MUSLIM WOMEN ISSUES IN THE PRESS: A CORPUS LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE BURKA'S REPRESENTATION IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an investigation of media representation of Muslim women (MW) issues. The study tries to examine the way in which the controversial Islamic dress, the burka, is represented in one of UK's most circulated newspapers, the Daily Telegraph, and to identify the key topics the Daily Telegraph uses to address Muslim women issues and how they are represented in those topics. The paper is informed by Baker's (2004) framework of Corpus-Assisted discourse analysis which has recently been widely integrated in discourse studies of newspaper articles. The corpus tools used to realize this research are: keyword analysis, concordance analysis and collocation. The analysis has focused on the burka representation as it has recently been one of the most salient topics in the Telegraph concerning Muslim women. The concordance analysis has revealed the basic patterns the Telegraph uses to deal with the topic of burka in particular and Muslim women in general. It is found that in the majority of cases the Telegraph negatively represents the burka, occasionally shows it neutrally, and only rarely presents it positively. The paper concludes with a discussion of the main findings by highlighting the Telegraph's discourse that turns around the topic of burka.

Keywords: Burka, concordance, corpus linguistics, keyword tool, Muslim women.