Language, Media, and Education: Unpacking Gender Bias and Empowerment in Moroccan Society

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of language on the perpetuation of male dominance and gender norms in Moroccan society from the perspective of six Moroccan EFL teachers. Utilizing in-depth interviews, the research investigates how linguistic practices in both the public and private domain provide support for patriarchal norms, which in turn constructs ideas of gender roles amongst both educators and their students. The findings show how language, through proverbs and dialogue exchanges, draws on male domination and marginalizes women's views. Participants stressed that hierarchies of language at schools and media representations help maintain masculinity as the favored position in privileged spaces over that of women as the inferior ones. However, the study also finds emerging efforts by educators and activists pushing back against those norms through gender-sensitive curricula and inclusive communication strategies—these results illuminate language's role as a tool of oppression and as an instrument of defiance. By challenging the cultural and linguistic aspects that reinforce gender inequality, Moroccan education can play a notable role in promoting gender equality and giving a voice to marginalized groups.

INTRODUCTION

The interrelationship of language and gender has attracted attention for decades due to their significant implications on social structures and power dynamics (Avelino, 2021). Language is not just a medium of communication but a reflector of norms and values that prevail within society. It is a formidable tool of patriarchal enforcement in countries where men rule. This dynamic is especially apparent in Morocco (Ouahid et al., 2023), where language practices are inextricably entwined with cultural traditions formed over generations. These behaviors reflect and reinforce a cultural structure whereby men are granted a privileged position while women are frequently silenced.

The linguistic landscape of Morocco is as complex as its culture, with Darija (Moroccan Arabic), Amazigh languages, and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) all playing a role. These language systems uniquely reinforce gender stereotypes (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2024). Some well-known proverbs and common idiom expressions honor masculine authority and denigrate the female. This linguistic tendency illustrates a deeply entrenched patriarchal mindset that assigns leadership and decision-making roles to men, both in public and private spheres. Therefore, Language in Morocco serves as a neutral tool and a vehicle that generates, legitimizes, and maintains power relations (Errihani, 2023).

The theory of the sociolinguistic field provides striking new perspectives on language as symbolic capital (Grieve et al., 2025). Bourdieu's concept of "symbolic power" shows how language usage in everyday discourse reinforces dominant ideas (Padmalochanan, 2025), rendering masculine power normal, making it unremarkable and beyond reproach (Foust, 2023). This phenomenon is undoubtedly represented in Moroccan culture within its gendered lines of communication (Yacob-Haliso & Falola, 2020). Males are usually taught to adopt aggressive, dominative registers in public discourse (Islentyeva et al., 2024), while females

are socialized to speech acts that suggest subservience and veneration (Lunnay & Foley, 2024). Mixed-gender interactions: Men dominate conversations, interrupt more frequently, and control discussions (Pakzadian & Tootkaboni, 2018).

Media and education play a crucial role in perpetuating these gender-differentiated norms (Pardamean Daulay et al., 2024). Moroccan media depicts women in domestic roles, while men are cast as providers and leaders. Similarly, educational curricula and textbooks are male-normative, reinforcing the idea that males are inherently superior and central to advancement and power. The biases in educational resources that result in women's marginalization begin as early as childhood, with textbooks reflecting beliefs that ultimately pave the way for gender inequality (Ait Bouzid, 2019).

However, the story is not all doom and gloom. In recent years, Moroccan feminist groups have challenged these entrenched conventions, advocating for gender-sensitive linguistic reforms and greater inclusion (Houki et al., 2023). Online platforms allow women to speak about their experiences and defy gender stereotypes. As such, social media has become a powerful tool for stitching together people, stories, and movements (Kubin & von Sikorski, 2021). These digital sites offer a counter-narrative to the dominant discourse of victimization and vulnerability, highlighting women's agency and resistance against institutional force (Houki et al., 2023).

Despite these initiatives, progress on gender equality in Morocco faces deep-rooted challenges (Mechouat, 2017). Language remains a flashpoint in struggles over cultural norms and power relations (Barnett, 2024). The linguistic practices reveal the dominant patriarchal system of Moroccan society (Benattabou, 2021). However, growing awareness of these issues and activism for alterations suggest a possible paradigm shift. Through an analysis of the intersection of language and gender, scholars and activists may help dismantle the systems that continue to constrain women's autonomy and allow for the rise of a more egalitarian society (Directorate of Anti-Discrimination, 2021).

