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Students' Perspectives of Power and Gendered Discourse in Moroccan EFL Classrooms- Fez Meknes Academy as a Case Study

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ABSTRACT

In Moroccan secondary schools, EFL classrooms serve as significant environments for the development of identity, expression, and engagement. However, not much has looked at how students view the gendered character of authority and classroom discourse. This research explores how gender influences classroom participation in Moroccan EFL classes, with an emphasis on students' experiences, interpretations, and resistance to gendered interactions with the teacher. Drawing on qualitative data from 30 hours of classroom observation, six-gender segregated focus groups, and a supplementary questionnaire administrated to 80 students in public secondary schools in the region of Fez- Meknes, Morocco, the study examines how students interpret differences in who speaks, who dominates discussions, and how teachers react to students of different genders. Findings demonstrate that many students are well conscious of the power dynamics present in class discussions. Boys claim to be under pressure to demonstrate dominance and superiority in class debates, whereas girls frequently share stories of being ignored in conversations or subjected to harsher criticism for speaking directly. Language hierarchy and societal standards unique to Morocco's postcolonial and multilingual culture, in addition to gender customs, influence these impressions. This study presents an unusual perspective on gender and language in education by emphasizing student viewpoints rather than only analysing the teacher's behaviour and action. It urges the creation of more inclusive classroom practices that acknowledge and question gendered power relations in English learning contexts, as well as a reconsideration of educational approaches that accidentally promote unequal speaking rights.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, there has been increased focus on how classroom discourse influences and reinforces students' identities, participation pattern, and social hierarchies, especially that

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pertaining to gender. As the main form of communication in the classroom, language not only conveys knowledge but also creates and controls identity, authority, and social relations. Although gendered patterns of speaking, taking turns, and feedback tend to be disregarded in educational settings, they have a significant impact on students' experiences, self-confidence and academic involvement.

In Morocco, the EFL classroom is often portrayed by diverse intersections between gender, linguistic ideology, and social expectations. The EFL classroom offers a unique setting for examining the ways in which gender interacts with power and participation, as Moroccan classrooms are influenced by postcolonial legacies, multilingual reality, and changing gender norms. Even though national educational reforms have sought to advance equity and inclusion, gender differences still exist in students' discursive practices and classroom involvement. Whereas boys may be commended for their courage and verbal risk-taking, girls may be praised for their discipline and quiet. Invisible biases are left unchecked, nevertheless, because these dynamics are rarely challenged or explored in curriculum design or teacher training.

Prior research on gender and language in education has mostly emphasized issues such as curriculum content, academic achievement, teacher behaviour, and access to schooling. However, not much is known about the actual language used within the classroom and how students themselves perceive gendered classroom discourse patterns, particularly in Moroccan public secondary schools. This gap is substantial, especially in language classes where spoken involvement and engagement are crucial to learning objectives.

Engaging with scholarship that views voice, gender, and discourse as socially and ideologically produced rather than neutral linguistic phenomena is essential to understanding how gendered power relations are implemented through classroom discourse. As a result, the literature evaluation follows three interrelated lines. It first looks at theoretical and empirical research on women's voice in language, highlighting how sociolinguistic and feminist frameworks have historically assessed, controlled, and gendered speech. Second, it focuses on studies of language, gender, and classroom discourse, emphasizing how peer-interaction, teacher-feedback, turn-taking, and participation serve as venues for the negotiation of power and inequality in educational environments. In a nutshell, combining research on gender, education, and discourse in sociocultural contexts influenced by multilingualism, postcolonial legacies, and changing gender norms, the review places these conversations within MENA region. Together, these strands offer the theoretical framework for examining how Moroccan secondary EFL students perceive power and gendered discourse.

1.1 Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the intricate interrelationships among language, gender, and power in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms in Moroccan public secondary schools. The research is driven by the rising recognition that classroom discourse serves as a place for production, reinforcement, and contestation of social identities, hierarchies, and gendered expectations in addition to being a pedagogical instrument for language acquisition. With its multilingualism, postcolonial influences, and developing gender conventions, Morocco makes the classroom an example of larger social dynamics. In order to create more inclusive and equitable teaching methods, it is mandatory to comprehend how students view and interpret these relationships.

By emphasizing student voices and the lived experiences, this paper will attempt to contribute to the existing literature on language, gender, and power in educational contexts. The current literature reveals a gap concerning the Academy of Fez-Meknes, where no studies have

systematically explored student perception of gendered classroom discourse or their recognition of inequalities in participation and teacher attention in English classrooms. This study pursues the following objectives. It seeks to investigate how male and female students view and understand dominance, interference, and interaction patterns in EFL class debates. Moreover, it explores the methods in which instructors' answers, whether verbal, non-verbal, or attitude based, may either support or contradict gendered norms and stereotypes. Furthermore, the study attempts to find out how Moroccan society as a whole shapes students' conceptions of speech behaviours, such as being aggressive, silent, or obedient, and how they absorb or challenge these social meanings. Besides, it analyzes how gender dynamics and language hierarchy interact, particularly in Morocco's multilingual and postcolonial educational environment. Last but not least, this research targets to offer pedagogical and policy focused suggestions and recommendations for encouraging inclusive teaching methods and gender-equitable classroom participation and involvement in Moroccan EFL contexts.

The focus of this research is purposefully limited to public secondary schools in Morocco's Fez- Meknes region, which provides socio-economic and linguistic diversity typical of Moroccan public education. Eighty questionnaire respondents, six gender- segregated focus groups, classroom observations were used to gather data from mixed-gender courses in various grade levels. Due to their communicative nature and frequent opportunities for student-teacher contact and conversation, English language classrooms were chosen as the main observation site. The findings provide crucial insights into how gendered power relations appear in regular classroom discussion, even though they cannot be applied to all Moroccan schools. The study attempts to present a contextualized knowledge of how EFL classrooms reflect and affect social attitudes regarding gender, authority, and participation, rather than offering a comparison analysis across all regions or educational streams. By emphasizing the need for gender- sensitive pedagogy and the development of more equal spaces for student voice and engagement, the research's conclusions can assist guide teacher training programs, classroom practices, and educational policy in Morocco.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Woman's Voice in Language

A listener can make assumptions about a speaker's personality by hearing their voice. For instance, someone with a lower voice pitch is seen as more capable and reliable than someone with a higher pitch. On the other hand, women with higher vocal pitches are perceived as having a friendlier disposition than those with lower pitch (Oleszkiewicz et al., 2017). In conversations, a speaker's voice can be modified based on the situation of the conversation. When speaking to new-borns, for example, women have been found to use "motherese," which is slower speech pace, a greater pitch range, expanded intonation contours, and a higher voice pitch than when speaking to adults, and it has been demonstrated that this phenomena is common in both traditional and Western civilizations (Broesch and Bryant, 2015).

