The Linguistic Construction of Gender: Masculinity and Femininity in Arabic Grammar

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Abstract—**Studies of gender have generally focused on the relationship between men and women within the context of social reality, rather than the construction of gender through language. This paper thus explores how language, specifically Arabic, contributes to the construction of gender and how the intersection of text and context shapes understandings of gender. The study reveals that Arabic words and sentences connote specific masculine and feminine identities that influence the social construction of gender. Texts provide spaces for the relationships between men and women to be discussed, and language influences their dynamics. This paper concludes that gender relations not only influence social reality, but also textual reality. As such, an understanding of social reality necessitates an understanding of the text. This paper thus emphasizes the importance of analytically linking language with social reality and framing language as a reflection of social reality.**

Index Terms—**Arabic language, Arabic grammar, gender inequality, gendered language, text and context**

I. INTRODUCTION

Arabic language besides functioning as a medium of cross-regional communication since centuries ago (Weatherall, 2016, p. 1), also has the power to construct gender portrayal (Moulton et al., 1978). In Arabic, words—nouns, verbs, and even letters—have specific gender identities that inform how they are used in social transactions and interactions. For example, masjid (mosque) is masculine, while mustašfā (hospital) is feminine. Although both are nouns, they are differently gendered, language thus conveys a specific sex bias (Mooney & Evans, 2018; Keenan & Gazdar, 1975; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2015, p. 288). Ali and Krish found the sex bias in language use: (…female blog authors are more inclined towards using more verbs, adverbs and pronouns than their male counterpart… the Malaysian male blog authors are inclined towards using more adjectives, nouns, determiners and prepositions/subordinating conjunctions than the females, with a significant difference on the usage of the latter two i.e. determiners and prepositions/subordinating conjunctions) (Ali & Krish, 2016, p. 21).

Linguistic studies of Arabic have generally focused on its textual elements, rather than its context. Language may be understood through a structural perspective, but it may also be understood through a functional paradigm (Mooney & Evans, 2018; Keenan & Gazdar, 1975; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2015, p. 289). Words, grammatical structures, and linguistic conventions are all closely associated with the social, cultural, and historical experiences of their users (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2015, p. 289). At the grammar level, the i'rob theory has been rejected by grammarians explicitly at the theological and grammatical levels (Binaghi, 2021). In other words, language—as text—is structured

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within a specific socio-communal context. It is thus necessary to consider the intersection of text and context when attempting to understand the social construct of gender. Indeed, various studies (Weatherall, 2016, pp. 1-2; Mills, 2011; Weatherall, 2015, pp. 4-6; Menegatti & Rubini, 2017) have shown that linguistic elements—including words and letters—embody a specific sexual and gender identity.

Seeking to fill a gap in contemporary studies of Arabic, this paper focuses not on the language as a text to be read and learned, but on how it is influenced by gender. More specifically, this paper shows how men, males, and masculinities dominate Arabic grammar. For this purpose, it asks three research questions: (a) how are gender inequalities reflected in Arabic grammar; (b) what factors create gender bias in Arabic, and (c) how do the gender biases of Arabic grammar influence social reality.

This paper departs from the argument that language is closely and inexorably linked with its social context. As such, the patriarchal (and often sexist) Arab socio-cultural context contributes significantly to the linguistic construction of male–female relationships. In Arabic society, as in all societies, language is not used solely for communication; it is also used to distinguish between men and women, predominantly based on their different social roles. As argued by Bourdieu, language is a structuring force, one that shapes social reality (Lyons et al., 1980). In other words, it has the ability to shape social relations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Gender Structure

According to gender theory, the behavior of human being is differently constructed by society and culture, generally resulting in the subjugation of women (Saum, 2016). According to Dayanti et al. (2008), women often experience systematic subjugation, including discrimination and sexual assault, at the hands of individuals, groups, and institutions (such as the media). These experiences are shaped primarily by the dominant ideology, i.e. patriarchy (Saum, 2016). This ideology creates two social groups, men (who are positioned as dominant and superior) and women (who occupy weaker positions and are relegated to domestic spaces). Women are socially constructed as objects, and consequently must deal with the injustices, inequalities, and stereotypes created by their communities and by the media (Marcus & Harper, 2014).