This study explores the role of language in reproducing male dominance in Moroccan society. Using frameworks such as symbolic power and feminist sociolinguistics, it investigates how discursive practices reflect and reproduce traditional gender roles. It also explores the backlash against these standards, particularly in online spaces, and the consequences for social change. It seeks to answer, therefore, the following question: How does language sustain maleness and affect gender relations in Morocco?

In Moroccan culture, the relationship between language and gender is deeply intertwined with the cultural norms that have shaped the country's identity for thousands of years (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 2008). Since language is the primary means of communication used in each culture, it tends to mirror that culture (Kramsch, 2014). In this light, in the Moroccan context, it is a powerful tool for maintaining male dominance and traditional gender roles. There are apparent gender gaps in attitudes towards roles, whereby women hold significantly more progressive and egalitarian views than men. Nevertheless, traditional conceptions are persistent, although several women reject the current barriers, thus mirroring similar transformations that resulted from the progress of involvement in labor worldwide changing perceptions of gender (Awaru et al., 2021). Women often produce traditional ideas that reaffirm care and domestic duties for women. (Bentaher, 2024).

As far back as sociolinguistics, academics have argued that language is not only a method of communication; it is a vehicle through which power relations can be established and maintained (Awaru et al., 2021). Feminist theorists have demonstrated how language marginalizes women, putting them vulnerable, submissiveness, and low authority (Rodríguez Herrera, n.d.). Pierre Bourdieu's notion of "symbolic power" gives this idea an additional layer, emphasizing how everyday language practices render masculine authority both natural and unquestionable (Ashad et al., 2024). This theoretical framework is essential to understanding the Moroccan context, wherein language represents a battleground of power relations shaped by culture and history.

The ways of using language are more than words; they reflect broader cultural norms around communication techniques (Said, 2023). Males in Morocco are expected to be aggressive and dominate conversations, especially in public locales (Guennoun & Guennoun, 2024). Men, by contrast,

have been socialized toward an assertive tone, working in their communications through force and intimidation. Nevertheless, this tension creates an illusion that men are the leaders and women are the gears that make it run, reducing women's independence in public and private life (Girón & Kazemikhasragh, 2022). Research has proven that even in mixed-gender environments, men interrupt and control discussions more frequently, while women's voices are drowned out (Dahlerup, 2018).

With these institutions (media and education) participating in the reframing, the problem only worsens. The Moroccan media tends to perpetuate traditional gender roles as the women are shown inside the house (Lehfid, 2024) while men are considered breadwinners (Chafai, 2021). Such representations are not mere coincidence but owe their existence to a social context that idealizes male strength (Razkane, 2021). Not even the resources available at schools do much to challenge these standards. Narratives and examples found in textbooks used in schools disproportionately feature male figures and, in doing so, unwittingly give the impression that men are the focal point of progress and decision-making [(Benlaghrissi, 2023) (Moutia, 2023) (Benattabou, 2021) (Nujhati & Nurkamto, 2024)]. At the same time, women lurk on the sidelines (Ait Bouzid, 2019).

Class is a space where these dynamics can be witnessed in Morocco's professional and political fields. Important decisions tend to be made with men's voices over women's (Melki & Mallat, 2019), which means their contributions are often overlooked. The gap is particularly evident in code-switching events (Denbaum & de Prada Pérez, 2021). In formal contexts, the prestigious languages that function as languages of authority Standard Arabic are used predominantly by men (Sadiqi, 2003). Women are likely to speak Moroccan Arabic or Amazigh languages, contributing less to prestige (Sadiqi, 2024). Such hierarchies of language help perpetuate power dynamics as they implicitly disallow women from these influential spheres (Bui, 2021).

However, the story is not entirely one of subjugation. Resistance to these entrenched conventions has grown recently (Badran, 2022). Feminist movements in Morocco – Feminist movements have played a key role in advocating for gender equality in Morocco (Ennaji, 2016),

demanding a reform of language practices that challenge patriarchy. There are slowly becoming initiatives to make gender-sensitive educational curricula and to educate about linguistic bias. The use of social media has especially offered Moroccan women a dynamic space through which they can communicate their voices and resist traditional views and practices (Houki et al., 2023). Online spaces have transformed into forums of conversation and advocacy where women share their stories and kindle solidarity (Bernardi, 2019).

