and offers insights to the misunderstood Saudi culture. Moreover, the study provides multidisciplinary knowledge related to sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, gender studies, feminism, politics, religion, and cultural anthropology.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This study analyzes the discourse of Saudi female advocates who demand the right of women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. This group of advocates has encountered offensive social criticism and severe resentment because they stood against a society that has been accustomed to dealing with obedient passive women. Through analyzing their discourse, I seek to illustrate their identities, ideologies and power relations. The ultimate goal of the present study is to bridge the gap between Saudi female advocates and Saudi society, and to reinforce the rights of Saudi women through raising the voices of the advocates and supporting their calls for equality and justice.

Before embarking into analysis, it is important to present an overview about major historical and social facts that will help readers get the full picture of the situation in Saudi Arabia. After that, I will provide an overview of the progress achieved in social change for Saudi women in general and the major attempts of female advocates to defy the ban on women’s driving. Then, the purpose of the present study and the research questions are presented, and followed by a preview of Saudi female advocates and justifications for particularly choosing the discourse of Saudi female advocates on women’s car driving in Saudi Arabia.

Overview

Saudi Arabia is a hereditary monarchy that is located in the south-western region of Asia. It was established in 1932 by King Abdulaziz Al Saud. It is the original homeland of Arabs and the birthplace of Islam, which contributed tremendously in shaping the ideological and behavioral acts of Saudi society. In addition to religion, oil wealth and tribal customs are major contributors in forming the mindset of the Saudi society. The
official language in Saudi Arabia is Arabic, which has a religious value being the language of the Quran, the Holy book of Islam. Moreover, Saudi Arabia stands out among other Arab countries for being the homeland of the two holy mosques in Makkah and Al Madinah.

A few years after the unification of Saudi Arabia, the country experienced a radical change due to the sudden wealth from the oil boom and the remarkable work of King Abdulaziz, which transformed the impoverished nomadic desert into a modern wealthy nation. This evolution contributed in nourishing the country’s infrastructure including, but not limited to, education, health, urban planning, and transportation. The vision of Saudi Arabia was, and still is, innovation with respect to religion and cultural traditions.

Since that time, Saudi Arabia has accomplished major advances in education, health, economy, agriculture, and industry. The overall infrastructure improved dramatically within a few years; however, the transportation system still lacks mass transit and passenger rails, and needs a huge boost in order to meet other highly improved sectors. The whole population is affected by the poor transportation system, yet women are the most affected because they do not have the option to drive cars as men do. When cars were introduced to the society, women were totally occupied with their familial duties and only men needed to get out for work. Therefore, driving cars became a traditional norm for men only and the following generations adopted this gender inequality causing Saudi Arabia to be the only country in the world that deprives women the right to drive cars. Saudi women have attempted to defy the ban since the 1990s, but their attempts ended up with great failure.
The present study is devoted to investigating the discourse of Saudi female advocates who demand the right of Saudi women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. Through analyzing their discourse using Critical Discourse Analysis, this study attempts to postulate the discursive practices that reinforce Saudi women’s rights and bridge the gap between Saudi female advocates and Saudi society. In addition, the analysis of the discourse of Saudi female advocates will portray them and reveal the factors that assist them in acknowledging and demanding women’s rights. Therefore, this study introduces these Saudi female advocates to the world, and at the same time highlights the rights of Saudi women.

**Progress Achieved in Social Change for Saudi Women**

The unification of Saudi Arabia in 1932, the oil boom of 1938, and the Islamic Awakening Movement, Wahhabism, contributed largely in shaping the social status of Saudi women (Van Geel, 2016). At that time, Saudi Arabia was merely a state of men and most women were confined to their homes to raise their children and perform their familial duties. This limited role of women did not last for long due to the contributions of elite families who travelled to neighboring countries and recognized the vital role of women in modern societies. They demanded girls’ education, which was the first step towards the progress of Saudi women.

Nowadays, Saudi women form a vital social power that is prominent across the Arab world (Jamjoom & Kelly, 2013). They occupy a considerable portion of the Saudi work force by working as doctors, lawyers, professors, engineers, and entrepreneurs. The following is an overview of the major social achievements of Saudi women in education, Majlis Al-Shura (The Consultative Council) and the municipal elections.
Education

In the past, education in Saudi Arabia was limited to informal classes that were held at mosques to teach boys how to read the Holy Quran and basic sciences. In 1953, formal education was introduced by establishing the Ministry of Education, which launched schools that were limited to boys only (Jamjoom & Kelly, 2013). Therefore, girls did not have the opportunity to join formal schools until the early 1960s.

When girls’ education was introduced to the Saudi society, it was rejected by the majority because they believed that education and knowledge is a means of women’s corruption. The Ulama (religious leaders) attributed their severe rejection of girls’ education to the fact that girls’ education is merely a western plan that targets Muslim women to disgrace them and expose them to the public sphere (Arebi, 1994). To solve this conflict, the Saudi government provided girls with segregated schools with a focus on religious curriculums in order to cope with the Ulama’s beliefs and the Saudi traditions.

In an interview with a Saudi female advocate, she expressed her anger at Ulama who reject women’s car driving. She compared their current rejection to their previous rejection of women’s education which was launched during the regime of King Faisal Ibn Abdulaziz. She said that she is amazed that most of the educated Saudi elites belong to extremely conservative families who once rejected women’s education. Their daughters are now professors of Islamic studies and Sharia’a (Islamic Law) in the most prestigious Saudi universities. She added that the social change of conservative societies such as Saudi Arabia occurs only through royal decrees as people usually tend to apply all governmental statements even when they have the choice not to apply them.
Majlis Al-Shura (The Consultative Council)

Besides the progress in girls’ education, women in Saudi Arabia achieved unprecedented progress in political participation. Recently, they are appointed positions in Majlis Al-Shura, which is a consultative council that proposes governmental laws and national rules. It was established by King Abdulaziz in 1926 (Al-Kahtani, 2004), and consists of 150 members who are appointed by the king for four-year terms.

The powerful role of consultative councils in the social reform of conservative societies is stressed by Ehteshami and Wright (2007) who described the Saudi Majlis Al-Shura as ‘a stable, reform-oriented, technocratic forum which, in a traditional and inherently conservative society such as Saudi Arabia, will serve as the ideal sounding board for the testing of future reform plans, and may act as the ideal vessel for their introduction as well’ (p. 928).

It is also worth mentioning that the seats in Majlis Al-Shura were exclusively limited to men from the moment it was established in 1926 until 2013, when the late King Abdullah granted women 30 seats and stated that women should occupy at least fifth of the 150 positions. Alzidi (2015) reported that the late King Abdullah was determined about allocating spaces for elite women such as royal princesses, academic professors and social activists to participate in making political decisions, regardless of religious and conservative forces that restrict women from participating in the public sphere.

Municipal Elections

Saudi women achieved a recognizable social progress in education and political participation as well. Moreover, Saudi women have recently had the opportunity to nominate themselves and vote in municipal elections. The Saudi municipal elections
started for the first time in January 2005 and were conducted every four years in order to allow Saudi citizens to participate in decision making and to spread democratic political awareness (Alzidi, 2015).

In the first two municipal elections, only men could participate as voters and candidates. Women were not included until 2011, when the late King Abdullah announced that women would be able to vote and be elected to serve for local government offices starting from 2015. For the first time, ever, Saudi women could vote and stand as candidates in the municipal elections of 2015. The municipal elections of 2015 were held in an atmosphere that excludes tribal and conservative bias that dominates the Saudi society. According to the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs (2015), 130,637 female voters and 979 female candidates participated in the elections of 2015.

**The Timeline of Women-to-Drive Movements**

Saudi women’s achievements in education and politics are considered significant because they took place within an extremely conservative society, where religion, politics and tribal traditions interplay to form a very complex mindset. Time and effort are needed to enlighten the Saudi society and spread moderate principles that fulfill individuals’ needs and cope with the religious and traditional norms.

Although many rights of Saudi women have been achieved, the right of women to drive cars is still pending. Saudi women have launched different campaigns to defy the ban and attract public attention. The first attempt was in 1990, and it was a huge failure for women because they were attacked and silenced for two decades. From 2011 and on, modern campaigns were launched and were successful in attracting public
attention. Yet, the issue is still open and no satisfactory action has been taken.

Descriptions of the most popular campaigns are presented below:

**1990 Driving Protest (November 6th, 1990)**

In 1990, the Gulf War embarked as Iraq invaded Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia responded to that invasion by requesting assistance from the US military (Commins, 2009). Therefore, the presence of Americans was visible in different parts of Saudi Arabia, especially around the Saudi-Kuwaiti boarders. In addition to the American presence, the Kuwaiti presence was visible since many Kuwaitis were hosted in Saudi Arabia during war. Both American women, who were in military service, and Kuwaiti women, who were refugees, drove their cars in Saudi Arabia, which raised the question of why women can drive cars in Saudi Arabia except Saudi women (Hamdan, 2005).

During the Gulf War, many Saudi men were away from their families for military service, and many foreign drivers left Saudi Arabia for the fear of war. Other foreign drivers accepted staying in Saudi Arabia, and requested triple their original salary. The absence of men and foreign drivers, and the presence of foreign women who drive cars motivated Saudi women to plan a public protest to demand the right to drive cars in Saudi Arabia.

On November 6, 1990, around 47 women assembled to drive fourteen cars around the capital city, Riyadh. The participants were a group of university professors, doctors, teachers, businesswomen, housewives and high school students who shared the same goal of allowing Saudi women to drive cars. All the 47 women who drove in the protest were holding valid driving licenses obtained from other countries (Al Mane & Al Shaikh, 2013).
One of the participants in this protest told me in an interview that their decision to protest was made fast in a “word by mouth” agreement to avoid spreading the news to authorities, and thus hindering the protest. She indicated that they were afraid of the society and the government, but this fear did not hinder them.

As soon as policemen noticed that the drivers were women, they stopped the cars and asked protesters to sit in the backseat of their cars. Every car was driven to the police station by a policeman. In addition, religious police members were present and their reaction was violent. Both officials and spectators were surprised by this protest because it was the first female protest in the history of Saudi Arabia (Al Mane & Al Shaikh, 2013).

The reaction towards this event was more than expected, and participants were highly resented. They were banned from travelling, slandered during Friday sermons, and suspended from their jobs (Di Giovanni, 2013). A few months after the protest, King Fahad Bin Abdulaziz held a meeting with four of the participants: Siham Al Swaigh, Azizah Al Mane, Suad Al Mane and Norah Aba Alkhail, and listened to their demands. They explained the reasons behind their protest and the hardship they faced after being attacked by the society and the government (Al Mane & Al Shaikh, 2013).

Later, a royal decree was declared to allow all suspended participants to return to their jobs and to be paid retroactively for 32 months. The travel ban was lifted one year after it was declared (Al Mane & Al Shaikh, 2013). However, the serious attack on the participants of the 1990 protest discouraged women from protesting and silenced them for more than two decades. Car driving campaigns were initiated again in 2011, when Manal Al Sharif drove her car in the streets of Saudi Arabia.
In 2013, two participants in the 1990 driving protest wrote a book, Assadis min November, meaning the 6th of November. This book is considered a valuable manuscript in the history of Saudi women. The authors narrated the historical attempt of Saudi women to obtain their rights, and mentioned repeatedly that the 1990 protest was a symbolic action to tell the Saudi society and the whole world that Saudi women are no longer submissive and marginalized. Saudi women were ready to be active participants in the society and rejected social constraints that were not originated from religion or law. This protest was also a way to attract public attention to the lost rights of women (Al Mane & Al Shaikh, 2013).

The Women2Drive Campaign (June 17, 2011)

Women abstained from raising the issue of women’s car driving for two decades. Then, the Arab Spring that embarked across the Arab world in 2011, and the social reform demands motivated a group of Saudi activists to organize The Women2Drive campaign, which goes under the larger umbrella of Right2Dignity Initiative. This initiative aims at obtaining Saudi women’s rights and defying the ban on women’s car driving.

Members of My Right to Dignity Initiative (n.d.) believe that women in Saudi Arabia should be able to obtain driving licenses, since the law does not state that women should not drive cars in Saudi Arabia. Cultural constraints are the only barrier that prevents women from driving and limits their mobility. Therefore, Manal Al Sharif filed a lawsuit against the General Directorate of Traffic upon their rejection of her request to obtain a Saudi driving license. The Women2Drive campaign encourages women to follow the steps of Manal Al Sharif and apply for Saudi driving licenses and
file lawsuits upon the rejection of their request. In this manner, law enforcement agencies would consider women’s demands and fulfill them.

Through social media networks, Women2Drive asked women to start driving on June 17, 2011. A considerable number of women from different parts of Saudi Arabia video-recorded themselves while driving cars and uploaded their videos and photos to social media websites. The society and the government were shocked by women’s daring actions and controversial discussions invaded social media websites and the press.

The difference between the protest of November 6th, 1990 and the Women2Drive Campaign is that the former was a physical assembly where participants gathered in one place and drove cars at the same time. On the other hand, the participants of the Women2Drive Campaign drove cars individually at different times and places. The news of the modern campaigns spread quickly due to the modern news outlets, and the reaction of the Saudi society was not as strong as before. This campaign attracted public attention, yet no royal decree has bestowed on women the right to drive cars.

It is worth mentioning that Saudi women were inspired by the video that was uploaded by the catalyst of women’s change, Manal Al Sharif, while she was driving earlier in May, 2011. Although she was arrested, asked to sign a pledge not to drive again, and served a 10-day jail sentence, her challenging action encouraged other women to drive on June 17. Manal Al Sharif was supposed to participate in the Oslo Freedom Forum; however, she was banned from travelling and therefore she video-recorded her speech and posted it online (Ottaway, 2012).
Oct 26 Driving Campaign

Two years later, women in Saudi Arabia launched another campaign on October 26th, 2013. This campaign was supported by pioneer activists and was popular nationwide. The initiators of this campaign explained their demands in a petition website. Lift the Ban on Women Driving Petition (n.d) demanded the following:

1. Issuing driving licenses to female citizens who pass driving tests and be equal to men in this regard.
2. Declaring a firm governmental statement that bestows women their God-given rights.
3. Stopping controversial social debates that increase the division of the society.
4. Providing logical justifications if the ban is not lifted.
5. Providing a legal mechanism that allows Saudi citizens to express their views and demands their rights.

This campaign utilized social media to deliver supporter’s demands to officials. However, the response of the government was also strict this time and a spokesman of the Ministry of Interior warned of crackdowns if the protest took place. The Ministry of Interior reported that driving campaigns facilitate opportunities for predators to blast the cohesion of the Saudi society. In the 26th of October, 2013 event, police cars spread along major streets and the security presence was heavy to prevent any riotous actions.

Attempting to Cross the Saudi Borders

In addition to on-site protests and online campaigns, individual attempts to defy the ban took place. On November 30th, 2014, Loujain Al Hathloul decided to cross the Saudi border with her own car using a valid UAE driving license to revive women’s driving campaigns. She obtained her driving license from the United Arab Emirates
(UAE), which is supposed to be valid in all the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), including Saudi Arabia.

Loujain Al Hathloul video-taped herself while driving and tweeted that she was 10 minutes away from the Saudi border, holding her UAE driving license and her Saudi passport. Later, she tweeted that she was kept at the check-point for 24 hours waiting for a response from officials. Her friend, Maysaa Al Amoudi, a Saudi journalist and feminist, drove from UAE to join Al Hathloul and bring her some supplies. They updated their Twitter followers with detailed information about their status at the Saudi check-point. Later, they were both detained and served a 73-day jail sentence for attempting to break the law of Saudi Arabia and pitting public opinion against the state. The social reaction towards this attempt was like the reactions to previous movements. However, people this time withdrew from taking any further actions and were afraid after Lujain and Maysaa were jailed for more than two months.

**Purpose of the Study**

The offensive social criticism and the explicit resentment towards Saudi female advocates, who demand the right of women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia, attracted my attention and motivated me to approach this group and investigate their identities, ideologies and power relations. The present study aims at converging views and bridging the gap between Saudi female advocates and the larger Saudi society through utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Analyzing the discourse of Saudi female advocates enables a revealing of their motives and justify the reasons behind the severe criticism they encounter albeit the seriousness of their demands.

Being a Saudi woman, and an academic researcher, I find myself responsible for pinpointing the demands of Saudi women, and postulating solutions that may assist in
fulfilling women’s needs without abandoning Islamic values and Saudi traditions. Whether we agree or disagree with Saudi female advocates, they are members of Saudi society who deserve attention and respect like any other social group. Therefore, representing Saudi female advocates and delivering their demands in a modern and peaceful way are the goals of the present research.

**Research Questions**

The present research hypothesizes the existence of an interwoven relationship between the discursive practices of Saudi female advocates and the negative attitudes of Saudi society towards the advocates and their demands. Therefore, a critical discourse analysis is conducted at three levels to find the discursive practices and linguistic tools implemented by the advocates to demand women’s rights, represented by the right of women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, I attempt to answer the following main research question:

RQ1. What are the discursive practices, employed in the language of Saudi female advocates, that reinforce Saudi women’s rights and reconcile the conflicting relationship between Saudi female advocates and Saudi society?

To get a broader view of the Saudi female advocates, I will try to answer the following sub-questions that link their discourse to their identity construction, power relations and ideologies.

**Sub-research Questions:**

**Discourse and identity**

RQ2. How have Saudi female advocates constructed their identities through their discourse?
RQ3. What are the sociolinguistic constraints, if any, that have contributed in shaping the identities of Saudi female advocates?

**Discourse and power**

RQ4. How does Saudi female advocates’ discourse manifest relationships of power and control?

RQ5. How do Saudi female advocates define women’s empowerment?

RQ6. What power, if any, is exercised by Saudi female advocates towards social change?

**Discourse and ideology**

RQ7. What are the ideologies that have been implemented in the discourse of Saudi female advocates?

**Who are Saudi Female Advocates?**

Saudi female advocates are women from different parts of Saudi Arabia who share the same goal of promoting equality, justice and social change. They tackle different social issues such as violence against women, harmful marriage traditions, child abuse, housing shortage, youth unemployment and poverty. They do not belong to an official organization, nor do they gather in physical settings. Some of them are journalists, doctors, academic professors, teachers, nurses, students, and even housewives. They utilize social media to deliver their voices to the public via posting recordings on YouTube, discussing their views on Twitter, participating in televised interviews, and writing articles for national and international newspapers. Pharaon (2004) reported that the internet has contributed in liberating Saudi women’s roles in the 21st century as two thirds of internet users are women. In other words, the internet is the window from which Saudi women watch and interact with the rest of the world.
It is worth mentioning that the shared characteristic among the selected Saudi female advocates of the present study is that they did drive cars themselves in Saudi Arabia, which is considered a courageous act in a very conservative society. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate their ideological instances and ascertain what encouraged them to sit behind the wheel and break the conformity of Saudi society.

Why Saudi Female Advocates?

Although advocates who call for women's rights in Saudi Arabia are both female and male, the present study focuses particularly on female advocates for many reasons. First, unlike males, female advocates experience what other Saudi women experience and therefore represent the lifestyle of other women who are affected by their lost rights.

Second, gaining access to the public sphere and asking for rights are not easy tasks in Saudi Arabia for either females or males because people usually tend to be self-contained and conservative because they are afraid of the law or tribal traditions. However, Saudi female advocates stand out, reveal their identities, and speak loudly on behalf of other women despite the strict governmental laws and the complicated social constraints.

Third, examining the demands of the Saudi female advocates will assist in empowering Saudi women and delivering their needs to the public. Therefore, the awareness towards women's rights will spread, and the voice of silenced women will be heard.

Why the Issue of Women’s Car Driving?

Whenever the rights of Saudi women are discussed, the ban on women’s car driving dominates the list, and endless discussions take place. Supporters consider car driving a symbol of independence, power and freedom, while opponents believe that car
driving is a trivial issue and a means of liberating conservative Muslim women. Such discussions are not limited to the Saudi context. International journalists and news reporters have also discussed the issue and raised important questions about the status of Saudi women.

In addition, investigating the ban on women’s car driving is personally significant because I am one of the affected women who struggle with the Saudi transportation system. The shortage in transportation means and the limited mobility encouraged me to deeply investigate this issue and find solutions that could assist decision makers in Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, the discourse on women’s car driving is broad and profound, which facilitates including a variety of data resources for the present research. In addition, the discourse on women’s car driving is a platform for discussing a wide array of women’s issues, such as the guardianship system, child custody, harassment, and gender equality.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature Review

Introduction to Language and Gender

Women have had different experiences throughout history. Some societies grant women powerful social and political positions while other societies impose strict rules that prohibit women from living as freely and equally as men. Gender inequality and discrimination against women have been documented within various academic fields, including discourse analysis that has shown gender inequality in language use. Discourse analysts implement content analysis tools to deconstruct various discourses to reveal hidden ideological instances and expose speakers’ motives and attitudes.

Examining women’s language dates back to 1922, when the Danish linguist Otto Jespersen devoted one chapter in his book, Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin, to discuss woman’s language. His chapter, ‘The Woman’, represents woman’s language as inherently deficient version of men’s language. He claims that gender-based differences are a result of the social experiences and the psychological traits of women. This chapter is considered the touchstone for language and gender studies and feminist linguistics despite disparaging women’s language and looking at women’s language as an inferior version of men’s linguistic norms.

The beginning of modern analysis of women’s discourse is marked by the work of Robin Lakoff (1973), Language and Woman’s Place. Her work introduces several characteristics that distinguish women’s language from men’s language, including the use of empty adjectives that soften the sentence such as ‘adorable’, ‘terrific’ and ‘awesome’, the use of hedges, tag questions, indirect requests, apologies and polite
forms. In addition to pointing out those characteristics, Lakoff links power to language by postulating that the cautious fearful language of women perpetuates and sustains their marginalization in the society. Although Lakoff’s work lacks credibility for being based on her intuitions, it is the spark that encouraged linguists to investigate female/male linguistic characteristics and how language mirrors social power structures and vice versa.

The present study adopted Lakoff’s perspective in language and power relations and the role of language in constructing various identities and ideologies. It also adopted Jespersen’s perspective in examining women’s language as a distinct group. However, Lakoff’s common-sense attributions and Jespersen’s biased intuitive analysis are avoided in the present analysis of Saudi female advocates’ discourse through utilizing credible research methods that are adopted from Critical Discourse Analysis and Feminist Post-Structural Discourse Analysis.

Jespersen and Lakoff’s studies stem from the “deficit” framework that posits women’s language as “deficient” in terms of men’s language. Talbot (2008) postulates that later researchers avoided the “deficit” framework and substitute it with either the “dominance” framework which interpret women’s language in terms of patriarchal social orders, or the “difference” framework which considers women and men equal but raised and socialized within different subcultures. Consequently, women and men speak and interact differently.

Recently, most language and gender studies adopt the ‘dynamic’ framework in which, as Coates (1993) states, gender is enacted rather than possessed by interlocutors. Therefore, gender is changing depending on the cultural expectations
about women’s and men’s speech styles. The present study finds the dynamic approach the most suitable framework since it examines speakers in context. In other words, Saudi female advocates’ discourse is being examined within the context of ‘The ban on women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia’.

It is important to note that examining women’s language apart from men’s language did not appear until the late 1980s, when a considerable number of studies examined interactions in all-women groups (e.g. Coates, 1993). These studies have focused on such phenomena as women’s communicative competence (e.g. Reynolds 1990), women’s enactments to build social relations (e.g. DeCapua, Berkowitz & Boxer, 2006), women’s everyday talk (e.g. Coates, 1991; Coates, 1989), women’s identity construction (e.g. Bucholtz, 1999; Holmes & Schnurr, 2006), female rhetorical expressions and natural-occurring interactions (e.g. Bate & Taylor, 1988), women’s dialect variations (e.g. Coates & Cameron, 1989), and women in political settings (e.g. Shaw, 2006; Suleiman & O’Connell, 2008; Ndambuki & Janks, 2010; Wilson & Boxer, 2015).

On the other hand, examining men’s language in itself has remained too long overlooked. This was attributed by Coates (1993) to the view that men are representatives of human race, therefore all studies that did not specify the gender of participants were by default discussing men’s language. The work of Johnson and Meinhoff (1996) is considered the first extensive account that concentrates basically on men’s language, including male patterns of interactions and heterosexual identity construction. Thereafter, sociolinguists started analyzing men’s language as a distinctive group and not only representatives of human race and studies on men’s
language and masculinity appeared (e.g. Cameron 1997; Coates, 2001; Kiesling, 2002; DeCapua & Boxer, 1999; Hall, 2009).

**Language and Gender in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**

MENA is a vast region where Arabic is the mother tongue and Islam is the dominant religion. However, the countries of the MENA region are different in their politics, history, and economy which has led to obvious diversity. In regard to women, MENA 'shares women-linked commonalities that are strong, deep, and pervasive: a space-based patriarchy, a culturally strong sense of religion, a smooth coexistence of tradition and modernity, a transitional stage in development, and multilingualism/multiculturalism' (Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2013, p. 1).

The bulk of research on women in MENA has been carried out from a political, cultural, or legal perspective, but it is only the rare study that focuses on the linguistic perspective; therefore, language and gender studies did not appear in MENA until the 1980s, which is considered late in comparison to western societies (Vicente, 2011). Earlier studies of language and gender in the Arabic speaking countries concentrate on the Arabic gender system (Ibn Al-Anbari, 1978), linguistic variations (Walters, 1991; Al-Wer, 1991; Bassiouney, 2009a), sex differences in speaking Arabic (Bakir, 1986), gender and prestige (Abu-Haider, 1989); however, no significant attention has been paid to the relationship between gender and power in the Arabic speaking communities (Sadiqi, 2006).

Most of the presented studies in this section were conducted in Morocco; however, there are many similarities between Morocco and Saudi Arabia. The monarchy of Morocco is similar to that of Saudi Arabia, since a king rules the state and has the power to affect public thinking. Consequently, royal power contributes in
shaping the social status of women and other social groups. Moghadam (2003) mentioned that gender cultural conceptions in Morocco and Saudi Arabia are similar in spite of the more conservative mindset in Saudi Arabia in regard to what is considered appropriate for women. Therefore, gender studies that have been conducted in Morocco are of great relevance to the situation in Saudi Arabia.

