

The Sociolinguistic Implications of Gendered Language in Hausa and Gender-Neutrality in Yoruba

SHUAIBU Abdulwaheed, PhD

Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.910000112>

Received: 06 October 2025; Accepted: 14 October 2025; Published: 05 November 2025

ABSTRACT

Language is an important tool that builds social codes and forms perceptions of gender. In this research, we consider the existence of gendered language in the Hausa and Yoruba language in terms of pronouns, occupational names, kinship terms and social terms. Being a Chadic language, Hausa has direct gender differences, in which pronouns shi (he) and ita (she) are used, as well as gendered terms of respect, like Alhaji and Hajiya, which solidify patriarchal social frameworks. Male domination is even perpetuated by proverbs and folklore. On the other hand, Yoruba, a south western Nigerian Kwa language has neuter pronouns like oun or o (he/she) and inclusive terms of occupation and kinship, which promote linguistic and social equality. With the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and Social Constructionist Theory of Gender serving as the context, the researcher demonstrated that Hausa language does retain rigid gender roles, but Yoruba does not. It comes up with the conclusion that language forms affect educational practices, policy-making and media representation. The paper proposes gender-sensitive reforms in language, inclusive education, and equal media coverage as the appropriate measures to ensure equality in gender-language societies. Future researches may investigate the dialectal differences and social classes in order to have a more insight into the language influence in shaping gender identities and behaviors.

Keywords: Gendered Language, Hausa and Yoruba, Linguistic Equality, Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, Social Constructionist Theory

INTRODUCTION

The values and ideologies along with the societal norms are passed on by the use of language as its primary conveyance medium. The means by which language defines gender have a very strong effect on social interactions and cultural perceptions. The systems of languages used in different parts of the world exhibit gender manifestations due to the different category of genders found in some languages and gender equity in others. Language differences between Hausa and Yoruba are very significant as major Nigeria speech communities. The Hausa grammatical gender system is a member of the Afroasiatic, whereas the Yoruba language system does not have any language rules of such kind and follows the Niger-Congo linguistic complex. The sociolinguistic implications of this difference in the two languages are significant and affect the social behavior through the norms, patterns of speech, and roles according to gender.

The physical expressions at language use, involve having distinct forms to indicate masculine and feminine forms in forms of pronouns, nouns, and verb agreement (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013). The Hausa language is gendered and comprises of distinct pronouns and gender-based nouns and adjectives, whereby shi is used to mean he and ita is used to signify she. According to Aikhenvald (2018), the Yoruba language does not have markings denoting gender differences in grammar. The language employs a gender-neutral pronoun o, which does not change the references to all persons regardless of gender differences. Yoruba therefore remains neutral with its grammar which is a cultural mentality that does not define social roles using speech unlike Hausa which uses the gender-filtered linguistic elements.

Lakoff (1975) discovered a high sociolinguistic implication between such variations of language. As a gendered language, Hausa relies on the linguistic expression to impose gender stereotypes in the society and support

gender roles. These gender indicators which are inherent are capable of perpetrating gender stereotyping in social interactions in most cases without one realizing it. Conversely, the Yoruba system of grammar that is gender-neutral suggests an egalitarian perspective of the gender roles that are manifested at the intersection of the linguistic form. Current studies are still going on to investigate whether the linguistic apathy between the sexes results in the true social equality in action. The linguistic gender markers influence the way the societies define gender and therefore Sapir (1921) and Whorf (1956) argue that language affects thought processes by influencing how the society defines gender.

Gender imbalances are also evidenced through education, literature and media which according to researchers are because of gendered language systems. Strong grammatical gender markers in spoken languages will result in the formation and reinvention of traditional forms of gender roles that influence the perception of male-females relations (Boroditsky, 2009). The linguistic dissimilarity between male and female elements of the Hausa society supports the power of men in leadership, career, and household decisions. However, Yoruba, due to its non-gender language structure, offers an avenue through which gender biasness can be minimized in daily communication.