This movement has continued, marking a paradigm shift in the narrative of gender and language in Morocco (Sadiqi, 2025). If those practices have long served to keep male domination in place, they are now becoming a site of struggle, a space to be kept free of dominance (Hinton-Smith, 2025). The combined awareness of these topics and the push for inclusiveness point toward a possible paradigm shift (Finn & Laaboudi, 2025). Handling overlapping and interconnected subjects, future studies can better tackle the effects of globalization and digital communication on these structures, mapping how digitalization in terms of platforms and cultural exchange technologies is shifting the balance between language and gender (Malki, 2022). Many studies have explored gender inequalities in the Moroccan context, highlighting the misrepresentation of women in textbooks and media (El Mhaoudar & Bourima, 2024) (Benlaghrissi, 2022) (Kolovich & Ndoye, 2023) (Bendraou & Sakale, 2024). Building on this research, the present study examines the role of language in reinforcing male dominance and gender norms in Moroccan society.

Examining how language and gender are intertwined demonstrates how linguistic habits mirror and mold societal conventions (Barham & Everett, 2021). The resilience of masculine superiority in the language reflects the embedded patriarchal order in the squatter practices of Moroccans (Menin, 2024). However, resistance and the demand for inclusion give hope for a fairer tomorrow. Hence, by recognizing the power of language to create a narrative of women's inferiority, we can break down the structures that constrain women's agency, working towards a world where all voices can receive equal treatment. Overall, This study aims to investigate the impact of

language on the perpetuation of male dominance and gender norms in Moroccan society.

METHODS

As the primary method of exploration, the researchers utilized in-depth interviews with six teachers to investigate the impact of language on the perpetuation of male dominance and gender norms in Moroccan society from the perspective of six Moroccan EFL teachers. A sample of six Moroccan EFL teachers provides varied perspectives while allowing for a manageable scope for in-depth thematic analysis. This figure balances attaining data saturation where additional insights become redundant and facilitating rich, contextually grounded narratives vital in qualitative analyses. Each interview lasted 45 minutes. After six interviews, data saturation was reached as the data began to repeat itself, and no new ideas emerged (Patton, 2002). This redundancy indicated that the primary themes and patterns had been adequately explored, ensuring the content was comprehensive and fully represented diverse perspectives. Also, a pilot study (Creswell & Poth, 2016) was conducted independently from the original sample to ensure the interview questions were reliable and credible. The pilot study was a valuable mechanism to validate straightforward, understandable questions, refine any confusing or leading questions, and address challenges not anticipated regarding the interview process, such as the flow and duration of the questions. Pilot feedback from participants indicated appropriate, comprehensive, clear, and non-sensitive questions, ensuring that interviews would provide meaningful and reliable insights regarding educators' experiences.

The researchers adopted a systematic methodology for data analysis to guarantee coding reliability. Following transcription, the interview data were independently coded by two researchers to ensure intercoder compatibility. Variations in coding were addressed and resolved through consensus, improving the consistency and objectivity of theme identification. A codebook was created to provide consistent theme categorization, maintaining uniform interpretations during the study. This meticulous method enhanced the reliability and credibility of the findings, reducing subjective bias and reinforcing the study's validity. Data were gathered in September 2024 via comprehensive interviews with six Moroccan EFL educators. To maintain ethical integrity, informed consent was protected, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality. This dedication to ethical research improves the study's authenticity and credibility.

SPSS was used for the analysis of demographic data to ensure reliability and speed in the statistical analysis of the variables. SPSS was chosen due to its powerful data management capabilities and the wide range of statistical procedures it can perform to allow for a thorough analysis of demographic factors. It added to the study's rigor and ensured the findings were reliable and valid. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis as Braun and Clarke (2013) specified. The process was divided into six steps: familiarization with the data, coding of interesting features, organization of codes into potential themes, thematic review, definition and naming of themes, and detailed report composition. Such a systematic approach ensured that the study was thorough, transparent, and credible in its findings (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

The study participants were sex, age, and education matched. There is a balanced gender distribution of 50% male and 50% female (3 individuals). The participants were divided into four age groups: 16.7% (1 participant) in the 20-30 age range, 16.7% (1 participant) in the 30-40 age range, 33.3% (2 participants) in the 40-50 age range, and 33.3% (2 participants) in the 50-60 age range, indicating a relatively wide age range.