Among the few remarkable studies that have investigated the interaction between gender and language in MENA is the work of Sadiqi (2003b) in which she analyzed the way women and men use language to construct their gendered identities. She illustrated how Moroccan languages, namely Standard Arabic, Moroccan Arabic, and Berber reflect the Moroccan androcentric culture and how women encounter this androcentricity through manifesting various linguistic strategies such as code-switching, indirect speech, polite forms, diminutives, oaths, euphemism, and entreaties. Saudi female advocates are aware of the androcentric nature of Saudi Arabia. Their discourse reflects their exploitation of different strategies to encounter the androcentric Saudi society.

The linguistic situation in Morocco is different than in Saudi Arabia, however as the former has more than three languages while the latter has only one language, Arabic. The exclusive use of Arabic in Saudi Arabia is attributed to the attachment of Arabic to national identity and religious commitment. On the other hand, the spread of English cannot be overlooked, as it dominates various administrative and economic sectors. Haq and Smadi (1996) concluded that Saudis consider the use of English a means of enriching one’s personality and social prestige. In other words, speaking English does not contradict patriotism and religious beliefs. Most Saudi female
advocates manifest different languages in their call for women’s rights. Nevertheless, this research focuses mainly on Arabic data, since it is the mother tongue of Saudi advocates and the official language in Saudi Arabia.

The linguistic behavior of Moroccans has also been studied by Kharraki (2001). This study examines the language of both women and men while bargaining. The results show that women use insisting strategies that are considered face-threatening if used by men. In other words, women use extensively daring and assertive language when bargaining in the market. These results contradict the common belief that women’s language denotes submission and insecurity. The present research highlights the assertive language of Saudi female advocates and the insisting strategies they exploit to obtain their rights.

In addition to assertiveness and insisting strategies, women in MENA show less use of standard Arabic. Al-Wer (2014) postulated that studies in MENA show that Arab women are a divergence of the common patterns found in linguistics in which women speak standard and prestigious languages. However, Arab women speak Standard Arabic less frequently than men due to the fewer educational opportunities they have had. In other words, Arab men have had more access to Standard Arabic through formal education. Therefore, they show more frequent use of Standard Arabic. On the other hand, common patterns of gender differentiation in sociolinguistics across societies show women’s more frequent use of standard languages than men.

Saudi female advocates have experienced significant progress in education, which has led to significant access to master different languages, including Standard Arabic and English, and therefore effectively delivering their voice to the society.
However, they speak the hybridized Arabic more than the Modern Standard Arabic MSA because it reflects youth, power, knowledge and urbanity. The hybridized Arabic is known as *al lahjah al baidha* ‘the white dialect’ and is less formal than MSA. Hybridized Arabic involves borrowing words and expressions from MSA into local dialects for the purpose of intelligibility and simplicity. Holes (2004) refers to this process of simplifying Arabic as hybridization.

The distinction between the public sphere and the private sphere is significant in MENA since they are two segregated worlds where the former is dominated by men and the latter belongs mainly to women. Accordingly, linguistic behaviors of women and men are connected to the worlds they inhabit. Investigating Arab women’s linguistic behavior in both private and public spheres has attracted several scholars of language and gender. Bassiouney (2009b) examined the speech behavior of Egyptian women and men in talk shows and revealed that women’s language in the public sphere is similar to that of men, since women used interruptions and controlled the floor in the same manner as men did. The finding of this study agrees with the divergence of Arab women’s linguistic behavior that was postulated by Al-Wer (2014).

Women’s linguistic power in the public sphere is also shown in Sadiqi’s (2003a) work that explained how Moroccan women, whether educated or not, creatively use language to negotiate power and assert themselves. Illiterate women use oral genres such as public oratory, folktales and poetry in order to differentiate themselves from other literate women and foreground their existence in an androcentric culture. On the other hand, educated women make use of their multilingualism and switch from one language to another to distinguish themselves as educated urban females. Code-
switching in Morocco is considered as a female strategy of communication. Young girls are encouraged from an early age to code-switch in order to differentiate themselves from boys. Code-switching between Arabic and other highly standard languages, such as French and English, is encouraged in the Arabic speaking countries. Several Saudi female advocates implement code-switching as a linguistic strategy to distinguish themselves as educated and to deliver their message to non-Arabs.

In Saudi Arabia, legal and cultural constraints have hindered both literate and illiterate women from participating in the public sphere. However, modern technology facilitates female participation in the public sphere. Saudi female advocates’ exploitation of technology to demand their rights is a vivid example of women’s attempts to participate in the public sphere and make a social change. Skalli (2006) highlighted Arab women’s use of communication technologies to break the silence that surrounds woman’s reality. She stressed that ‘being a vocal female media professional in the MENA is an act of heroism. Women work within a context rife with physical, psychological, and emotional blackmail in addition to gender discrimination’ (p.41).

Other MENA studies examined the linguistic behavior of women in the private sphere. Bassiouney (2009b) illustrated the linguistic behavior of Arab women in the private sphere where mothers exercise significant power over their children. This is attributed to the belief that mothers’ blessings and prayers bring happiness to children. People in MENA tend to describe a miserable person by saying Ummuh daʕyah ʕaleeh ‘His mother has cursed him’ to indicate that his misery is a result of his mother’s curse. Consequently, children seek their mothers’ satisfaction in order to encourage mothers to use their linguistic power that is symbolized in prayers in favor of their children. The
private sphere in Saudi Arabia is exclusive for women due to sex segregation policies. Their limited access to the public sphere has resulted in a more elaborate social networks that enable them to gather information that contribute in familial decision making (Altorki, 1973).

**Language and Gender in Saudi Arabia**

Academic research that has been investigating Saudi Arabia has focused mainly on politics, history, religion, and economics, but few academic studies concentrated on Saudi women’s discourse and gender issues. Soraya Altorki’s work (1986) is considered the starting point that encouraged scholars to investigate gender issues in Saudi Arabia. She investigated the change in ideology and social organizations within three generations of women who belong to 13 elite Saudi families from 1971 to 1984. Her longitudinal study postulates that women’s seclusion and the asymmetrical power relations between sexes have been reduced over time, especially among younger generations. This change is gradual and slow despite the country’s rapid economic and social change. Although this work is anthropological, it provided a fascinating insider look of how Saudi fundamental conservatism has stood firmly against social change.

The research of Altorki (1986) is remarkable for being the first major monograph conducted by a Saudi female scholar in the field of Saudi gender studies. However, Altorki has been investigating women who possess significant freedom, less complicated lifestyle and heterogeneous social relations that are not accessible to all Saudi women. Therefore, her research consultants do not represent the majority of Saudi women who live in a very conservative and self-contained atmosphere.

Previous work of Altorki (1977) challenged the traditional concept of ‘the disadvantaged, subservient, powerless position of women in Middle Eastern societies’
(p. 277). Through investigating female/male power relations within the domestic domain of urban Saudi Arabian society, Altorki claimed that Saudi women have more power than globally perceived. Women assert their legal and social rights, demand more privileges, enhance their individuality within the familial domain and have a powerful role in marriage decisions. Leaman (1978) argued with this claim and believed that Altorki’s research supported the subordinate role of women in Middle Eastern societies where men establish the context first and then women may influence the decisions of men. When women choose brides for their sons or brothers, men had already decided the social range from which the bride should come.

Altorki’s claim of the fallacy of the powerless Middle Eastern woman was also discussed in Nelson’s (1974) work who also challenged that the power of men was significantly limited to the public arena, and women are more powerful than men within social and domestic spheres. Altorki (1973) attributed the domestic power of women to gender segregation which prevents women from participating in the public sphere. Consequently, women are forced to establish friendship networks and social relations that allow them to collect vital social information that endows them with informal power leading to influence male decisions (ibid).

Recently, Al-Rasheed (2013) meticulously mapped out the complex intersection between politics, religion and gender in an attempt to answer the ongoing question of Saudi women. She analyzed a variety of sources that include, but were not limited to, interviews with Saudi women, media sources, official documents, contemporary literary discourses, religious speeches, and newspaper articles. Al-Rasheed concluded that religion per se is not the cause of gender stratification but it is the interplay between
religion and politics which produced a religious nationalism. She believes that the modern Saudi Arabia, founded in 1932, transformed the religious revival of the eighteenth century into a religious nationalism that secluded women and made them hostages to extremely conservative nomadic society and contradictory political decisions.

The work of Altorki (1986) and Al-Rasheed (2013) are distinguished for being conducted by Saudi female scholars who are familiar with the culture and heritage of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the problem of having Middle Eastern gender studies conducted by ethnographers who ‘have been European or American males who, by virtue of their foreignness and maleness, have had limited if no access to the social world of women’ is partially resolved (Nelson, 1974, p. 553).

On the other hand, many non-Saudi Arab women have attempted to study women in Saudi Arabia. They presented exceptional monographs despite the limited access they had to the Saudi society. The Libyan Arebi (1994) discussed the ideological function of the literary tradition of the first Saudi female writers. Her discourse analysis revealed how women utilized their writings to challenge institutions that theorize women’s behavior and dictate their roles in the society. At the same time, she asserted that Saudi female writers respected major cultural values and formulated solutions that call for justice and equality. Their work did not merely lament women’s exclusion and secondary role in society but rather presented applicable suggestions that could be taken seriously. In the same manner as the first Saudi female writers, Saudi female advocates have utilized various types of writings to convey their thoughts and needs, some of them compose poems and write novels, while others write in journals,
newspapers, and online blogs. In addition to literary writings, social media networks, such as Twitter and Facebook, are packed with Saudi female advocates’ contributions, which assist in delivering their voices to the androcentric public sphere.

As we have seen, the literature lacks studies that examine Saudi women’s linguistic behaviors that are exploited to make social change. The present research is novel within the Saudi academic arena since it presents a detailed investigation of the discourse of Saudi female advocates who appeared recently in Saudi Arabia. The benefit of conducting this analysis is not limited to language and gender studies but extends to cover the broader social level through implementing critical discourse analysis tools.

**Discourse Analysis and Women’s Language**

The majority of discourse analysis studies that investigate women’s issues has focused mainly on uncovering gendered language, exposing sexism and discrimination against women, and analyzing the representations of women in different media outlets through the use of discourse analysis tools (Mishra, 2007; Kabgani, 2013; Kopf, 2013; El-Falaky, 2015). Focusing on women’s discourse itself has received the least attention among scholars in general. Scattered studies have investigated particular themes within the discourse of women, such as female discourse on social change in Nzema maiden songs (Agovi, 1994), rape as constructed in the discourse of South African women (Sweeney, 2008), and sexuality in the discourse of indigenous South African societies (Hanong, 2006).

Various studies have utilized critical discourse analysis to investigate women’s discourse itself, and the discourse about women. Among them is the work of Navarre (2008) in which the discourse of female marriage-based immigrants (FMI) in Taiwan
was examined through the use of CDA tools to neutralize the prejudice and discrimination against them. FMIs are foreign women, basically from Southeast Asian countries and China, who are married to Taiwanese men and form a major social minority in Taiwan. In addition to analyzing their discourse, the study also examined the representations of FMIs in public in order to reveal underlying competing ideologies. The results showed a huge gap between FMIs’ self-representations and public representations of them, and the study successfully illustrated this gap and assisted in understanding the attitudes and motives of both parties. The prejudice and discrimination that Saudi female advocates encounter when they ask for their rights is similar to that of FMIs. They both are considered minority groups who challenge the society and rebel against social constraints and misconceptions.

The study of Hanong (2006) is also among the few studies that utilized CDA tools to examine women’s discourse. The discourse of South African women on sexuality issues was analyzed by both critical discourse analysis and post-structuralist discourse analysis tools. The post-structuralist discourse analysis illustrated how gender is constructed discursively within different social interactions. On the other hand, CDA illustrated power dynamics and how male voices dominated female ones in the public domain. The study concluded that women’s reluctance to participate in public discussions about sexuality issues including sex crimes is attributed to the androcentric ideologies and the culture of secrecy that prevails in African societies. Moreover, women’s speech behavior is mediated and constrained in a way that prevented them from expressing themselves effectively in public discourses of sexuality. The present study is similar to Hanong’s (2006) work in that they both utilize CDA and post-
structuralist discourse analysis to study the discourse of a particular female group while discussing a particular social wrong: sex crimes in Hanong’s study and the driving-ban in the present study.

Talbot’s (1992) study did not analyze the discourse of women themselves. However, mass media texts that target the interest of teenage girls were analyzed to demonstrate how language helps in constructing woman identities as feminine. The study examined the strategies that were used by writers to minimize the social distance between writers and their readers. In other words, the study presented the linguistic tools that were implemented to establish friendly relationships between writers and their mass audience. Highlighting linguistic techniques used by writers to build a close relationship with readers is beneficial in understanding what captured the attention of mass audience. The present study investigated as well the techniques used by Saudi female advocates to foster friendly attitudes and minimize social distance between Saudi female advocates, and the very conservative Saudi society.

There is a gap in the literature of both discourse analysis, and language and gender, on how women utilize their own linguistic competence to demand their rights in the MENA context in general, and the Saudi context in particular. To my knowledge, no study has been conducted to critically analyze the discourse of Saudi female advocates who demand for the right to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. Most of the studies that focused on Saudi women were either anthropological (Altorki,1986; Al-Rasheed, 2013), literary (Arebi, 1994), educational (Hamdan, 2005), or religious (Pharaon, 2004). As such, the present study breaks new ground.
Theoretical Framework

The connections between linguistic structures and social structures, which were marked by the work of Fowler et al. (1979), are the main focus of the present study. This means that the linguistic features of the discourse of Saudi female advocates are not investigated solely, but in connection with the surrounding cultural and social contexts. Since the present study is interested in investigating the social aspects of power, ideology, and identity as manifested in the discourse of Saudi female advocates, the different approaches of critical discourse analysis (CDA) will contribute largely in revealing ‘opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language’ (Wodak, 2002, p. 2).

Before delving into how CDA contributed to the present study, it is important to mention that CDA is not based on a single homogeneous theory or a specific methodology, but relies on a whole range of theoretical backgrounds and different critical approaches that share common features (Wodak, 2011a). In other words, ‘CDA must be multitheoretical, multimethodical, critical, and self-reflective’ in order to make complex social relationships transparent (Wodak, 2001, p. 64). The present study is inspired by the work of proponents of CDA: Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun Van Dijk, and Michelle Lazar. Moreover, tools from Judith Baxter’s method of Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) is adopted.

In following section, I present the theoretical framework of the present study by presenting the origins of CDA and introducing the focal approaches that are adopted in the present study: The Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), the Socio-Cognitive Approach (SCA), the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA). Moreover, ideas from Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse
Analysis (FPDA) have also illuminated the present study. Finally, I define the key terms in CDA that are repeatedly mentioned in the present study.

**Origins of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Linguistics (CL), which appeared in the late 1970s at University of East Anglia, is considered the origin of Critical Discourse Analysis. It is marked by the work of Fowler et al. (1979), *Language and Control*, which focused mainly on the connections between linguistic and social structures. Wodak (2002) pointed out that CL and CDA focus on analyzing 'opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language' (p. 2). Analysts in CDA seek to identify absences, assumptions and taken-for-granted concepts in order to reveal underlying ideologies.

It is worth mentioning that CDA, as a network of scholars, appeared in the 1990s, and became internationally recognized after a symposium held in Amsterdam in 1991, in which pioneers of CDA, such as Van Dijk, Fairclough, Kress, Van Leeuwen and Wodak, laid out theories and methods for CDA. During that time, CDA reached a well-established position in linguistics as many books and journals were launched. Both CDA and CL terms are used interchangeably to describe studies that critically investigate the relationship between society and language. However, the term CDA is preferred nowadays.

The different approaches of CDA adopt major social theories, such as social theories of power (Foucault, 1971, 1977), hegemony (Gramsci, 1971), and ideology (Althusser, 1971), and then set methodological objectives based on the theoretical positions. Wodak (2011a) postulated that CDA has never been based on a single homogeneous theory or a specific methodology, but relies on a whole range of
theoretical backgrounds and different critical approaches. Therefore, she suggested referring to CDA as a program or school, not a single theory. In spite of this diversity within CDA theories and approaches, they share five common features that were initially presented by Fairclough and Wodak (1997) and adopted later by Jorgensen and Phillips (2002):

1. All CDA approaches aim at unmasking discursive practices that are included in various discourses of social phenomena, and identifying the processes of producing and consuming discourse in a society.

2. Discourse is both constitutive and constituted, which means that discourse constitutes the social world, and at the same time discourse is constituted by other social practices.

3. Textual analysis in CDA is not purely linguistic and should be empirically analyzed within its social context.

4. Discursive practices in CDA contribute to the production of unequal power relations between different social groups, like women/men or white/black people due to the ideologies that are packed within discourse.

5. All CDA approaches are critical for the purpose of making a social change, and always take the side of oppressed people to maintain unequal power relations.

In general, the CDA program aims at identifying absences, assumptions and taken-for-granted concepts in order to reveal underlying ideologies, identities, and power relations. The present study shares the same goals of CDA, which include
remedying unequal power relations, empowering oppressed people through fighting inequality and discriminations and effecting a social change.

**The Power of Critical Discourse Analysis**

CDA research ‘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’ (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 352). The power of CDA lies in its capacity to include all the nonlinguistic factors that affect texts such as culture, society, ideology, religion, and politics. Therefore, CDA bridges the gap between the micro-level analysis which concentrates on language itself and the macro-level analysis which focuses on social aspects such as power, ideology, hegemony, discrimination and dominance (Van Dijk, 2001). In addition, CDA can play an advocacy role to support socially discriminated and oppressed groups (Wodak & Meyer, 2009), and show hidden power relationships (Meyer, 2001).

The mutual benefits between CDA and linguistics make CDA a significant contribution to the field of linguistics. On one hand, CDA contributes to linguistics by focusing on properties of language that are overlooked in other disciplines such as feminist studies (Van Dijk, 1995a). On the other hand, linguistics contributes to CDA by providing linguistic-oriented tools that assist in ‘empowering the powerless, giving voices to the voiceless, exposing power abuse, and mobilizing people to remedy social wrongs’ (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 449).

The present research contributes to both CDA and linguistics by providing a CDA framework that incorporates diverse linguistic tools to analyze the discourse of Saudi female advocates. In addition, the present research contributes to feminist studies by
providing a linguistic-oriented research method that provides a systematic analysis for women’s language and other social inequalities.

**Approaches Adopted in the Study**

The present research was inspired by four approaches of CDA: The Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), the Socio-Cognitive Approach (SCA), the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA). Moreover, ideas from Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) have also illuminated the present study. The following section introduces the five approaches and links them to the present study.

**Dialectical-Relational Approach**

CDA cannot be discussed without the name of one of its great founders, Norman Fairclough who contributed largely to the field. Fairclough’s (1989) *Language and Power* presented the social theories that underpin CDA and investigated the dialectical relation between language and social structure. Fairclough’s theoretical framework is based on two approaches. First, Michael Halliday’s (1978) functional linguistics approach, in which language serves particular functions that affect different linguistic structures; second, Bakhtin’s (1981, 1986) concept of intertextuality, which examines the interrelationships between texts and how texts draw elements from prior knowledge.

Later, Fairclough (1992a) elaborated social theories of discourse and methods of analytical framework through sketching his popular three-dimensional analytical framework, in which he examined discourse as a text, as a discursive practice and as a social practice. Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) postulated that Fairclough’s three-dimensional model provided a refined and powerful method of text analysis through identifying hegemonic processes such as democratization and technologization, and
then determining how individuals construct identities and social realities within such hegemonic regimes.

According to Fairclough (2001), social life consists of interconnected networks of social practices, such as televised news, familial talk, medical talk, classroom talk. Each of these social practices consists of different social elements: activities, social identities, cultural values, discourse, time and place. Those elements of social practices are dialectically related, meaning that they are discrete elements but not fully separate. In other words, social elements internalize each other ‘without being reducible’ (Fairclough, 2013, p. 231). Therefore, Fairclough’s Dialectical Relational Approach focuses on dialectical relationships between discourse and other elements of social practices. Similarly, the present study developed a three-dimensional model to examine the dialectical societal conflicts within the discourse of Saudi female advocates, and to determine how different nonlinguistic factors, such as religion, politics, and gender relations, are dialectically related to the discourse and identities of Saudi female advocates.

**Socio-Cognitive Approach**

In addition to Fairclough’s Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), the present study is informed by the Socio-Cognitive Approach (SCA), which was started by the work of Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983). This initial cognitive model provides a link between thought and talk, and therefore relates the thought of prejudice for example to the actual expressions in discourse. Afterwards, this cognitive model was developed to explain meaning construction on the broader social level (Wodak, 2002).

Van Dijk (2009) mentioned that SCA is concerned about the cognition and mental representations of both individuals and social groups. Individuals’ cognition is
represented in their production and comprehension of discourse, and their participation in verbal interactions. On the other hand, social groups’ cognition is represented by the ideologies, knowledge and beliefs that they share. In other words, SCA focuses on the interaction between mind, discursive interactions and society.

Previous SCA studies have focused on issues such as racism (e.g. Van Dijk, 1987, 1993), and ideology (e.g. Van Dijk, 1998). However, the present research offers SCA an enhanced analysis of the cognitive mechanisms within the discourse of Saudi female advocates through linking thought and talk. For example, thoughts of oppressed women are linked to their actual expressions. Expressions such as ‘اجحاف’ ‘prejudice’ and ‘ظلم’ ‘injustice’ are repeatedly occurring in the discourse of Saudi female advocates, which denote thoughts of oppression and inequality.

**Discourse-Historical Approach**

DHA is oriented towards the Frankfurt School of critical theory, with a particular focus on Habermas’s thought of language, which considers language a communicative telos and a medium of domination and social force (Wodak, 2015). DHA was first introduced in a research project led by Wodak in the late 1980s to investigate the Austrian postwar anti-Semitism (ibid).

DHA is distinctive among other CDA approaches as it ‘analyzes the historical dimension of discursive actions by exploring the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change’ (Wodak, 2011b, p. 65). In other words, DHA aims at integrating as many genres and historical resources related to the topic of analysis as possible.
The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) is adopted in the present research in order to add a historical dimension to the analysis. Therefore, integrating all historical contexts, including religious texts and official statements, facilitates understanding the big picture behind the ban on women’s driving in Saudi Arabia. In addition, DHA will shed light on the origins of intertextual borrowings made by Saudi female advocates, and examine how their discourse changes over time.

**Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis**

The dialectical relationships which are the focus of DRA, the cognitive mechanisms in SCA, and the historical scope in DHA lack the feminist perspective, which is the core of the present research. Therefore, the present research incorporates both FCDA and FPDA to add feminist standpoints to the analysis. The power of FCDA lies in its concerns with ‘demystifying the interrelationship of gender, power and ideology in discourse’ (Lazar, 2005, p. 5).

Lazar (2005) highlights the importance of overtly labeling the section of CDA that utilizes critical feminist views as Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) for three considerable reasons. First, gender studies that have been conducted under the umbrella of CDA adopted feminists’ issues such as unequal gender relations, patriarchy, and sexism. Second, some CDA studies have a considerable number of citations from feminist scholars, which necessitates the existence of a formal theory and analysis from a critical feminist point of view. Third, the lack of a label for CDA studies with a feminist perspective leads to disorganized work that needs to be collected under a well-established subsection of CDA, namely Feminist CDA.

Lazar (2005) indicated that both CDA and feminism have social emancipatory goals. However, feminist studies apply descriptive discourse analysis while feminist
CDA utilizes sophisticated analysis tools that illustrate clearly the relationship between discourse and social practices. In other words, CDA has already established various systematic tools to analyze social inequalities which can support feminist scholars to develop their strategies for social change. Therefore, FCDA is utilized in the present study to add feminist standpoints to the analysis while examining unequal gender relations, patriarchy and sexism in the discourse of Saudi female advocates.

**Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis**

On the other hand, FPDA adds both feminist and poststructuralist standpoints to the analysis. Poststructuralist principals such as ‘complexity, plurality, ambiguity, connection, recognition, diversity, textual playfulness, functionality and transformation’ (Baxter, 2008, p. 2) are informative to the present research. FPDA is interested in the feminists’ perspective of gender differentiation, which is culturally salient as it systematically produces discrimination and inequality among people. Through examining gender differentiation within the discourse of Saudi female advocates, gendered social orders within the Saudi society will be transparent.

The present study benefits from the concepts of complexity and performativity that are shared between FCDA and FPDA. Complexity in the present research entails that categorizing Saudi female advocates as powerful or powerless is not valid, but rather women who fluctuate between powerfulness and powerlessness depending on various contexts. Therefore, the analysis aims at highlighting points of dramatic shifts between powerfulness and powerlessness within the speech of each participant. On the other hand, performativity entails that the identity of speakers is performative rather than instinctively inherited, and language is one means of enacting identity (Baxter, 2008). Therefore, analyzing the identities of Saudi female advocates will focus on the
performativity of identity construction, and the variables that contribute in shaping the identities of participants, such as gender, ethnicity, age, and social class.

All in all, the present study adopted a combination of DRA, SCA, HDA, FCDA, and FPDA. From DRA, the dialectical relations between linguistic elements and other social elements are linguistically and interdiscursively analyzed. In addition, SCA is utilized in my analysis through making use of my knowledge as a Muslim Saudi Arabian woman about women’s status in Saudi Arabia, Islamic laws and teachings, political restrictions, economical situation and cultural traditions. This diverse personal cognitive knowledge assists in analyzing the individual cognition of female advocates and the social cognition of other subgroups: Saudi female advocates, religious people, political representatives, male advocates, and so on. Regarding the HDA, the present study integrates various historical resources surrounding the discourse. FCDA and FPDA are both fruitful in informing the present study because they are based on a feminist perspective that reveals hierarchal gendered social orders. In addition, integrating a feminist perspective is fundamental in exposing patriarchal ideologies and male/female asymmetrical power relations. A detailed discussion on the way the present study utilizes this theoretical synergy will be presented in the model analysis.

Terminology and Definitions

In the following section, I introduce how the present study incorporates the following CDA key concepts: discourse, ideology, identity and power. Understanding these concepts assists in tracing them within the discourse of Saudi female advocates, and accordingly answers research questions that focus mainly on the ideologies, identities and power relations of the Saudi female advocates.
**Discourse**

Discourse refers to language above the sentence, and how constituents are situated in contexts (Schiffrin, 1994). However, CDA prefers the term semiosis to refer to the abstract meaning of discourse. Fairclough (2013) defined semiosis as an element of social process, of which language is only one semiotic modality. Other semiotic modalities that are involved in the social process are visual images and body language.