The patriarchy uses language to assert itself, creating what psychoanalysts identified as "the law of father" through symbolic processes that produce and reproduce gender differences and injustices. Labor is distributed along gender lines, following biases that are internalized through social interactions. These same biases influence decision and policymaking activities, and thus inform political and legal products; for example, Indonesia's pornography law reflects the cultural biases of the patriarchy and limits the mobility of women. Patriarchal culture thus subordinates and marginalizes women, as evidenced in the domestic violence, stereotypes, exploitation, and socio-cultural exclusion experienced by women (Postmus et al., 2020). These experiences can contribute to the abuse of women and various forms of violence (Postmus et al., 2020).

B. Gender Identity

Gender identity encompasses an individual's deep-seated recognition and experience of their own gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex designated at birth (Zitelny et al., 2022). This notion is reinforced by Antoniucci (2023), who posits that gender identity mirrors an individual's self-conception within the framework of societal norms and cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity. Traditional approaches to personality and gender identity categorize traits and interests into communal and agentic dimensions (Singh et al., 2021). Through the interplay of personal and sociocultural factors, individuals forge a gender self-concept that informs their gender-related behaviors, driven by motivation and self-regulation mechanisms linked to gender identity. The formation of gender conceptions and the associated self-regulatory processes are influenced by a range of social agents, including family, peers, media, and broader social structures (Parkinson, 2023). In accordance with Steensma (2013), a significant number of people find their gender identity to be congruent with their sex assigned at birth (cisgender), whereas others identify a divergence between their gender identity and their assigned sex (transgender). Additionally, some individuals align with identities such as non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, or other identities that transcend traditional binary conceptions of gender.

The pivotal stage in the development of gender identity occurs around the ages of six to seven, when children become cognizant of the permanence of their biological sex. At this juncture, familial involvement is crucial for nurturing a child's gender identity (Perry et al., 2019). Diamond (2020) suggests that it is incumbent upon parents to expose their children to gender stereotypes, both directly and indirectly. These stereotypes, embedded within cultural matrices, consist of values, symbols, and beliefs perpetuated through established systems. Gheaus (2023) argues that the manner in which children develop their gender identity is significantly shaped by their social interactions, embodying both feminine and masculine behaviors, as well as the treatment they receive from their parents. Parents play a pivotal role and offer essential support as adolescents navigate the complexities of the social world (Llaveria Caselles, 2021). Dewinter (2017) indicates that insufficient socialization concerning gender roles in childhood can precipitate gender identity disorders later in life. The repercussions of gender-specific parental treatment include emotional disturbances,

rebelliousness, diminished self-esteem, and behavioral issues. Consequently, the parenting practices adopted significantly impact the early formation of gender identity in children.

C. Gender Inequality

The prevailing sociocultural construction in both developed and developing countries posits gender distinctions as binary—female and male—a perspective widely recognized in Western societies (Morgenroth et al., 2021). Recent developments in psychology, however, have led to a nuanced understanding of gender, differentiating it based on individual personality traits. These traits encompass masculine, feminine, and undifferentiated categories, giving rise to the concept of non-binary gender identities (Ruisah, 2018; Molin et al., 2021). Additionally, Grzymisławska et al. (2020) articulate a distinction between biological gender—defined by sex and hormonal differences, with a focus on health implications for women and men (Slapikoff, 2019; Kushwaha et al., 2021)—and cultural gender, which pertains to the social constructs surrounding gender, heavily influenced by traditional cultural norms and their impact on identity politics (Banović, 2012).