Educational Background Regarding educational background, most participants (50%, 3 participants) hold a doctoral degree, followed by a master's (33.3%, 2 participants) and a bachelor's (16.7%, 1 participant). These demographic terms provide a comprehensive overview of the subject participants, based on which a diversified sample would be constructed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Power Dynamics and Assertiveness Language as a Tool for Gendered Socialization

Potential data	Codes	Theme
Men should always have the final word.	- Masculine supremacy, hierarchy - Hierarchical Power- Gender Power Dynamics - Conventional Gender Guidelines - Societal Standards - Masculine Privilege - Resistance to Gender Egalitarianism	Power Dynamics and Assertiveness Language as a Tool for Gendered Socialization
Girls should not speak out loud in public.	Silence-muting of Women-Gender-Based Social Expectations-Concern of Social Judgment:	
Males are told to be assertive.	Being assertive as a man - Expectations for Gender-Based Leadership and Domination Confidence - Building Pressure - Emotional Suppression in Men - Preservation of Toughness in Society.	

This study provides key insights into how the construction of gender through socialization, particularly about power relationships and assertiveness among individuals, is upheld through social constructs. Participant 3 further emphasized the idea of male dominance; he stated: "Men should have the final word in conversations; it is considered a symbol of power and dominance". This statement exemplifies the hierarchical nature of power that often attributes to males the more dominant roles. In human society, a transfer of political power is a legacy of patriarchal traditions of thought based on the belief in male superiority. In contrast, Participant 5 shared that: "Girls must not raise their voices in public; it is frowned upon, and they are judged for being too assertive".

It reveals how society has, by default, smothered the voice of women it is another episode of quiet as a form of gendered social control. These conceptions align with the principles of gender-based socialization, with women sandbags silenced to maintain the trivialization of women in public spheres and, more broadly, in male-dominated spaces. In contrast, Participant 1 expressed a varied viewpoint regarding gender prevalence on assertiveness, particularly amongst men: "Men are taught to be assertive, to speak their minds and be in control; leadership is practically expected of them everywhere".

This highlights the social imperative for men to display confidence, authority, and dominion, further reinforcing age-old power structures. While traditional masculine privilege corresponds to the social problem, men are socialized to internalize emotions of grief and to wear a brave face. Such perspectives highlight the underlying commonalities in how power dynamics and assertiveness intersect and shape gendered norms of socialization and, ultimately, how these cultural practices are enshrined to reinforce gender inequalities in various cultural contexts.

Gendered Linguistic Practices in Media

Potential data	Codes	Theme
Women are predominantly shown in household roles on television.	Representations of Women in Media – Stereotypical Image Depiction – Gendered Media Discourses – Domesticity in Media – Media – Informed Gender Roles – Television Gender Disparity	Gendered Linguistic Practices in Media
Men in Advertising Roles as Decision-Makers	- Male control - Gender roles in advertising - Male managerial behavior - Democracy in decision-making - Gendered marketing - Media dominance by men	
Women rarely appear as professionals on TV.	Gender Disparities in the Media - Female professionals face inadequate - representation in the media. Gender bias is limited - Categorized Female Figures.	

The data suggest that within media, there has been a persistent gendered linguistic practice, such that women are often considered in stereotypical domestic contexts. Participant 3 remarked, "On television, women are almost always shown in the home; they seem to belong in the house, and the house is the kitchen and the children. This illustrates the stereotypical representation of women in media, reinforcing traditional gender roles that restrict women to domestic roles". On the other hand, Participant 6 perceived that "Men in ads are always shown as decision-makers as if they have control or they take all major decisions".

This highlights the pre-eminence of male figures in authoritative positions within advertising, further entrenching male domination as well as shaping social ideas of role definitions between the sexes. The positions of both participants show how men continue to dominate the media, which upholds gender-specific stigmas and limits the representation of women to domesticity, while men dominate the public sphere.