In the present study, I utilize the term discourse to refer to language as a semiotic modality of social processes. I avoid using the term semiosis because the present study does not aim at analyzing visual images and body language. Therefore, discourse in the present study refers to interrelated linguistic acts that are represented in the oral and written language of the Saudi female advocates.

**Ideology**

The relationship between ideology and language, and the analysis that shows this relationship are essential in CDA since text and talk are means by which different ideologies are expressed, consumed and reproduced. CDA considers ideology an important aspect that establishes and maintains unequal power relations. Consequently, language is the medium that mediates ideology in societies (Wodak, 2002), and it is important to analyze it in order to reveal hidden ideological instances that cause unequal power relations.

In addition, it is common in studies that investigate ideology to preview the diverse and controversial definitions of ideology, and the confusion that results from those numerous vague definitions. This complexity in understanding the notion of ideology is similar to other complex social notions such as power, hegemony, and domination.
It is important to mention that the term ideology had been associated with false beliefs and misguided thoughts that are hidden in texts to manipulate people. Van Dijk's (1998) introduces this traditional definition of ideology that sums up scholarly debates and classical definitions in four points:

(a) ideologies are false beliefs; (b) ideologies conceal real social relations and serve to deceive others; (c) ideologies are beliefs others have; and (d) ideologies presuppose the socially or politically self-serving nature of the definition of truth and falsity (p. 2).

Fairclough (2013) based his perspective of ideology on Structuralist Marxism, with a special focus on Althusser’s (1971) conceptualization of ideology, which locates ideology in ordinary linguistic and non-linguistic practices. In other words, Althusserian perspective of ideology considers language as a form of ideological existence (Fairclough, 2012). The modern definition of ideology considers ideology as a belief system that is shared among a group of people.

Van Dijk’s (1998) *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach* is considered an excellent starting point for studies that focus on ideologies because it outlined a theory of how ideologies are created, maintained and changed; how people manifest different ideologies in their social practices; and how ideologies dominate and are dominated by different communicative events. In addition, mental processes and cognition are taken into account through linking ideologies to discourse, cognition and society (Van Dijk, 2006). This theory of ideology amends traditional approaches that consider ideology a social structure and a means of power and domination.

Since CDA is interested in analyzing how ideologies are expressed, consumed and reproduced through the use of language, it is important to investigate how different ideologies are represented in the discourse of Saudi female advocates in order to gain a
deeper understanding of them as a distinctive social group. In addition, revealing hidden ideological instances within the discourse of Saudi female advocates is helpful in identifying ideologies that cause unequal power relations.

**Identity**

Identity is the sense of who and what we are depending on context and purpose. The distinction between personal identity and group/collective/social identity has been the focus of many studies. In the present research, I adopt Van Dijk’s (1998) socio-cognitive approach to distinguish between the personal identity and the social identity of Saudi female advocates. For him, personal identity is a personal mental representation of self as a unique individual with specific characteristics and personal experiences, and a social mental representation of self as belonging to various memberships and adopting the representations of such social groups. On the other hand, social/group identity is a group-level social representation. Social groups tend to emphasize and teach their shared knowledge, attitudes, ideology and fundamental beliefs in order to identify who they are, who belongs to their group and who does not.

Interviewing Saudi female advocates aims at instantiating their identities on both personal and social bases. Many scholars believe that analyzing narratives has potential in depicting the process of constructing gender identities. Therefore, the narrative within the discourse of Saudi female advocates will inform us about their identities and how they construct them individually and socially.

**Power**

Power in general and social power in particular are essential terms in CDA. The traditional conceptualization of power links power to control. Therefore, ‘Groups have (more or less power) if they are able to (more or less) control the acts and minds of
(members) of other groups’ (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 355). However, the present study dismisses this negative definition of power and adopted the positive definition of power which links power to empowerment and transformation. Therefore, people are powerful if they are able to empower and transform themselves and others. This positive conceptualization of power has been largely adopted by feminists who reject female subordination and male domination. Accordingly, Saudi female advocates are agents of empowerment and transformation within the Saudi society. Their power is linked to their contributions to empower Saudi women and demand for their rights.

In addition to the positive conceptualization of power, the present research is inspired by Foucault’s (1978) views of power as residing in everybody and everything. For him, power is not ‘acquired, seized or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away’ (p. 94). Rather, power is mobile and diffused in all social relationships. In other words, power is not limited to dominant groups only, but emanates from dominated groups as well. Therefore, assuming that Saudi women in general, and Saudi female advocates in particular, are dominated by men or by the state is not possible within Foucault’s perspective. Rather, power emanates from women, men, society and government.

The present study incorporates Foucault’s conceptualization of power in the same manner as feminist studies have done. Feminists have utilized Foucault’s conceptualization of power to form a feminist theory of power to help women to be active actors who resist domination and work hand in hand to fight oppressive forces. Feminists, such as Allen (2008) and Sawicki (1991), believe that oppressed and marginalized groups have certain points of power. For example, ‘Women can adopt and
adapt language to their own ends. They may not have total control over it but then neither do men. Choice, chance and power govern our relationships to the discourses we employ’ (Sawicki, 1991, p. 1). Based on this belief, the present study aims at highlighting points of power within the discourse of Saudi female advocates and how they fluctuate between powerful and powerless positions.

Other feminist studies that investigate power, body and sexuality, such as Allen, 2008; Bartky, 1990; Butler, 1990; Fraser, 1989; McLaren, 2002, motivated the present study to analyze power relations and patriarchy structures within the Saudi society and how such forces control Saudi women’s bodies and minds. For example, most Saudi female advocates adhere to wearing the traditional Saudi outfit when addressing the society. This outfit serves double meanings. First, the society controls women’s appearance and how they should dress in public. Second, Saudi female advocates exploit this social control and wear the traditional outfit to inform the society that asking for rights does not mean abandoning religious teachings and social customs. Therefore, covering their bodies serves as a powerful means of persuasion.
A qualitative approach in data collection and analysis is manifested in the present research in order to gain a deep understanding and an extensive exploration of the Saudi female advocates. Similar to other qualitative studies, the data of the present study is based on the choice of notable exemplars that promise to contribute to informing the study.

**Data Collection**

The data of qualitative research can come from various sources, which has the possibility of resulting in a bulk of heterogeneous data. To avoid messy and useless data, I utilized three methods that hold promise in providing adequate and sufficient data: snowball sampling, data saturation and data triangulation. Snowball sampling, or chain referral sampling, is based on referrals from people who share or know people who are of research interest (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). This method is commonly used in qualitative research that investigates sensitive issues and requires the knowledge of insiders. A detailed description on how snowball sampling is utilized to recruit the participants of the present research is presented in the interviews section.

In addition to snowball sampling, I utilized data saturation to ensure that the collected data are adequate and sufficient. Data saturation is reached when collecting more data does not add or illuminate the investigated issue (Mason, 2010). Therefore, the present study focused on the quality of data not the quantity. The saturated data of the present research includes ten interviews with Saudi female advocates, ten YouTube videos by Saudi female advocates, twenty articles written by Saudi female advocates and more than 500 tweets by Saudi female advocates. Adding more data was possible;
however, it would not shed more light on the investigated issue. Therefore, the present study includes four sources.

To ensure data reliability, I utilized data triangulation, which is strongly recommended in qualitative research. Data triangulation refers to the employment of multiple sources of data in order to explore the phenomenon from different perspectives, and ensure the depth and richness of data (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Therefore, the present research collected data from ethnographic interviews, personal online blogs, newspapers, YouTube, and Twitter.

Ethnographic interviews are informative for the present study because they show how participants understand the meaning of interactional features in the recorded data from their own native perspective. In addition, the ethnographic interviews allow for the participants to explain their language and behavior that are under scrutiny, in their own narrative voice. This interaction is necessary because participants’ narrative gives insight to the study. Gumperz (1999) indicated that to interact means ‘to engage in an ongoing process of negotiation, both to infer what others intend to convey and to monitor how one’s own contributions are received’ (p. 454). Moreover, this type of interaction is not easily achieved via recorded videos and written texts. Consequently, including ethnographic interviews facilitates understanding Saudi female advocates through their own native narrative.

Collecting data from personal online blogs, newspapers, YouTube, and Twitter was based on participants’ emphasis on the potential role of these sources in delivering their message to the public. Saudi female advocates reported in the interviews that they attract the attention of the public through uploading their videos while driving cars in
Saudi Arabia to YouTube. After that, they enhance their action through writing articles for their personal online blogs and newspaper opinion columns. Finally, they interact with each other and with the audience through Twitter.

**Ethnographic Interviews**

Conducting interviews is considered a major method for data collection in qualitative research. To conduct the most informative interviews, Spradley (1979) indicated that two processes should be involved: developing rapport with participants, and then attaining information. Spradley stressed the importance of harmonious relationships between the researcher and the participants in order to attain informative information.

After obtaining an approval from the Institutional Review Board IRB at University of Florida (Appendix A), I selected fifteen Saudi female advocates randomly, and invited them to participate in the study by sending invitation letters to their emails. Only four of them accepted participating in the study. Therefore, I adopted snowball sampling in order to recruit more participants and gain deeper access to potential advocates.

Each one of the participants referred me to other advocates and provided me with their contact information. The total number of conducted interviews was ten. Although conducting more interviews was possible, the present study is limited to ten interviews that were rich enough to inform the study. The answers of interview questions were relatively similar, and adding more interviews would be repetitive.

Before interviewing participants, I obtained informed consents, (Appendix B), to audio-record the interviews and explained the benefits and risks of participating in the study. Being a Saudi woman with the same concerns facilitates establishing a
harmonious relationship with participants. A sense of trust was developed after introducing myself and describing the goals of the present research.

The present study utilizes ethnographic interviews to facilitate immersion into the lives of Saudi female advocates, and therefore answer research questions. Spradley (1979) indicated that ethnographic interviews share many features with friendly conversations. However, ethnographic interviews are more formal and have an explicit purpose. The questions of the interview were formatted in an open-ended conversational style, (Appendix C), which guided participants during the interview, and allowed them to include their personal experiences and individual thoughts. Formulating interview questions was guided by Spradley’s (1979) ethnographic questions which include more than 30 types. The present research utilized descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions.

Descriptive questions are commonly used in all interviews. They allow the researcher to collect general and ongoing data. Question number twelve in the interview, (Appendix C), is an example of descriptive questions, where the informant is asked to describe the situation if women were allowed to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. This question allows me to gather general information about the way participants visualize the situation if their demands were fulfilled. Such questions usually start by words, such as describe, how and tell.

On the other hand, structural questions enable the researcher to identify the ways participants organize their knowledge. Question number four, which asks about the procedures that could contribute in accepting social change in Saudi Arabia, is an example of structural questions. This type of questions allows the participant to list all
the possible procedures, and consequently the researcher is able to identify participant’s domains of knowledge.

Contrast questions allow the researcher to discover how participants distinguish different situations and events in their world. Question number eleven asks about the difference between the Saudi society and other Gulf and Arab societies. This type of question is informative because it reveals how participants compare and contrast, and what thoughts they have about their country and other neighboring countries. All in all, the ethnographic questions aim at initiating friendly conversations with participants in order to investigate other sides of their personalities, and closely examine their discourse.

Spradley’s (1979) work was inspiring in formulating interview questions, and during the interviews. His twelve elements in ethnographic interviews are incorporated in the present research as follows: each interview starts by greetings and quick friendly questions about health and family. Being of the same culture facilitates initiating the interview in a smooth way. After that, I explain the project, the ethnographic questions, the recording tool. Then, I start the interview, which includes descriptive, structural and contrast questions. Interview questions are prepared to guide the interview. Asymmetrical turn taking is maintained through asking questions, and then allowing participants to answer questions and talk about their own experiences.

Expressing interest, expressing ignorance, repeating and restating participants’ words are elements that are incorporated during interviews in order to motivate participants to speak, and engage them deeply into the discussion. In addition, Spradley encourages researchers to create hypothetical situation to elucidate more information.
This element is utilized through asking questions such as, if the Saudi government issued a decree that allows women to drive, how the situation would be, and how the Saudi society will be if women drive cars?

Finally, the ethnographic interviews include some friendly questions that maintain the flow of the speech, and a proper leave taking. My leave taking ritual in the present study represents the Saudi norm of saying goodbye. It starts by thanking the participant for allotting time for the interview, and then performing a wish, and finally saying goodbye.

It is worth mentioning that conducting interviews is common in qualitative research, however, CDA scholars depend solely on ready-made sources, such as newspapers, political debates, academic textbooks, etc. From my point of view, I find ethnographic interviews potential in gaining comprehensive and authentic information about the targeted group. Interviews allow the researcher to examine the discourse of individuals closely, and therefore provide optimal results.

All the participants in the interviews were Saudi women from different parts of Saudi Arabia. Each one of them has joined at least one of the pro-driving campaigns and has driven a car in Saudi Arabia. They are all public speakers, and have participated in different media outlets. The ethnographic investigation has shown that all the participants were married women, over the age of 25, and highly educated with bachelor, masters and doctoral degrees. They classified themselves as belonging to the middle class of the Saudi society. These characteristics apply to the majority of Saudi female advocates.
Articles

In addition to interviews, the data of the present study includes a corpus of articles that were written by Saudi female advocates. The articles were collected from their personal online blogs (Appendix D), and newspaper opinion columns (Appendix E). Articles from personal online blogs are significant in the present study because they express the opinion of the Saudi female advocates without any form of censorship. The freedom of writing in blogs was expressed by one of the advocates who headed her blog by the following sentence: ‘Here I post the full texts of my articles, away from the censor’s scissors’.

On the other hand, writing for newspapers is not as spontaneous as writing for personal online blogs. However, newspaper opinion articles are significant for the present study because they propagate particular ideologies that reach a wide range of populations. Although Saudi female advocates write in local and international newspapers in both Arabic and English, the present research focused on the Arabic articles only to reveal the strategies that were utilized by Saudi female advocates to address the local populations who mainly speak Arabic. A contrastive research could focus on the English articles to provide results on how the Saudi female advocates address the English-speaking audience.

The choice of articles was based on the following criteria: (a) articles should be written in Arabic, (b) the date of publication should be within the period from 2011 to 2016, (c) the author of the article should be one of the Saudi female advocates, (d) the title or the content of the article should discuss the issue of women’s driving, (e) newspaper articles should be op-ed articles reflecting the authors opinion.
After comparing newspaper articles to personal online blog articles, the present study presupposes that newspaper op-ed articles reflect the opinion of the author without the impact of external censorship. However, this assumption might be questioned in highly censored press, such as the Saudi press, where freedom of speech is limited compared to other countries. Yet, the op-ed articles are collected from local and international newspapers, which makes the impact of censorship slight, if not absent.

**YouTube Videos**

Saudi female advocates reported that posting videos on YouTube while driving in Saudi Arabia has been significant in provoking both the society and the government. Therefore, analyzing their YouTube videos would be informative for the present research. YouTube has many videos that show Saudi women attempting to drive cars in Saudi Arabia while hiding their faces and real names. Only Saudi female advocates were showing their real names and their faces. Both silent and anonymous videos were excluded in the present study.

The present study focused on ten videos for the Saudi female advocates while driving cars in Saudi Arabia (Appendix F). Searching for videos was conducted by typing the names of famous Saudi female advocates in YouTube search engine in Arabic, then selecting their videos recorded while driving and addressing the audience. The research resulted in a huge number of videos of their participations in different programs. However, the present study is concerned with their discourse while driving cars in Saudi Arabia. Their discourse will be informative for the present research because their act is legally prohibited in Saudi Arabia.
Twitter Posts

During the interviews, Saudi female advocates stressed the importance of Twitter in networking with each other, and in delivering their message to the public. The influential role of Twitter is caused by the huge number of its users. Kinninmont (2013) reported that the CEO of Twitter said that Saudi Arabia has ‘the fastest-growing Twitter community in the world’ (p. 2), which facilitates initiating and spreading news to a large community of youths. In addition, Twitter becomes a platform of debates on social and global issues.

This popularity of Twitter encourages Saudi female advocates to exploit Twitter to organize driving campaigns and explain the rules of participation. Their presence on Twitter has ignited local and international debates. The present study found Twitter a rich source of Saudi female advocates’ discourse. Therefore, a collection of more than 500 tweets has been included in the data.

To select the most fruitful data, I based my search on three critical periods when discussions on women’s driving were at their peak. The first period was around June 17, 2011, when the Women2Drive Campaign was initiated. I used Twitter advanced search engine to search for tweets by Saudi female advocates from June 7, 2011 to June 27, 2011. The second period was around October 26, 2011, when the Oct 26 Driving Campaign was initiated. Tweets from October 16, 2013 to November 5, 2013 were selected, with a particular emphasis on tweets that were posted on the days of campaigns. The third group of tweets was collected around November 30, 2014, when two of the Saudi female advocates attempted to cross the Emirati-Saudi borders with their cars, and then were arrested and detained for more than two months.
All the collected tweets were posted by Saudi female advocates via their Twitter accounts. Their replies and discussions with the audience were not included in the data in order to avoid messy data. Only their original tweets that address the public are analyzed in the present research. The tweets were posted by ten of the most-followed Saudi female advocates.

**Model Analysis**

After reviewing studies that focus on analyzing the discourse of women (e.g. Agovi, 1994; Sweeney, 2008; and Hanong, 2006), I found a loose combination of approaches that were utilized to analyze women’s discourse. Therefore, the need for a thorough and systematic model of analysis motivated me to develop the present model that is guided by five major approaches of discourse analysis: Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), Sociocognitive Approach (SCA), Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), and Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA).

The present model has three levels of analysis: textual analysis, discursive analysis, and sociocultural analysis. According to Fairclough (1992a), textual analysis refers to describing the text, discursive analysis involves interpreting the text, and sociocultural analysis includes explaining the text. Each level of analysis consists of tools that are adopted from other discourse analysis approaches. The choice of the tools is based on their ability to inform the present study and best answer research questions. The optimal goal of the developed model is to fairly portray Saudi female advocates with a particular focus on their identities, ideologies and power relations.

Before delving into the model, it is important to clarify that the proposed model does not aim at analyzing all the linguistic features of the Saudi female advocates.
However, this model aims at utilizing some linguistic tools that would contribute in revealing textual manipulations, hidden ideologies and unequal power relations to unwary recipients.

**Tools for Textual Analysis**

Textual analysis focuses mainly on the grammatical and semantic aspects of texts. Therefore, it is necessary for the researcher to have a good command of linguistic knowledge to conduct the analysis. However, textual analysis alone cannot be productive in social research if not conjoined with other methods of analysis. Approaching the discourse of Saudi female advocates from a linguistic perspective and from a sociocultural perspective is necessary in order to enhance the analysis and better answer research questions.

In this section, I selected tools for textual analysis based on three sources: Machin and Mayr’s (2012) toolkit for media texts analysis, Fairclough’s (1989) questions of the experiential value of grammatical features and Huckin’s (1997) text-level concepts. This toolkit consists of the most comprehensive and commonly used tools in CDA. Table 3-1, illustrates textual analysis tools through introducing the strategy, the objective of using it, and the devices to achieve the objective.

**Table 3-1. Tools for textual analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Device</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lexicalization</strong></td>
<td>Tracking how words are used to show certain types of identities, ideologies, values, etc. Identifying how speakers use words to build a relationship with the audience.</td>
<td>Overlexicalization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Suppression</td>
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<td>Structural oppositions</td>
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<td>Lexical choices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quoting verbs</td>
<td>Presenting and evaluating social actors.</td>
<td>Neutral verbs</td>
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<td>Directive verbs</td>
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<td>Assertive verbs</td>
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<td>Expressive verbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representing social actors</td>
<td>Identifying who are the participants in discourse and how they are represented.</td>
<td>Personalization vs. impersonalization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Signifying how identities of social actors are constructed.</td>
<td>Individualization vs. collectivization</td>
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<td>Nomination vs. functionalization</td>
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<td>Use of honorifics</td>
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<td>Objectivation</td>
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<td>Anonymization</td>
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<td>Aggregation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pronoun vs. noun</td>
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<td>Rhetoric and metaphor</td>
<td>Persuading and convincing.</td>
<td>Hyperbole: exaggeration. e.g. she died laughing.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Metaphor: understanding one idea in terms of another, e.g. The discussion overheated.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Metonymy: substituting words with other words that are closely related.</td>
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<td>Transitivity</td>
<td>Depicting the agents.</td>
<td>Nominalization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identifying who is empowered and over whom.</td>
<td>Passive verbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modality</td>
<td>Conveying authors’ degree of authority and certainty.</td>
<td>Epistemic expressions (opinion, conclusion, possibility)</td>
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<td>Evidential expressions (reported)</td>
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<td>Evidential expressions (sensory)</td>
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<td>Obligative expressions (and necessity)</td>
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<td>Permissive expressions (and prohibitive)</td>
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<td>Commisive expressions</td>
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<td>Abilitive expressions (incapability)</td>
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<td>Volitive expressions</td>
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</table>

**Lexicalization**

Lexicalization is a basic tool in conducting textual analysis in CDA. It simply means examining the author's word choices to reveal underlying beliefs, ideologies,
identities, and power relations. Van Dijk (1995b) posited that lexicalization is a key domain of ideological expressions as suggested in the classic pair ‘freedom fighter’ vs. ‘terrorist’. The former phrase conveys a sense of belonging and positivity, while the latter word gives an impression of negativity and otherness.

Lexicalization can take various forms depending on the message the author wants to deliver. In the present study, four types of lexicalization are being examined. First, overlexicalization, which refers to the overemphasis that is placed over a single concept by using a large number of synonyms (Fowler et al., 1979). Through examining overlexicalized concepts, a critical discourse analyst will be able to identify areas where intense preoccupation and overpersuasion occur and therefore capture the ideologies that are meant to be accepted by the consumers.

Second, suppression, which refers to the absence of terms that are expected to be in the text, is examined. Generally, suppressing terms of a particular concept is a strategy to conceal and legitimate particular ideologies. The critical discourse analyst should be able to examine the text and find out what the author is trying to hide through utilizing suppression. In CDA, analyzing the absences is as important as analyzing the what is present in the text.

Third, structural oppositions, which refer to the use of vocabulary to create opposing concepts within a text, is analyzed. Machin and Mayr (2012) indicated that it is not necessary that opposing concepts, such as good and bad, or young and old should be present in the text to create oppositional structures. However, structural opposition can be created with the presence of one party only. For example, a news text could refer to a participant as ‘militant’. This word creates an idea that this person is acting in
a manner that is opposite to what a ‘citizen’ is expected to do. In this case, the text contains only one side of the opposing parties, i.e. ‘militant’, and the opposing party, ‘a citizen’ which is understood from the context.

Fourth, lexical choices which indicate the speaker’s choice of words. By choosing certain words over others, speakers are capable of conveying a certain level of authority and particular degree of formality. In addition, lexical choices help speakers to express themselves and convey their intended meanings. Therefore, examining lexical choices is vital in CDA because it tells about speakers' identities, ideologies, and power relations.

Quoting verbs

Quoting verbs are verbs that are used by someone to represent how another one has spoken. For example, ‘John said that his teacher is moody’. The verb ‘said’ gives a neutral impression about what John reported. On the other hand, ‘John whined that his teacher is moody’ gives the impression that John is complaining nervously about the moodiness of his teacher (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Examining quoting verbs reveals how individuals are represented by the author and what is connoted through using particular quoting verbs. In the present study, quoting verbs include neutral verbs such as قال ‘say’, directive verbs such as أمر ‘order’, assertive verbs such asافق ‘agree’, and expressive verbs such asاشتكي ‘complain’.

Representing social actors

Representing social actors focuses on the various methods that are exploited by the speaker in order to represent social actors. Representational strategies are essential in CDA because they inform us about how the speaker chooses to represent other participants. Machin and Mayr (2012) adopted Van Leeuwen’s (1996)
classifications of social actors which includes personalization vs. impersonalization, individualization vs. collectivization, specification vs. genericisation, nomination vs. functionalization, use of honorifics, objectivation, anonymization, aggregation, pronoun vs. noun, and suppression. (Table 3-1 has some clarifying examples).

**Rhetoric and metaphor**

It has been known that figurative language is associated with poetry and beautiful language. However, linguists have ensured that figurative language is fundamental in human thinking. Musolff (2012) illustrated the powerful nature of metaphorical speech in persuasion and at the same time the importance of conducting a careful and thorough critique of figurative language.

In the present study, the focus has been placed over three rhetorical skills which are essential in public speaking: hyperbole, metaphor and metonymy. Hyperbole means the use of exaggerated statement for the sake of emphasis. For example, I waited an eternity, or I died laughing. On the other hand, metaphor is regarding a thing as representative of something else. This leads to understanding one idea in terms if another. For example, the exam was a breeze. Finally, metonymy is defined as replacing a name with another word that is closely related to it. For example, the pen is mightier than the sword. Here the pen is closely associated to writing and sword is closely related to military force.

**Transitivity**

In CDA, transitivity choices refer to the authors’ strategies to obscure the agents and deemphasize the doers within texts. Transitivity is achieved through utilizing two linguistic devices: nominalization and passive verbs. Fowler et al. (1979) indicated that
transitivity is ideologically charged, i.e. whether the agents within a text are made clear by the author or not is based on cultural and ideological factors.

Nominalization is a process of forming nouns from words that belong to different parts of speech. For example, the verb ‘nominalize’ is converted to a noun by adding the suffix ‘-ation’. El-Farahaty (2015) posited that the nominal form of the verb is common in the Arabic language, especially in documents that need to be objective such as legislations and institutional texts. In contrast, some scholars argue that the Arabic language avoids the use of passive verbs and tends to use the active form of the verb more often (e.g. Rosenhouse, 1988). Through analyzing nominalization and passive verbs in the discourse of Saudi female advocates, it will be clear if they deploy techniques that are not often used in Arabic, such as passive verbs, in order to hide the agents of the action. Moreover, the hidden ideologies behind backgrounding the agents will be clarified through the analysis of transitivity. Accordingly, power relations and gendered social orders will be revealed.