This paper discusses the way, in which the usage of gender-based linguistic patterns in Hausa affects sociolinguistics and the application of gender-inclusive terms in Yoruba. It assesses gender perceptions and social categories via the linguistic, cultural and societal models besides assessing the regional dialect differences in Hausa and Yoruba to identify the minor subtleties in gender expression. Moreover, the research incorporates participant views on a variety of social classes and ages to offer more information about the role of linguistic structures on gendered behavior and social standards. Lastly, it examines some practical remedies, i.e., language reform, education programs, and media coverage, to foster gender equality in gendered language societies. These extensive discussions will help the research advance the African linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge of language and gender.

Aim of the Study

This study examines sociolinguistic features of Hausa a gendered language and Yoruba a gender-neutral language and how they respectively affect gender perceptions, social patterns, and communication processes among their speech communities.

Objectives of the Study

- To explore the structure factors which distinguish gender among Hausa and gender-neutral factors among Yoruba.
- To examine the role of sociocultural factors in influencing the aspects of gendered language in Hausa and Yoruba is devoid of such linguistic forms of gender.
- To compare the effects of gendered language characteristics and gender-neutral words on social gender relations and sociocultural judgments in Hausa and Yoruba-speaking societies.
- To determine the effect of language differences based on gender in determining social equality, gender roles, and daily interaction patterns in both societies.
- To suggest the potential interventions, including language reform, educational policies, and media representation, to ensure gender balance via the linguistic practice.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used is a qualitative research design that incorporates comparative linguistic study and sociolinguistic analysis to explore gender differentiation in Hausa language and gender neutrality in Yoruba language.

The data is gathered by means of literature review of works on language and gender by scholars; the interviews with linguists and teachers, and focus-group discussions with the native Hausa and Yoruba speakers. Other sources are proverbs, folktales, media productions, and literary texts which are examined in order to determine and determine symbolization of gender in the language and cultural context.

In analyzing the data, the study uses comparative linguistic analysis in determining and assessing the gender markers in Hausa and their lack in Yoruba. Interpretation of interview and focus group responses is done through the use of thematic analysis, whereas media and everyday speech is analyzed through discourse analysis to gain insight into how gender is linguistically constructed and expressed.

Even though the study involves speakers in Nigeria, there are some limitations that can limit the study scope, including regional language variations and the availability of historical materials of the language. Nevertheless, the study also offers a lot of details concerning the impact of linguistic gender modelling on the societal attitudes, communicative behaviours, and the sociolinguistic development of the two language communities.

Theoretical Framework

The study is grounded in two significant theories that are the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (Linguistic Relativity) and the Social Constructionist Theory of Gender.

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (Whorf, 1956) is based on the idea that language is a determinant of perception and thinking and that it determines the ways people perceive and interpret reality. In this context, gendered qualities of Hausa language are considered as language resources that maintain and strengthen gender roles in social places. On the other hand, the grammatical neutrality of the Yoruba language will tend to promote the lenient kind of gender norms and social relation as a language environment that imposes no gender differentiation in the way of thinking and interacting.

The Social Constructionist Theory of Gender according to Butler (1990) is the view that gender is not a definite biological characteristic but a social category that is influenced by cultural practices, discourse, and language. Gender identities and expectations are carried out and embedded in language, which is one of the main avenues of performing it. With its gender-based linguistic identifiers, Hausa is associated with the preservation of the gender hierarchies, whereas the gender-free system of the Yoruba language is associated with the presumption of a more inclusive and egalitarian focus when communicating through language.

Through a combination of the two theoretical frameworks, the paper will consider the effects of linguistic patterns in Hausa and Yoruba on cultural understandings of gender as well as how patterns of language can reinforce traditional social roles among the Hausa and Yoruba communities.

Gender importance in Hausa Language

There are specific characteristics of the Hausa language genders that not only affect the grammatical rules but also the social relations and patterns of communication, as well as the creation of cultural identity. The Hausa people have a society that is based on the traditional gender roles in contrast to Yoruba because unlike Yoruba, speakers do not require any linguistic means to distinguish between male and female groups, and rather use explicit linguistic indicators that place distinct gender markers. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013) believe that this type of linguistic division influences the way people interact with each other and supports the social expectations, thus, playing a part in the creation of gender in the Hausa-speaking community.