In addition to the existing tropes found in media when it comes to gender, the use of language must not go unexamined when we talk about these preconceived notions. Language in media is not only influential to the societal conception of gender roles but also specifies society's expectations over individuals depending on their gender. The language used to describe female characters in advertisements, news broadcasts, and television programs often accents their physical beauty, nurturing abilities, and role as caretakers, while the vocabulary used to describe men is far more aggressive, authoritative, and related to leadership and decision-making. This distinction in language illustrates the false scenario in which men are active agents in the world while women are passive subjects retired to home and servitude. Such critical reading of the language in media, in turn, enables us to gauge better the socialization systems, their institutionalization, and processes of reinforcing normatively gendered scripts through media. With the growing importance of social media platforms, new opportunities exist to challenge established conventions. However, the language often resonates with fixed gender constellations, denoting the slow process of reconstructing gender through media.

Cultural Bias Against Women in Moroccan Proverbs

Potential data	Codes	Theme
A woman's voice should be silent.	Silencing – Suppression – Marginalization – invisibility – Subjugation – Muted – Oppression	Cultural Bias Against Women in Moroccan Proverbs
The man is the head of the household. Women are like children; they need guidance.	Command – Ascendancy – Order – Direction Patriarchy – Subordination – Guidance – Dependency – Inferiority – Control	

The data reveal cultural biases reflected in some Moroccan proverbs that contribute to sustaining gender inequity, as well as the relegation of women to a secondary position in society. Participant 3, for example, highlighted the oppressive nature of certain proverbs by noting, "A woman's voice should be silenced, it suggests she is not entitled to have an opinion or be heard. This goes hand in hand with a famous Moroccan proverb: "El-mra hiya qfel elbi:t "(A woman is a key to her house), which, while alluding to a woman being the x-factor in the home, simultaneously restricts her to it, jailing her voice and autonomy outside".

This aligns with codes of suppression, silencing, and marginalization, whereby a woman's role is forcibly reduced to maintaining order within the home, thus consolidating her subservience. Participant 1 said, "There is this idea that women are like children and need to be guided at all times, which makes it and them look inferior and infantile". "We have a saying that 'El-mra rrba3 39el' (A woman is a quarter of an intellect) and 'El-mra ness 39el' (A woman is half a brain) are all taking us down to being just incomplete beings. These sayings illustrate the pervasive cultural bias against women, with men and women alike viewing them as lesser and subservient to the family and society".

Cultural bias towards women is deeply rooted in the ancient rules and beliefs that govern gender relations in Moroccan culture. Women are

consistently assigned lower-tier duties in both public and private spaces, with their roles generally undervalued. Through language and societal norms, this cultural bias is maintained, as women are expected to take care of the home and raise the family. At the same time, men are viewed as the primary decision-makers and providers. Women's opinions are often silenced or dismissed, especially in society and work, which reinforces the idea of how women are inferior to men. The clear path to such an ideal future is only articulated in the framework of patriarchal social organization, thus placing an obstacle to women's escape from domesticity. The persistence of cultural prejudices shows why that goal remains out of reach despite the increased visibility of women's activism and improvements in education and working conditions. These deep-seated mindsets must be addressed to foster a more fair, liberating, and equal society.

Social Media: Empowering Women and Challenging Stereotypes

Potential data	Codes	Theme
Women Sharing Their Stories on social media	Empowerment – Articulation – Narratives – Connection – Prominence – Advocacy	Social Media: Empowering Women and Challenging Stereotypes
Online platforms allow us to challenge stereotypes	Digital Independence and Stereotype Displacement – Social Media as Change Agent – Online Platform Challenge of Norms – Digital spaces help to redefine identity; online activism against stereotypes; social media breaks down barriers.	
Social media gives us a voice that society denies.	Digital Emancipation and Marginalized Speaking Voices – social media as a Literary Platform for Expression – Addressing Social Exclusion Using Technology – Rising Voices in the Digital Age-shattering silence with social media – Online Platforms' Power for Reform in Society	

The data reveals the significant power of social media to uplift women and challenge traditional practices. Participant 6 explained, "Social media gives us a voice that society often takes away from us". This highlights the digital freedom women gain through online platforms, enabling them to share their stories, voice their beliefs, and connect with more significant demographics. Participant 3 said, "These platforms allow us to challenge stereotypes and showcase our true selves". This demonstrates how social media acts as a powerful change agent, deconstructing normative barriers, reshaping identity, and facilitating a web-based activism system. Taken together, these insights show how digital platforms have the power to amplify marginalized voices, facilitate advocacy, and reshape social norms.