**Modality**

Modality is the use of overt modal verbs, such as will, might, must and is, and other expressions to indicate the author’s commitment to the truth of the statement or necessity (Machin & Mayr, 2012). In CDA, modality is more than expressions that convey commitment or necessity. Rather, modality informs us about the author’s attitude, self-image, authority, and certainty.

In Arabic, modality is ‘a metalinguistic operation far too complex to be reduced to modal auxiliaries’ (Kahlaoui, 2015, p. 222). Al-Sabbagh et al. (2013) listed various reasons causing the complexity of Arabic modality. Among them is the flexible nature of Arabic word order which leads to long dependency between the modality triggers and
their scopes. In addition, Arabic modality triggers are semantically and lexically ambiguous which makes identifying them challenging.

Consequently, Al-Sabbagh et al. (2013) developed eight modality semantic meanings to annotate Arabic modality: epistemic, evidential, obligative, permissive, commissive, abilitive, and violitive. They provided the following examples for each semantic meaning and asked the annotators to relate modality expressions to those eight meanings, as illustrated in Table 3-2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Epistemic (opinion, conclusion, possibility)** | أعتقد ‘think’  
افرض ‘assume’  
من المحتمل ‘it is possible’ |
| **Evidential (reported)**      |  
صرّح ‘state’  
قال ‘say’  
أفصّح عن ‘reveal’ |
| **Evidential (sensory)**       | شاهد بعينيه ‘see’  
سمع بنفسه ‘hear’  
لاحظ ‘notice’ |
| **Obligative (and necessity)** | يجب ‘should’  
ضروري ‘necessary’  
بحاجة الى ‘need’  
حتما ‘for sure’ |
| **Permissive (and prohibitive)** | وافق ‘agree’  
منع ‘prohibit’  
أجاز ‘legalize’ |
| **Commisive**                  | وعد ‘promise’  
أقسم ‘swear’  
تعهد ‘pledge’ |
| **Abilitive (incapability)**   | استطاع ‘able to’  
عجز عن ‘unable to’  
تسني له ‘could’  
فشل ‘fail’ |
Table 3-2. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volitive</td>
<td>أراد ‘want’ عقد النية على ‘intend’ عزم على ‘determine’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tools for Discursive Analysis

In this level of analysis, the focus shifts from textual analysis to the dialectical relations between text, text producers, and text consumers. The discursive analysis for the present research manifested six strategies adopted from CDA approaches and feminist post-structuralism: intertextuality, presuppositions, gender relationality, ideological squaring, connotation, and historical dimensions. Table 3-3, lists each discursive analysis tool, its source and objectives.

Table 3-3. Tools for discursive analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intertextuality</td>
<td>The Dialectical-Relational Approach</td>
<td>Disambiguating texts' layers of depth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Linking texts in hand to prior knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presupposition</td>
<td>The Dialectical-Relational Approach</td>
<td>Persuading through concealing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking certain ideas for granted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Squaring</td>
<td>The Socio-Cognitive Approach</td>
<td>Evaluating participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying opposing ideologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Relationality</td>
<td>Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>Analyzing the hierarchy of gendered social orders (patriarchy).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing awareness about gender discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connotation</td>
<td>Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>Illustrating how participants jockey for positions of power.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-3. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Historical Dimensions     | The Discourse-Historical Approach | Enhancing the complex notion of power and gender as promoted by feminist-poststructuralism.  
|                           |                              | Linking utterances to historical events and facts.                        
|                           |                              | Tracing the diachronic change of discourse.                                |

**Intertextuality**

The notion of intertextuality implies that every text is dialogical, which means that every particular text is in a continual dialogue with other texts. This dialogical approach of text analysis was developed by Bakhtin (1981) whose approach focused on the heterogeneity of discourse. However, the term ‘intertextuality’ was not coined by him, but by Julia Kristeva who introduced the term ‘intertextuality’ in her discussion of the work of Bakhtin (Kristeva, 1986). The work of Bakhtin was not the only work that focused on intertextuality without using the term itself. Foucault (1972) also discussed intertextuality in his *Archaeology of Knowledge* long before the term ‘intertextuality’ was introduced to academia.

In CDA, intertextuality is a key term that refers to the incorporation of elements of other texts into one (Fairclough, 2003). Intertextuality can take two forms: manifest intertextuality through explicit linguistic tools, such as quotations and reported speech, and constitutive intertextuality through implicit linguistic tools such as presuppositions, logical entailments, and implicatures (ibid). Utilizing both forms of intertextuality serves
in adding layers of depth to a text and evoking prior knowledge and experiences to the presented text.

Moving from the abstract notion of intertextuality to practice. Fairclough (1992b) attempted to operationalize the concept of intertextuality through a historical orientation. He supported Kristeva’s (1986) perspective of intertextuality, which focuses on the mutual relationship between history and text. They both believe that texts are made out of past texts, and at the same time history is created by the amalgamation of various texts. However, the analysis of intertextuality is complex because some intertextual elements have unknown origins. Therefore, the analysis of intertextuality is based mainly on identifying different voices and prior texts that contribute to the production of the text under analysis.

In the present study, the analysis of intertextuality is supposed to depict the voices and prior discourses that were deployed by Saudi female advocates to promote women’s driving in Saudi Arabia. Wodak’s historical discourse analysis is of great help in identifying the sources of intertextual discourses that are incorporated into Saudi female advocates’ discourse.

**Presuppositions**

A presupposition is an implicit assumption that is taken for granted by both the speaker and the hearer. A rule of a thumb that distinguishes presuppositions from other implicit intertextual elements is negation, which does not change the presupposed facts within a sentence. For example, *King Salman is the king of Saudi Arabia* and *King Salman is not the king of Saudi Arabia*. Both sentences presuppose that Saudi Arabia has a king.
Presuppositions are ‘notoriously manipulative because they are difficult to challenge: many readers are reluctant to question statements that the author appears to be taking for granted’ (Huckin, 1997, p. 83). In addition, presuppositions allow speakers to conceal their ideologies and at the same time deliver their intended message. This type of persuasion through concealing is common in public speeches such as political debates, newspaper articles and online blogs. The discourse of Saudi female advocates offers a bonanza of debates on gender, religion, politics, and culture. Analyzing presupposition structures utilized by Saudi female advocates will largely contribute in revealing their ideologies and the persuasive strategies they implemented to promote the right of women to drive cars.

**Ideological squaring**

As Van Dijk (1998) proposed, ideological squaring is part of the ideological reproduction in discourse. It occurs when opposing concepts are linked to participants through discursive structures. It is not necessary that participants should be referred to using overt adjectives such as good-bad, young-old, etc. However, semantic representations contribute in evaluating participants as good/bad, or belonging/not belonging. Ideological squaring simply implies the positive representation of Us and the negative representation of Them through the following four moves:

1. Emphasizing the positive information about Us.
2. Emphasizing the negative information about Them.
3. Suppressing the positive information about Them.
4. Suppressing the negative information about Us.
Van Dijk (1998) stressed that ideological representations of participants do not refer to individuals. Rather, they refer to group members who share the same ideologies. In other words, discussing ideologies involves discussing groups' opinions about social issues.

**Gender relationality**

Gender Relationality is the main principle of analysis within Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis. It primarily focuses on two aspects: First, the discursive co-constructions of a man and a woman. The analysis does not focus on women per se, but includes their relations to men and how these relations operate within broader gender orders. Second, gender relationality examines how masculinity participates in the oppression against women (Lazar, 2005). Implementing gender relationality in the analysis will help in understanding the hierarchy of gendered social orders in Saudi Arabia. Women’s awareness of their situation within androcentric communities will encourage them to oppose any form of discrimination.

**Connotation**

Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) places a focus on the connotative analysis which aims at analyzing a stretch of competing texts in order to expose the various ways in which speakers are jockeying for powerful positions. This entails that power is not possessed by specific speakers but shifts from one speaker to the other within one single text. Therefore, speakers are positioned into a matrix of powerfulness and powerlessness regardless of their gender.

Connotative analysis in FPDA is similar to CDA in that they both analyze intertextual discourses. However, CDA is interested in polarity in which binary words such as powerful/powerless, men/women, black/white, good/bad are always prevalent.
On the other hand, FPDA focuses on complexity meaning that binary fixed words do not fairly describe people. A complex and assorted array of words should be manifested within connotative analysis. This array is never stable and always changing as long as speakers are constantly jockeying for positions of power within various competing discourse.

**Historical dimensions**

This tool of discursive analysis is inspired by the work of Ruth Wodak (2001), which concentrated on making extensive interpretations of the historical context of texts. Interpretations are based on linking the text to other texts, topics, and arguments, and providing elaborated ethnographic information that assists in understanding the text within its historical context. The present research will trace the diachronic change of the discourse of Saudi female advocates during the period of 2011-2016. This period marks the beginning of modern initiatives that promote the right of women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the data covering this period is extensive due to utilizing the internet and social media applications.

Although the period from 1990 to 2010 marks a dramatic change in the Saudi society, data from that period could not be included in the present research due to the lack of resources. However, some of the participants in the present research participated in the campaign of 1990 and reported some incidents that would be humbly included in the present research.

**Tools for Sociocultural Analysis**

After revisiting the text at the linguistic level and the discursive level, text is analyzed in relation to its cultural context, i.e. in relation to power, hegemonic struggles and ideology (Fairclough, 1992a). The dialectical-relational approach investigates the
dialectical relationship between discourse and the social and historical processes. This relationship implies that discourse is shaped by the situations, institutions, and social structures, and at the same time discourse shapes them. Todolí Cervera et al. (2006) explained Fairclough’s method of sociocultural analysis which implies analyzing text at three levels: the immediate situation, the wider institution, and the level of society. They illustrated an example of a conversation between a husband and a wife which can be analyzed socioculturally at three levels: in terms of their personal relationship (immediate situation), in terms of belonging to the family institution (the wider institution), and in terms of gender relations within the society (society). This level of analysis includes a critical analysis of various forms of power abuse and struggles over power. The analyst’s critical standpoints and sociocultural background contribute largely in this level of analysis. The discourse of Saudi female advocates is linked to the Saudi culture, the existing religious beliefs and the political situation in Saudi Arabia.
CHAPTER 4
TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Textual analysis is the first level of analysis in the present research. To conduct textual analysis, I examine how Saudi female advocates utilize six linguistic tools in their discourse. The linguistic tools are lexicalization, quoting verbs, social actors’ representation, rhetoric, metaphor, transitivity and modality. In Chapter 3, the model analysis introduces these linguistic tools, and their objectives, and Chapter 4 discusses each of the six linguistic tools in relation to the discourse of Saudi female advocates.

Lexicalization

In this section, I track how Saudi female advocates use words: what words they tend to use and what words they avoid, to reveal their underlying beliefs and specify their messages. The analysis of lexicalization focuses on four aspects: overlexicalization, suppression, structural oppositions and lexical choices. The model analysis, in Chapter 3, introduces each of the four aspects.

Overlexicalization, the use of multiple synonyms to emphasize a single concept, is employed by Saudi female advocates when they talk about the conservative traditions of Saudi society, the misinterpretations of Islamic laws by religious leaders, patriarchy, and gender inequality. In CDA, themes that are emphasized through using multiple synonyms are pragmatically interpreted as problematic to the speakers. Therefore, Saudi female advocates constantly repeat words to persuade the consumer that these areas are problematic and need to be corrected.

The conformity, complexity and conservatism of Saudi society are repeatedly mentioned in the data. The advocates acknowledge the role of Saudi society in hindering women’s progress, which is indicated in their repetitions of the following social
Table 4-1 is an excerpt from an ethnographic interview that shows how an advocate repeatedly mentions the society and its constraints. The underlined words indicate that the speaker has a problem with the conservatism of the society. However, she respects the nature of the society and suggests changing this conservatism gradually.

**Table 4-1. Overlexicalization of terms related to the extremely conservative society**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excerpt</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| لا أي تغيير وكون المرأة من بداية الدولة ما قادت سيارتها بشكل رسمي بالرغم أنها قادتها في الأرياف والضواحي والمناطق النائية لكن بشكل رسمي داخل المدن... عفواً. ما قادت هذا النبي إلى المجتمع يعود أن المرأة لا تقدر أو ممنوعة من القيادة وصار عرف اجتماعي بالأصح وأنا من باب الاحترام للعرف الاجتماعي ومقاومة المجتمع لا أي تغيير يمكن يحدث مهما كان صغير أو كبير أقول أكي ممكن في البداية يعني لا أريد أبدا أن يتم وضع محوترات وأماما على قيادة المرأة غير متوفرة على قيادة الرجل لكن كبداية فقط حتى نكسر الارتباط الاجتماعي وحتى نكسر العرف الاجتماعي بعدم قيادة المرأة ونعد المجتمع على منظر أنه يشوف امرأة تقود سيارتها وأنه شيء طبيعي وأنه ما ح تقوم القيادة إذا قادت المرأة. I understand the resistance of the society to any change. The fact that women did not drive cars officially in cities at the beginning of the state—although women did drive cars in villages and rural places—led the society to get accustomed to the fact that women do not drive cars, or are prohibited from driving cars. More accurately, banning women from driving cars became a social custom.

Considering this social custom and the social resistance to any change, I say it is OK to posit conditions when introducing women’s car driving to the society in order to be able to break this social taboo and change the social custom of banning women from driving cars. Although I refuse enacting laws on women’s car driving that are not applied on men, such laws will lead the society to get accustomed to see a woman driving her car, and that it is not the end of the world if women drive cars.

**Words that refer to the religious nature of the Saudi society and the authoritative role of the religious leaders are frequently repeated in the data. Religion itself is positively described with words that refer to the tolerance of Islam, such as الإسلام دين يسر وسهلة, Islam is a religion of ease and flexibility. On the other hand, words that describe**
religious leaders and their legislations denote the advocate’s negative attitude towards them. Religious leaders are described as radical sheikhs, and المتشددين radical sheikhs, and الملتزمين conformist clerks. The sociocultural analysis in Chapter 6 provides a broader analysis that illustrates how religion is institutionalized in Saudi Arabia, and how radical religious leaders degrade Islam and hinder women’s progress. Table 4-2 has an excerpt from an article written by an advocate to show how words related to the misinterpretation of Islam are repeatedly mentioned. This indicates that the advocate condemns the actions of such religious leaders because they represent Islam in the wrong way. Underlined words are repetitions of the same concept: prohibiting what is religiously legal.

Table 4-2. Overlexicalization of terms related to misinterpreting Islam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excerpt</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>التاليار الديني أو المحافظ منقسم بين مؤيد ومعارض. والمعارضة من باب سد الذرائع التي وصلت للتشرييم، في مخالفه لأساس التشريع الإسلامي التي لن يسامحهم عليها التاريخ حين تم تجريم أمر بدون نص صريح من كتاب أو سنة.</td>
<td>The religious party is divided into supporters and opponents. Opposing (women’s car driving) is based on preventing means that may lead to vice. This leads to prohibiting what is religiously legal, which is a violation of the basics of the Islamic law. History will not forgive them (the religious party) for prohibiting a matter without a clear law from the Holy Book (Quran) or Sunnah (the Prophet’s sayings).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Words that refer to patriarchy and gender inequality are repeatedly mentioned in the discourse of Saudi female advocates. Words that are related to anguish and hardship, such as غوانق, عفف, violence, محظورات, بانس, and barriers, indicate that Saudi female advocates suffer from discrimination and inequality.

In addition to overlexicalization, the data indicates that Saudi female advocates avoid words that degrade other women. Calling women متحررة unveiled or متحررة liberal is
offensive in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the advocates avoid that by using detailed
descriptions of women who deviate from the norm of wearing the conservative public
attire, which includes a black abayah, placed on the head to cover the whole body, and
a face cover (niqab). The following example indicates how the advocates use detailed
descriptions of the way open-minded women dress and behave:

| لحالهم يلبسو عبايات على الكتف وعبايات ملونة وكاشفين وجيههم ويسافروا |
| They put abayas on their shoulders, wear colorful abayas, unveil their faces, and travel alone. |

In their YouTube videos, Saudi female advocates avoid the accusing words
pointed at the government. This could be attributed to the nature of YouTube videos,
which allows people from all around the world to stream videos and comment on them.
Therefore, problematic words that are related to politics are suppressed. Moreover,
avocates tended to utter fewer words when they were driving in their YouTube videos.
This strategy assists in drawing the audience attention to the action of car driving, more
than to the discourse of the advocates.

The articles and Twitter posts contain a condensed volume of aspirational and
motivational words that encourage women to demand their rights and inform the society
that rights are not negotiable. The written data shows that Saudi female advocates
avoid passive and pessimistic words that describe their opponents. They limit the use of
such words to the ethnographic interviews which provide them with a private
atmosphere. Table 4-3 has some Twitter posts that show how the advocates utilize
positive words to encourage women to be active agents in the society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Twitter Post</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 4-3. Aspirational and encouraging Twitter posts
Remember to trust your abilities and skills even if everyone doubts them. This holiday is really happy because it coincides with the women’s movement on November 6, 1990. For those 47 women, we say thank you on the 21st anniversary of this movement.

Congratulations for every Saudi woman. Today your voice is heard, loudly heard. Thank you for every free woman.

Let’s prostrate to thank Allah. Freedom evening my country’s girls .. I love you..

Structural oppositions are utilized by advocates to present social contradictions and conflicting groups. When structural oppositions are incorporated, the audience is not told where the conflict exists. Instead, structural oppositions motivate listeners to locate the conflict. Both overt and covert structural oppositions are used by the advocates. Overt structural opposition occurs when binary oppositions are involved. The discourse of Saudi female advocates has several covert oppositions, such as man and woman, supporters and opponents, openness and conservatism, and urban and rural.

On the other hand, the advocates employ covert structural oppositions to avoid mentioning one of the opposing groups. Therefore, one opposing concept is clearly overt, and the other is covert, but activated. In the following example, the government and the society are two opposing groups. However, the advocate mentions only the society, and activates the audience to find out the other group, through a set of words that are related to the government, detaining and interrogations:
Detaining and interrogating us were not by the society, and the myth that the society
is not ready does not exist.

In general, the lexical choices of the Saudi female advocates are categorized into
three types: first, formal words that indicate the advocates’ education and fluency in
Arabic, such as درء avoidance, تتبدد vanish, and مخيال imaginary scene, and يتذرّع find
excuses. Second, colloquial words that assimilate the advocates to the audience, such
as مرمطة trouble, and يَفْتَقَّطُ عَلَيْكَ make fun of you. Third, English words that indicate their
fluency in English and awareness of other cultures.

The advocates use formal and sophisticated words in their articles and Twitter
posts, and informal words in their ethnographic interviews and YouTube videos. This is
attributed to the formality of written Arabic in comparison to spoken Arabic. English
words are used in both written data and spoken data. Table 4-4 has example of the
formal, informal, and English words that are used by the advocates.

Table 4-4. Sample of Saudi female advocates’ lexical choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Words</th>
<th>Colloquial Words</th>
<th>English words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>درء</td>
<td>الدنيا رواق</td>
<td>نكسر التابو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>Calm life</td>
<td>Break the taboo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تتبدد</td>
<td>يُفْتَقَّطُ عَلَيْكَ</td>
<td>بشكل ثوريتكلي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanish</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td>Theoretically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لنك أن تخيل</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td>اكسكلودنق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td>Excluding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>في حوزتهم</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td>تمدت ادلجتهم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With them</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td>Ideologically persuaded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بايت بالفشل</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يتذرّع</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find excuses</td>
<td>مركمة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quoting Verbs

In addition to lexicalization, the textual analysis includes an analysis of quoting verbs. The choice of quoting verbs indicates indirectly how participants choose to represent social actors. The social actors in the data can be classified as: Saudi women, society members, religious leaders, and government representatives. The advocates choose quoting verbs that connotatively evaluate these four groups. The quoting verbs that are used to represent Saudi women include تدافع, demand, تطالب, ask, تناقش, discuss, تفاوض, negotiate, and تواجه, confront. These quoting verbs indicate that Saudi female advocates look at the majority of Saudi women as active fighters who are not satisfied with rigidity and who seek change. On the other hand, Saudi female advocates choose quoting verbs that denote the problematic role of the Saudi society towards women’s issues. The quoting verbs that are used by the advocates to report what society members say include يرفض, refuse, ينقض, contradict, ينصاع, comply with, لا يقبل, does not accept, and يصنّف, categorize. Table 4-5 shows how an advocate selectively chooses quoting verbs to positively report the way Saudi women demand their right.

| Table 4-5. Quoting verbs to represent Saudi women |
|---|---|
| **Excerpt** | **English Translation** |
| في بعضهن التزمن بنقاباتهن كما يفعلن دائما في حياتهن اليومية وأخرىن التزمن بحجابهن الإسلامي ولم يبد أن أحدا كان يدعو إلى ما يثير الشغب أو التجمع أو إعلان حالة من التظاهر أو العاصيان.. على العكس وكما اتضح من متابعتي لدعوة بعض النساء بالسماح لهن لقيادة السيارة وقد أكدت النساء الداعيات أن الأمر لا يتعارض مع حقوق المرأة وحقها في ممارسة أحيانا داخل المدن وتمارسه الكثير من النساء التقليديات والقرويات في القرى والأرياف لضرورات المعيشة. | Some women kept wearing Niqab (face cover) as they always do in their daily life. Others kept putting on the Islamic Hijab (covering hair, but not face). It was clear that no woman called for riot and gathering, or declared a state of demonstration or disobedience. Contrarily, through following up with women who demand the right to drive cars, those women stress on the fact...
that they merely demand to practice a right that they sometimes do (drive cars) inside cities, and many traditional and rural women do it (drive cars) in villages and rural places to fulfill their life needs.

The quoting verbs for religious leaders denote a stronger sense of authority than that of the society members. The quoting verbs that are utilized by the advocates to evaluate religious leaders are related to religious instructions, for instance, 

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{يجيز} legalize,
  \item \textit{يحرم} forbid, and
  \item \textit{يتعترض} object.
\end{itemize}

These verbs denote the authoritative and powerful role of religious leaders regarding women’s social issues. Finally, the quoting verbs that are used for government representatives denote the highest degree of authority, such as

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{يفرض} impose,
  \item \textit{يرفض} reject,
  \item \textit{يصدر قانون} issue, and
  \item \textit{يحقق في} inspect.
\end{itemize}

Table 4-6 contains quoting verbs that are utilized by the advocates to represent religious leaders, while Table 4-7 has quoting verbs that represent government officials.

### Table 4-6. Quoting verbs to represent religious leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excerpt</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| كان المشهد مستفزاً للمتشددين الذين يعارضون التواجد الأمريكي على الأراضي السعودية ماجعل هناك منتنفاً لذلك الغضب بصب جام الغضب واللعنات على هؤلاء النساء بطريقة يندي لها الجبين. من منا لايذكر المنشورات التي وزعت والتي تحمل أسمائهن وأسماء عائلاتهم وأرقام هواتفهن وتصفهن بالفاسقات وبالمؤامرة الإيرانية العلمانية. وانتشار الحديث في المجالس كالنار في الهشيم وتم تشويه محاولة عفوية جريئة فقدت شر مستظفر وحديث المدينة. في ٩ نوفمبر ١٩٩٩م أصدر الشيخ بن باز (رحمه الله) المفتي العام فتوى تحريم قيادة المرأة للسيارة. | The scene (watching Saudi women drive cars in the 1990 protest) was provocative to the extreme conservatives (religious leaders) who oppose the American presence on Saudi soil. They poured anger and curses on those women in a way that makes your forehead sweat. Who does not remember the pamphlets that were distributed bearing their names, their family’s names, their phone numbers, and describing them as promiscuous women who support the secular Iranian
conspiracy. The news spread like wildfire, and a bold spontaneous attempt was distorted and become bad news and the talk of the city. On November 9, 1990, Shaikh Abdulaziz Ibn Baz, may Allah have mercy on him, issued a statement forbidding women to drive cars.

What is strange is that two days after the session was held (at the Consultative Council) and the routine press report was released, the official spokesman of the council issued a statement contradicting what happened in the Council. Besides that, he almost denied the female members of the Consultative Council and belittled them and their recommendation (of allowing women to drive cars) claiming that this recommendation is not among the responsibilities of the Ministry of Transportation. What is worse is the sentence of Dr. Mahammad Al Muhanna: “What female members proposed violates the 31st rule of the Consultative Council.” This rule states that the proposed recommendation should relate to the discussed issue. This is to say that the female members of the Consultative Council do not know the rules after nine months of working at the Consultative Council.

**Representing Social Actors**

Saudi female advocates employ several linguistic tools to represent social actors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excerpt</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conspiracy. The news spread like wildfire, and a bold spontaneous attempt was distorted and become bad news and the talk of the city. On November 9, 1990, Shaikh Abdulaziz Ibn Baz, may Allah have mercy on him, issued a statement forbidding women to drive cars.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is strange is that two days after the session was held (at the Consultative Council) and the routine press report was released, the official spokesman of the council issued a statement contradicting what happened in the Council. Besides that, he almost denied the female members of the Consultative Council and belittled them and their recommendation (of allowing women to drive cars) claiming that this recommendation is not among the responsibilities of the Ministry of Transportation. What is worse is the sentence of Dr. Mahammad Al Muhanna: “What female members proposed violates the 31st rule of the Consultative Council.” This rule states that the proposed recommendation should relate to the discussed issue. This is to say that the female members of the Consultative Council do not know the rules after nine months of working at the Consultative Council.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and appreciation, such as Sultan Bin Abdulaziz, and his majesty king Abdullah.

On the other hand, the advocates utilize impersonalization when they complain about the laws of the country to avoid blaming single individuals who are responsible for the lag in women’s progress. Therefore, the blame is usually pointed at impersonal entities, such as the government, the consultative council, and the traffic department. The following two examples indicate how impersonalization is utilized in the advocates’ discourse:

The Consultative Council is extremely shy and hesitant in discussing the issue of women’s car driving.

The government, represented by the Ministry of Interior, keeps refusing to enroll women in driving schools and to issue driving licenses.