Hausa possesses grammatical gender as a characteristic of its language. Hausa, being one of the typologically gendered languages, has the pronouns of both male and female subjects, *shi*, meaning he, and *ita*, meaning she (Newman, 2000). This gender categorization is not limited to the personal pronouns but also to some adjectives and verb conjugation (Aikhenvald, 2018), and one could say that the categorization of genders is an inseparable part of the description and the action. Ordinary languages in this way support gender identities and lead to preservation of social hierarchies in Hausa speaking contexts.

In Hausa society, social and cultural set ups are very much interwoven with the gendered language forms. Gender markers are explicit in titles, professions and in kinship terms where such a distinction serves to respect the division of roles between men and women in traditional leadership and religious institutions (Jaggar, 2001). As Zima (2007) notes, Hausa uses gender related forms to communicate respect, hierarchy and social status.

These patterns of speech support gendered social roles and expectations, which Ibrahim (2014) elaborates by stating that gendered patterns of speech reveal gender difference, to support the traditional concept of masculinity that is associated with leadership and the femininity that is associated with domesticity. This is in accordance with Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (1956), that is, linguistic structures determine perception and social conduct.

Hausa lexicon also has gender bias in terms of education and media. Olaoye (2013) notes that children are raised with gender norms that are strengthened in their early learning materials, storytelling traditions, and through media representations, which lead to the embedded social-accepted ideas about the role of males and females. Gendered expectations are passed down through such language and narrative practices, which are common in Hausa language and culture.

Finally, gender separation in the Hausa language is a critical sociocultural component, which determines identity, communication and perception. Gendered forms of linguistic use at the same time allow the continuity of the culture and suggest thinking about the aspects of equality and social change in Hausa-speaking communities.

The Gender Usage in Hausa Analysis Shows That There Was a Difference That Was Not Found in the Non-Gender-Specific Yoruba System

Hausa and Yoruba languages have striking differences in the way they treat gender. Hausa is a language that is gendered, i.e. distinguishes between masculine and feminine in pronouns, nouns, and some adjectives (Newman, 2000). Contrastingly, Bamgbose (1966) recognizes Yoruba as a gender-free language, and the language can employ the same linguistic forms to refer to each gender.

1. Pronouns

Specialized third person singular pronouns are used in Hausa to indicate gender difference (Jaggar, 2001):

- *shi* (he) vs. *ita* (she)
- *su* (they – for both genders)

The Yoruba language does not allow pronouns to represent gender differences. According to Adegbite (2003), the language has only one pronoun *oun*, which is used both in reference to both males and females.

2. Nouns and Titles

Newman (2000) demonstrates that Hausa differentiates gender through professional and social titles:

- *malam* (male teacher) vs. *malama* (female teacher)
- *sarki* (king) vs. *sarauniya* (queen)

Yoruba, on the other hand, is consistent when it comes to professional and titular reference. Gender is not an issue in the form of titles as Bamgbose (1966) notes:

- *Olùkó* (teacher – applicable to both male and female)
- *Ọba* (monarch – used for either a king or queen, depending on context)

3. Adjectives and Agreement

Hausa adjectives can be gender-reflective when these adjectives are associated with pronouns or nouns:

- *Yaro mai karfi* (a strong boy) vs. *Yarinya mai karfi* (a strong girl)

In Yoruba, adjectives are uniform and do not vary by gender:

- *Omọ tó lagbara* (a strong child – applicable to both boys and girls)

4. Everyday Expressions

Gender differences are usually recognized in Hausa greetings and forms of addresses:

- *Ina wuni, Yallabai?* (Good afternoon, sir) vs. *Ina wuni, Hajiya?* (Good afternoon, madam)

Greetings in Yoruba, on the contrary, are gender indifferent and acceptable to all:

- *Ẹ kààsán* (Good afternoon) – used for both men and women.