Jespersen Otto (1921) was the first to try to define differences in the use of vocabulary in his book: "Language, Its Nature, Development, and Origin." In this book, he dedicated a chapter called "The Woman", in which he made several claims about her language, among these allegations such as: **"**The vocabulary of women is much less than that of men. Women use adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns more widely than men. Her sentences are also less complicated than men."

According to an experimental study using an extensive number of Arabic novels written by both men and women, men's linguistic output is four times greater than women's. The fact that men produced 2,145,071 words while women produced 678,430 words actually indicates that women's vocabulary is significantly smaller than men's (Alalfy, 2022). However, if Jespersen was right and the empirical study supported it, then the same research refuted his assertion that women use pronouns more frequently than men. In the same study, we discovered that men produced 30,804 pronouns, compared to 7,094 for women, indicating that men were four times more numerous than women.

While the feminist movement's scholars heavily condemned Jespersen for his assertions in the chapter "The Woman," they unjustly embraced Lakoff's work. One of the researchers who was most impacted by Jespersen's work was Lakoff, who worked to identify several linguistic characteristics of women's language that, in her opinion, explain why women lack confidence and are less accurate. These characteristics are presented as follows: “Frequent use of hedging terms such as: you see, sort of, you know. Frequent use of adjectives empty of meaning, such as: cute. Accuracy in identifying colors. Avoid strong swear words. Emphatic stress, like pressing a word within a phrase: it was a BRILLIANT performance” (Lakoff, 1973). This is what Lakoff decided about women’s language, the woman utilizes intensifiers to make the listener take her comments seriously while also using hedging phrases to make the listener doubt what she is saying. She hedges and uses a lot of intensifiers, which is a sign of a loss of confidence, because she believes the recipient does not take her words seriously or listen to what she has to say.

But the problem of identifying characteristics unique to women's language did not end with Jespersen or Lakoff and her theory of women's helpless and men's dominance. Instead, Holmes, (1998) presented a number of statements about women's language, which he entitled "Sociolinguistic Universal Tendencies." A few of these claims are as follows: men and women have developed different patterns of language use. When trading, women are more likely than males to concentrate on emotional processes. Compared to men, women are more likely to employ language that stresses harmony and unity. Men typically interact in ways that maintain and expand their authority, particularly in formal settings, whereas women typically interact in ways that maintain and strengthen solidarity. Compared to men, women's styles are more adaptable.

The viewpoint known as difference feminism had a particularly significant impact on research at this time, resulting in binary accounts of linguistic gender that emphasized the differences between the speech of men and women. These stories provided a significant feminist reinterpretation of early twentieth-century anthropological work on women's languages and men's languages, despite being harshly condemned by later researchers operating within a performative model of language and gender.

Identity characteristics are studied by conversation analysts in relation to social interactions that naturally occur (Benwell 2006; and Stokoe 2016). This makes conversation analysis the opposite of any method that begins with a category, such as man, woman, gay man, lesbian, or bisexual, and the analyses language based on the idea that the category is fundamentally related to the language that is generated. Therefore, conversation analysts look at how speakers invoke, bring attention to, claim, resist, and so on the significance of being a “X”, where “X” is any identity category membership (Speer and Stokoe, 2011), rather than analysing distinctions between language style, vocabulary, or interactions according to gender, as an illustration, Lakoff 1973, on women’s language) or sexuality, like Leap, 1996, on gay men’s English.

Some academics address the issue of difference by looking at the performance of identity categories instead. As Janet Holmes (2007: 52) mentioned, “the field of language and gender

was engulfed in a wave of social constructionism" in the middle 1990s, emphasizing the way identity is an "emergent product rather than the pre-existing source of linguistic and other semiotic practices" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005: 588). The social constructionist foundations of this work are largely found in postmodernism, post-structuralism, and literary theory; examples of this include Foucault (1972), Butler (1990), and Bauman (2004), who prominently reference the language of discourse and performativity.

2.2 Language, Gender, and Classroom Discourse

The primary focus of educational research is unavoidably learning, which is frequently operationalized as achievement, or the assessment of learning outcomes in particular student populations. Relative gender advantage in academic accomplishment has been the subject of cyclical debates over the past few decades; at times, females are viewed as less successful, while at other times, boys are (Davies, 2003). There are aspirations that educators will one day get it right, reconcile conflicting gender demands, and accomplish equity for all. Such aspirations lead to research, and a large portion of educational research on gender looks at linguistic practices because language mediates so much of schooling and identity development.

Given the variety of educational environments found throughout the world and the fact that gender is always performed within a sociocultural context, we also acknowledge a range of perspectives on how to interpret language and gender. Such was the case in 2005 when Cameron noted that, "a paradigm organized around the concept of binary gender difference" (Cameron 2005).

Researchers have refocused their efforts to understand how aspects of identity, such as ethnicity, class, or sexual orientation, intersect with gender to create or limit learning opportunities. This theoretical shift does not imply that researchers believe that the impact of sexist practices on learning has decreased globally. In their 2003 introduction to language and gender studies, Cameron, Eckert, and McConnell-Ginet contend that the discourse turn in language studies and the performance turn in gender studies, theoretical approaches that see gender as constantly changing in a fluid relationship with linguistic practices in particular social contexts, have supplanted earlier dominance and difference approaches. In her discussion of gender and language classroom research issues, Sunderland (2000) reanalyzed and re-theorized some of the classroom data she had previously used to highlight differences between male and female students. In her updated analysis, she shows how gendered performances varied within groups, pointing out that one boy in particular, not all boys in general, had captured the teacher's attention during the observed lesson.

Academics believe that understanding language and identity production across social sectors requires an explicit theorization of gender variety, and we also firmly believe that social context is essential. However, after reviewing research on language and gender in education and making an effort to fairly depict global trends, they are unable to claim that the research has advanced smoothly in the manner that language and gender theorists have argued, moving from earlier studies based on paradigms of dominance and difference to more recent studies that look at gender diversity (Cameron 2005; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003).

2.3 Gender and Classroom Discourse in the MENA Region

The significance of intersectional analysis that is comprehending how gender interacts with other social categories (such us, class, language proficiency, ethnicity, and socio-economic status), to shape students' opportunities to participate, be recognized as legitimate speakers in educational settings, has been emphasized more and more in recent literature on gender and

classroom discourse. Research on gender and classroom discourse in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) emphasizes how sociocultural norms, educational resources, and teacher-student interaction patterns all have a significant impact on how gendered involvement is formed in educational institutions. According to a recent thorough analysis of gender dynamics in classroom interactions, teachers frequently show unconscious discrimination by giving male students more attention and giving them more control over class discussion, while female students often become less noticeable in participation patterns (Mamnoun & Nfissi, 2023).