Functionalization is utilized by the advocates to represent foreign drivers who play a potential role in the daily lives of Saudi women. Although advocates have the option of choosing words like العامل الاجنبي domestic worker, or الأجانب foreigners, they choose the word سائق driver to highlight the importance of the work of foreign drivers in Saudi Arabia. The following example indicates how the advocates use the word سائق driver to define the significant function of drivers in Saudi Arabia:

Three decades have passed while waiting for the Ministry of Interior to find a solution that copes with the modern time, and allows women to drive cars to eliminate the existence of a spoiled foreign driver, if not two or three drivers, in every house.

To represent the different social groups in Saudi society, the advocates use collectivization, such as المسؤولين officials, المعارضين opponents, and الداعين supporters.
Such use of collectivization distances the reader from the members of such groups and draws the attention to the group as a collectivity. The collectivized word, المسؤولون, officials, in the following example, draws the attention to the officials as a group:

المسؤولون في كل مقابلة مع وسيلة إعلام أجنبية يصرحون أنهم مع حق المرأة في القيادة لكن (المجتمع غير جاهز).

Officials in every interview on international media declare that they support the right of women to drive cars but (the society is not ready).

**Rhetoric and Metaphor**

Various rhetorical skills and figurative language have been deployed in the discourse of Saudi female advocates for the purpose of communicating ideas and persuading their audience. Saudi female advocates frequently use metonymy, metaphor and hyperbole more than other figures of speech. The use of metonymy is attributed to the general nature of metonymy, which allows advocates to replace agents with substitutions that make knowing the agents impossible. The following example illustrates how advocates utilize metonymy to hide the real agents and how the ‘public opinion’ and ‘authority’ are personified as if they were able to speak:

الرأي العام والسلطة تقول ان مواضيع حقوق المرأة لاتناسب مجتمعنا.

The public opinion and the authority state that feminism is not applicable in our society.

On the other hand, metaphor is deployed to relate natural and commonsense abstracts with concrete objects for the purpose of clarifying and persuasion. Saudi female advocates implement metaphor to capture social contradictions and cultural complexity. For example, when advocates are asked about their response to those who say that allowing women to drive cars is a trivial matter compared to other vital social issues such as poverty and unemployment, one participant replies with the following ironic sentence:
We are not standing in a line to buy sandwiches from a canteen.

The notion that asking for rights is like waiting in a line to buy sandwiches from a canteen is rejected in the previous example. This metaphor encourages every member of the society to fight for her/his rights, suggests that rights should be obtained without order, and indicates that authority can handle multiple issues simultaneously. In addition, the advocates use metaphor to substitute abstract concepts with concrete images to convey the message effectively. For example, the advocate in the following example utilizes metaphor to indicate that she is interested in rights that pertain to her needs. The metaphor indicates that being deprived from rights is like being handcuffed:

اذا أعطي اهتمام للشي اللي يكبل يدي.

I care about rights that cuff my hands.

Metaphor is also utilized to mock people who compare Saudi men to wolves and monsters, and Saudi women to pearls, jewels, diamonds and queens. The advocates stress the importance of issuing strict laws that prevent human wolves and monsters from abusing and assaulting Saudi women. The ironic comparisons attract the attention of the audience to the superficiality of the society’s perspectives towards women and men. The following example illustrates the way Saudi female advocates utilize metaphor to describe Saudi women and men:

ويعللون لازدواجيتهم بفرض مخيال وحشي يصور الحياة غابة يعيش فيها رجل بمواصفات وحش، وامرأة تلازم مستويات الفتنة وتعيش دور طريدة الوحش.

They justify their duplicity by positing an imaginary brutal scene that depicts life as a jungle where men are predators and women are their seduced preys.

حيث يرى البعض أنه لا بأس من استخدام سائقات غير سعوديات لتقود بالسعودية "الندرة والجهرة والألمامه"!

Some accept the idea of hiring foreign female drivers to drive Saudi women who are pearls, jewels, and diamonds!
Hyperbole is utilized by Saudi female advocates to highlight the complications related to women’s rights, and to express their emotions and negative feelings, such as sadness, frustration and anger. For example, participants express their fear when they drive cars in Saudi Arabia by sentences such as I was dying of fear or I was shivering with anger. The following excerpt shows how an advocate utilizes hyperbole to describe the supernatural Saudi men. Her statement indicates that it is impossible for men to be always ready to fulfill women’s needs because men sometimes get sick, angry and busy:

كيف لنا أن ننسى جميل رجالنا الخارقين الذين لا يمرضون و لا يغضبون ولا ينشغلون بثنا البية؟
How can we forget the favor of our supernatural men who never get sick, angry, or busy?

In addition, repetition of words and phrases is frequently used in the discourse of Saudi female advocates to emphasize and reinforce ideas that are related to transportation problems, extreme conservatism, and women’s lost rights. Repetition highlights the importance of the repeated words and phrases and attracts the attention of the audience. The following examples of repetitions pinpoint significant themes such as royal authority, mother duties and social constraints:

نحتاج الى قرار سياسي واللى قرار سياسي ثم الى قرار سياسي.
We need a political decision and a political decision and then a political decision.

صحيت تاني يوم وانا فيني غضب فوق الغضب وفيني إحباط فوق الاحباط من هذا الوضع.
I woke up the other day with madness over madness and frustration over frustration because of this situation.

كيف نروح شغلنا؟ كيف نودي أولادنا مدارسهم؟ كيف نرجعهم؟ كيف نقضي للبيت؟ الأسواق؟ المستشفيات؟ المستوصفات؟
How to go to work? How to take our kids to school? How to take them back home? How to go to grocery? Malls? Hospitals? Policlinics?

The distribution of rhetorical devices is more frequent in articles and Twitter posts than ethnographic interviews and YouTube videos. This is attributed to the formality and
rhetorical nature of written Arabic compared to spoken Arabic. Whether spoken or written, rhetorical devices are employed to enhance persuasiveness and formulate one opinion promoting women’s prosperity and gender equality. The discourse of Saudi female advocates assists in the discourse analysis that takes a critical perspective because it introduces the advocates themselves, and the Saudi society in general.

**Transitivity**

Transitivity patterns are essential in textual analysis to depict the agents and identify who is empowered and over whom. Nominalization and passive verbs are two devices that hide agents, and emphasize actions. The advocates have a tendency for nominalization to make objective claims about social issues including women’s rights. For example, the advocates who participated in the 1990 driving protest were attacked by the society and religious leaders, detained by policemen and suspended from work by the government. However, in the following example, the agents are hidden using nominalization to focus on the actions of هجوم attacking and التوقف suspension, and not the agents themselves:

بعد عام 1990 صار هجوم اجتماعي وهجوم اعلامي وتوقف عن العمل.

After 1990, there was a social attack, media attack and suspension from work.

In addition to nominalization, participants utilize three types of passivation: internal passive verbs, prefixed verbs, and periphrastic passive structures, to hide agents. All three types of passivation are utilized by the advocates to stress the actions. The hidden agents are either the powerful groups in the Saudi society, government officials, men, and religious strivers, or the affected groups, women of all kinds and children.
Internal passive verbs are the classical forms of passive verbs in the Arabic language. However, they are not frequently used in spoken Arabic. Internal passive verbs are formed by changing internal vowels in verb patterns. For example, the verb قبَلَ /qabil-α/ ‘accept’ becomes an internal passive verb through changing the internal vowel /a/ into /u/, قُبِلَ /qubil-α/ ‘accepted’. The use of internal passive verbs in the following example attracts the attention to change and resistance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>كل تغيير جديد يطرح بالمجتمع لا يقبل بسهولة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every new change that is introduced to the society is not accepted easily.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, prefixed passive verbs are innovative forms that substitute internal passive verbs. They are formed by adding the prefix ʔin- to the root (Holes, 2004). For example, انسجن ‘imprisoned’, انقتل ‘killed’, and انضرب ‘beaten’. Saudi female advocates utilize prefixed passive verbs in the ethnographic interviews and YouTube videos, and the internal passive verbs in articles and Twitter posts. The more formal the discourse is, the more internal passive verbs occur and vice versa. The first example below has an internal passive verb، سُجنت ‘imprisoned’, which denotes formality, while the second example has a prefixed passive verb، انسجن ‘imprisoned’, which is less formal. Both passive forms convey the same meaning; however, the difference is in the degree of formality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>الناس خافت بعد ما سُجنت.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People became cautious after I was imprisoned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>تواصلت معاها قبل ما انسجن.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I contacted her before I was imprisoned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Periphrastic passive structures are used to denote the completion of the process in the verbal noun. They are formed by *tamma* + verbal noun (Holes, 2004). They give a sense of necessity and obligation, as expressed in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This issue will not be solved.</td>
<td>لن يتم البت في هذه القضية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues should be raised for discussions.</td>
<td>لابد أن يتم طرح قضايا لمناقشةها</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An order has been issued to imprison violators.</td>
<td>تم إصدار أمر بحبس المخالفين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Modality**

Various forms of modality expressions are utilized by participants to express their opinion, report their experiences, convey their certainty and degree of authority. After applying the eight semantic meanings of modality proposed by Al-Sabbagh et al. (2013), data analysis shows an extensive use of four modality meanings: epistemic, obligative, permissive and abilitive. Epistemic expressions are used by participants to evaluate women’s state, and express their opinion on social issues, as in the following epistemic statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أظن أن موضوع القيادة في عصرنا الحاضر: عصر التكنلوجيا، ومع التغيرات التي تمر وستمر المملكة بها لمقابلة الرؤية 2030، أمر أصبح في خانة الضرورة.</td>
<td>I think the issue of women’s car driving in the present time, the age of technology, with the changes that are occurring and that will occur in the kingdom to meet the vision of 2030, becomes an urgent need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أرى أن من الضروري الوقوف عند توصية الشوريات الفاضلات الدكتورات هيا المنيع، لطيفة الشلاان ومنى آل مشيط.</td>
<td>I find it necessary to closely examine the recommendations of the members of the consultative council: Dr. Haya Al Munai, Dr. Latifah Al Shalaan, and Dr. Muna Al Mushait.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis also reveals an extensive use of obligative expressions in which participants dictate what the society, the government, and Saudi women should do or
abstain from doing, which denotes a sense of control without authority. In addition, the advocates employ modality expressions to demand their rights and achieve equality with men. The following sentences are excerpts that show the obligative language used to express opinions and evaluate the society:

المفترض ماتكون الموافقة بأي اشتراطات مثل مابدأ القرار مع الرجال بدون اشتراطات
Approval for women’s car driving should be without conditions, as it was with men.
الحقوق يُفترَض أن تُقرّ
Rights should be determined.
للزم يكون فيه استراتيجية للتوعية المجتمعية
There should be a strategy for community awareness.
للزم تكون مدافعة ومطالبة بحقوقهم بشكل حضاري وسلمي واشوف انه واجب من واجباتي
You should advocate and demand their (women’s) rights in a civilized and peaceful manner. It is one of my duties.

On the other hand, permissive expressions expose the invasive culture of patriarchy, in which the government, the society and men have authority over women in all aspects of life. The following excerpts show how women should seek the permission of the government, the society and their male guardians to be able to gain their rights, such as driving a car:

أبويه الله يرحمه ماكان عنده مشكلة يشوفنا نسوق
My father, may Allah bless his soul, did not mind watching us drive cars.
المجتمع متقبل وبيتقبل مثل ما قبل عمل المرأة في المحلات النسائية
The society accepts and will accept (women driving cars) in the same manner as it accepts women’s employment in the female stores.

Abilitive expressions are mainly used by advocates to express their ability/inability, and the difficulties they encounter with poor public transportation.

Different forms of capability verbs, such as يقدر and يستطيع, are repeatedly mentioned to
indicate the limited ability of women in a country with a poor transportation system. The following sentences show abilitive expressions that are used by advocates:

In general, no one can limit rights.

It was really difficult to obtain a driving license (from Dubai).

I posited limits and was able to decide on what I want for my family and myself.

Women cannot drive, and at the same time, there is no easy public transportation.

Interrogative statements are employed by participants in order to motivate the audience’s logical thinking and engage them in the issue. The interrogative statements that are used in the ethnographic interviews and YouTube videos start with Why, which is the colloquial equivalent of the classical word لماذا, and How.

When I examine interrogative structures that occasionally occur in the data, I find that participants utilize interrogatives to convey their anger and dissatisfaction. The tone of their voices and the higher pitch of their discourse assert this assumption. The following excerpts show how interrogatives are utilized to convey anger and dissatisfaction:

Issues that discuss women’s rights do not fit our society. WHY? Are we coming from Mars? Our society is closely similar to the Qatari, Kuwaiti and Bahraini societies. WHY do their women have rights, and we do not have?
WHY are we silent? WHY is this weariness? WHY is the government silent? WHY does the country allow women to be so weary? And WHY are we silent towards this matter, and WHY do we accept it?

كيف يخافون ويحرصون على المرأة بشدة وينفس الوقت يخلونها مع سائق أجنبي؟ فهذا يناقض هذا HOW do they care a lot about women and at the same time allow her to go with a foreign male driver? This is a contradiction.
CHAPTER 5
DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS

Chapter 5 zooms out the analysis to focus on a broader scope that covers six discursive strategies: intertextuality, presupposition, ideological squaring, gender relationality, connotation, and historical dimensions. Each discursive strategy contributes in disambiguating layers of discourse and linking discourse to prior knowledge.

**Intertextuality**

The data of the present study shows that Saudi female advocates deploy both manifest intertextuality in the form of direct quotations and reported speech, and constitutive intertextuality through narratives and presuppositions. Direct quotations are salient in the discourse of Saudi female advocates. They are mainly religious quotations that are excerpted from the Holy Quran and Prophet Mohammad sayings.

Quoting religious verses serves two functions. First, it constitutes the religious identity of Saudi female advocates who possess religious knowledge that qualifies them to preach. Second, it provides the society with strong arguments that satisfy its religious conservative nature. The following examples show the way Saudi female advocates utilize religious verses to educate the society and support their requests:

> تَتَّغِيرُ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ غَيْرّ نَفْسِكَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

To change people around you, you should start by changing yourself: ‘Allah does not change what is in people unless they change what is in their hearts.’

> لِمَّا انتَشَرَ الفسَّادُ وضَاعَتُ الْحُقُوْقَ بِيْنَاهُمْ نَحْنُ أُولُو الْمُرَادِ البَيْنِ فِي الْعَقْلِ وَنُسِينَا أَنَّ الْمَسَّؤُولَ في الْأَصِلِ جَاءَ مِنْ الدِّينِ’

What is the reason behind the spread of corruption and the loss of rights? We are the first to be blamed for losing our language and forgetting that officials will be questioned (in the Day of Judgment): ‘Stop them, for they must be questioned.’

99
Moreover, advocates quote religious verses to explain how religion contributes in forming the lifestyle of Saudi women, who are raised to follow the teachings of the most conservative version of Islam. In addition, participants incorporate religious excerpts to explain how religion is misused to prevent women from gaining their rights. The following excerpts have religious verses that are quoted by advocates to illustrate the situation in Saudi Arabia:

They (religious people) manipulate using the religious rule of ‘warding off corruption’ (which means that warding off corruption is to be chosen over bringing in benefits, if we are to choose). This religious rule is like a candy in their hands, or like a card in their hands. They often raise in front of women. They use this religious rule whenever they want to prevent women from doing something. They extremely misuse this rule.

The government should facilitate women’s transportation in a practical and comfortable way or allow us to manage the situation in our way. The government is like ‘the woman who confined a cat, neither giving the cat food, nor allowing it to eat from the earth.’
How can you think of women’s car driving when the country is waging war. The historical paradox shows that this same argument has been used for 26 years. This argument is based on ignoring the needs of weak social groups when the country is busy with important foreign affairs (wars).

It is also worth mentioning that Saudi female advocates report statistical information for the purpose of persuading the Saudi society with numbers. In addition, supporting their arguments with statistics reflects their intellectuality and knowledge about what they are asking for. The following examples show the way Saudi female advocates employ statistical information as persuading devices:

A close friend of recruitment offices’ owners told me that one family owns 70% of recruitment offices around the kingdom, gaining more than 800 million a year!

The development report of the United Nations for 2010 indicates that the difference in development between men and women in Saudi Arabia ranks Saudi Arabia 128 out of 138 countries, which places Saudi Arabia at the bottom of the global country list. Nowadays, I believe that asking for car driving is a necessity with the increase of the Saudi population, especially the youth group aged from 15 to 30. The statistics shows that his group composes 35% of the population.

Reported speech is utilized by advocates to present their accomplishments and construct the identity of active influencers who participate in TV programs, newspapers, and magazines. Their contributions are used by other journalists as catchy headlines. The following participant includes an incident that highlights her attempts to defy the ban long before she collaborated with other Saudi female advocates:
I was interviewed in a Saudi magazine in 2010, and the title was in bold: I will not return to Saudi Arabia unless they allow women to drive cars.

Sometimes, participants stop the flow of the interview to mention their own individual attempts to defy the ban. For examples, while answering a question about the difference between Saudi Arabia and other Arab and Gulf countries, an advocate abruptly mentioned that she was interviewed by a Dutch channel:

I do not see a difference. We developed this difference out of our imagination. I had an interview with a Dutch channel and they asked me the same question.

Constitutive intertextuality includes presuppositions, discussed in 5.2., and narratives, in which advocates narrate detailed stories of their experiences with poor transportation in Saudi Arabia. Narrative is salient in the advocates’ ethnographic interviews more than other data sources. At some point in each interview, participants take the role of a storyteller and narrate the finest details of their hard experience with chauffeurs and taxi drivers. Narrative is employed to trigger the audience’s sympathy, and persuade through experience. The following example illustrate how narrative is employed to trigger sympathy:

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That day, I was nine-months pregnant with my second son. I had food poisoning in the morning. I had dinner, and then I became food-poisoned. I had diarrhea, and dizziness. I was vomiting, may Allah honor you. There was no chauffeur, or husband. All my family was either in the southern region or in Riyadh. I had no one in Jeddah. The weather was 45 °C. I was food-poisoned. I was standing in the street for about half an hour. Back in the day, there were no Uber, Kareem or Easy Taxi. There was nothing like this. You can imagine the situation. At the end, a taxi stopped, and took me to the emergency room. Imagine! He delivered me in fifteen minutes and asked me to pay 80 Riyals. I asked him, Is there a meter? He said, No. You must pay 80 Riyals. I paid him laughing. The same happened when I was on my way home. I spend one day in the hospital. It was a day full of medicine and antibiotics. When I was discharged from the hospital, I experienced the same. I was in the streets, pregnant and exhausted. I was obliged to wait until a taxi passed by. It took me home, and again, without a meter. All our taxis do not use the meter, and no one cares. This time, I was asked to pay 40 Riyals. Look, half the price. They are playing with the prices. Do you understand? It was a tragedy. I woke up the next morning with anger over anger, and frustration over frustration because of this matter.

Presupposition

Presuppositions are a form of constitutive intertextuality. They are utilized by Saudi female advocates to posit their ideas and thoughts as taken for granted facts, and to persuade through concealing. Examining the four data sources indicates that Saudi female advocates share the following presuppositions:

- The intentional passive role of the government.
- The dominant role of religious leaders.
- The contradictory and patriarchal nature of the Saudi society.
- Facilitating women’s mobility leads to women’s emancipation and gender parallelism.
- The peaceful and advocacy role of Saudi female advocates.
- The fundamental role of their male guardians.
- Deep-rooted exclusion of women.
- Gender segregation.

The Saudi government is represented as a passive agent when it comes to the right of women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. This presupposition is repeatedly mentioned when Saudi female advocates are asked about the solution of women’s poor
transportation. The following sentences presuppose that the Saudi government is the only agency that could decisively solve the problem:

The state broke many of the restrictions that were established by the religious institution, when it wanted that.

A royal decree is imposed on the society, and that is how change occurs in this matter. Therefore, I repeat it. We need a royal decree, a royal decree and a royal decree.

Saudi female advocates presuppose the vital role of the strict religious institution and its members in delaying women’s progress. They claim that the cooperation between the government and the religious institution is a fundamental factor in postponing and ignoring women’s demands. In addition, Saudi female advocates focus on the role of religious men in silencing women and suppressing their voices. The following excerpts show the way participants presuppose that the religious institution is an obstacle in the road of women:

The ladies of 1990 encountered a lot of problems because people at that time were listening to mosques only.

Some women believe that driving a car is religiously forbidden because they handed their minds to extremely religious men. Of course, those religious men do not have any religious evidence that prohibits women from driving cars.

The Saudi society has been the center of criticism by Saudi female advocates, who presuppose the contradictory nature of the society. In many occasions, Saudi female advocates launch harsh criticism on the way the Saudi society submits to royal decrees, even if such degrees are against their beliefs and traditions. The reaction of the Saudi society towards women’s education, women’s employment in the malls, and
participation in the municipal elections and the consultative council are repeatedly mentioned. At first, the society rejects royal decrees, and after applying the decree, the society submits to the decree and implements it. The following sentences show how Saudi female advocates criticize the society:

The society shows resistance and refusal (towards change). It superficially shows lack of interest. However, as soon as there is political and media interest towards change, the attitude of the society changes.

The society has proven that it is through practice, not theoretical talking, that the society accepts the thought (of change), gets reassured and used to the new change.

Participants presuppose that the fear of women’s liberation is the reason behind the social rejection of women’s progress in education, employment, and freedom of mobility. They also presuppose that the society shields its fear by attacking those who ask for change. In other words, the fear of women’s power is the reason behind impeding women’s progress. Allowing women to drive cars leads to independence, which is unacceptable in the Middle Eastern culture. In addition, participants presuppose that lifting the ban and fulfilling the demands of driving campaigns would be a sign of weakness and a motivation to create other campaigns that might threaten the security of the kingdom. The following excerpts show advocates’ presuppositions for the lag in women’s progress:

The other reason (for rejecting women’s car driving) is the fear of women’s independency which triggers masculinity in men within oppressive societies, where people cannot live without having a person to oppress, confine, and take away her/his right of freedom and choice.
The issue (of driving cars) is related to women’s transportation, which means freedom of mobility and more visibility in the public sphere. Consequently, she will be responsible and dependent on herself in going out and about.

Moving from one place to another changes the nature of the society. Everything will change. Women will have more freedom and then demand more.

Saudi female advocates presuppose that the society and the government accuse them of disloyalty, rebellion, and liberation. However, they assure that they are misunderstood, and only seek to live in a civilized and productive country where women can be independent, empowered and extroverted. Saudi female advocates frequently presuppose the goals behind their initiatives in sentences like:

They (Saudis) think that we resist them and break the law. They look at activism as an action that is against religion and government.

When I talk, I do not talk about my personal problem (with driving). I am demanding for that (the right to drive cars) to benefit my daughters and other women in the society.

Personally, I do not try to break the law. All what I am doing is supporting women and supporting their rights as a journalist, activist and a Saudi citizen. Before anything, Saudi Arabia is the country where I live and was born. I see how people suffer, and I help them.

Saudi female advocates presuppose the vital role of their male guardians in supporting them to demand for their rights. Each one of them has pointed to the understanding and support of a father, a brother, a husband or a son. Although Saudi female advocates appear as independent and liberal, the support of their male relatives motivates them to appear in public and demand their rights. The discourse of Saudi female advocates is packed with reported conversations between the advocates and...
their male relatives discussing and asking for permission to drive cars and initiate driving campaigns. The following excerpts are examples that presuppose the fundamental role of the advocates' male guardians:

We travelled to America in the summer, and I notified my husband that I want to apply for a driving license. He cooperated with me, indeed.

My father, may Allah bless his soul, was a religious man. However, he built my self-confidence throughout his life, and he never questioned my abilities.

I brought a copy of the newspaper, and told them that my brother agreed, and I want to apply for a driving license.

Saudi female advocates acknowledge the deep-rooted exclusion of women in the Saudi society. Their discourse presupposes that women are the reason behind their own exclusion because they accept discrimination and subordination. Saudi female advocates sympathize with submissive women, and declare that those women are the enemies of themselves. In addition, the advocates highlight the role of men, extremely religious laws, and the government in restricting women from enjoying the whole benefits of a normal life. The following excerpts presuppose the deep-rooted exclusion of women in the Saudi society:

They look at women as sexual creatures with no minds and religion. If women are left alone, they will be immoral and will spread immorality to other women, as mentioned in secondary schools' textbooks under women's rights. What a shame!

When women are allowed to drive cars, the ideology of people about women will change. Our societies are extremely gendered, fixed, and unchanging, and have stereotypes for men and women. Men should go out to bring money, and women should stay at home to cook.

المرأة تخاف من الرفض المجتمعي، فهي لازم تبني انها بالشكل اللي تقبله المجتمع.
Women are afraid of social rejection. Therefore, they should act in a way that is socially acceptable.

Strict gender segregation is a trait that prevails in Saudi Arabia, but not in other Arab and Muslim countries. It stems from the interpretations of some Islamic theologians, who believe that sexes should be completely separated in order to prevent interactions between sexes to maintain modesty. To cope with these interpretations, the Saudi government has provided schools, universities and institutions that are exclusively for women. Consequently, the society has become accustomed to gender segregation and incorporates it as a lifestyle. For example, houses are designed to have two sections for males and females, and some malls and theme parks are exclusively for women.

Saudi female advocates presuppose that gender segregation is a form of gender apartheid and a manmade law. They posit that people resist introducing new changes to the society, including allowing women to drive cars, because they are afraid of gender mixing which might lead to increasing vice and eliminating virtue. Advocates indicate that gender segregation is not as strict as before, yet its impact is still on the Saudi mindset. The following is an example of participants’ presuppositions of the impact of gender segregation on the Saudi society:

Gender mixing is a social concept that existed since ancient times. It is fundamental in all societies, and even in religious rituals such as praying and pilgrimage, without a
religious verse that prohibits it. It occurs daily when a woman is in the car with her driver. It is impossible to expect women to stay at home for a lifetime to prevent mixing with men in the public sphere. Women in rural places and villages drive their cars without immortality. A police man is dealing with a woman in the same manner a male judge looks after women’s cases, a male doctor who treats women, and a firefighter who rescues them, an employer who completes women’s transactions. Therefore, keeping women hostages to the private sphere or creating an exclusive female sphere that is equivalent to the male public sphere is imaginary and inapplicable. The policy of strict gender segregation started when cities were made in the modern Saudi Arabia, and is rooted through public governmental policies.