The discourse on gender dynamics is profoundly intertwined with the ongoing struggle for gender equality, a struggle exacerbated by prevalent misunderstandings and misinterpretations of gender equality principles. Gender inequality has emerged as a critical issue affecting societal progress across various nations, with religious and political factors contributing significantly to gender-based disparities and poverty (Dormekpor, 2015). This inequality manifests in numerous aspects of life, including societal behaviors that limit women's opportunities for professional and creative expression (Kempe-Bergman et al., 2020). Research by Nguyen et al. (2020) highlights gender inequality's pervasive impact on social, economic, and political spheres in Nepal, China, and Nicaragua. Corroborating these findings, Carlsen (2020) observes that gender inequality is particularly pronounced in societies that enforce moral values and rules disproportionately constraining women compared to men. This imbalance, Carlsen suggests, is rooted in the value systems and norms that govern political, educational, and employment sectors. Consequently, gender inequality has been linked to higher rates of depression and suicide, especially in egalitarian societies where gender norms are more rigorously enforced (Chang et al., 2019). Thus, despite efforts to address and minimize gender inequality, it remains a persistent challenge in contemporary society.

D. Arabic Grammar

Arabic grammar can be called the nahwu which is defined as a science that talks about principles for recognizing Arabic sentences from mu'rob and mabni aspects (al-Ghulayainy, 2011; Sawaie, 2015). In simple terms, nahwu is a science that can know the final sound of a word in a sentence structure (Abu-Chacra, 2007). Nahwu can also be interpreted as a science that studies the rules governing the final state of words in Arabic, their changes, the position of words in each sentence (Bahnyny, 2021). In detail, Arabic grammar discusses the jumlah ismiyah and the jumlah fi'liyah. The jumlah ismiyah is a sentence that begins with the word isim which consists of mubtada' and khabar. In addition, jumlah fi'liyah is a sentence composed of fi'il (verb) and fa'il (subject) or naib al-fa'il (subject) (Sawaie, 2015).

Arabic has many complicated grammar rules which may seem complicated to the average user or learner (Alothman & Alsalman, 2020, pp. 1-2). The existence of gender differences in words, as highlighted by Muassomah (2022) and other studies (Yassine-Hamdan & Strate, 2020; Izzuddin et al., 2021) adds complexity with its sexist elements. This sexist characteristic in Arabic has also influenced the sentence structure (Muassomah, 2023). As in the composition of the jumlah ismiyah and jumlah fi'liyah, there are conditions that require compatibility between musnad and musnad ilaih (Al-maqabelah, 2021). If the musnad is masculine, then the musnad ilaih must follow the masculine, likewise if the musnad is feminine, then the musnad ilaih must follow the feminine (al-Ghulayainy, 2011). Accordingly, words that show plural must be relevant to gender identity. Except for words that show the plural appraiser of nouns that don't make sense, the musnad is in the singular feminine form. This gender character conformity applies to nouns and verbs of its various forms (singular, dual, and plural) (Kaye & Suleiman, 2000).

III. METHOD

This paper has taken Arabic grammar as its research object, recognizing that words and sentences embody specific gender nuances, which influence social transactions by distinguishing between men and women. As such, grammar is not only a means of structuring how people communicate (i.e. language), but also a means of structuring the relationship between communicator and communicant. For this paper, a qualitative research design was used to describe and explore the linguistic phenomena that can potentially construct (or contribute to the construction of) the relationship between men and women. More specifically, this study applies syntactic and sociolinguistic analysis to link text and context. Syntactic analysis is applied to Arabic-language sentences that present gender inequality, while sociolinguistic analysis will be applied to Arabic-language words that reflect the social relationship between men and women.

The data used in this analysis were collected by conducting in-depth analysis of Arabic grammar, particularly elements that distinguish between men and women. Data were classified through three levels of analysis. At the first level, data were understood as having been constructed by gender inequalities, as evidenced through their linguistic classes. Second, data were classified based on their grammatical expression of gender inequality. Third, data were classified in accordance with grammatical gender inequalities' influence on the social interactions of men and women.

In this study, data analysis was conducted in accordance with the research goals. First, analysis sought to understand how gender inequality is reflected in Arabic grammar. Second, analysis examined the letters, diacritics, and pronouns that contributed to gender-biased linguistic constructs. Third, analysis explored how Arabic grammar influences social reality. During the first and second stage of analysis, syntactic analysis was applied; conversely, for the third stage of analysis a sociolinguistic approach was used.

IV. RESULTS

A. Construction of Gender Inequality in Arabic Grammar

Language consists of letters, words, and sentences that convey both linguistic and non-linguistic meaning, including specific understandings of the relationship between men and women. Arabic sentences may, for example, juxtapose or compare men and women in one of three ways (Table 1).