Language textbooks used in Egypt, Iran, Iraq (Kurdistan), Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates exhibit gender imbalances in visual and textual content, depicting males in dominant roles and females in more stereotypical roles, according to studies on educational materials throughout the Middle East. This pattern affects how students view gender-appropriate involvement and authority in classroom interactions (Dahmardeh et al., 2025). Critical discourse analysis of EFL textbooks in the Saudi context revealed that female characters were consistently underrepresented and portrayed in traditional roles, enhancing sociocultural norms that prioritize male voices and leadership, a problem that students may accept in their interactions with one another (Altamimi, 2025). The larger field of educational research highlights how gender differences are mirrored not just in resources but also in interactional norms and student participation, even though direct studies that replicate real classroom conversation in MENA schools are still in their early stages.

For instance, studies on gender influence in digital discourse environments, such as computer-mediated communication studies, suggest that female learners may produce different discourse functions than male learners. This finding is pertinent to understanding participation patterns in both online and in-person EFL contexts (Bani Younes et al., 2023). Although there aren't many MENA-specific empirical studies on teacher-student discussion in the classroom, relevant research from nearby educational settings adds to the body of knowledge on regional discourse. Research on classroom interactions in Bangladesh, for instance, shows that female students frequently defy male-dominant participation norms and find it difficult to negotiate their communicative identities within conventional classroom structures. This dynamic is pertinent to gendered participation issues in MENA settings (Akther, 2023).

Although there has been some recent research focusing on the same subject in Morocco stressing the gender differences in EFL learning and achievement (e.g. Hdii & Fagroud, 2018; Brigui, 2017), the phenomenon of gender differences in relation to language learning is still in its initial stages. Recent empirical research from Morocco assembles on the conclusion that gendered norms are produced, questioned, and negotiated in classroom discourse. Researchers contend that academic studies of Moroccan EFL textbooks regularly reveal stereotyped and underrepresented depictions of women, which influence students' perceptions of what constitutes and authoritative or legitimate speaker in the classroom. These studies of textbooks demonstrate how tasks and pictures often replicate established gender norms, and they draw the conclusion that curriculum materials constitute a significant structural layer influencing classroom interaction (Benlaghrissi, 2023).

By demonstrating how teacher speaking and interactional practices affect participation patterns, classroom-level empirical research supplement textbook analysis. Teachers' elicitation techniques, feedback methods, and turn-allocation procedures have a tangible impact on who talks and whose contributions are accepted, according to observation-based and mixed-methods research conducted in Moroccan classrooms. More assertive students, typically boys, tend to obtain floor control when professors use unclear uptake or favour

informal prompts; girls' visible participation increases when teachers utilize explicit turn-taking or targeted encouragement. These results suggest that teacher mediation is a space for prejudice as well as a potent change agent (Benattabou, Khoumich & Kanoubi, 2021).

The intersection of culture, religion, and politics in Morocco creates a complex landscape for addressing gender inequality. It is important to consider the cultural and religious context of Morocco when advocating for gender equality to ensure that interventions are culturally sensitive and effective. Specifically, Sadiqi emphasizes how cultural narratives serve as potent agents, perpetuating stereotypes that influence people's perceptions of themselves as well as larger society values (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 2014). Through current educational policies, Morocco has taken multiple initiatives to activate the gender approach in the educational field under national public policy commitments in this regard.

The Strategic Vision for Educational Reform 2015–2030, which highlighted the dissemination of the ideals of justice, fairness, and equal opportunities as fundamental factors for the achievement of gender rights and equality, served as the foundation for these activities. These programs also follow Framework Law 51.17, which outlines the fundamental goals of state policy in this area as well as the key principles upon which the system of training, education, and scientific research is established. These targets were also embraced in the development model 2021–2035. Based on this, educational public policy initiatives were eager to embrace an integrated strategy that rejects all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination and works to advance justice and equality in order to establish equal opportunities for men and women.

In order to question prevailing gender stereotypes and power dynamics, a number of research have suggested implementing critical pedagogy in Moroccan educational contexts. The research' explanation of these teaching methods emphasizes the value of pedagogical strategies that promote fair learning and challenge cultural norms, highlighting critical pedagogy as a driving force for social justice in Moroccan schools. (Bendraou and Sakale, 2024; Mechouat, 2017). Teacher educators, teacher trainees, and all teacher practitioners should be knowledgeable with the resources and content pertinent to civic-oriented education in order to guarantee a successful execution of the civics program and effective reinforcement of engagement and gender-sensitive values (Mechouat, 2017).

Taken together, these MENA- related studies indicate that local cultural values, educational practices, and institutional norms have a significant influence on gender and classroom discourse. The evidence from textbook analyses, thorough reviews, and related regional studies highlights ongoing disparities in participation, attention, and representation, even though there is still a research gap in direct observational analyses of classroom talk in schools throughout the MENA region. This emphasizes the need for further empirical studies of classroom discourse that take into account not just who speaks but also how and why conversation patterns are influenced by gendered norms. The intersectional approach, which holds that gender interacts with institutional, linguistic, and cultural elements to shape classroom discourse dynamics, is further supported by these observations.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Approach

In order to examine how gendered power relations are created, understood, and perpetuated through classroom discourse in Moroccan public secondary schools, this study uses a qualitative, interpretive research approach. Students' lived experiences and meaning-making processes about who speaks, who is heard, and how speech is assessed in terms of gender are

intended to be highlighted. Exploring the complicated, situational dynamics of classroom discourse and student perspectives that may not be adequately represented by statistical measures is a speciality of qualitative approaches. The contextual, relational, and interactional aspects of classroom speech that are frequently missed by strictly quantitative measurements are best captured by a qualitative approach. Incorporating a questionnaire fulfils an additional and investigative function, providing more comprehensive contextual patterns without suggesting statistical generalization or casual inference.

Thematic analysis was used to examine all qualitative data, including focus group transcripts, observation notes, and open-ended questionnaire responses. There were three steps in the coding process. In order to find recurrent themes and interactional patterns without imposing predefined categories, an open coding phase was first carried out which involved going line by line through the data. During the axial coding step that followed, these initial codes were arranged into more general conceptual categories such as peer dominance, gendered recognition, selective encouragement. Besides, feminist discourse analysis and sociolinguistic theories of language and power were used to refine these categories into analytically coherent themes. These categories, which included recognition versus mere participation, institutional versus peer-based power, internalized gender expectations, and the negotiation of communicative identity, were combined into broad themes during the final interpretive phase of the study. Theoretically, this phased analytic method remained established in critical and feminist understandings of language, power, and identity while allowing themes to develop inductively from participant testimonies.