### Ideological Squaring

The Us/Them dichotomy is salient in the discourse of Saudi female advocates who emphasize positive information about themselves and focus on negative information about others. Table 5-1, at the end of Chapter 5, shows how Saudi female advocates utilize the four moves of the ideological square to promote for themselves. They utilize the ideological squaring successfully to construct positive self-representations. They emphatically emphasize their individual attempts to support women’s rights and raise social awareness about women. This side of the square is the most used among the other sides.

Saudi female advocates classify men, government officials, religious people and oppressed women as the opposing group, OTHER/THEM. They highlight negative actions of THEM in order to justify their illegal actions of driving cars in Saudi Arabia, and their rebellious demonstrations. The discourse of Saudi female advocates frequently stresses the poor transportation infrastructure, the strict governmental rules towards demonstrators, the passivity and ignorance of the majority of Saudi women, the misinterpretations of religious texts by religious people, the patriarchal nature of Saudi
men and government, and the lack of harassment laws that protect women and children from abuse.

Emphasizing the positive about US and the negative about THEM is easily detected in the data. However, deemphasizing the positive THEM and the negative US is not transparent. Participants do not focus on the achievements that have been accomplished by the Saudi government in education, health and the labor market. All Saudi citizens have access to public education from kindergarten through college, and are granted free health care. Women in Saudi Arabia have entered the workforce by working in hospitals, schools, universities, courts, retail stores and diplomatic institutions.

In addition, the advocates suppress information that is related to their unacceptable actions which pit the society and the government against them, such as mocking religious laws, provoking the society by sarcastic comments about the Saudi traditions and customs, threatening the national security by insisting on driving cars without formal regulations, and engaging in heated arguments with their opponents on social media websites, television and radio programs.

**Gender Relationality**

The linguistic behavior of Saudi female advocates reflects their identities as women, their relations to other women and men, and how masculinity affects their lives. Their identities deviate from the identity of the ideal Islamic woman whose mobility and public presence are limited. Saudi female advocates construct a multi-faceted identity that includes motherhood, wifehood, mobility, emancipation, education and urbanity. They prioritize their roles as wives and mothers and at the same time strive to put their
mark in the public sphere. Below are examples of their self-representation as wives, mothers, and active workers:

I am a retired faculty member of King Saud University. I have an MA in computer science. I am 52 years old, married, with four sons and one daughter. I am a wife and a mother of four, two daughters and two sons, the youngest is seventeen. Now I am retired, however, I started work as a teacher then a school principal, and finally an education administrator. I got my MA and PhD while working. I worked in public education, and then in universities. My latest job was the dean of Girls’ College in Yamamah Private University. I work hugely in philanthropy, including the program of the National Family Security. Of course, I am the chairman of the program.

The data shows that Saudi female advocates have strong relations with each other and with Saudi women who share the same interest of fighting for egalitarian principles. In addition, Saudi female advocates cooperate to support other Saudi women who are weak, hopeless, and poor. Below are examples of how Saudi female advocates support each other and advocate to help women in need:

In 2011, when Manal Al Sharif appeared, I did not know her personally. But when she called me before she was imprisoned, and asked for press coverage, I supported her. When she got imprisoned, I stayed with her for support because I started with her from the beginning.

I participated in the first driving campaign because I believe that driving a car is one of women’s rights. However, driving a car is not significant for me because I can afford to have a chauffeur. I think it is the woman who possesses nothing, the poor woman who cannot employ a driver. I do not demonstrate to fulfill my needs but to give this right to my own daughters and other women.
In addition to their self-representations and their relations to other women, Saudi female advocates have two types of relations with men. First, they develop strong and harmonious relations with their male relatives, including husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons. This strong bond is represented in their reported speech of interactions that occurred between advocates and their male relatives. These interactions show the mutual respect and the huge support of their male relatives, which encourages advocates to develop a deviant identity that prevails in both the private and the public spheres. The excerpts show the strong bond between participants and their male relatives:

My father, may Allah bless his soul, used to teach me how to drive a car when we travelled abroad. He had no problem to see us drive.

My father was in Makkah and we used to go out with him. The last two years, we had a driver, however, my father used to accompany us because he was retired and we were not allowed to get out with the driver alone. Everything was running smooth. If my father was not able to take us, my brothers would take us instead.

When I decided to go out and drive a car, I asked my husband to take care of my daughters because I did not know what would happen to me.

Second, advocates’ relations to unrelated men are tense and asymmetrical, especially with religious men and government officials who stand against participants’ demonstrations and accuse them of treachery and liberation. The clash between Saudi female advocates and non-relative men is a result of advocates’ violation of the Saudi norm of interaction, in which women and men seldom interact out of the domestic sphere. This strict gender segregation has raised a generation that lacks basic interactional skills with the opposite sex. The majority of men expect women to be
obedient and silent. Protesting and asking for rights shock men, and therefore result in a tense relationship. The following are examples of how participants represent Saudi men. Compared to their soft and kind linguistic choices when representing men who are family, their linguistic choices are harsh and strong when representing men with whom they are unrelated.

Development enemies in my country are four: First, religious men who hold the sword of ‘preventing means that lead to immorality’. Therefore, they prohibit legal things and refuse discussing their advisory opinions that do not cope with our time and place. They tightly hold their opinions and raise them to the status of the Holy Quran, and accuse whoever questions their opinions with westernization and immorality. Second, journalists and writers who seek fame through lying, rumoring, and frightening people. Third, the ‘fear of change’ group who are afraid of innovations and find stability more safe. Fourth, some rumor believers and frustrated and jealous people who do not want to move, neither do they want others to succeed. Those are the result of a fear culture that is based on ‘people discipline people.’

All those men are liars. If you discuss poverty, or widows’, and divorced women’s rights, no one would support those women or talk about them. No one would bother to look at these issues unless there is a scandal or a beaten woman.

Analyzing gender relationality involves examining the effect of masculinity on the lives of women. In Saudi Arabia, tribal traditions and customs grant Saudi men privileges that facilitate controlling women. These privileges are women’s guardianship, child custody, and freedom of mobility and travel. The superiority of men over women has been given an Islamic gloss which facilitates ingraining this principle in the Saudi
mindset. Al-Rasheed’s (2013) book, The Most Masculine State, symbolizes the prevalence of masculinity in Saudi Arabia and the effect of masculinity on Saudi women. However, Saudi female advocates frequently declare their awareness and rejection of gender inequality and men’s guardianship. They also carry the responsibility of enlightening other women to fight for egalitarian principles.

The patriarchy of both the Saudi government and the Saudi society is the cause of the lag on women’s progress. Banning women from driving cars in Saudi Arabia illustrates the effect of masculinity and patriarchy on women’s lives. The government claims that allowing women to drive cars is a social decision, while men, with full satisfaction, hang the blame on the government for delaying the decision that legitimates women’s driving. In both cases, women are deprived of the right to decide and choose. The following examples indicate how advocates resist gender inequality and men’s control:

Unfortunately, we extremely escalate gender discrimination. A teenager can drive his car easily and recklessly, endangering people’s lives, and no one criticizes or rejects his actions. On the other hand, an adult mature woman is deprived from her right to drive a car because of the imaginary superstitions of preaching.

I should reassure that car driving is a right that should be granted to both women and men. Postulating conditions on women’s car driving that were not applied to men is discrimination and oppression.

**Connotation**

Data analysis indicates that Saudi female advocates jockey for powerful positions utilizing assertive structures, strong arguments, and directive speech acts. However, there are certain points in which advocates utilize powerless styles such as hesitation,
hedging, and interrogative intonation. Therefore, characterizing them as powerful or powerless is not applicable as they constantly shift between powerfulness and powerlessness.

Saudi female advocates enact power when they narrate their achievements in activism and education, and when they persuade the audience of their demands. In these two situations, they utilize powerful styles that show their assertiveness, knowledge and persistence. On the other hand, advocates express powerlessness and frustration in three situations: first, when they are asked about their means of transportation in Saudi Arabia. Second, when they are asked about the reason why the issue of women’s driving is still open. Finally, when they are asked about the reason why some Saudi women stand against the demands of the advocates.

The examples below are excerpts from one interview to illustrate how advocates shift between powerful and powerless styles within one text. When the advocate was asked about her transportation means, she answered with a frustrated tone. She frequently used intensifiers such as جداً (really, of course, and indeed). On the other hand, the advocate answered with an assertive tone when she was reporting her participation in the 1990 protest. She used imperative structures, such as

لازم تكونين مادفة (you should be a defender), which denote authoritative and powerful style:

عندنا كأسرة سائقين. وللاسف أقولها لأن احنا مضطرين جداً يكون المرأه لا تستطيع القيادة. ونفس الوقت لا يوجد مواصلات عامة بشكل سير بحيث ان الواحد يعتمد عليها. عملي خارج الرياض بكلية المجمعه وسكتا بالرياض. وبناتي زي ماعرفين شباب تخرجوا ويعملون فسائق واحد لا يمكن ان يكفي. وطبعا يترتب عليه تكاليف كثيره غير الراتب.

[Powerless tone] As a family we have two drivers and I am sorry to say that but we are very obliged because women cannot drive and at the same time public transportation is poor and no one can depend on it. We live in Riyadh and my work is outside Riyadh, at Almajmah University. My daughters graduated and now work. Therefore, it is impossible to have only one driver. Of course, this costs a lot of money besides the drivers’ monthly salary.

ماهو برأيك سبب عدم البت في هذه القضية الى الان؟ (What do you think is the reason for not settling this case until now?)
(What is the reason behind the delay in resolving this problem?)

[powerless tone] This question is really confusing. Especially that media raises this issue from time to time, but we have not had a solution yet...ummm ... I do not know!

I do not know if you know that I am one of the ladies who drove cars in 1990… I am one of them. Generally, I am interested in social issues and women’s rights. As a family counselor, most of my customers are women and most of them suffer from many problems. Underline the word ‘suffer’ ten times. Whoever is in touch with those suffering women should support them and advocate for their rights in a modern and peaceful way. This is one of my duties.

**Historical Dimensions**

The discourse on the Saudi ban on women’s car-driving was started by a group of Saudi women who initiated the 1990 car driving protest. Al Mane and Al Shaikh (2013) documented that event and the political, social and financial situations in Saudi Arabia around that time. Their documentary work has copies from the articles, poems, official statements, and pamphlets that were written in response to the car driving protest. The profanity in the documents indicates the extremely offensive reaction of the society towards the old generation of Saudi female advocates and their families.

The following is a report that was written in 1990, showing the strongly negative language that was used to describe the participants of 1990 driving protest. The report describes the advocates with words that denote immorality and vice, such as سائقاتن [cheap and داعيات إلى الرذيلة] messengers of vice. In addition, the report claims that the advocates underestimated religious leaders, and called for abolishing the religious and cultural values of the Saudi society. The men who supported the 1990 driving protest
are represented as secularist and communist men. Such words denote a strongly negative impression and present men as irreligious and liberal. When interviewed for this study, the advocates who participated in the 1990 driving protest denied the claims in the following report, and assured that this report was unfair in representing them:

This is a statement of the names of the cheap women who call for vice and corruption, who protested in the streets of Riyadh, and mocked religious men chanting ‘We do not want to be led by blind people’ referring to Shaikh Abdulaziz Bin Baz, and ‘We do not want conservative religious men with sweepers’ (beards), referring to men who follow Sunnah. They were calling for:

1- Discarding and not recognizing the Islamic veil.
2- Legalizing gender-mixing in schools, universities and jobs.
3- Allowing women to drive cars without veiling and representing freedom.

This is the list of cheap women and some of their communist and secularist supporters: …

Interviewing three of the participants in the 1990 driving protest indicates that women at that time drove cars to show the world that driving cars is one of many lost rights of Saudi women. They assure that their protest was not motivated by western agencies, as many have claimed. It was organized by Saudi women, for the purpose of assisting Saudi women. Although the protest of 1990 was meant to be peaceful, the three participants report the offensive attack they encountered after that protest. They were fired from their jobs, slandered in public speeches, and exiled from familial and social gatherings. However, this incident does not stop them, but strengthens them and encourages them to ask for more rights. The following is an excerpt from the
ethnographic interviews to show the determination and insistence of the old generation advocates:

After 1990, the social attack, the press attack, and the suspension from work took place. Of course, I suffered psychologically and socially. However, this incident did not stop me from my right to protest and it did not change my mind. Contrarily, it has a positive impact on my personal demands. I sent my daughter to study abroad, although my family and my in-laws are extremely conservative.

Saudi female advocates frequently mention the bravery of women who participated in the 1990 driving protest, and encountered the society when it was at the peak of conservatism. They refer to it in their ethnographic interviews, Twitter posts, articles, and YouTube videos. The repetition of this topic is for two reasons: first, Saudi female advocates are surprised at the delay in solving the problem. Second, to inform the society that this demand is old and needs to be fulfilled.

After the 1990 driving protest, the discourse on women’s car driving stagnated until 2011. Then, the Arab spring ignited Saudi women to initiate modern driving campaigns through utilizing modern communication technologies. The news about modern car driving campaigns and the arrangements spread quickly. In addition, the voices of the Saudi female advocates become louder than ever utilizing social media applications.

The Saudi society is shocked by the loud voice of women, and consequently it is divided into supporters and opponents. The name of Manal Al Sharif, the first woman to drive a car in Saudi Arabia in 2011, is mentioned in multiple discourses that discuss the issue of women’s car driving. Her name is sometimes connected to bravery and
strength, and other times to vice and liberation. The following is an excerpt from one of
the advocate’s articles, showing how Manal Al Sharif is mistreated:

أخيرا: أتذكر عندما كانت قضية الإرهابية هيلة القصير في أوجها، وكيف تشفع لها الكثير من الدعاء والمشايخ ليُعفى عنها وهي من أبرز عناصر الإرهاب تمويلاً وتخطيطاً وتنفيذها، وأخطرها على أمن البلاد والعبد، وأنظر لقضية منال الشريف وصمتمهم عن سجنها بل وتحبيده من بعضهم، أتساءل ألهذه الدرجة تفعل أدلجة التشدد في الإنسان وعقله ونفسه بل وفي ضميره؟!

Finally, I remember the case of the terrorist, Hailah Al Qusair, and how many religious
men petition for her to be excused, although she topped the list of terrorists with
funding, planning and execution. She was a real danger for land and people’s security.
At the same time, I look at the case of Manal Al Sharif, and their silence upon her
imprisonment, and sometimes their appreciation of her imprisonment. I wonder how
the extremist ideology is able to control the human, his mind and his conscious?!

The diachronic analysis indicates that modern car driving campaigns ignite
controversial discourses, while the 1990 car driving protest sparked only hatred and
biased discourses. The difference between these two eras is attributed to the openness
of the modern world, which contributes in changing the mindset of the Saudi society.
People are introduced to different cultures and doctrines, and consequently become
capable of shaping their opinions and expressing their own views. Although a high
degree of conservatism still exists when discussing the issue of women’s car driving,
the modern discourse shows a huge progress in accepting opposing views and
negotiating controversial issues.

The discourse on women’s car driving experienced a dramatic change between
1990 and 2011. Starting from 2011 to 2016, the discourse has been stable. No
significant change has been indicated. However, the volume of discourse increased
around June 17, 2011; October, 26, 2013 and November 30, 2014, coinciding with the
various driving campaigns that were held in 2011 and on.
Discourse topics on the issue of women’s car driving revolve around the advocates themselves and their families. Their names are repeatedly mentioned across discourses. This is attributed to a well-known ideology that is spread in the Arab world, which links family honor and reputation to women. Therefore, men find themselves responsible for controlling the mobility and visibility of women in order to protect the reputation of their families. This ideology leads women to extensively use pseudonyms in the public sphere in order to speak their minds without being judged by their names or their family names. However, Saudi female advocates deviate from the norm and reveal their identities and real names, refuting the ideology that links women to fame and shame.

On the other hand, women in Saudi Arabia and most of the Muslim countries symbolize religion; the more women are veiled the more they adhere to religion, and the more religious the country is. Therefore, Saudi female advocates are considered uncommitted to religion and unrepresentative of the country because they defy religious norms as some of them uncover their faces and hair. Regardless of what religion dictates, Saudi female advocates are involved in social battles where the rigid Saudi mindset is combined with tribal traditions, religious values and patriarchic social orders.
Table 5-1. Sample of the implementation of the ideological square

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasize the Positive Us</th>
<th>Emphasize the Negative Them</th>
<th>Deemphasize the Positive Them</th>
<th>Deemphasize the Negative Us</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manal Al Sharif requested a press coverage from me, and I supported her.</td>
<td>Those whose houses are packed with chauffeurs are the ones who trivialize this issue because they do not feel the problem.</td>
<td>Having people who have loud voices does not mean that they are the majority.</td>
<td>I left Saudi Arabia because of the words, “the permission of your guardian.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>منال الشريف طلبت دعمي الإعلامي وقد دعمتها.</td>
<td>لا ينثق هذه الأمر إلا اللي بيوتهم مكتشَّت بالسواقين وما حاسين بالمشكلة.</td>
<td>كون ان فيه ناس أصواتهم عالية جداً لا يعني أنهم الأغلبية.</td>
<td>أنا ماتطلعت من السعودية إلا بسبب كلمة موافقة ولي الأمر.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>انا ماطلعت من السعودية بسبب كلمة موافقة ولي الأمر.</td>
<td>الرجال في المجتمع معارضين لأي مشروع تنمية للمرأة لأن عندهم عقد نفسية وهم يرغبون المرأة تطور عليهم.</td>
<td>بعد سجن منال صاروا البنات مهتمين أكثر من أذا مجتمعية.</td>
<td>أنا عن نفسي ما بحاول اكسر نظام أو شي، لكن اللي بسوية أدعم المرأة وأدعم حقها.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am one of the ladies who drove cars in 1990.</td>
<td>Men in the society are against any women’s development projects because they are psychopaths who do not want women to surpass them.</td>
<td>Abaya (Women’s outwear) in Saudi Arabia is more lawfully imposed than socially.</td>
<td>After the imprisonment of Manal (Al Sharif), women become more interested (in the issue of driving) and we started to get together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أنا من السيدات الي قاموا بقيادة السيارة بعام 1990.</td>
<td>الدولة يفترض أنها تتخلل بروابيب هؤلاء السانقين وتكلفة استقدامهم وأقامتهم تحكم ان المنع منها.</td>
<td>كان فيه ناس معارضون للموضوع (قرار مشاركة المرأة بمجلس الشورى) بس بالأخير متش كلار وصار شيء عادي ونقبله المجتمع.</td>
<td>أنا عن نفسي ما بحاول اكسر نظام أو شي، لكن اللي بسوية أدعم المرأة وأدعم حقها.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am an activist interested in feminist social issues.</td>
<td>The government should take care of the chauffeurs’ salaries and the costs of their recruitment and living, since the ban is from the government.</td>
<td>Some people were against women’s participation in the Consultative Council. However, the decision was made and has become normal, and the society accepted it.</td>
<td>Personally, I do not try to break the law. All I am doing is supporting women and their rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>عندي اهتمام وناشطة بالقضايا الاجتماعية والحقوق التي تقترض انها تتخلل بالافراد، سواء على القانون أو على الحقوق.</td>
<td>كان فيه ناس معارضون للموضوع (قرار مشاركة المرأة بمجلس الشورى) بس بالأخير متش كلار وصار شيء عادي ونقبله المجتمع.</td>
<td>كان فيه ناس معارضون للموضوع (قرار مشاركة المرأة بمجلس الشورى) بس بالأخير متش كلار وصار شيء عادي ونقبله المجتمع.</td>
<td>كان فيه ناس معارضون للموضوع (قرار مشاركة المرأة بمجلس الشورى) بس بالأخير متش كلار وصار شيء عادي ونقبله المجتمع.</td>
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In this final level of analysis, I analyze the discourse of Saudi female advocates in relation to the politico-religious context, the tribal context, the economic context, the familial context and the ideological context. These various contexts provide a broader analysis of the discourse of Saudi female advocates and facilitate understanding the factors that underpin the issue of women’s car driving. Each of the contexts contribute largely in shaping the discourse of Saudi female advocates in particular, and the lifestyle of Saudi women in general.

**Politico-religious Context**

The politico-religious context in Saudi Arabia dates back to the early eighteenth century when Prince Mohammad bin Saud allied with Shaikh Mohammad bin Abdulwahhab to initiate a politico-religious reform movement, Wahhabism. The main purpose of this movement was to restore the original practices of Islam, as they were practiced at the time of Prophet Mohammad and his companions (Ungureanu, 2011). Therefore, the politico-religious collaboration invited people to implement the authentic Islam that is based on two sources: The Holy Quran and Sunnah, which is the record of the proverbs, sayings, and deeds of Prophet Mohammad (ibid). Wahhabism has succeeded in uniting the diverse tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, and continues to be incorporated into the Saudi political system until the modern times.

Although Wahhabism follows the guidelines of Islam, it has been distorted by extreme conservative religious people who adopt the most stringent rules of Islam, ignoring that Islam is a religion of ease and flexibility. The Quran and Sunnah have many statements that ‘offer sufficient logical substantiation for zero hardship in religion’
(Ushama, 2015, p. 65). However, the extremely religious ideology has been implemented in the Saudi society and has impacted Saudi society, especially women who suffer from extreme exclusion and inequality (Al-Rasheed, 2013). Nowadays, critical trends emerge and acknowledge the need for reforming Wahhabism and creating a modern and inclusive Saudi nation (Lacroix, 2005).

New innovations have faced consecutive rejections as they have been introduced to the society. Religious leaders examine each innovation and issue statements of whether such innovations comply with the religious society. In most cases, the introduction of new technologies such as television, internet, and cellphones was rejected by religious leaders to avoid changing the religious values of the society. Many people are affected by the decisions of the religious leaders and obey their orders. However, this strong reaction towards innovations dissolves over time and people gradually start utilizing new technologies. Recently, many Saudi citizens participated in a Twitter hashtag, ك#كان حرام وصار حلال, that previews a long list of innovations that were religiously illegal and eventually become legal. The hashtag is rich with pictures of the edicts, caricatures and comments that denounce the misuse of Islam. Below are some examples from the hashtag:

تعليم المرأة، التلفزيون، التصوير، السفر، الدش، الجوال، النت، التأمين، إجازة السبت
Women’s education, television, photography, travelling abroad, satellite, cellphones, internet, insurances, and Saturday as weekend.

التأمين، بطاقة الأحوال، القرض، بطاقة الفيزا، التصفيق، التلفزيون، المجلات، النقاب، الدش
Insurance, identification cards, loans, visa cards, applauding, televisions, magazines, niqab (that shows women’s eyes, instead of a full-face veil), and satellite.

كل جديد عندنا يحرم، ثم يتم تحليله على مرحلتين: المرحلة الأولى بحلل للرجال، والمرحلة الثانية: هل خلال للمرأة المشاركة فيه؟ وهي المرحلة الأطول
Every innovation is illegal, then it becomes legal in two steps: first, it becomes legal for men. Second, is it legal for women? This step takes the longest time.

تعليم البنات قبل 50 سنة كان حرام وعيب والحين أغلب الآباء يفتخرون ببناتهم ونجاحاتهم.
Women’s education was religiously illegal 50 years ago. Nowadays, fathers are proud of their daughters and their accomplishments.

Although the politico-religious ideology is still infused into in the Saudi society, Saudi female advocates acknowledge that this ideology is unfair and strive to educate people, especially women, about the flexibility and tolerance of Islam (e.g. Ungureanu, 2011). However, the majority of Saudi society rejects the actions of Saudi female advocates because those advocates dare question well-established religious principles. The excerpt below indicates the attitude of Saudi female advocates towards radical Islamists and the impact of radicalism on people’s religion and morals:

The continuation of embracing radical attitudes will result in corrupting people’s religion. We urgently need to employ the tolerance of Islam in coping with contemporary changes and modern evolutions. The radical attitude of some religious leaders towards the issue of women’s car driving degrades our religion and our country without significantly contributing in preserving people’s morals and religion.

The example above has a religious tone that is expressed through the use of words such as, *دينهم* their religion, *الإسلام* Islam, and *الشياخ* religious leaders. At the same time, the advocate uses words that justify her rejection of radicalism, such as *يفتن* corrupting, and *اساء* degrades. She uses the epistemic structure, *من شأنه* will result in, to highlight the consequences of adopting radicalism. She also utilizes a strong obligative structure, *ونحن بحاجة ماسة* we urgently need, to indicate the necessity of employing the tolerance of Islam in coping with temporary changes. The use of the inclusive pronoun, *نحن* we, assimilates the advocate to Saudi society and at the same time enhances solidarity. The pronoun, *نحن* we, presupposes the existence of another group,
religious leaders, that needs to be encountered to abolish degrading Islam and
Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, the power of the government, represented by the royal
decrees of the Saudi kings and official statements, is above the religious power and the
people’s power. This royal power has a positive impact on the Saudi society that has
developed a norm of submitting to royal orders and adapting to change if introduced by
the government. It would be difficult to form a modern and civilized country without the
royal power.

It is also important to mention that Saudi governmental decisions do not
contradict Islamic values. However, the Saudi government is cautious when introducing
change to avoid protests and violence. Therefore, Saudi female advocates were acting
in violation of governmental policies when they drove cars in Saudi Arabia and initiated
driving campaigns. Their actions infuriated the government, the religious institutions,
and the society.

Other than that, Saudi female advocates have been exerting effort in serving the
Saudi society. Some advocates have established charity institutions and participated in
volunteer works. Others participated in TV programs and media networks to raise the
awareness towards critical social problems, such as women’s abuse, harassment, and
poverty. With all that has been said and done, the Saudi government is the only agency
that can solve the problem of the poor transportation system and the ban on women’s
car driving. Below is a semi poem written by a popular Saudi female advocate,
explaining the hegemonic power of politico-religious ideologies on Saudi women:
They taught us when we were young,
That only their religion is true.
The religion that honors women
We discover as adults,
That there is a religion out of the Saudi borders
We discover that women here live a life,
That even ancient women would not accept

It is important to indicate the benefit of using structural oppositions, in the above example, in pinpointing the contradictions that Saudi women have encountered when they were young girls, and later when they became mature women. In addition, structural oppositions activate the readers to compare many concepts: the Islam that is practiced in Saudi Arabia and the Islam that is practiced abroad; the situation of Saudi women and the situation of ancient women; and the naïve and simple mentality of Saudi women when they were young and their awareness and knowledge when they become adult.