Implications

Linguistic practices in Hausa reproduce historical social hierarchy between men and women because the patterns of speech indicate and reify gender difference. These trends help to preserve gendered representations and subordinating social relationships. Yoruba, though, shows linguistic inclusivity, having no gender markers that allow communicating to facilitate the fluid gender roles and equal social participation. The difference between the two language systems is used to highlight the effect of the structure of language on the way people in these societies view gender, equality, and identity formation in their speech communities.

Hausa Language Gender Differentiation

Hausa, which is one of the major Chadic languages used most of the time in Northern Nigeria, has evident gender distinctions, which are manifested in its language form. Hausa-speaking communities have traditionally assigned social and cultural roles to men and women, which are evident in the verbs, the nouns, and adjectives of the language as well as the pronouns and verbs (Newman, 2000; Jaggar, 2001). In this section, the researcher will look at the language features that define gender in Hausa and how they affect the social communication trends.

1. Pronouns

Hausa language has explicit grammatical gender differences where the third-person pronouns are either masculine or feminine. These variations are evident in the sentence structure:

- *shi* (he) → *Shi ne malami*. (He is a teacher.)
- *ita* (she) → *Ita ce malama*. (She is a teacher.)

The plural pronoun *su* is a gender-neutral pronoun. According to Newman (2000), *su* is used in all people irrespective of their sex meaning that gender differentiation in Hausa is limited in dealing with the singular forms.

2. Nouns and Titles

Hausa nouns and professional titles are usually manipulated to denote a male or female. Jaggar (2001) says, such type of marking linguistic gender is characteristic of Afroasiatic languages. Examples include:

- *malam* (male teacher) vs. *malama* (female teacher)

- *dan sanda* (policeman) vs. *'yar sanda* (policewoman)
- *sarki* (king) vs. *sarauniya* (queen)

According to Blench (2006), these differences not only mirror but also reinforce the social differences between men and women in Hausa communities.

3. Adjectives and Agreement

Even though most adjectives in Hausa do not change according to gender, the adjectives have to agree with the gender of the nouns.

- *Yaro mai karfi* (a strong boy) vs. *Yarinya mai karfi* (a strong girl)
- *Mutum mai hankali* (a sensible man) vs. *Mace mai hankali* (a sensible woman)

In these examples, the adjective has been constant, whereas gender variation is observed in the noun. This is sharply different with Yoruba as Owomoyela (2005) reports that adjectives do not exhibit any form of changes as a result of gender.

4. Verb Forms and Address Terms

Hausa also has gender-based words of address and some speech conventions that support gender division.

- *Yallabai* (Sir) is used for men, while *Hajiya* (Madam) applies to women in both formal and social interactions.

Such language practices, as Newman (2000) observes, reflect cultural practices which support gender expectations in the Hausa-speaking community.

Generally, gender distinctions in the Hausa language indicate socio-hierarchical and customary value principles. Hausa inscribes gender identities through the use of its pronouns, nouns and other forms of address that are aligned with general cultural interpretations of identity and social structure. In contrast to Yoruba, which uses grammars that are neutral, Hausa linguistics is persistent in the realization of visible gender boundaries that influence the process of communication and cultural identity of the West African society.

The place of culture in linguistic gender markers in Hausa

The linguistic gender markers in Hausa are heavily determined by the cultural principles that are mixed with the social systems. Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001) stipulate that the language system of Hausa divides male and female since the social roles and power structures and community expectations converge so as to form the Hausa speaking societies.

Occupational Titles and Gender Roles

The conventional social roles of Hausa become manifested in the terms of the language differentiation which is taken by masculine and feminine signs. The Hausa language has specific terms associated with professions and status, which are obviously male or female.

- *Sarki* (king) vs. *Sarauniya* (queen)
- *Malam* (male teacher) vs. *Malama* (female teacher)
- The head of the household named *Maigida* most often takes the male form but *Uwar gida* functions as an occupational title referring to the female leader of a household.