In order to improve analytic credibility, the study used peer checking processes instead of statistical measures of inter-coder reliability, which are less compatible with interpretive qualitative research. A peer researcher with experience in qualitative and gender-focused research independently examined a portion of the data. Two phases of peer checking were carried out to increase credibility: first, mid- analysis review: about 20% of the qualitative dataset was examined independently by a peer researcher. Second, stage of theme validation; the peer questioned category boundaries and interpretations while examining the developing topic structure. The goal was to assure thematic coherence, decrease individual bias, and improve analytic transparency rather than to generate numerical inter-coder agreement. Consistent discourse was used to discuss and refine coding categories and emergent topics, and disagreements were settled by consensus. This procedure ensured that interpretations were based on the facts, sharpened topic boundaries, and challenged researcher presumptions.

3.2 Research Sites and Sampling Frame

The research was conducted in ten public secondary schools located in both urban and rural areas in the region of Fez- Meknes, Morocco. These schools were purposively selected to capture variation in socio-economic and linguistic environments, while remaining representative of the broader public school sector. All schools follow the national curriculum and operate under the Ministry of National Education. Participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling to ensure representation of diverse student voices across gender, grade level, and participation profiles.

The study involved, first classroom observations, which were conducted in 15 mixed-gender classes across grades common core to 2nd year baccalaureate (approximately 35- 40 students per class). Besides, focus group discussions of six single-gender focus groups with students aged 15- 20 (3 groups of girls, 3 groups of boys, with 6- 8 participants each). In addition, a questionnaire was administered to 80 students (40 male and 40 female) from public secondary schools in the Fez-Meknes region to capture broader perceptions and supplement

the qualitative data. The demographic characteristics of the questionnaire participants are presented in Table 1. Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent from students and, where necessary, their guardians. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Questionnaire Participants (N=80)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	40	50
	Male	40	50
Age	13 - 17	33	41
	17-21	42	52
	Over 21	5	7
School location	Urban	47	59
	Rural	22	27
	Semi-urban	5	6
Educational level	Common Core	2	2
	1st Year Baccalaureate	29	36
	2nd Year Baccalaureate	41	51

A total of 30 hours of non-participant classroom observations were conducted in English lessons. Interactional patterns, including who speaks, taking turns, interrupts, instructor distribution of speaking rights, body language, and forms of praise or punishment, were recorded using an observation procedure. An observation approach was used to document interactional patterns, such as who speaks, taking turns, interrupting, the distribution of speaking rights by the instructor, body language, and forms of reward or punishment. The observed school site and classroom characteristics are displaced in Table 2.

Table 2: Observed School Site and Classroom Characteristics

Characteristic	Description
Number of schools	10 public secondary schools
Region	Fez-Meknes, Morocco
School location types	Urban, semi-urban, and rural
Classes observed	15 mixed-gender English classes
Grade levels	Common Core to 2nd Year Baccalaureate
Total observation time	30 hours
Class size range	35-40 students

To enhance analytic clarity, key interactional categories were operationalized as follows: speaking turn, which is any undisturbed segment of student speech that consists of at least one clause. An interruption occurs when a speaker's turn is interrupted before it is finished by another speaker, either by express vocal takeover or overlap that redirects the floor. Moreover, evaluation types include neutral acknowledgement, constructive criticism and

positive reinforcement; such as encouragement and praise. Besides, non-verbal validation includes body alignment, eye contact, nodding, and proximity as indicators of interest or acceptance. In addition, the explicit recognition or expansion of a student's contribution by the teacher or peers (e.g., follow-up question, elaboration request, praise, reformulation, or inclusion into lesson content) is known as uptake. Contextual details such as the kind of school (urban, rural, or semi-urban), grade level, gender of the teacher, and the date and the length of the session were provided at the start of each observation.

Table 3: Gendered Classroom Interaction and Acquisition Patterns

Time	Speaker	Gender	Turn type	Interruption	Uptake type	Notes
10:12	Student A	Female	Self-selected	No	Neutral acknowledgment	Short answer, no follow-up
10:14	Student B	Male	Teacher-nominated	No	Follow-up question+ praise	Extended discussion

Recognizing and controlling for researcher bias is crucial given the qualitative nature of this study, especially when it comes to data interpretation and classroom observations. As the main instrument for gathering data, the researcher's expectations, background, and beliefs may affect how classroom dynamics are observed and documented. A number of tactics were employed to reduce this risk. First, following each classroom visit, a reflexive notebook was kept to record individual reflections, new presumptions, and potential biases. As a Moroccan woman researcher observing gendered interactions in familiar cultural and linguistic situations, this technique of self-awareness enabled the researcher to maintain a critical awareness of their positionality. Second, the results were not dependent on a single viewpoint or interpretation thanks to triangulation method across several data sources, including questionnaires, focus groups, and the classroom observations. The results' reliability was reinforced by the agreement of several data methods. Subsequently, in order to minimize subjective interpretation, the researcher employed systematic observation protocols with well-defined categories, such as speaker turns, teacher answers, and interruptions). For the purpose of ensuring that findings represented group trends rather than individual opinions, observations concentrated on detecting patterns rather than assessing specific people. By following these measures, the study aims to preserve openness, reflection, and analytical rigor, which would improve the reliability of the information and the validity of the results reached.

Focus groups with a gender-segregated format were set up to provide a secure space for students to freely consider delicate topics pertaining to classroom discourse. The conversations, which were led by a semi-structured methodology, examined how students perceived their rights to speak, classroom hierarchy, peer evaluations, and instructor reactions. Depending on the students' preferred language of expression, each session lasted 30 to 35 minutes, was audio recorded with their permission, and was held in either English or Moroccan Arabic. In addition, a short questionnaire combining closed and open-ended questions was distributed to 80 students in the Fez-Meknes region. The questionnaire explored how frequently students participated in classroom discussions, whether they felt encouraged or discouraged to speak, and if they believed gender influenced teacher attention, peer reactions, or judgments about behavior and speech. These sets of data have been analyzed using thematic analysis, which is used to find and analyze patterns or themes in a collection of data; it frequently produces fresh perspectives and understanding. Data were analyzed thematically, drawing on feminist discourse analysis principles.

To guarantee variance on important factors that can affect classroom discussions, a purposive sample technique was employed. These factors were teacher gender, class level and school location. To provide for a variety of viewpoints, the selection of participants in schools mixed voluntary sign-up with explicit invitations, in which teachers suggested students who might be suitable candidates for focus groups. The researcher delivered handouts and consent forms to parents and students, explained the study to teachers, and conducted school administrator to secure site permissions. The purpose, voluntary participation, secrecy, and withdrawal right were all described in the information document.