**Tribal Context**

The Saudi society is not different from other Arab societies that appreciate tribal traditions and relations. The vast majority of Saudi citizens affiliate to tribes that dictate strict policies and protocols. Among the traditions that are shared by Arab tribes is linking the honor of tribes and families to women. Therefore, women are supposed to behave modestly and respect patriarchal social orders. This tribal ideology has worked hand in hand with the politico-religious ideology to control the lives of women and delay their progress. Tribe leaders and representatives have always protested against governmental projects that introduce women to the public sphere, such as joining schools and participating in political life. However, although tribal affiliation is still
prevalent in Saudi Arabia, the royal power has succeeded in managing and controlling it.

Tribal traditions favor men over women because men are supposed to take care of their parents when they advance in age, while women will be part of their husband’s family when they get married. In addition, boys carry their fathers’ names and continue the descent of their families and tribes. Therefore, fathers are proud of their sons and the more sons they have the better. Another tenet of tribal traditions is raising people to be selfless and care more about the honor and reputation of their tribes than they care about themselves. Therefore, the actions of people are under surveillance to avoid tarnishing the reputation of the tribe.

On the other hand, some tribal traditions have ingrained genuine principles such as hospitality with strangers, generosity, honoring old people, and respecting family and relatives. These principles are strongly emphasized within tribes, and violating them is considered shameful. Nowadays, tribal ideology is not as dominant as it was before, and tribal networks loosen when cities are built and people from different regions reside together in cities for work and study.

Saudi female advocates challenge tribal traditions that favor men over women and contribute in changing the stereotypical image of quiet obedient women. Instead, a fierce image of loud women who demand their rights and refuse discrimination has come into view. Many family and tribe leaders have condemned and disowned the actions of the Saudi female advocates who are affiliated with them. This reveals a new area of conflict which arises between Saudi female advocates and their tribes. Moreover, some Saudi female advocates are affected professionally by their actions as
some companies and institutions reject their employment applications because of the bad reputation of their names. The following excerpt indicates the negative impact of feminism on the Saudi female advocates, and the impact of family names in the lifestyle of women:

I am incapable of getting my dream job because many Saudi and Gulf companies are afraid of my name. I am not the only person affected, but also the closest people to me are affected. My husband, …, has missed a lot of opportunities because his name is associated with mine. However, this does not mean giving up what we call for, or changing our approach, which we believe is the approach that leads to developing the country without compromising or harming people in any way.

The lexical choices in the above example indicate how tribal ideology, represented by the advocate’s family name, affects the advocate’s professional life. She uses words that denote the negative effect of tribal ideology, such as incapable, are afraid of my name, missed, and his name is associated with mine. However, the advocate uses negation to express her resolution in developing the country, regardless of the losses caused by associating her name with advocacy. The negative statements that denote resistance and resolution are: This does not mean giving up what we call for, or changing our approach.

All in all, tribal traditions have many advantages that need to be instilled in future generations, and disadvantages that need to be corrected or eliminated through positive discussions and constructive dialogue. The way some Saudi female advocates disavow
their families is not the solution to the issue, since it weakens the tight-knit relations of family and tribe members.

**Economic Context**

Saudi Arabia is considered one of the richest countries in the world for having large reserves of petroleum. However, recent plans aim at diversifying economic resources and encouraging Saudization, which aims at employing Saudi citizens and decreasing the number of foreign workers in the labor market. The number of women who participate in the labor market is low because of the gender segregation policy which limits women's participation in public institutions that are mainly for men. Nowadays, a gradual change is occurring as women are allowed to work in hospitals, courts, governmental institutions and shopping centers.

The discourse of Saudi female advocates highlights the change in the Saudi economic plans, and stresses the importance of recruiting more women to enrich the Saudi labor market. However, Saudi women need a proper transportation system that facilitates reaching their jobs conveniently. This argument is used by Saudi female advocates to persuade the government that the need of women to drive cars is urgent. The following excerpt shows how Saudi female advocates resist the poor transportation system and the expensive costs of employing chauffeurs:

لكني أزيد بأنه أنت في حقنا في مطالبة وزارة المالية بتعويض كل نساء المملكة وبأثر رجعي عن بدل المواصلات الذي ينبغي أن يغطي راتب سائق ورسوم استقدامه وإعاشته وإقامةته وتأمينه الصحي وحوادثه وتحرشه واستغلاله، لتضاف إلى الست مئة ريال التي لا تغني ولا تُنمي من جوع

We will not be silent about our right to request The Ministry of Finance a compensation for all Saudi women. This compensation should cover drivers' salaries and the costs of their recruitment, living, accommodation, driving licenses, health and accidents insurances, and harassments. This compensation should be added to the current transport allowance of 600 Saudi Riyals, which does not suffice or feed hungry mouths.
The above example has an aggressive and firm tone that is expressed through negation، لن نسكت we will not be silent، and the obligative structure ي ينبغي أن it should. To avoid blaming the government for the financial loss of Saudi women to afford transportation، the advocate addresses a subsidiary official agency، The Ministry of Finance، as being responsible for the living costs of foreign drivers. In addition، the advocate elaborates the expenses of foreign drivers to convey many messages. First، Saudi women are spending a lot of money on foreign drivers. Second، the transport allowance is too low to cover transportation expenses. Third، legalizing women’s car driving is an economic solution for both the government and the society.

All in all، legalizing women’s car driving takes precedence in correcting the Saudi economic plans. First، the number of women participating in the labor market will increase because they will be able to commute to their jobs easily. Second، the need for recruiting private foreign drivers will diminish، which will save millions of riyals for the economy of Saudi Arabia.

**Familial Context**

The traditional structure of the Saudi family charges the father to provide for his family and the mother to manage the household and raise children. This traditional structure has changed over the years. Modern Saudi families are smaller in number، and often both the father and the mother work to provide for the family. The expenses of modern lifestyle need the cooperation of both women and men. However، patriarchy still exists in modern families as the father is still legally and socially responsible for taking care of his family.

The discourse of Saudi female advocates، especially in their YouTube videos، reflects the modern roles of Saudi women within their families. Mothers accompany their
children to schools, hospital and malls, with their family drivers. Mothers do not leave their children alone with drivers, and allocate time to accompany their children. Therefore, the majority of modern Saudi families recruit drivers to help the father deliver his family members to their jobs and schools. Larger families recruit more than one driver, which affects the family budget. Other families, who have limited budget and cannot afford a private driver, depend on their male relatives or taxis to reach their jobs and schools. This situation results in an unnecessary expenditure of money, and gives a rise to opportunistic taxi companies, such as Uber, Careem and Easy Taxi, that target and take advantage of women in need.

The modern family structure of Saudi families necessitates legalizing women’s car driving in order to allow women to contribute in providing for their families, taking their children safely to schools, and saving time and money. In addition, the oppression of some men will decrease when women are responsible for their own mobility and become more financially independent. Confining women in houses produces diffident women and irresponsible generations who wait for their fathers to provide them with money and accommodation. In the following excerpt, an advocate illustrates fathers’ duties within modern Saudi families to persuade the audience of the necessity of women’s car driving:

Should we talk about fathers and where are they? Good morning Arabs. The absence of a father in a Saudi family has always been illustrated. The father is either a simple employee who carries the huge burden of working and providing for his family, or a
traditional father who cares about working for few hours, and then hangs out with his friends or sits in front of his computer. Even if the father wants to fulfill all his family’s needs, he should leave half of his work to chase his children and take them from and to schools, and takes his wife also from and to work. Why do not we accept the easy solution and allow women who want to drive cars to do so, and those women who do not want to drive cars have the right not to drive. Every morning would be beautiful with a society that appreciates its members, women and men, and works hand in hand to achieve its goals, away from the Byzantine discussions of whether women should drive or not?

The advocate in the above example narrates the role of modern Saudi fathers as a means of persuasion. She starts with an interrogative statement, هل نتحدث عن الأب وأين هو؟ Should we talk about fathers and where are they? and a greeting, صباح الخير يا عرب, good morning Arabs, to attract the attention of the audience to the role of fathers in modern Saudi families. Then, she elaborates the duties of Saudi fathers using expressions that denote indifference, such as، ثم يتفرغ لاستراحته وجلسات شلته وكمبيوتره، hangs out with his friends or sits in front of his computer. Later, she stresses the incapability of devoted fathers to fulfill their family needs if no one else helps with transportation. She uses hyperbole to visualize the huge burden on fathers by saying، هذا يعني عمليا ان يترك نصف دوامه حتى يلاحق مدارس الاطفال، he should leave half of his work to chase his children and take them from and to schools. Again, the advocate attracts the attention of the readers with another interrogative statement، فلماذا لا نقبل الحل الأسهل يتيك الراغبات من القيادة، why do not we accept the easy solution and allow women to drive cars? Finally, she encourages readers to abandon discussions on women’s car driving and accept the easy solution. The uselessness of such discussions is compared to ancient discussions، النقاش البيزنطي، Byzantine discussion, that lead to no conclusions.
**Ideological Context**

The Saudi society is the homeland of diverse ideological groups that share different social representations and beliefs. Such diversity results in what I call ‘ideological clashes’ that occur among asymmetrical groups. After examining the discourse of Saudi female advocates, and with my own prior knowledge of the Saudi sociocultural system, I classify the modern Saudi society based on ideology into six groups: old generation ideology, young generation ideology, women's ideology, men's ideology, conservative ideology and liberal ideology.

**Old Generation Ideology**

The old generation of Saudis, who are 50 years old and older, experienced the drastic change in the Saudi lifestyle that accompanied the oil boom. They are the first Saudi generation to have free institutionalized health care and education. Their nomadic lifestyle was replaced by a modern and luxurious lifestyle that raised a satisfied, stable, and highly patriotic generation. The government was providing unprecedented services for this generation, and therefore a strong bond between the society and the government was established. However, people have become extremely dependent on the government and unwilling for any kind of social change for the fear of social insecurity and neediness.

The old generation stands out with its own cautious and conformist ideology that resists change, discourages innovations and undervalues different thoughts. Therefore, a herd mentality and a fixed identity have emerged and become stable and unquestioned within the Saudi society. Saudi female advocates respect the ideology of the old generation, and at the same time attempt to gradually change the rigidity of this
ideology. The following Tweet post indicates how the advocates kindly address the old generation ideology:

Because my mother could not change my present time, I decided to change the future of my daughter.

**Young Generation Ideology**

The majority of the Saudi society are raised to be replicas of other society members and deviating from this norm is weird and unwelcomed. However, some Saudi youths reject the herd mentality and demand personal freedom and greater opportunities. Because the young generation forms the majority of the Saudi population, change is forced into the society to cope with the demands of the young generation. Although this change is gradual and slow, it is inevitable. The ideology of the young generation rejects the conformity and selflessness of the old generation ideology. Therefore, a clash occurs between the demands of the young generation and the refusal of the old generation.

The introduction of the internet to the young Saudi generation contributes largely in forming an open-minded and ambitious ideology that rejects conformity and calls for diversity and creativity. The young generation aspires to see a society that accepts change and tolerates different people. Although the two generations have different interests, they coexisted within the Saudi society because of a deeply instilled religious value that calls for respecting old people and taking care of young people.

The discourse of Saudi female advocates reflects this generational gap as some of the advocates belong to the old generation, while the majority of the advocates belong to the young generation. The discourse of older advocates is characterized by
objectivity and rationality, while the discourse of young advocates is emotional and spontaneous. The first example below shows the language of the older Saudi female advocates and the second example is for young advocates:

Driving a car is an optional right, which means that I will not force you to drive a car, and at the same time you do not have the right to prevent me from driving a car! Therefore, women from different parts of the kingdom start driving their cars alone or with their male guardians, and many social thinkers and reformists, either women or men, express publicly their support for the issue of women's car driving.

Throughout the past years and whenever I was sharply attacked for doing an action, I found no reason for justifying my actions. Nowadays everything is changed. Today I felt the importance of clarifying things because of the unfair criticism that I am facing without a reason. The attack this time doubts my patriotism, which is totally rejected. The country is bigger than having one stream that gathers all diverse people.

The excerpt of the older advocate in the above examples is characterized by using permissive and prohibitive structures and evidential structures that denote rationality and sobriety. The permissive and prohibitive structures are, لن اجبرك على القيادة لن تملك الحق في منعني من ذلك! ولذا فقد بدأت النساء في شتى مناطق المملكة ومنذ بعض الوقت في قيادة سياراتهن في أماكن عامة منفردة أو برفقة أوليائيهن كما بادر الكثير من مفكري الرأي الاجتماعي والمصلحون الاجتماعيون رجالًا ونساء بالتعبير العلني عن تأييدهم لقيادة المرأة للسيارة.

أنا أقول أن القيادة حق اختياري وتعني أنه لي أن أقرر أن أقيادة لكنك أيضا لا تملك الحق في منعني من ذلك! ولذا فقد بدأت النساء في شتى مناطق المملكة ومنذ بعض الوقت في قيادة سياراتهن في أماكن عامة منفردة أو برفقة أوليائيهن كما بادر الكثير من مفكري الرأي الاجتماعي والمصلحون الاجتماعيون رجالًا ونساء بالتعبير العلني عن تأييدهم لقيادة المرأة للسيارة.

Driving a car is an optional right. The evidential structures report the actions that are taken by women and men, social thinkers and reformists to support women’s car driving.

On the other hand, the excerpt of the younger advocate is sentimental because it focuses on detecting and responding to criticism. The lexical choices describe the
severity of the attack she encountered, such as حملة هجوم شرسة sharply attacked, and unfair criticism. Finally, she uses a prohibitive structure, وهذا مرفوض تماماً which is totally rejected, to respond to people who doubt her patriotism, and an epistemic structure to express her opinion about the country، فالوطن أكبر من أن تكون له صبغة واحدة تجمع كل أطياف المجتمع The country is bigger than having one stream that gathers all diverse people.

**Men’s Ideology**

The Saudi sociocultural context grants Saudi men privileges that make them superior and responsible for women and children. Based on tribal traditions that are given an Islamic gloss, men are in charge of their families. The father should provide his wife and children with living costs and accommodation. If the father passes away, the responsibility transitions to the eldest son, who sometimes is too young to be responsible. In other occasions, when the father passes away and the family has no sons, women and children may face a real trouble.

Consequently, the government provides the guardianship system, which legalizes a male guardian to take responsibility for his family’s women and children and represent them legally. Although this system is initiated to support women and children, it fails in granting women the right to choose because women must obtain the permission of their male guardian before they travel, take a job, or are issued an ID card. Moreover, the male guardian is not at all times a responsible independent man. Sometimes, the male guardian is an abusive domineering male who oppresses women and children and finds himself right because he is the legal guardian.

The guardianship system and the strict gender segregation contributes largely in creating an ideology that exclusively belongs to men. Men’s ideology entails that women are inferior to men, should be accompanied by their male guardians at all times, and are
supposed to be obedient and submissive. Moreover, the strict gender segregation system creates a men’s ideology that visualizes women as tempting seductive creatures that should always be kept at home.

Men’s ideology is reflected in the discourse of Saudi female advocates. Their discourse mocks the common concept that compares Saudi women to jewels, diamonds, and queens who should be kept away from public. Moreover, the discourse of advocates rejects the laws that support men to control women’s decisions, and stresses that Islam does not call for discrimination and oppression. Men’s ideology contributes largely in hindering women’s progress, and the issue of women’s car driving is a clear example. Therefore, advocates propose that women should be treated, legally and socially, as responsible adults who can take care of themselves and their families. This will contribute in abolishing men’s ideology which prevails in the Saudi society. The following excerpt is an example of the way Saudi female advocates call for abolishing men’s ideology within the Saudi society:

Dear Woman, I am not divorced nor a widow. I am not a teacher, nor was I underage when I got married. I drive my car abroad, where I am residing now. Therefore, I am a neutral citizen towards your rights. However, humanly before professionally, I advise you to educate yourself and not to follow ignorance. The man who abuses you, deprives you and your children from your living costs, marries you when you were a minor only to abandon and divorce you is the same man who persuades you of the triviality of driving a car. This man is not afraid of the car itself that he drives every day, but is afraid from your awareness, my lady, and your resignation from your habit of glorifying him and obeying his orders submissively as the society has raised you. Dear woman who is convinced with the triviality of driving a car, your hostility towards human rights will take you to one place only, where you will not drive a car, nor lead yourself independently.
In the previous example, the advocate starts by a salutation to women to indicate that the message is addressed to women. Then, she introduces her neutral attitude by presupposing the existence of an abused group of women to whom she does not belong. Later, she illustrates men’s ideology by creating a scene that has two diverse groups: abused women and abusive men. The advocate utilizes imperative statements to advise women, such as اوصيك ان تعلمي نفسك ولا تتبعي الجهل I advise you to educate yourself and not to follow ignorance.

She repeatedly uses the second person inseparable pronoun ك-ki in verbs like، يعنفك abuses you، يتعملك leaves you، يطلقك divorces you، يكلفك persuades you، to distance herself from the abusive environment, and intensify the involvement of the abused female readers. The agent of all the previous verbs is the abusive man who later persuades women that they do not need to drive. The advocate uses friendly forms of address, such as عزيزتي المرأة my dear woman، and سيدتي my lady، to minimize the difference between them and to denote respect and politeness.

Men’s ideology is revealed when the advocate declares that the abusive man is not afraid of the car, but of women’s awareness towards their rights. She accuses the society of strengthening men’s ideology through raising women to be obedient and submissive to men’s orders. Finally, the advocate uses another friendly form، عزيزتي المقتنعة بهامشية حقك في قيادة السيارة dear woman who is convinced of the triviality of driving a car، to express her sympathy with women who are against their own rights. Moreover, the advocate rhetorically utilizes the abstract meaning، lead، and the physical meaning، drive، of the Arabic word قيادة ‘qyadah’ to declare that opposing women will not be able to drive cars، nor lead their lives.
Women’s Ideology

As mentioned above, the strict gender segregation and the guardianship system contribute in creating two contrastive ideologies for women and men. Women’s ideology entails that women are weak groups who cannot be independent and should always be supervised by men. The majority of Saudi women possess women’s ideology and believe that they cannot function without men. Therefore, if a woman is divorced or if her husband passes away, she becomes socially impaired, and she herself becomes broken and destroyed. In this case she would go back to her father’s house, who then becomes the official guardian. If her father is not there, her eldest brother is supposed to take care of her and her children. If her father is dead and she has no brothers, she faces a real trouble. The same scenario applies to unmarried women, especially those who are too old to get married. It becomes difficult, if not impossible, for them to personally fulfill their needs. Almost all the governmental institutions are occupied by men only and the presence of women who publicly demonstrate their needs is weird and unwelcomed in exclusively men institutions. The following excerpt by an advocate illustrates how Saudi women are supposed to be dependent on men:

I was watching a discussion on social media between a religious leader and a divorced woman with a little child about the issue of women’s car driving and her daily suffering with transportation. The woman considers searching for a driver in the middle of the night to take her child to the hospital more dangerous than driving her own car to the hospital. The religious leader was insisting that she should be like other women who have men to take care of them. When the woman swore that no man was available to help her, the religious leader prayed for her to get married soon.
In the previous excerpt, the advocate utilizes intertextuality to illustrate how women’s ideology controls women. The intertextuality is in the form of a reported speech of a conversation between a divorced mother and a religious leader. The use of intertextuality serves two functions: first, it indicates how women are dependent on the decisions of religious leaders. Second, it indicates how the other party, the religious leader, reinforces women’s ideology through assuring the woman that she needs a male supporter, and praying that she gets married soon, so her problems will be solved.

The lexical choices represent the religious leader as a decisive man, مصرأ، insistent, who dictates how all women should live. On the other hand, the quoting verbs used to report the answers of the religious leader and the divorced woman show their roles. The verb, اقسمت, she swore, indicates that the woman pleads the approval of the religious leader, while the verb, دعا, prayed, indicates the superior role of the religious leader.

The discourse of Saudi female advocates is packed with instances where advocates condemn and sympathize with women and their ideology. Saudi female advocates declare that they carry the responsibility of empowering Saudi women and enlightening them towards their rights. They stress that women’s car driving is a symbolic right that all Saudi women need, and that every woman should have the right to be employed and take care of herself and her children. Both the government and the society need to work hand in hand to spread the awareness towards women’s rights in order to abolish women’s ideology and utilize women’s potentials to benefit themselves and contribute in developing their country. The following excerpt is by an advocate who
indicates the importance of empowering women and spreading awareness towards women’s rights:

In our society, women are the enemies of themselves. We cannot ask men to defend women’s rights if women themselves do not believe in their rights. Women sucked their mothers’ milk with the following concepts: Shameful! Be thankful! You are just a woman with a broken wing! The shadow of a man is better than the shadow of a wall. Women learn the alphabets of suffering in silence at the society’s school, which always finds women guilty and looks at women with doubt, even if women show their good intentions and work hard. Women are the first to be blamed if a problem occurs. Even if a man is involved in the same problem, women are the first to be blamed.

The advocate in the previous excerpt reports facts about women’s ideology through using declarative statements and figurative language. To indicate that women’s ideology is rooted in women, the advocate compares the culture of ‘Shameful! Be thankful! You are just a broken woman’ to breastfeeding, in order to emphasize that this culture is instilled as soon as women are born. Moreover, the basics of suffering are compared to the alphabets and the society is the school. This metaphor elucidates the role of the society in teaching women the basics of suffering, and therefore, raising submissive and oppressed women.

In addition to figurative language, the advocate illustrates women’s ideology through intertextuality. She reports gender-biased statements that are circulated in the society. The figurative language in these statements illustrates how men are favored over women. For example, metaphor is used to compare women to birds with broken wings, أنت مره مكسورة الجناح, you are a woman with a broken wing. This statement indicates that gender is closely associated to ability; men are strong and women are weak.
On the other hand, the ideology that women should have male supporters is revealed in this figurative statement, ظلم راجل ولا ظلم حيطة, a shadow of a man is better than a shadow of a wall. This statement encourages women to have husbands, even if they are not fully present; the shadow of men is better than loneliness. Because of this ideology, women become obedient and submissive to their husbands, even if the husbands are abusive or incompetent, for the fear of loneliness.

The excerpt highlights gender inequality through creating a scene where both men and women are guilty. However, the society generates gender inequality through blaming women only, as declared in مجتمع يلبسها دوما الخطأ, a society that always dresses her in guilt. Personification is utilized to highlight the role of the society in oppressing women and enacting gendered laws.

**Conservative Ideology**

In Saudi Arabia, being conservative does not necessarily mean being religious. The Saudi conservative party shares common beliefs that constitute their conservative ideology. They resist all form of social change and attack modern innovations, especially if imported from Western countries. Westernization is their first enemy, and conformity, solidarity, and rigidity are the basic concepts of this party. Members of the conservative party are women and men from all ages who call for conservatism and reject liberality.

Social media networks have been the most appropriate place for the conservative party members to fight liberal people. The comments of conservative people in the Twitter accounts of the Saudi female advocates expose a high degree of hostility and resentment towards the advocates and their supporters. For example, an advocate posted the picture of her dusty car after being held by the government as a
punishment for driving a car in Saudi Arabia. The advocate addressed her audience by saying:

Look what I got back today (finally). The travel ban has been lifted as well. Greetings to freedom! I hope the ban on women’s car driving will be lifted as well.

In reply to this post, supporters encouraged the advocate and praised her actions and opponents, who represent the conservative group, replied with insults and negative language. The following are some example of the replies of some conservative people who resent the Saudi advocates and denounce their actions:

There will be no car driving for women. May Allah’s curse be on you and on everyone intending evil for Saudi Arabia.

What rights do you think women do not have? You should be exiled from Saudi Arabia. People like you do not deserve to stay in Saudi Arabia or walk on its sand.

People like you are the ones who ruin our country. I don’t know where these people are coming from.

I think they should place the travel ban again on you, and trusteeship as well.

The discourse of Saudi female advocates reflects their understanding and capacity in accepting the negative attitudes and comments of conservative people. However, advocates always highlight the procrastinations that occur in Saudi Arabia because of the conservative party, and encourage the government to ignore the retardation of the conservative party and force change in the Saudi society.
following excerpt illustrates how Saudi female advocates reject the social conservatism that hinders women’s progress:

We should admit that the issue of women’s car driving took more time than it deserves because of the social procrastinations which are led by groups that want to engage the public in trivial matters, while women have surpassed these groups with the support of the decisive government that facilitates women’s education and work in fields that were not available.

The excerpt indicates the existence of a conservative ideology that results in procrastination. The advocate visualizes the procrastination of the conservative group through using metaphor, in which the issue of women’s car driving is symbolized by a ball that is passed among the conservative members to distract the public, they start passing the issue of women’s car driving. However, the advocate indicates that the woman, who is the core of social debates, has surpassed the procrastinators. The success of women is attributed to governmental decisions that are the solutions of the endless debates led by conservatives.

**Liberal Ideology**

Liberal thinking and liberal people have been attacked by the extremely conservative Saudi society at all times, creating a polarization between conservative and liberal ideologies. The term ‘liberal’ is considered an insult in Saudi Arabia since it connotes negative concepts, such as calling for equality, freedom, change, unconformity and most importantly secularism, concepts which are rejected by Saudi society. Although liberal thinking is widespread in Saudi Arabia, liberals prefer not to reveal their actual orientations to avoid the sharp social criticism.
Saudi liberals are both women and men; however, liberal women are more rejected because of their gender and for the fear of motivating other women to change women’s ideology and adopt liberal thinking. Therefore, Saudi female advocates have been classified as liberals because they call for gender equality, freedom, justice and promote social change. Moreover, feminism and activism are labelled as liberal movements that aim at changing the values of the society and weakening social and religious principles. However, Saudi female advocates attempt to correct and illustrate the misinterpretations and the negative connotations that are associated with the term ‘liberal’. Their discourse reflects their awareness of the social misuse of the term ‘liberal’ as seen below:

Being a liberal is not an insult. If you examine the basics of Islam, you would find that Islam is based on liberal principles. For example, getting along with different people ‘you have your own religion, and I have my own religion,’ social justice that equalizes people without looking at color, race, gender, or religion. The liberal party in Saudi Arabia is divided. Some of them are ignoring, others are attacking us because, they say, there are issues that are more important. Some of them are sincere and enthusiastic, and others exploit the issue (women’s car driving) to beat other parties.