TABLE 1
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN ARABIC-LANGUAGE SENTENCES

No.	Sentences		
	Sentences		**Translate**
1	أحمد و علي ومحمد وعثمان وحسن **(هم) يقرأون** الدرس	*Ahmad wa-Ali wa-Muhammad wa-Uṯman (hum) yaqraūna al-darsa*	Ahmad, Ali, Muhammad, Usman and Hasan are reading textbooks
2	أحمد و عائشة وفاطمة وهند وزينب **(هم) يقرأون** الدرس	*Ahmad wa-Āišah wa-Fāṭimah wa-Hindun wa-Zainab (hum) yaqraūna al-darsa*	Ahmad, Aisyah, Fatima, Hindun, and Zaenab are reading textbooks
3	عائشة وفاطمة وهند وزينب **(هن) يقرأن** الدرس	*Āišah wa-Fāṭimah wa-Hindun wa-Zainab (hunna) yaqra'na al-darsa*	Aisyah, Fatima, Hindun, and Zaenab are reading textbooks

In the first sentence, in which all nouns are masculine (*Ahmad wa-Ali wa-Muhammad wa-Uṯman*), the masculine plural pronoun hum is used in conjunction with the masculine plural verb *yaqraūna*, as indicated through the use of the letter *ya* at the beginning and letters *waw* and *nun* at the end of the word (Point 1). The second sentence, meanwhile, shows that when feminine nouns (*Āišah wa-Fāṭimah wa-Hindun wa-Zainab*) are used in conjunction with a masculine noun (*Ahmad*). A masculine plural verb is used, as is a plural masculine pronoun (Point 2). The third sentence provides an example of a sentence wherein all nouns are feminine (*Āišah wa-Fāṭimah wa-Hindun wa-Zainab*). This sentence uses the feminine plural pronoun *hunna*, as well as the feminine plural verb yaqra'na (the femininity of which is indicated by the use of the letters *nun* and *muannaṯ*) (Point 3). From these three sentences, it may be understood that Arabic grammar not only reflects certain gender biases, but also indicates a gender-biased social structure wherein men are more dominant than women. In Table 1, Point 2, despite including multiple feminine nouns and only a single masculine noun, masculine verbs, pronouns, and adjectives are used. This formulation indicates the subjugation of femininity by masculinity.

The feminine diacritic ة (*ta marbūṭah*, or round ta), as seen in words such as عائشة and فاطمة, can be used as a symbol of femininity in Arabic. However, it is not particularly significant, as even without this diacritic these words still refer to a feminine identity (as in هند and زينب); both of these personal nouns are culturally identified with women and femininity.

TABLE 2
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN ARABIC-LANGUAGE SENTENCES

No	Sentence					
	Column 1 (Feminine)			**Column 2 (Masculine)**		
1.	الطالبة ذكية	*al-ṭālibatu ḏakiyyatun*	One student (female) is smart	الطالب ذكي	*al-ṭālibu ḏakiyyun*	One student (male) is smart
2.	الطالبتان ذكيتان	*al-ṭālibatāni ḏakiyyatāni*	The two students (female) are smart	الطالبان ذكيان	*al-ṭālibāni ḏakiyyāni*	The two students (boys) are smart
3.	الطالبات **ذكيات**	*al-ṭālibātu ḏakiyyātun*	Many students (female) are smart	الطلاب **أذكياء**	*al-ṭullābu aḏkiyāu*	Many students (male) are smart
4.	المجلة جديدة	*al-majallatu jadīdatun*	One magazine is new	المسجد نظيف	*al-masjidu, naẓīfun*	A mosque is clean
5.	المجلتان جديدتان	*al-majallatāni jadīdatāni*	The two magazines are new	المسجدان نظيفان	*al-masjidāni naẓīfāni*	The two mosques are clean
6.	المجلات **جديدة**	*al-majallātu jadīdatun*	The magazines are new	المساجد **نظيفة**	*al-masājidu naẓīfatun*	The mosques are clean