Furthermore, consent and agreement with parental signature for minors, were signed by interested students. Interviews and focus groups were planned to cause the least amount of interruption to school schedules. At the transcribing stage, all data were anonymized by using pseudonyms and deleting identifiable information such as student, teacher, and school names. Participants were informed they could skip questions or end interviews due to the sensitive nature of what was discussed. Furthermore, throughout the data collecting and analysis process, the researcher kept a reflexive notebook to document opinions, presumptions, and potential biases. To reduce subjectivity, systematic observation materials, external coding checks, and peer debriefing sessions were used.

4. Analysis

4.1 Teacher's Influence as the Primary Determinant of Classroom Power and Participation

This theme emphasizes how students believe that the teacher's personality, character, and teaching style are the primary determinants of the power dynamics and degree of gender equality in the classroom. Students frequently point directly to the teacher's behavior when evaluating the level of classroom engagement, the chances for student participation, and the existence or lack of gender bias. Before diving into the participants' perspectives, it is critical to present a summary of the study's sample demographics, which include gender, age group, and educational background, as outlined below:

The questionnaire sample (Ns= 80) is gender balanced, ensuring a range of opinions on students' perspectives of power and gendered discourse in Moroccan English classrooms. Participants represented diverse age groups: about half 52% (n= 42) are "between 17 to 21 years old", 41% (n= 33) are "between the ages of 13 and 17", and 7% (n= 5) are "more than 21". In terms of school context, the majority of urban respondents attended urban schools 59% (n= 47), followed by rural schools 27% (n=27) and a smaller group from semi-urban settings 6% (n= 5). All respondents are enrolled in secondary education: over half 51% (n=41) are in the second year of baccalaureate, 36% (n=29) in the first year, and small proportion in the common core 2% (n=2). These proportions reflect a relatively mature group of EFL learners nearing the end of their secondary studies, capable of reflecting critically on classroom dynamics.

The data suggest a noticeable gendered pattern in classroom oral participation. Among female respondents (N= 40), 32% (n=13) report that they tend to speak frequently during English classes, compared with over a quarter of boys 27% (n=10)**.** Although the difference is not dramatic, it still points to a trend wherein female students are slightly more verbally active in classroom discourse than their male counterparts**.** This may reflect a complex interaction between language-learning motivation, perceived classroom expectations, and gendered performance norms**.**

This finding indicates that students' willingness to speak in English class is strongly shaped by classroom climate and gender dynamics. The majority of students report feeling comfortable participating orally, highlighting the importance of a supportive teacher who fosters a non-judgmental atmosphere and actively encourages self-expression. As one participant noted:

> *"Yes, I feel comfortable speaking in English class because the teacher creates a positive environment and encourages us to express ourselves without fear of making mistakes, which makes me more confident to participate".*

This comment emphasizes how important it is for teachers to foster a culture of trust and language innovation. Students, especially girls, feel more comfortable taking linguistic risks and speaking in front of peers when teachers take a nonjudgmental approach and encourage all contributions. However, not all students share this confidence. A significant minority remain hesitant to speak due to feelings of shyness, nervousness, and fear of negative peer reactions. Some explicitly linked this hesitation to peer dynamics and gendered power relations within the classroom. One female participant, for instance, remarked:

> *"No, I don't, because I have some difficulties like being shy and the boys in my class are dominant they want to control everything".*

This comment highlights how perceived authority, interruption, and social categorization all have an impact on classroom comfort, which is both educational and relational. These gendered views show that social hierarchies are just as important in negotiating participation as language ability.

Some students believe their teachers actively work to create an equitable and inclusive atmosphere, ensuring that all students, regardless of gender, have an opportunity to participate. As a participant stated:

> "*My teacher treats all students equally*."

Another participant added:

> "*My teacher creates an equal environment for both genders*",

These remarks imply that intentional classroom management and teacher knowledge can reduce gender disparity and promote more inclusive engagement. On the other hand, several students feel that teachers are biased, either explicitly or implicitly, which frequently show up as unequal attention, questioning styles, or compliments. According to one participant,

> "*Sometimes, I don't participate when my teacher tends to give more attention to boys in my class.*"

Another observed,

> "*The teacher mostly lets boys answer.*"

These observations suggest that gendered participation norms are either reinforced or challenged by teacher discourse practices, including who is called upon, who receives praise, and whose responses are extended. Female students may internalize a sense of secondary position or choose for silence over perceived competition when attention is directed toward male students.

4.2 Gendered Communication Patterns and Student Self-Censorship

This theme analyzes the various manners in which students' gender and the perceived expectations of their teachers and classmates affect their engagement and communication.

The data suggest that many students, particularly girls, may restrict or modify their involvement in the classroom in response to gendered presumptions. These findings highlight the subtle ways in which self-censorship operates as a learned strategy for navigating unequal interactional spaces.

The data also reveal an uneven distribution of teacher encouragement in English classes. The vast majority of students 61% (n=49) stated that they are regularly encouraged to speak in class, compared to around one quarter 23% (n=18) who claimed they are not encouraged at all and 16% (n=13) who are unsure of the degree of support they receive. Despite the fact that most students feel encouraged, a sizable minority do not, indicating that positive reinforcement is not consistently conveyed. This approach is consistent with classroom observations, where encouragement frequently seemed selective rather than methodical. According to one participant:

> *"No, I don't feel that my teacher encourages all students equally to participate. Some students get more chances to speak, while others, including myself, are often overlooked or not given as many opportunities."*

Beyond teacher influence, peer dynamics also play a decisive role. Several participants noted that male students tend to dominate discussions, taking the floor more frequently and asserting control over class debates. a participant mentioned:

> "*I don't participate sometimes when my classmates especially boys don't let me."*

Another added succinctly:

> "*Boys tend to talk more.*"

These comments highlight how boys' boldness may unintentionally limit female voices in gendered communication hierarchy. Girls frequently carefully balance their desire to participate in class with the possibility of being evaluated or stopped as a result of these interactions. "*I'm shy*" or "*I'm not confident enough*" are common explanations for lesser female engagement, which implies that these feelings are socially conditioned reactions to gendered expectations rather than just personal characteristics.

According to a female participant:

> "*I feel shy when I want to participate in classroom activities with my classmates and I'm a girl."*

This statement captures the relationship between gender identification and emotional experience, showing that shyness may not be a sign of poor language skills but rather an internalized knowledge of unequal power dynamics.

4.3 Educational Spaces as Arenas of Gender Construction

This theme examines how educational settings serve as venues for the construction, negotiation, and occasionally contestation of gender identities and hierarchies. The classroom reflects and replicates larger societal norms rather than functioning in a void. Comments from students show that both educators and students may unknowingly reinforce traditional gender norms, which include that guys should be strong, loud, and dominant and girls should be reserved, modest, and obedient.