The advocate in the previous excerpt attempts to correct the social misuse of the term ‘liberal’ by claiming that liberty is an Islamic principle. She provides religious arguments to support her claim. She employs manifest intertextuality (Fairclough, 2003), through quoting a verse from the Holy Quran, لكم دينكم ولي دين, you have your religion and I have my religion, to indicate that Islam reinforces liberty. Providing religious arguments is a strategy that is frequently used by Saudi female advocates.
because the society accepts, to some extent, claims when based on religious justifications. Moreover, the lexical choices in the excerpt call for ignored religious principles such as, التأمل, contemplation, التعايش مع الآخر, coexistence, العدالة الاجتماعية, social justice, and التساوي, equality.

In conclusion, the sociocultural analysis in Chapter 6 connects the discourse of Saudi female advocates to multiple contexts: the politico-religious context, the tribal context, the economic context, the familial context, and the ideological context. These contexts interplay to constitute the discourse of Saudi female advocates, and at the same time illustrate the reasons behind the ban on women’s car driving in Saudi Arabia.
CHAPTER 7
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study critically analyzed the discourse of Saudi female advocates who demand the right of Saudi women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. The study has aimed at utilizing critical discourse analysis to unpack the discursive practices that reinforce women’s rights and reconcile the conflicting relationship between Saudi female advocates and Saudi society. In addition, the present study has explored Saudi female advocates’ identities, power relations, and ideologies through analyzing their discourse.

The data of the present research was obtained from four resources: ethnographic interviews, articles from newspaper opinion columns and the advocates’ online blogs, YouTube videos, and Twitter posts. The data analysis has incorporated feminist standpoints from both Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), and Feminist Post-structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA). The analysis was conducted at three levels: textual level, discursive level, and sociocultural level.

Results

The critical discourse analysis pinpoints several discursive practices that are utilized by Saudi female advocates to demand the right of women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. These discursive practices are instances of language use and events that are produced discursively (Fairclough, 1992a). The advocates utilize some practices that cope with the sociocultural context, and therefore reinforce women’s rights and converge opposing views. On the other hand, other practices employed by the advocates are contrary to the sociocultural context and lead to disagreement and discontent among the diverse social groups. The main research question of the present
study, reiterated below, queries the practices that support women’s rights and that bridge the gaps within Saudi society.

**RQ1.** What are the discursive practices, employed in the language of Saudi female advocates, that reinforce Saudi women’s rights and reconcile the conflicting relationship between Saudi female advocates and Saudi society?

With sociocultural considerations in mind, going behind the wheel and driving cars without official regulations is a practice that fails to solve the problem of women’s car driving. Although this practice attracts local and international attention towards the issue, it is accepted neither by the government, which imposes serious punishments on lawbreakers, nor by most social groups, who attack the advocates and condemn their actions. In addition, breaking the laws of the government is against the cultural values and the Islamic teachings. In Islam, obeying the orders of the leaders is enforced in order to enhance unity and prevent conflict, as stated in the following verse from the Holy Quran:

> يَا أَيُّهَا الْذِّينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

You who have believed, obey Allah, the Messenger, and those in authority among you.

On the other hand, the analysis of other discursive practices—Twitter posts, articles, and ethnographic interviews—that discuss women’s car driving indicates that Saudi female advocates are interested in a wide range of women’s issues, such as guardianship, women’s abuse, and gender inequality, which makes their discourse comprehensive and informative. Therefore, increasing such discursive practices through utilizing social media networks and the press is needed to spread awareness towards women’s rights and reconcile the conflicting relationship between the advocates and the
society. Utilizing such peaceful means to empower women, call for justice and equality, and spread awareness towards human rights can cope with governmental laws, social traditions, and Islamic teachings. The following verse is from the Holy Quran to indicate that justice, giving and good conduct are enforced, while immorality and oppression are forbidden in Islam:

\[
	ext{إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالإِْحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ}

\]

Allah orders justice, good conduct, and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality, bad conduct and oppression. He preaches you to remind you.

**Discourse and Identity**

One of the main interests of the present study has been to illustrate the relationship between the identity of Saudi female advocates and their discourse through answering the following research questions:

**RQ2.** How have Saudi female advocates constructed their identities through their discourse?

**RQ3.** What are the sociolinguistic constraints, if any, that have contributed in shaping the identities of Saudi female advocates?

The study indicates that Saudi female advocates have constructed personal identities and a collective identity. Following Van Dijk’s (1998) socio-cognitive approach, each one of the advocates has a distinctive mental representation of herself as being a member of several groups: women, feminists, Saudi citizens, advocates, Muslims, and Arabs. These mental representations of self are constructed through their own personal experiences and are highlighted in their discourse. Although they share several characteristics, such as strength, independence, patriotism, and feminism, each
advocate has a distinctive personal identity that is affected by other factors, such as age, socioeconomic status and personal experiences.

On the other hand, the collective identity is constructed through the intragroup discourse and the intergroup discourse (Van Dijk, 1998). The intragroup discourse of the Saudi female advocates includes their interactions with each other as a group, their calls for solidarity and unity, and their collaboration and support for each other. The data of the present study reveals tight-knit relations between Saudi female advocates albeit the lack of physical meetings. Some selected YouTube videos show one advocate driving a car with another advocate video-recording and encouraging the driver. In addition, they refer to each other in their interviews, articles and Twitter posts, which indicates a highly collaborative relationship.

The intergroup discourse of Saudi female advocates includes the advocates’ interactions with other groups. The analysis of the advocates’ representations of social actors and quoting verbs, discussed in Chapter 4, and the ideological squaring and gender relationality, discussed in Chapter 5, reveal how the advocates situate themselves among other groups. The collective identity of Saudi female advocates combines a wide array of beliefs and social practices: Saudi female advocates show gratitude and respect to the royal family members, the Kings and Princes; express dismay over their opponents; sympathize with other Saudi women, especially needy women; and criticize religious leaders who utilize religion to spread their radical beliefs.

Although the sociocultural analysis has revealed several constraints that shape the identity of Saudi women, such as political, religious and tribal constraints, Saudi female advocates override such constraints and construct an identity that rejects all
types of discrimination and inequality. They utilize arguments from the Holy Quran, statistical information, and narratives to justify their appearance and reinforce women’s rights, as seen in the analysis of intertextuality and presuppositions presented in Chapter 5.

**Discourse and Power**

The data analysis highlights the relationship between the advocates and the social power that is exercised by the rulers, religious leaders, and Saudi people to answer RQ4, which is reiterated below:

**RQ4.** How does Saudi female advocates’ discourse manifest relationships of power and control?

Saudi female advocates utilize presupposition, as discussed in Chapter 5, to indicate that the government, the religious leaders, and the dominant men are the powerful groups that affect women’s progress in Saudi Arabia. However, the advocates assure that the royal power, represented by royal decrees and governmental statements, is above other forms of social power.

The analysis of connotation in Chapter 5 indicates that Saudi female advocates jockey for powerful positions through using assertive structures and strong arguments. In addition, they utilize different linguistic genres, such as articles, Twitter posts, and interviews, to express their resistance and disapproval of the social powers that hinder women’s progress and deprive them of their rights.

In addition to power and control relationships, Saudi female advocates stress the importance of empowering Saudi women and spreading awareness towards women’s rights. Their discourse indicates that women’s empowerment is achieved through problematizing men’s ideology, in Chapter 6, that favors men over women and obliges
women to be submissive and obedient to men. In addition, the advocates assure the women that they need to think and decide by themselves on religious matters based on authentic resources, and stop handing their minds to radical religious leaders who prevent legal matters and hinder women’s progress. The advocates demand deliberate policies that include women in all sectors to ensure the well-being of women. Such principles of women empowerment answer RQ5:

**RQ5.** How do Saudi female advocates define women’s empowerment?

Despite the controversial attitudes towards Saudi female advocates, the present study reveals the governmental and the social fear of the demands and actions of Saudi female advocates. The government places serious punishments on the advocates who violate the rules and drive cars in Saudi Arabia. In addition, the society, with its religious leaders, and diverse groups, frequently negotiates the applicability of the advocates’ demands. Such attention motivates the inquiry of women’s rights and needs. Therefore, the answer to RQ6, reiterated below, implies that Saudi female advocates have a loud voice that attracts the attention of both the government and the society. Moreover, the power of the advocates is represented in their resistance to inequality, which leads to gradual social change.

**RQ6.** What power, if any, is exercised by Saudi female advocates towards social change?

**Discourse and Ideology**

The analysis of the discourse of Saudi female advocates reveals the ideologies of the advocates and the ideologies of Saudi society. RQ7, repeated below, asks about the ideologies implemented in the discourse of Saudi female advocates. These ideologies are stated in the sociocultural analysis, in Chapter 6, which indicates that
ideologies classify the Saudi society into several groups: old generation, young generation, men, women, conservatives and liberals. Each group is distinct with its own ideology that frequently contradicts with other social groups. Social factors, such as gender segregation, tribal traditions, and patriarchy, create different social groups that have different beliefs, values and attitudes.

**RQ7.** What are the ideologies that have been implemented in the discourse of Saudi female advocates?

On the other hand, there are salient ideologies that distinguish Saudi female advocates from other social groups. The explicit ideology that characterizes Saudi female advocates is the feminist ideology. Their social practices to defy the ban on women’s car driving, through driving cars, writing articles, recording videos, and utilizing social media networks, display and reproduce this feminist ideology.

The underlying ideologies of the advocates are revealed through the analysis of presuppositions, in Chapter 5, which indicates that Saudi female advocates acknowledge the passive role of the government towards women’s car driving, the dominant role of religious leaders, and the submissive and contradictory nature of Saudi society. Therefore, Saudi female advocates emphasize the need for a peaceful change through governmental decisions that grant women their rights and enhance their well-being.

**Study Limitations and Implications for Future Research**

The present study is limited by three factors. First, the issue of women’s car driving is presented from the perspective of Saudi female advocates only. The perspectives of the government and the opposing parties are not included because of the difficulty of accessing data from official sources, and the risk of obtaining data from
the opposing parties. Second, the data of the present study is limited to four sources that are nominated by the advocates. Other possible data sources could include the advocates’ books, literary work, and programs on YouTube, radio and television. Third, the language of the data is variant as the advocates use both formal and informal registers, which makes the analysis more challenging.

The present study furthers the use of CDA to cover the discourse of women on social issues. Future research may investigate the discourse of Saudi women who stand as candidates in the municipal elections, or the discourse of the female members in the Saudi Consultative Council. Moreover, a comparative study that investigates the discourse of Saudi male advocates on the issue of women’s car driving might provide significant results that illustrate men’s strategies of persuasion. Such studies will enrich the literature of gender and language in Saudi Arabia and the literature of CDA.

In addition to gender and language, the present study opens horizons for further research that might analyze the discourse of Saudi officials on the issue of women’s car driving, or the discourse of the opposing parties. Conducting such critical analyses will broaden our understanding of the complications that surround women’s progress in Saudi Arabia.

Conclusion

The present study introduces Saudi female advocates and their demand of lifting the ban on women’s car driving in Saudi Arabia. Analyzing women’s discourse and discussing social issues are combined in this research through utilizing CDA. The three levels of analysis portray Saudi female advocates and link their discourse to their identity construction, power relations and ideologies. Moreover, the sociocultural factors that surround Saudi women’s progress are displayed.
‘To drive or not to drive?’ is still an open question, and only the Saudi government has the answer. The attempts of the Saudi female advocates and the controversial discussions around this issue, will fade as soon as the government legitimates women’s car driving. Women’s education and participation in political positions and the labor market are parallel examples to the issue of women’s car driving. Saudi women would not have gained access to education, politics and the labor market if the Saudi government had not offered such opportunities and forced change. In the same manner, Saudi women will not have access to a more convenient and safe transportation system, represented by the legitimation of women’s car driving, if the Saudi government does not lift the ban and enact strict laws that protect women and their rights.

The present study supports the feminist theory of power, formulated by Allen (2008), which aims at helping women to be active actors, resist domination and work hand in hand to fight oppressive forces. This analysis of Saudi female advocates’ discourse reveals the existence of social and political discrimination against women that advocates resist through their discursive practices. In addition, the study indicates the advocates’ calls for solidarity and support. This interrelation between domination, resistance and solidarity is the core of the feminist theory of power.

The study also indicates that oppressed and marginalized groups have certain points of power, which aligns with Foucault’s account of modern power (1978) in which power emanates from everywhere and not from the top solely. Although Saudi female advocates have been oppressed, they cannot be categorized as powerless because they have certain points of power. For example, heavy security patrols and police cars
spread along Saudi major streets on October 26th, 2013, when the advocates planned to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. The power of the advocates, which is shown through the serious reaction of the government, is considered a form of power. The following Twitter post by an advocate commenting on the OCT26 event indicates that the advocates acknowledge that women encounter oppression because people are afraid “of” them not “for” them:

اليوم أثبتت السعوديات أنهن بحق أشجع من الرجال.. وكل هذا الزور والهجوم عليهم ما هو إلا خوف منهن لا عليهن

Today, Saudi women proved that they are really more powerful than men. All these attacks and discrimination are because people are afraid of women not for women.

Linguistically, the analysis of the discourse of Saudi female advocates indicates that language is an interdependent system of social life. Michael Halliday’s (1978) perspective of functional linguistics is achieved in this study through focusing on the relationship between the discourse of women and the way it is situated in contexts. It is worth mentioning that Halliday’s functional linguistic approach has been one of the major approaches that contributes in formulating Fairclough’s theoretical framework, which is considered the most popular framework within CDA.

In addition, the linguistic tools that are utilized in this study show the multidisciplinary nature of linguistics. Such linguistic tools provide systematic analysis that enriches different fields such as feminist studies, politics, education, and media and communication. Therefore, linguistics is not limited to studying language above the sentence, but rather revealing why and how linguistic structures are utilized in the wider social context.

In addition, the wide range of linguistic tools adopted in this study enables us to closely examine the advocates. Their ideologies are revealed; their power relations are
highlighted and their identity construction is mapped out. The linguistic tools draw out features in the discourse of the advocate that are not obvious if not critically analyzed. Many ideologies and sociocultural factors are embedded in the discourse, and operationalizing linguistics reveals them.

CDA has been criticized for its quest to remedy social wrongs. However, this study indicates that acknowledging the problem, pointing out responsible parties, and understanding the reasons behind this social wrong is a huge step towards social change. Discussing women’s car-driving, or talking about Saudi female advocates who promote driving cars, are considered taboo subjects within Saudi Arabia. This study employs CDA to closely investigate the advocates and their demand.

This work is a reference for people who are interested in Saudi culture and wonder about the status of Saudi women within this culture. The different aspects of Saudi society are presented in a way that enables outsiders to understand the prevailing world view. The complex intersection between politics, religion, and women is clarified through using CDA. Moreover, the repetitive question of why women in Saudi Arabia cannot drive is answered.

The study provides an emic perspective and an insider analysis for the discourse of a group of women who have been kept away from the public sphere. This emic perspective is combined with an ethnographic approach that observes the advocates and investigates them closely through ethnographic interviews. Machin and Mayr (2012) stress the importance of enriching the analysis of texts ‘by an ethnographic approach which investigates the processes that lie behind the production of texts’ (p. 217).
All in all, the study contributes to our understanding of the advocates, highlights the demands of Saudi women, and offers insights into the Saudi culture. Moreover, the study provides multidisciplinary knowledge related to sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, gender studies, feminism, politics, religion, and cultural anthropology.
## APPENDIX A
### IRB APPROVAL

Legacy IRB Protocol Lookup

The protocols below are associated with your UFID. Selecting a protocol will update the events grid. You can sort the grid by clicking on the column headings. Click once for ascending (A-Z) and click again for descending (Z-A). If you don’t see protocols that you believe are yours please contact the IRB Office Staff.

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Critical analysis of Saudi women’s discourse on driving cars for women in Saudi Arabia

Please read this agreement before deciding to participate

Aim of Research
This study aims at investigating and analyzing the opinions of Saudi women who ask for their right to drive cars in Saudi Arabia in an attempt to understand the different facets of the problem and suggest solutions that could be applied in order to improve the social status of Saudi women.

What you are asked to do in this study
In an interview with the researcher, you will be asked to answer a number of general questions about the social status of women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and also about the ban on women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. The interview will be audio-recorded to be transcribed and analyzed later.

Needed Time
15-20 minutes

Risks and Benefits
You will not be prone to any risk upon participating in this study. Rather, you will have a chance to speak your mind out and discuss the social status of women in Saudi Arabia.

Rewards
You will be paid 50 SR upon your participating in this interview

Privacy
The researcher will use Sony mp3 recorder to record your interview. The recorded interview will be kept in a safe place. An encrypted hard drive will be used to store the digital audio files. After that, data will be analyzed and deleted as soon as the study is accomplished. It is necessary to mention that names and personal information will be deleted from the recorded audio files to ensure total safety.
Voluntary participation

Your participation in this research is voluntary. There are no negative consequences upon your denial to participate.

المشاركة تطوعية

مشاركتك في هذا البحث تطوعية وليس هناك أي تبعات لعدم مشاركتك في البحث.

Your right to withdraw

You have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time with no obligations

الحق في الانسحاب من الدراسة

لديك الحق في الانسحاب من الدراسة في أي وقت دون أي تبعات.

Contact information for more inquiries:

Dr. Diana Boxer
Department of Linguistics
University of Florida
Email: dboxer@ufl.edu

Raniah Al Mufarreh
PhD, Linguistics, UF
Department of Linguistics
Email: raniah1983@ufl.edu

Contact information if you want to know more about your rights as a research participant:

University of Florida Institutional Review Board
P. O. Box 112250
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250
Phone: +1(352) 392-0433

Agreement:

I have read and understand the procedures of interviewing me. Based on that, I agree to voluntarily participate in this study. I also have a copy of this agreement.

الاتفاقية:

لقد قمت بقراءة وفهم اجراءات المقابلة المتعلقة بهذه الدراسة وبناءً على ذلك فأنا موافق على التطوع في هذه الدراسة وإجراء مقابلة مع الباحثة. كما أن لدي نسخة من هذه الاتفاقية.

Participant: ___________________________ Date: _________________
Principal Investigator: ___________________________ Date: _________________
Co-investigator: ___________________________ Date: _________________
## Interview Questions

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<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>أسئلة المقابلة</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- What is your name? How old are you? What is your marital status? What would you consider your social class?</td>
<td>1- ما اسمك؟ كم عمرك؟ ما هي حالتك الاجتماعية؟ من أي طبّة اجتماعية تصنفين نفسك؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Do you have a private driver? Who is responsible for taking you to different places?</td>
<td>2- هل لديك سائق خاص؟ ومن هو الشخص المسؤول عن نقلتك؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Do you agree or disagree with allowing women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia?</td>
<td>3- هل انت مؤيدة أم معارضة بقيادة المرأة للسيارة في المملكة العربية السعودية؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- In case the government issued a decree that allows women to drive, what procedures could contribute in accepting this social change?</td>
<td>4- في حال إصدار قرار بالسماح للمرأة بقيادة السيارة، ما هي الاقتراحات التي ستساهم في حل المشكلة وتقبل المجتمع لهذا الأمر؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- What are the advantages and disadvantages of allowing women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia?</td>
<td>5- وماهي حسنات السماح للمرأة بقيادة السيارة وما هي المساوئ؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Name the most famous female advocates of driving campaigns. Have they succeed in attracting the attention of the public opinion?</td>
<td>6- اذكرني لي اسماء أشهر المطالبات بحق المرأة في قيادة السيارة و هل نجح في تأليب الرأي العام؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- What is the reason behind the disapproval of some Saudi women of driving campaigns?</td>
<td>7- ما هو السبب في رأيك خلف مانحة بعض النساء لحملة قيادة السيارات؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Is it better for Saudi women to drive their cars or to have a foreign driver? Why?</td>
<td>8- هل من الأفضل ان تقوم المرأة سيارتها بدلاً عن استئجار سائق اجنبي ليقوم بالمهمة؟ ولماذا؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- What is your response to those who say allowing women to drive car is a trivial matter compared to other vital social issues such as poverty and unemployment?</td>
<td>9- ما هو ردك على من يقول أن موضوع قيادة المرأة للسيارة موضوع تافه مقارنة بالمسائل الاجتماعية الأخرى كال الفقر والبطالة؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10- What is the reason behind the delay in resolving this problem?</td>
<td>10- ما هو السبب الرئيسي لعدم حل هذه القضية الى الان؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11- What is the difference between the Saudi society and other Gulf and Arab societies that do allow women to drive cars?</td>
<td>11- ما هو الفرق بين المجتمع السعودي وغيره من المجتمعات الخليجية والعربية والتي تتمتع بقيادة المرأة للسيارة؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12- How Saudi society will be if women drive cars?</td>
<td>12- ما هو تصورك لحال المجتمع السعودي إذا قادت المرأة السيارة؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13- Is there a reason behind the urgent necessity for women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia?</td>
<td>13- هل هناك سبب وراء الضرورة الملحة لقيادة المرأة للسيارة؟</td>
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### APPENDIX D
LIST OF ONLINE BLOG ARTICLES

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<th>Names of author</th>
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<tr>
<td>Manal Al Sharif</td>
<td>Apr 21, 2013</td>
<td>متى تقود المرأة السعودية السيارة؟</td>
<td><a href="https://manal-alsharif.com">https://manal-alsharif.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maysaa Al Amoudi</td>
<td>Oct 7, 2013</td>
<td>إنفقنة الابناء .. ام .. قيادة 16 أكتوبر</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maysaa.co">http://www.maysaa.co</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maysaa Al Amoudi</td>
<td>Jan 5, 2014</td>
<td>ملف قيادة المرأة السعودية</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maysaa.co">http://www.maysaa.co</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamador Alyami</td>
<td>Feb 17, 2015</td>
<td>ولنا في تكريم القائدات عبر توضيح</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tamadoralyami.com">www.tamadoralyami.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loujain Al Hathloul</td>
<td>Mar 24, 2016</td>
<td>توضيح</td>
<td><a href="http://www.loujainhathloul.com">http://www.loujainhathloul.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamador Alyami</td>
<td>Oct 26, 2016</td>
<td>ولنا في تكريم القائدات عبر</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tamadoralyami.com">www.tamadoralyami.com</a></td>
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### APPENDIX E
LIST OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Names of author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of Article</th>
<th>Retrieved from</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fawziah Albakr</td>
<td>Oct 10, 2013</td>
<td>قيادة المرأة للسيارة... حق طال انتظاره!!</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aljazirah.com/2013/20131010/ar2.htm">http://www.aljazirah.com/2013/20131010/ar2.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatoon Al Fassi</td>
<td>Oct 13, 2013</td>
<td>قيادة المرأة السيارة.. وصلت إلى آخر الطريق.. حيث الضوء</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alriyadh.com/875343">http://www.alriyadh.com/875343</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatoon Al Fassi</td>
<td>Nov 6, 2016</td>
<td>في مجلس الشورى.. قيادة المرأة للسيارة تُناقش لأول مرة</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alriyadh.com/1545718">http://www.alriyadh.com/1545718</a></td>
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### APPENDIX F

**LIST OF YOUTUBE VIDEOS**

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<tr>
<th>Names of advocates</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of YouTube video</th>
<th>Retrieved from</th>
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<tr>
<td>Manal Al Sharif</td>
<td>May 25, 2011</td>
<td>###قيادة السيدة بارعة الزبيدي تؤدي &quot;قيادة السيارة&quot; عند مجمع الراشد 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqBDpLpcmG4">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baryah Al Zubaidi</td>
<td>Oct 29, 2013</td>
<td>السيدة تضاير اليوم تأخذ طفلها للسوبرماركت 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xiuOY5xM_So">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamador Alyami</td>
<td>Nov 8, 2013</td>
<td>🆔 <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS6GlHjBrK0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS6GlHjBrK0</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Madeha Alajroush</td>
<td>Oct 10, 2013</td>
<td>Dr. Madeha Alajroush driving in Riyadh 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEP_ZoPQu94">YouTube</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loujain Al Hathloul</td>
<td>Oct 23, 2013</td>
<td>🆔 #قيادة #قيادة_26اكتوبر #قيادة_22فبراير #قيادة_28ديسمبر 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNiYV11p8kE">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sahar Naseef &amp; Tamador Alyami</td>
<td>Dec 13, 2013</td>
<td>السيدة سحر نسيف تقود سيارتها برفقة السيدة تضاير اليومي يوم ٢٨ديسمبر 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIBOmmyxRZI">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamdar Alyami &amp; Samyah Al Musalamani</td>
<td>Dec 28, 2013</td>
<td>تضاير اليومي وسامية المسيلمي أوقفتهم الشرطة 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etAnhiu_orY">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ayshah Almana</td>
<td>Mar 8, 2014</td>
<td>🆔 عائشة المانع تقود في مدينة الخبر بمناسبة اليوم العالمي للمرأة 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCyvG8y3JHY">YouTube</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Azizah Al Yousif</td>
<td>Feb 22, 2014</td>
<td>السيدة عزيزة اليوسف تقود سيارتها في الرياض نهار فبراير ٢٢٢٢ 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTx4i95bvr8">YouTube</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Loujain Al Hathloul</td>
<td>Nov 29, 2014</td>
<td>لجين الهذلول في طريقها للحدود السعودية وهي تقود بنفسها 🆔 retract from <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7r-p7FHxqo">YouTube</a></td>
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LIST OF REFERENCES


Van Dijk, T., & Wodak, R. (2000). Racism at the top. parliamentary discourses on ethnic issues in six European states.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Raniah Al Mufarreh is a lecturer at the English Department at King Khalid University in Dhahran Aljanoub, Saudi Arabia. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from the Girls’ College of Education in Abha, Saudi Arabia, and a master’s degree in applied linguistics with a concentration on Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) from King Khalid University. Al Mufarreh joined the Department of Linguistics at University of Florida in 2012, and received a master’s degree in linguistics from University of Florida at the end of Spring 2014. In 2017, Al Mufarreh earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree in linguistics. Her dissertation, To Drive or not to Drive: a Critical Analysis of Saudi Female Advocates’ Discourse, was supervised by Dr. Diana Boxer. Al Mufarreh’s research interests include feminist critical discourse analysis, gender and language, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, second language acquisition, language documentation, and computer-assisted language learning.