Through social media, Moroccan women have found a powerful platform to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes, giving them a space to voice their opinions and share their stories. Women have bypassed traditional media, specializing in framing women according to passive domestic models since social media allows access to a broader demographic. By creating an ecosystem of activism where women have been able to participate in conversations about gender equality, share personal stories, and push for empowerment, digital platforms have emerged as powerful spaces high in advocacy. Digital liberation has reshaped societal perceptions, giving voice to women who provide counter-narratives and challenge biases perpetuated by mainstream media. Also, the anonymity and widespread availability of social media significantly empowered women to voice previously repressed issues and, as such, made it a critical tool in propelling social change and establishing a more inclusive environment. However, while social media offers a substantial potential for empowerment, it also presents challenges, from online abuse to the spread of disinformation, requiring constant monitoring and intervention.

Gender Bias and Educational Curriculum

Potential data	Codes	Theme
Textbooks show boys as doctors and girls as nurses	Gender Stereotyping in Education - Traditional Gender Roles - Textbook Bias - Gendered Career Representations - Educational Gender Inequality	Gender Bias and Educational Curriculum
Stories in schoolbooks rarely have strong female characters	Female Character Underrepresentation - Gender Bias in Education - Stereotyped Female Roles - Lack of Female – Empowerment - Gendered Narrative Structures	
Girls are encouraged to pursue less demanding careers	Gendered Career Expectations - Educational Gender Bias - Career Segregation - Traditional Gender Roles in Employment - Female Career Limitations	

There is a great deal of gender bias in the school curriculum, as traditional prejudice affects students' perception of gender roles and job aspirations. In this regard, participant 2 stated, "Boys, for example, are shown in textbooks as doctors or engineers, while girls are shown as nurses or teachers; this sends a message about proper careers for each gender". This reflects the common bias in textbooks that strengthens traditional gender roles and maintains the differences in job goals. Participant 5 commented, "Educational texts narratives do not have strong female characters; women characters are primarily secondary or passive. Narratives that lack empowered female characters limit girls' ambition and self-efficacy". Further, the school system often encourages girls to go on to less demanding or traditional "female" careers by the preconceived notions of women belonging in supporting roles, not managing. These activities are another example of how gendered narrative frameworks and curricular design maintain inequity for individual students by constraining their agency.

Gender bias in the Moroccan school curriculum persists, as textbooks often represent males in leadership roles and females in household duties. Such stereotypes create biases on occupations and societal positions and restrict what women can aspire to be. We also know that lacking strong, diverse female role models within materials increases gender inequity. Despite some progress, these biases continue to shape students' understanding of gender roles. Reforms are needed to include gender-sensitive material that endows an equitable image and makes both genders more proficient in different professions away from their rigidly designed roles. All these ideas are summarized in the following map:

Introduction to the intersection of language, media, and education in Moroccan society

Overview of gender bias and its impact on empowerment

Gender bias in language: The use of gender-specific language and linguistic structures that reinforce traditional gender roles.

Gender bias in media: Portrayal of women and men in stereotypical roles, objectification of women, and limited representation of diverse gender identities.

Gender bias in education: Unequal access to education, limited representation of women in academic subjects and leadership positions, and perpetuation of gender stereotypes through educational materials.

Impact on empowerment: Reinforcement of unequal power dynamics, limitations on individual potential, and hindered progress towards gender equality.

Language, Media, and Education: Unpacking Gender Bias and Empowerment in Moroccan Society

Examination of the role of language in perpetuating gender bias

Analysis of how media influences perceptions of gender roles and empowerment

Discussion of the role of education in challenging gender bias and promoting empowerment