Bodomo (2019) confirms that this system of linguistic gender distinctions maintains traditional gender-based leadership and responsibility assignments which also appear in various gendered languages.

2. Politeness and Social Hierarchy

Hausa culture emphasizes respect for social hierarchy according to Greenberg (1963) as well as Newman (2000) which affects the use of gendered naming conventions throughout greetings and honorifics.

- The terms *Yallabai* (Sir) and *Hajiya* (Madam) serve as respect markers for superior ranked male and female individuals.
- During interactions women receive their names followed by specific titles including *Uwar daki* (Mother of the house).

Language forms used in Hausa society strengthen cultural traditions which value elder respect as well as leader authority and family systems (Jaggar, 2001).

3. Proverbs and Traditional Sayings

The Hausa community utilizes proverbs featuring gender roles to teach traditional values to members of society according to Yahaya (1980) and Adamu (1999).

- *Mace ta zauna gida ya zauna* (The stable condition of women produces a prosperous household according to Hausa beliefs).
- The expression *Namiji shi ne ginshikin gida* (A man is the pillar of the home) stands as a proverb that confirms masculine home leadership.

Newman (2000) indicated how gendered language shows connections between cultural values and traditional social systems.

4. Religion and Language Use

One fundamental part of Hausa culture is Islam that plays a strong role in creating language markers for gender-based categories. Loimeier (2013) explains how particular religious words showcase designated roles according to gender.

- *Liman* (male imam) vs. *Mace mai tafsiri* (female Islamic scholar, but without the same religious authority as a liman).
- When delivering religious greetings in conversation men receive various prayers from women while women receive differing types of blessings from men.

Gender-specific linguistic elements in Hausa language exist as physical manifestations of traditional Hausa social standards. Both Newman (2000) and Jaggar (2001) define language as an instrument that reinforces social structures together with traditional roles and religious values. The language use patterns in Hausa communities maintain distinct gender aspects yet modernization together with globalization show signs of toning them down (Bodomo, 2019).

Example and Analysis of Gendered Language in Hausa Society

The Hausa society expresses gendered language throughout its communication which grows out of traditional social norms and historical background. Newman (2000) together with Jaggar (2001) explains that the linguistic gender distinctions in Hausa language establish how language upholds social structures. An investigation of gendered language in Hausa society includes the following examples combined with their analysis:

1. Pronouns and Gender Differentiation

- *Shi ya tafi kasuwa* (He went to the market.)
- *Ita ta tafi kasuwa* (She went to the market.)
- *Su sun tafi kasuwa* (They went to the market – gender-neutral plural.)

The Hausa language distinguishes between gender pronouns in the third person yet Yoruba and English lack such gender-specific pronouns. The gender markers in Hausa pronunciation system strengthen sex-related discrimination during everyday social interactions thereby stressing the divide between male and female participants.

2. Gendered Occupational Titles

- *Malam* (Male teacher) vs. *Malama* (Female teacher)
- *Sarki* (King) vs. *Sarauniya* (Queen)
- *Ma'aikaci* (Male worker) vs. *Ma'aikaciya* (Female worker)

The professional leadership titles within Hausa society show gender differences through separate forms for men and women which mirror traditional gender norms among Hausa communities. The traditional separation in work tasks between genders indicates how women received limited professional opportunities compared to men who held most authority positions throughout history.

3. Greetings and Honorifics

- *Ina wuni, Yallabai?* (Good afternoon, sir.)
- *Ina wuni, Hajiya?* (Good afternoon, madam.)
- *Allah ya kara maka lafiya* (May God grant you more health – said to a man.)
- *Allah ya kara miki lafiya* (May God grant you more health – said to a woman.)

Social hierarchy and respect get priority within the gendered Hausa honorific system and greetings structure. Professional relationships in the Hausa society require men to accept *Yallabai* (sir) while women are addressed as *Hajiya* (madam). Everyday communication in Hausa society shows distinct gender differences through blessings which employ *kara maka/miki lafiya*.