The above twelve sentences are illustrative of specific grammatical tendencies. First, the sentences in Column 1 conveys feminine identities, while the sentences in Column 2 conveys masculine identities. All of these sentences follow the grammatical rule that every subject (*mubtada'*) must correlate with its predicate (*ḫabar*). Second, the words *al-ṭālibatu, al-ṭālibatāni*, and *al-ṭālibātu* (Points 1, 2, and 3 in Column 1), and the words *al-ṭālibu, al-ṭālibāni*, and *al-ṭullābu* (Points 1, 2, and 3 in Column 2) are all subjects, referring to university students. Meanwhile, the words *ḏakiyyatun, ḏakiyyatāni*, and *ḏakiyyātun* (Points 1, 2, and 3 in Column 1), and *ḏakiyyun, ḏakiyyāni* and aḏkiyāu (Points

1, 2 and 3 in Column 2) serve as predicates, and as such are conjugated in accordance with the amount and gender of the subject. Meanwhile, the subjects *al-majallatu, al-majallatāni*, and *al-majallātu* (Points 4, 5, and 6 in Column 1), and *al-masjidu, al-masjidāni*, and *al-masājidu* (Points 4, 5, and 6 in Column 2) inform the conjugation of the predicates *jadīdatun, jadīdatāni*, and *jadīdātun* (Points 4, 5, and 6 in Column 1) and *naẓīfun, naẓīfāni*, and *naẓīfatun* (Points 4, 5, and 6 in Column 2). Third, there are exceptions, as seen in Point 6 of Column 1 and Column 2, wherein the singular predicate *mufrad* must be feminine, following the rule *kullu jam'in ġairi āqilin mufrad muannaṯ* (all plural inanimate nouns have a feminine root).

The grammatical rules that apply to the above sentences are strongly indicative of gender inequality. Arabic grammar defines the relationship between men and women, implicitly discrediting femininity by associating it with the inanimate (i.e. non-sentient) objects with which women interact in their everyday domestic activities. The rule that plural inanimate nouns must have feminine singular roots further indicates the inequality in Arabic grammatical structure.

B. Basis for Gender Inequality in Arabic Grammar

The gender inequality in Arabic sentences, as evident in Table 1, is derived not only from linguistic constructs, but also Arabic social constructs. First, gender inequality occurs in Arabic grammar because letters are given with masculine and feminine identities. The letter ج, for example, is identified as masculine, as it is able to connect with the letters that precede and follow it. Meanwhile, feminine letters such as ر can be connected with the letters that precede them, but not with the letters that follow them. Gender inequality is evident in these letters' different connective abilities. This difference contributes to these letters' differential ability to create sentences, and evidences how social reality is manifested through language and grammar.

Second, individual letters have specific characteristics that convey a particular meaning. In other words, gender inequality in Arabic grammar can be seen in these characteristics. Take, for example, the letters ي and ت, which respectively identify words as masculine or feminine. In the sentence أحمد يقرأ الدرس (*Ahmad yaqrau al-darsa*), the verb يقرأ (*yaqrau*) takes a masculine identity as it begins with the letter ي. Meanwhile, in the sentence فاطمة تقرأ الدرس, (*Fáṭimah taqrau al-darsa*) the verb تقرأ (*taqrau*) takes a feminine identity through the letter ت. The masculinity and femininity of these individual letters thus determines the masculinity and femininity of specific words, which in turn distinguishes between men and women in their everyday linguistic communications.

Third, gender inequality is also presented in Arabic grammar through the use of masculine and feminine pronouns. The pronouns هو (*huwa*) and ه (*hū*) may replace masculine nouns, while the pronouns هي (*hiya*) and ها (*hā*) may replace feminine pronouns. From these pronouns, it can be seen that egalitarian ideologies are not present in Arabic script. Diacritics are similarly used in Arabic grammar to convey a particular gender ideology, as seen in the words أنتَ (anta) and أنتِ (anti), In the masculine second-person singular pronoun أنتَ, the diacritic is located above the letter, while in the feminine second-person singular pronoun أنتِ the diacritic is located below the letter. Through their diacritics, these pronouns do not only distinguish between men and women, but also create spaces that symbolically regulate the relationships between them and influence social interactions.