Conclusion with potential strategies for addressing gender bias and promoting empowerment through language, media, and education
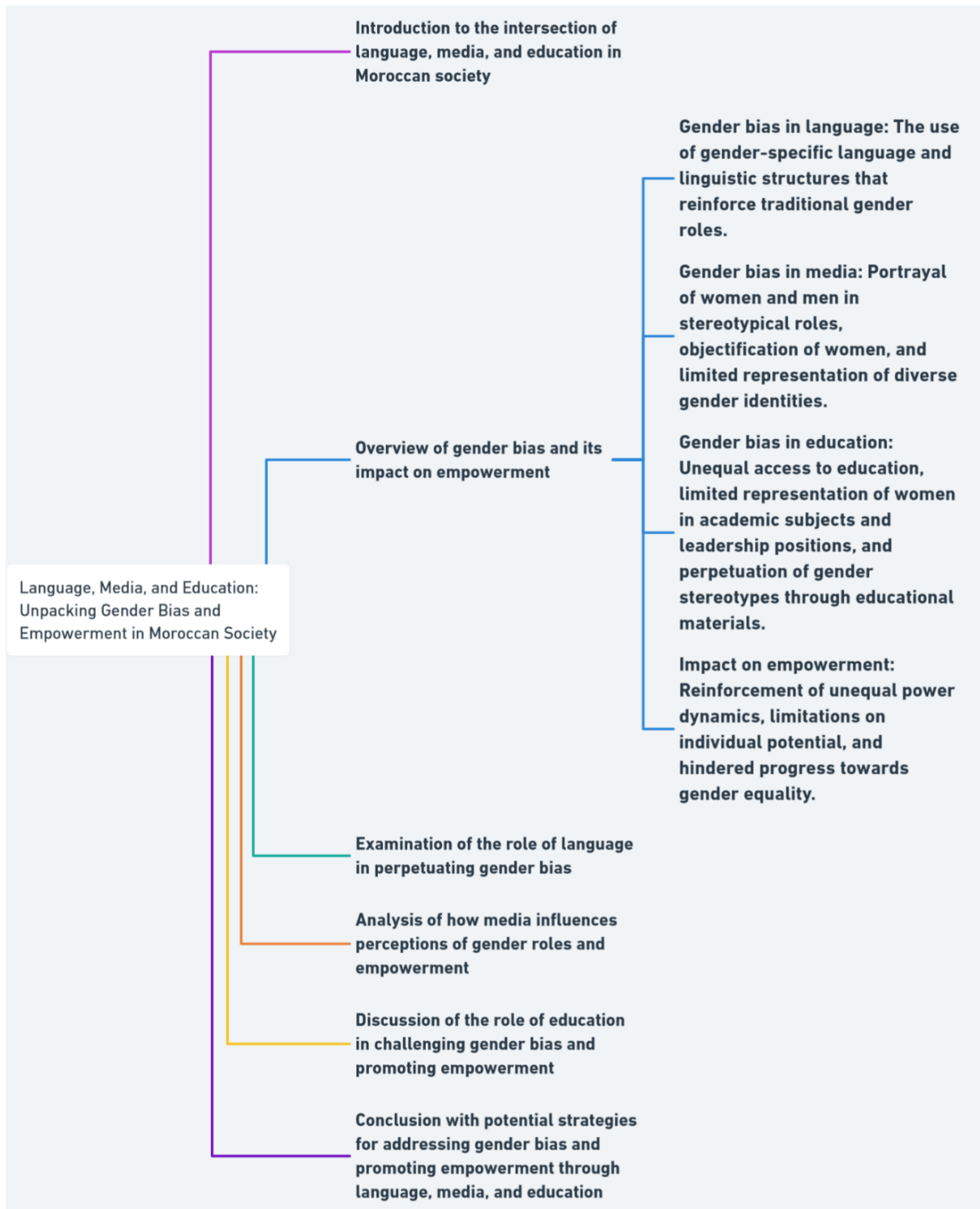
Figure 1. Language, Media, and Education: Unpacking Gender Bias and Empowerment in Moroccan Society

In Morocco, language is an essential tool for establishing male power and birthing gender norms rooted in the historical and cultural contexts of the monarchy (Sadiqi, 20025). Many proverbs, idioms, and colloquial expressions celebrate male power while marginalizing women, sonorously embedding patriarchal values in everyday language.

For example, "El-mra mahrouma walakin mat3aycha "a woman is deprived but still manages to live" emphasizes the idea of women as inferior while legitimizing the role of men. Such language use also stands as a symbol of deeper societal hierarchies, echoing patterns of a systemic

patriarchal society felt throughout Moroccan culture.