The data highlights a clear perception among students that gender influences how speech is received in the classroom, even if opinions are divided. Although about half 45% (n=36) of respondents believe boys and girls are treated *the same* when they speak, over one-third 36% (n=29) feel that they are treated differently, and approximately one in five 18% (n=14) report

that gender sometimes influences teacher reactions. The focus group testimony deepens this insight. One female participant remarked:

> "*When boys speak, they get more attention and encouragement, but girls are sometimes ignored.*"

This statement encapsulates the idea that girls' contributions may be underestimated or ignored while boys' views are given more credibility and acknowledgment. These views highlight the ways in which symbolic power functions in the classroom, where praise and attention are used as instruments to uphold gender norms.

Besides, the data imply that there exist underlying assumptions regarding which gender is better equipped or capable of handling particular academic activities. Although these beliefs are rarely expressed explicitly, patterns of teacher attention suggest their tacit influence. As one participant observed:

> "*Boys mostly answer and the teacher lets them*".

This comment reflects an implicit hierarchy that privileges male voices and reinforces social norms equating authority and intelligence with masculinity. At the same time, students' answers, show a variety of sometimes contradictory views of justice. A majority of students believe that their classrooms are egalitarian, appreciating the efforts made by teachers to allocate attention fairly. However, nearly equal numbers believe there is an imbalance that favors males, indicating that teacher neutrality is perceived differently depending on the specific classroom setting. Perceptions of teacher prejudice tend to favor male students over female ones, as seen by the small minority who stated that girls receive more attention. As one participant stated:

> "*My teacher gives more attention to boys*."

Based on this view, the teacher's attention is a resource that is unevenly divided along gender lines and serves as a sign of power and approval. The pattern aligns with broader societal trends that give masculine perspectives more prominence and power. Ultimately, these findings demonstrate that Moroccan English classrooms, like many other educational settings, are places where gender norms are perpetuated, teaching students implicit lessons about who is expected to lead, speak, and be heard in addition to language skills.

5. Discussion

The present study sheds light on the subtle but persistent gendered dynamics shaping classroom talk within Moroccan secondary EFL settings. The results demonstrate that classroom talk is a gendered performance influenced by expectations, authority, and recognition rather than just being an instructional activity. Girls significantly outnumber boys in self-reported frequent participation (32% vs. 27%), according to questionnaire data, although this picture is complicated by qualitative data from focus groups and classroom observations. Sunderland's (2000) claim that gender disparity in classroom discourse is reinforced not only by speaking time but also by how speech is acknowledged and assessed is supported by the fact that girls' contributions, while there, were frequently described as less visible or less appreciated.

According to Palfreyman's (2006), classroom power functions at the level of reaction and uptake rather than just access to the floor, which is consistent with the obvious conflict between participation frequency and perceived dominance. A number of students observed that while females' contributions were occasionally disregarded, boys' responses tended to receive more attention, follow-up inquiries, or applause. As a result, females' participation

does not always translate into discursive authority, even when they speak. These results highlight the significance of looking at qualitative aspects of contact instead of depending only on quantitative measures of involvement.

Students' desire to talk has been found to be significantly influenced by the classroom setting. Consistent with Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis, students who said they were inspired by their lecturers also showed more assurance and ease when speaking up. In contrast to students who reported shyness, peer judgment, or masculine dominance, those who felt their professors were helpful indicated greater levels of comfort and confidence. This is similar to research by Norton (1995), which contends that power-oppressed classroom interactions are used to negotiate language learner identity, frequently disadvantageously affecting female students in mixed-gender settings.

Another finding that is strongly related to Sadker & Sadker's (1995) concept of the hidden curriculum is the perception of uneven teacher encouragement and attentiveness. While most students said they felt encouraged overall, a sizable minority did not, indicating that encouragement is perceived as selective rather than universal. This impression was supported by observations made in the classroom, which showed that teachers usually relied on a small group of self-assured speakers, often boys, to control class discussion. By giving some speakers more legitimacy than others, such actions, even when unintended, can perpetuate gendered hierarchies of voice and power.

Although peer and teacher-student relationships influence classroom involvement, this study demonstrates that they do so through different but related power dynamics. By dividing speaking turns, asking pertinent inquiries and providing feedback, teachers establish the tone for engagement and apply institutional authority. Teachers perpetuate hidden hierarchies that legitimize male dominance and portray girls as less authoritative speakers when they unintentionally offer boys more attention or praise, as multiple students have described. This result supports Sadker and Sadker's (1994) claim that progressive gender bias results from unequal teacher attention, as males gradually gain more self-assurance and prominence in the classroom. Peer dynamics, on the other hand, have an impact that is based on informal hierarchies, group norms, and social appreciation.

The assertiveness or domination of male peers who "want to control everything" made many female participants feel uncomfortable speaking up. These exchanges show how peers perpetuate more general gendered norms: girls deal with pressure to appear modest or avoid conflict, while boys frequently use authority as social asset. These peer dynamics, which reflect the interrelation of cultural expectations and power negotiations in the classroom, can silence girls even when teachers work to be fair (Norton, 2018; Pavlenko, 2020). In contrast, peer hierarchies are more challenging to control since they represent deeply rooted social norms that extend the classroom, whereas teacher speech patterns can be deliberately changed through awareness and training. However, by establishing rules for participation, stepping in when dominance arises, and elevating marginalized perspectives, the teacher's role in mediating these peer connections is still vital. Since each reinforces or challenges the other in determining who speaks, who listens, and whose voices matter, promoting gender equity in classroom discourse necessitates paying attention to both institutional authority (teacher-student interaction) and social dynamics (peer interaction).

Focus group comments that show how girls occasionally feel underappreciated while boys are given more credit for comparable contributions serve to support this. Collectively, these findings confirm and extend existing scholarship on gendered power relations in classroom discourse**,** but also nuance it within Morocco's multilingual, postcolonial context, where English as a foreign language becomes a site for both empowerment and re-inscription of

social hierarchies. Although there has been significant success in achieving gender equality in participation, hidden practices of teacher attention disparity, unequal encouragement, and silencing still exist. Therefore, more reflective teaching methods that promote fair involvement, and respect the opinions of all students are desperately needed.

6. Implications and Recommendations

The findings from this study highlight that despite Morocco's ongoing efforts to promote gender equality and communicative language teaching, subtle gendered hierarchies continue to shape learners' participation in EFL classrooms. This has important implications for classroom practice, teacher education, and policy implementation.

First and foremost, EFL teachers in secondary schools in Morocco must embrace more gender-sensitive interactional strategies to guarantee that boys and girls receive equal recognition, attention, and speaking chances.