C. The Influence of Arabic Grammatical Gender Inequality on Social Interactions

By creating gendered definitions of social space, Arabic grammar conditions the interactions between men and women and influences social reality. The influence of grammar can be seen at three levels simultaneously, namely the creation of cultural mindsets through grammatical rules, the delineation of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate, and gendered behaviors.

First, language is used to create specific social spaces for men and women. Table 2, for example, shows that gender inequality in Arabic grammar cannot be separated from the words used to construct social spaces. For example, the word مسجد (mosque) is identified as masculine; as men are required to complete their Friday prayers at a mosque, masculinity is thereby directly linked with (religious) power. Conversely, the word مستشفى (hospital) has a feminine identity, as signified by the use of *alif tanīṯ maqṣūrah* at its conclusion. Hospitals are identified with the sensitivity, concern, patience, and tenderness, all of which are required to treat patients. Similarly, although doctors and nurses may be male or female, these characteristics are most commonly identified with women.

TABLE 3
MASCULINE AND FEMININE ARABIC TERMS

Masculine			Feminine		
Word		**Translate**	**Word**		**Translate**
مسجد	*Masjid*	Mosque	مستشفى	*Mustašfā*	Hospital
مطار	*Maṭār*	Airport	مدرسة/جامعة	*Madrasah/ jāmi'ah*	School/ university
متحف	*Mutḥaf*	Museum	الحكومة	*Al-ḥukūmah*	Governance

Symbolic interactions between men and women are also created through everyday expressions. Table 3, for example, shows how Arab grammar shapes the interactions of men and women by limiting the spaces in which they occur. Linguistic constructs have direct implications for the social structure. The word ضيف (guest) is masculine, while the word ربة البيت (homemaker) is feminine. In this manner, men are identified with the ability to travel and to act impermanently, while women are identified with household and domestic activities.

TABLE 4
MASCULINE AND FEMININE ARABIC TERMS

Masculine			Feminine		
Word		Meaning	Word		Meaning
ضيف	*Ḍaif*	Guest	ربة البيت	*Rabbatu l-bayt*	Homemaker
قاض	*Qaḍi*	Judge	حبلى	*Ḥublā*	Pregnant person
عالم	*Ālim*	Scholar	أمانة	*Amānat*	Accountable

Third, specific symbols are used in everyday speech to categorize men and women. Table 5, for example, presents a list of feelings and emotions that—despite being felt by all people (regardless of gender)—are identified specifically with men and women. For example, the word أمان (safe) is a masculine adjective, as structurally it does not include the round ta; connotatively, it is identified with the cultural expectation that men should provide protection and security to those around them. Meanwhile, the word صحة (healthy) is feminine because it includes the round ta; it is connotatively linked with the cultural expectation that women should show promote good health by providing food and drink to others and by ensuring that proper hygiene and sanitation are maintained.

TABLE 5
SYMBOLS OF MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY IN ARABIC

Masculine			Feminine		
Word		Translate	Word		Translate
سلام	*Salām*	Prosperous	صحة	*Ṣiḥḥah*	healthy
أمان	*Amān*	Safe	عافية	*Āfiyah*	fresh
خير	*Ḥair*	Benevolent	سعادة	*Sa'ādah*	happy

V. DISCUSSION

Arabic grammar is closely tied to the patriarchal social structure of the Arab people, wherein authority, power, and control are wielded by men. In Arabic grammar, where masculine and feminine words are used, the masculine ones are dominant. For example, as seen in Point 2 of Table 1, no matter how many feminine nouns are present in a sentence, a single masculine noun is sufficient to require the use of masculine pronouns, verbs, and adjectives. Similarly, within Arab society (and indeed in all Islamic settings), a man always has the right to be the imam of a mixed congregation, no matter how many thousands of women are in attendance. In other words, the dominance of men evidenced in Arabic grammar provides a basis for gender inequalities in the socio-cultural lives of Arabs and Muslims (Muassomah, 2022).