Language sustains male superiority in public discourse and could be used against women, too. Males are often trained to have an assertive and enforcing approach, specifically in public spaces, while females are expected to keep silent and fragile (Guennoun & Guennoun, 2024). In mixed-gender dialogues, men tend to interrupt and monopolize, silencing women's voices or reducing them to the role of being a spare part. This dynamic dismisses women in direct interactions and reinforces a narrative that centers male points of view as superior to those of women.

Specific languages in Morocco are given preference over others, creating a linguistic hierarchy that deepens inequalities in gender relations. MSA and French are seen as prestigious languages, often used by men to dominate in the professional and political spheres. On the other hand, women are more likely to use Moroccan Arabic or Amazigh languages, which have lower prestige in formal contexts. This creates a hierarchical linguistic structure that mirrors the power dynamics in society, restricting women's access to powerful domains and reinforcing their second-class citizenry.

These trends are reinforced by educational institutions and media perpetuating traditional gender norms through discourse and representation. Textbooks especially those related to science and mathematics place a disproportionate emphasis on the accomplishments of males as innovators and leaders. At the same time, most women are represented in caregiving or household roles (Ait Bouzid, 2019). Women are often shown in the domestic sphere, while men are presented as the providers and the decision-makers (Razkane, 2021). Such storytelling contributes to the collective imagination of youth, reinforcing the premise of societal expectations and norms and deepening the challenge of gendered representations intertwined in language and customary practices (Melki & Mallat, 2019).

Despite these limitations, feminist collectives and online platforms are shifting the conversation about language and gender in Morocco. Gradually, activists and intellectuals have called for language practice changes within education programs to promote gender equality (Ennaji, 2016). This has led to social media becoming a vitally important platform for Moroccan women to respond against prejudices and to enhance the notion of inclusivity, as they have been exposed to (Houki et al, 2023). Women have instrumentalized platforms like Facebook and Instagram to share their stories, foster dialogue, and create solidarity, thus creating a counter-narrative to the dominant gender norms presented through language (Bernardi, 2019).

This transition is not limited to digital platforms, as seen in grassroots language fairness initiatives. Efforts to offer gender-sensitive educational materials and challenge patriarchal language norms are clearing the ground. These activities mark an acknowledgment of the role of language in the constitution of cultural norms and a commitment to working against the construction of systems that reproduce a male-dominant society. The activists' push for inclusive language use represents a broader struggle for social justice, and it highlights the role played by language as a site of both resistance and empowerment.

The findings align with existing literature outlining the contradictory role of language, acting as an instrument of oppression and simultaneous resistance. While linguistic practices have long served to sustain male hegemony, a growing awareness of these issues and an increasing impetus for change point to a potential paradigmatic shift. Cultural, institutional, and linguistic factors perpetuating gendered power relations must be addressed to enable a more equitable society. Thus, by recognizing and changing the effect of language on the dynamics of gender, the Moroccan state helps build a world where all voices are valued equally (Buchanan, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Through thematic analysis, this study elucidates how language not only enacts but entrenches male dominance and affects gender relations in Morocco, showing how linguistic practices reflect and reinforce patriarchal precepts in different spheres. Qualitative interviews were conducted with six Moroccan English teachers, which showed that language plays an important role in maintaining traditional gender roles by silencing the female voice and marginalizing women. The study also suggested an increased resistance, especially through digital means, where women use

language to challenge assumptions and promote gender rights.

Despite providing valuable insight, this study has limitations, such as a limited sample size of six teachers, which might not effectively capture the diversity of voices in the Moroccan education sector. Future research could address this limitation by expanding the sample to include a more significant number of instructors and by exploring gendered language habits across disciplines. In addition, exploring the long-term effects some digital platforms have on gender relations in the Moroccan context would also provide valuable insight into the way specific online spaces can fashion reoccurring ideas and attitudes prevalent in society itself. By encouraging inclusive language education and gender perspective, Morocco can take giant steps toward an egalitarian society.

This necessitates the incorporation of gender-inclusive pedagogy in teacher training programs, facilitating classroom discussions on linguistic biases, and advancing critical media literacy to confront digital gender stereotypes. Policymakers should endorse programs that amplify women's voices in educational and digital domains, fostering a more fair language environment. Moreover, curriculum revisions must integrate texts and resources that reflect multiple gender viewpoints, and awareness campaigns should be initiated to emphasize the influence of language in forming societal norms. Cooperative initiatives among educators, academics, and civil society organizations will foster sustainable transformation.

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