6.1 Implications for Classroom Practice

Teachers play a significant role for the purpose of creating learning environments that are both egalitarian and encouraging. According to the findings, educators should: first and foremost implement inclusive discourse practices, making sure that boys and girls participate equally through methods including fair questioning, organized turn-taking, and small-groups workshops. Additionally, they should avoid promoting stereotypes which categorize boys as dominant or girls as quiet by using gender-neutral forms of praise and feedback. Besides, they should provide a welcoming environment in the classroom where students can express themselves without worrying about mockery or unfavorable assessment. Teachers ought to remain aware of non-verbal signals, such as tone, gesture, and eye contact, which might mistakenly give some voices more weight than others.

6.2 Implications for Teacher Professional Advancement

The study emphasizes the importance of discourse awareness and gender consideration in Moroccan teacher training programs. Courses on gender and language should be included in pre-service trainings, with a particular focus on how classroom interactions and teacher speech can either reinforce or undermine social inequalities. Moreover, reflective workshops and peer observation programs that enable teachers to examine recordings or transcripts of their own classroom conversations in order to spot unconscious bias should be incorporated into professional training programs.

6.3 Implications for Educational Policy

The results provide credence to the inclusion of gender equity and inclusion as quantifiable metrics in national frameworks for evaluating the quality of education at the policy level. Thus, curriculum reform projects and teacher assessment rubrics ought to incorporate gender-responsive teaching guidelines from the Ministry of National Education. As part of quality assurance, schools should encourage gender equity evaluations or routine assessments of classroom discourse. Furthermore, a national framework for inclusive classroom interaction can be developed with the assistance of researchers, teacher trainers, and legislators, assuring that the objectives of gender equality transcend speech and become a common practice.

It is advised that educators establish organized turn-taking procedures, especially in oral discussions and debates, to prevent dominance by assertive male students and to encourage participation from more reserved girls. Modules on gender-sensitive pedagogy and classroom discourse management should be included in educational training programs so that aspiring

educators may actively confront long-standing norms of silence and dominance. In addition, it is recommended that educators establish organized turn-taking procedures, especially in oral discussions and debates, to prevent dominance by assertive male students and to encourage participation from more reserved and shy girls. All students' voices can be heard and encouraged with the use of tactics like think-pair-share, targeted praise, and equitable questioning.

As part of professional development, reflective practice and peer observation could be promoted at the school level to help teachers see and recognize unconscious bias in their discourse practices. Administrators and school inspectors could also encourage classroom conversation audits as a means of encouraging more inclusive involvement. Lastly, this study recommends that students' critical understanding of gender and discourse be increased. By incorporating conversations about gender equity into language and civic education, students may be able to examine their own actions and confront peer hierarchies that undervalue the contributions of girls.

7. Conclusion

This study set out to explore Moroccan secondary school students' perceptions of power, gendered discourse, and participation patterns in English language classrooms through a combination of observations, focus groups, and questionnaires. The findings show that while overt gender disparities appear to be narrowing, with girls even reporting slightly higher levels of oral participation than boys, subtle and often unconscious mechanisms of power continue to structure who speaks, who is heard, and how speech is evaluated. Besides, numerous participants noted that teachers provided boys more attention and praise when they spoke, while occasionally ignoring or silencing female. According to these experiences, girls' voices are not always given the same legitimacy even when they actively participate, which reflects the continued existence of subtle gendered hierarchies in Moroccan classrooms. Students' comfort in speaking English is closely linked to the classroom climate created by teachers, yet perceptions of encouragement and attention remain uneven, with many participants believing that teachers respond more positively and more often to boys' interventions.

Taken together, these results are consistent with previous research on gender and classroom discourse (Sunderland, 2000; Sadker & Sadker, 1994), but they also place these dynamics in the particular Moroccan setting, where gender norms are influenced by postcolonial legacies, multilingualism, and cultural expectations. By drawing attention to learners' own perceptions of fairness, visibility, and voice, this study contributes to the broader literature on language, gender and power. It also emphasizes the necessity for Moroccan educators, inspectors, and policymakers to strive toward more inclusive EFL classroom practices that guarantee all students, regardless of gender, an equal chance to speak, be heard, and succeed. These findings have important recommendations.

More focus must be placed on the subtle ways that classroom interactions perpetuate gender inequality if Moroccan education is to advance equity, empowerment, and learner-centered pedagogy. As teachers have a crucial influence on how students engage in discourse, and how they react to student contributions, they can either strengthen current hierarchies or create more democratic opportunities for participation. In addition to affecting the confidence of individual students, unequal attention, selective encouragement, and unconscious bias also influence more general patterns of inclusion and exclusion in the learning process. Teachers are urged to embrace introspective behaviors that enable them to recognize implicit bias patterns. As an illustration, teachers can keep track of who talks, who is interrupted, and how

feedback is given by using participation-tracking tools like checklists or seating maps. Boys and girls can have equal speaking chances through the use of structured turn-taking techniques, such as switching up the conversation leaders or calling on students at random. Teachers ought to also deliberately establish a balance between compliments and criticism, refraining from gendered assessments like calling guys "talkative" or girls "quiet." Stereotypes regarding dominance, confidence, and communication might also be broken down by collaborative learning activities in which mixed-gender groups' work toward common objectives. Students' awareness and self-regulation may be further developed by asking them to briefly consider fairness and participation after class activities.

Rather than relying just on individual instructors, schools and administrators play a crucial role in maintaining gender equity as a collective practice at the institutional level. Experts from teacher-training centers (CRMEFs) should ideally lead professional workshops and training sessions on gender-sensitive pedagogy that are organized by schools. To evaluate participation trends and spot possible biases, they could regularly inspect classroom conversation. Moreover, a culture of cooperation and introspection can be promoted by putting in place mentoring programs where seasoned educators watch their colleagues and exchange inclusive teaching methods. The significance of gender equity as a sign of professional achievement would also be reaffirmed by recognizing and praising inclusive teaching through teacher evaluations or school awards.

Gender equity should be incorporated into the national education system by the Ministry of National Education at the policy level. This can be accomplished through the inclusion of gender-responsive pedagogy modules, with a focus on classroom discourse and interactional fairness, into pre-service and in-service teacher training programs. Additionally, national rules that clearly specify signs of equitable classroom practice, like balanced involvement, inclusive questioning, and objective feedback, should be developed by policymakers. These standards should subsequently implemented in procedures used for school inspections and teacher evaluations. Furthermore, funding studies and pilot programs that track female involvement in Moroccan classrooms would offer continuous, fact-based information to direct future transformations. These efforts may be boosted outside of the classroom through public awareness campaigns, such as community initiatives that honor girls' voices and emphasize their right to speak and to be heard.

Last but not least, it is critical to involve students in the process of creating inclusive educational environments. To help students understand how fairness functions in their own learning atmosphere, teachers can implement brief lectures or reflective exercises regarding gender, respect, and communication into EFL subject. As a matter of fact, events like International Women's Day can be used to further discussions about equality and empowerment through English, and student organizations, debates, and class workshops can alternate leadership positions to guarantee equal visibility for both genders. Schools may foster a generation of learners who value equity, respect, and engagement through the participation of students in these thoughtful and active programs.