In the Arab social structure, women may only play an important role in homogenous groups (i.e. within groups of women). This is also true in Arabic grammar. Take, for example, the sentence عائشة وفاطمة وهند وزينب (هن) يقرأن الدرس, which takes a feminine identity as all elements of the sentence are feminine. Conversely, men can practice power both within homogenous groups (i.e. within groups of men) and within heterogenous (mixed) groups. Such a hierarchy is also found in Arabic grammar (Point 1 and 2, Table 1), wherein masculine elements determine the gender identity of the sentence.

The influence of Arabic letters, words, and sentences on the social structure is not only evidenced in their gendered and sex-biased meanings, but also in how language guides human behavior. The word ضيف (guest), for example, denotes the freedom to move from place to place, without any spatial or time constraints. This reflects how, in Arab society, men are allowed to actively participate in public spaces, while women are expected to remain in the domestic sphere. This social construct is also evident in the word ربة البيت (homemaker), which denotes domestic activities that are socially associated with women and connotes the social construct of women being patient, diligent, flexible, and gentle (all of which are associated with domestic labor).

Language also informs human behavior, as seen in the word قاض (judge; a person with authority to make legal decisions). Judges are seen as needing particular characteristics and qualities to improve the quality of human life, including the freedom to make decision, firmness, responsibility, and objectivity—all of which are associated with men. In this manner, language serves to structure social relations, and through language (Wang, 2019) social constructs of masculinity and femininity are reflected. In its use, language reflects individuals' assumptions and beliefs, including their views regarding norms of behavior for men and women (Yassine-Hamdan & Strate, 2020). He construction of gender inequality in Arab society, and by extension in Muslim society, has deep historical roots in language. At the same time, language has significant implications for the structuring of the social relationships between men and women. Language, through its structuring of social relations, also determines the social spaces in which human beings live and socialize. Family and social units are unconsciously shaped by sexist symbols. Not only Arabic, it turns out that the language used in electronic communication on language forums in Russia has a different character and makes it possible to identify and describe different genders (Miftakhova et al., 2020). It is believed that sexism has negative impacts on the making of social order (Dato & Abdul, 2008).

Take, for example, the words prosperous (سلام), safe (أمان) and benevolent (خير), all of which are masculine. To promote safety, one must protect those around oneself from outside disturbance, defend them from dangers and fears; these duties are all associated with men, who are identified as having strong bodies, muscles, courage, and firmness. Meanwhile, health (صحة), freshness (عافية), and joy (سعادة) are all feminine in Arabic. To ensure optimal physical health

and wellbeing, it is necessary to seek all of the minerals and nutrients that the body needs; this necessitates a proper diet. Women, as mothers, women are thus expected to guarantee the health and wellbeing of their families, including by preparing breakfast before they begin their daily activities. This highlights how the symbols used in Arabic reflect and simultaneously influence the social interactions between men and women (Izzuddin et al., 2021).

VI. Conclusion

This study of Arabic grammar has shown that the language, through its gendered elements, specifically and clearly distinguishes between men and women. Gender construction does not only occur through the social realities (including their social interactions and transactions) experienced by Arabs users, but also through the grammar used in linguistic communications. Words and sentences inform language users' construction of specific gender identities, as they create a hierarchy that permeates the soul and form of the language. Gender inequalities and constructs are thus fundamental parts of everyday conversations and interactions, a fact that highlights the link between social and linguistic constructs.

The close link between social and linguistic constructs shows that texts can only be comprehensively and clearly understood through their contexts; conversely, understanding the context necessitates knowledge of the text. Texts do not only convey particular understandings of reality, but also create values and boundaries that inform social interactions. Just as analysis of linguistic texts cannot ignore their contexts, analysis of society will be far more fruitful when it considers how grammar—in this case, Arabic grammar—structures social reality.

As this paper has taken grammar as its point of departure, and thus focused on how linguistic structures expose social realities, this study has not produced a balanced discussion of text and context. Further research, using the social reality of gender as its point of departure, is also necessary to understand how social transactions can be used to analyze particular gender realities. In other words, further research is necessary to explain how social dynamics correlate with linguistic dynamics (as well as how linguistic dynamics correlate with social dynamics). A collaborative research project that combines linguistic and anthropological/ sociological perspectives would thus provide a better and broader understanding of the social structuring process.

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