These recommendations are essentially meant to help people move from awareness to action. Morocco can continue to advance its educational vision of equity and empowerment by implementing concrete and doable measures at the institutional, policy, and classroom levels. Every student despite their gender, should feel equally supported, visible, heard and valued in English classes through thoughtful teaching methods, reflective school leadership, and supporting national frameworks. Therefore, encouraging equitable participation calls for both communicative teaching strategies and gender-sensitive educational reflexivity that acknowledges and counteracts small biases in interactions. Moroccan education can achieve

significant progress toward its larger objectives of gender equality, empowerment, and inclusion by creating classrooms where each student's input is equally recognized. By so doing, the language classroom becomes a safe place of opportunity rather than exclusion.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

Student Perspectives of Power and Gendered Discourse in Moroccan EFL Classrooms- Fes Meknes Academy as a Case Study

This questionnaire is part of a research study that aims to investigate how students experience and perceive classroom participation in English language classes, particularly in relation to gender.

All responses are anonymous and confidential. Please answer honestly, and there are no right or wrong answers. Your opinion is valuable and will contribute to improving classroom practices.

Thank you for your time and participation!

يعد هذا الاستبيان جزءًا من دراسة بحثية تهدف إلى استقصاء تجربة الطلاب وإدراكهم للمشاركة في الفصول الدراسية في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية، لا سيما فيما يتعلق بالجنس.

جميع الإجابات مجهولة وسرية. يرجى الإجابة بصدق، ولا توجد إجابات صحيحة أو خاطئة. رأيك قيّم وسيساهم في تحسين ممارسات الفصل الدراسي.

شكراً لك على وقتك ومشاركتك

Section A: General Information/ معلومات عامة

1. What is your gender? ؟ما هو جنسك *

- ◯ Male/ ذكر
- ◯ Female/ أنثى

2. How old are you? ؟كم عمرك *

- ◯ Between 13 to 17/ بين 13 إلى 17 ما
- ◯ Between 17 to 21/ ما بين 17 إلى 21
- ◯ More than 21/ أكثر من 21

3. What is your school type? ؟ما هو نوع مدرستك *

- ◯ Urban/ حضري
- ◯ Rural/ قروي
- ◯ Semi-urban/ شبه حضري

4. What is your class level? ما هو مستواك الدراسي؟ *

- ◯ Common core/ جدع مشترك
- ◯ 1st year baccalaureate/ السنة الأولى بكالوريا
- ◯ 2nd year baccalaureate/ بكالوريا السنة الثانية

Section B: Perceptions of Classroom Participation/ تصورات المشاركة في الفصول الدراسية

5. Who speaks more often in your English class? من الأكثر تحدثاً في صف اللغة الإنجليزية؟ *

- ◯ Boys/ الأولاد
- ◯ Girls/ البنات
- ◯ Same/ نفس العدد
- ◯ Not sure/ غير متاكد(ة)

6. Do you feel comfortable speaking in your English class? هل تشعر بالراحة في التحدث في صف اللغة الإنجليزية؟ *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Sometimes/في بعض الأحيان

7. Do you feel comfortable speaking in your English class? هل تشعر بالراحة في التحدث في صف اللغة الإنجليزية؟ Please explain why/ يرجى توضيح السبب *

8. Have you ever been interrupted or ignored when speaking in class? هل سبق أن تمت مقاطعتك أو تجاهلك عند التحدث في الفصل؟ *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

9. If yes, who usually interrupts you? إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم، من الذي يقاطعك عادةً *

10. Do you feel that your teacher encourages all students equally to participate? هل تشعر أن أستاذ(ت)ك (ت)يشجع جميع الطلاب على المشاركة على قدم المساواة؟ *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not sure/ غير متاكد(ة)

11. Please Explain/ يرجى التوضيح *

Section C: Gender and Power in the Classroom/ النوع الاجتماعي والسلطة في الصفوف الدراسية

12. Do you think boys and girls are treated differently when they speak in class? هل تعتقدين أن الأولاد والبنات يعاملون بشكل مختلف عندما يتحدثون في الصف؟ *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Sometimes/ في بعض الأحيان

13. If yes, how? إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم، كيف؟ *

14. In your opinion, who gets more attention from the teacher in class discussions? برأيك، من الذي يحظى باهتمام أكبر من الأستاذ(ة) في مناقشات الفصل؟ *

- ◯ Boys/ الأولاد
- ◯ Girls/ البنات
- ◯ Equal/ متساوون

15. Why do you think this happens? لماذا تعتقد أن هذا يحدث؟ *

16. Have you ever held back from speaking in class because of how others might judge you (e.g., "too loud," "not respectful")? هل سبق لك أن امتنعت عن التحدث في الصف بسبب الطريقة التي قد يحكم بها الآخرون عليك (على سبيل المثال، "بصوت عالٍ جداً"، "غير محترم")؟ *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

17. If yes, can you give an example? إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم، هل يمكنك إعطاء مثال؟ *

Appendix B: Focus Group Protocol

Purpose

The focus group discussions aimed to explore how male and female students perceive patterns of classroom talk, power relations, and teacher–student interactions in Moroccan public secondary schools. The focus groups were designed to elicit participants' reflections on who speaks, who dominates, who interrupts, and how teachers respond to students of different genders. Discussions were conducted in a quiet classroom setting after school hours. Sessions lasted 45–60 minutes and were audio-recorded with participants' permission. The language of discussion was Moroccan Arabic and/or English, depending on participant preference.

Focus Group Questions

Section 1: Classroom Participation

1. How would you describe participation during English classes?
2. Who tends to speak more in class — boys or girls? Why do you think that is?
3. Are there times when you want to speak but choose not to? What makes you hesitate?

Section 2: Teacher Interaction and Encouragement

4. Do you think your teacher encourages everyone equally to participate?
5. How do teachers usually respond when boys speak? And when girls speak?
6. Have you ever noticed differences in how teachers praise or correct male and female students?

Section 3: Peer Dynamics

7. How do classmates react when boys speak up?
8. How do they react when girls speak up?
9. Have you ever felt interrupted or ignored during a discussion?

Section 4: Perceptions of Gender and Power

10. Do you think boys and girls have the same right to express opinions in class?
11. Are there topics that boys or girls feel more confident to talk about?
12. How do social or cultural expectations influence how you participate?

Section 5: Reflections and Suggestions

13. What could teachers do to make classroom discussions more equal for everyone?
14. How can students support each other to make the class more inclusive?
15. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience speaking in English class?