4. Proverbs and Gender Expectations

- *Namiji shi ne ginshikin gida* (A man is the pillar of the home.)
- *Mace ta zauna, gida ya zauna* (When a woman is stable, the household is stable.)
- *Mace kamar kaza ce, idan ta yi yawa a gari, ta fi sauƙin samu* (A woman is like a chicken; if there are too many, they become easy to get.)

In Hausa traditional wisdom gender expectations of the community become clearly visible through its proverbial expressions. The first two proverbs demonstrate how men and women work together to maintain household stability. The third proverb upholds patriarchal attitudes because it suggests that women lose value when they have numerous children though these outdated beliefs exist during contemporary times of gender equality advocacy.

5. Religious and Cultural Influence on Gendered Language

- *Liman* (Male Islamic leader) vs. *Mace mai tafsiri* (Female Islamic scholar, with less authority than a male liman.)
- The term *Uwar gida* serves as a respectful way to address women who occupy the position of home lead.

The language gaps in Hausa society emerge mostly from religious influences especially from Islamic teachings. Spiritual titles which recognize religious leadership preferences identify males above females in religious authority structures and show women predominantly support roles. The *uwar gida* title demonstrates how married women earn social respect in the residence while excluding them from public spheres besides home duties.

Hausa culture together with social dynamics and religious guidelines has developed a profound system which employs masculine and feminine language practices. The changing dynamics of modernization and gender equality have started to influence how language is used yet gender-specific occupational terms and expressions in greetings and proverbs indicate that language continues to shape and reinforce societal gender perspectives in Hausa communities (Newman 2000; Salihu 2017).

Neutrality of Gender in Yoruba Language

Contrary to the Hausa language, Yoruba has high gender-neutral traits because without pronouns, nouns, adjectives, or verb forms that indicate masculinity or femininity (Aikoye, 2018). Yoruba is a language that lacks grammatical gender in its daily use, which is one of the cultural systems where male and female social roles were open to each other and regarded as complementary, as opposed to being separated.

1. Pronouns and Gender Neutrality

Yoruba employs identical pronouns for both male and female references.

- Ó lọ sí ilé-ìwé (He/She went to school.)
- Wón wá sí ibi isẹ (They came to work.)

The third-person singular o pronoun applies to both sexes, which is different to Hausa shi (he) and ita (she). The use of uniforms in the pronouns of the Yoruba language make it gender biased free and demonstrates an equal based grammatical composition in the language.

2. Occupations and Titles

Yoruba occupational and leadership titles are equally applied to both men and women.

- *Olùkó* (teacher – male or female)
- *Dókità* (doctor – no gender distinction)
- *Ọba* (ruler – regardless of gender)

According to Yahaya (2006), Hausa draws a line between masculine and feminine (e.g., *malam/malama*, *sarki/sarauniya*), yet Yoruba working words are not exclusive, and they balance genders.

3. Adjectives and Verbs

The Yoruba language does not distinguish between adjectives and verbs according to gender.

- *Ọmọ tó dára* (a good child – applies to boys and girls)

- *Eni tó lagbara* (a strong person – gender-neutral)
- *Ó ti dé* (He/She has arrived)

According to Fagborun (1994) this lack of grammatical gender creates an inclusive form of communication as opposed to Hausa where agreement may change depending on the gender of the noun.

4. Greetings and Honorifics

Greetings among the Yoruba are respectful and seniority-focused instead of gender.

- *E kààsán* (Good afternoon – for both men and women)
- *Báwo ni?* (How are you? – gender-neutral)

Balogun (2004) states that Hausa identifies Yallabai (sir) and Hajiya (madam), whereas the Yoruba greetings do not carry gender, but rather courtesy and hierarchy.

5. Proverbs and Cultural Views on Gender

Yoruba proverbs share cultural wisdom without gender.

- *Àkùkò kò ògèdè kú* (The rooster crows and the banana dies – actions have consequences, not gendered)
- *Ohun tí a bá fì owó ra, a máa fì ẹsẹ dẹ* (What we buy with money, we do not treat carelessly – applies to all people)

In comparison with Hausa proverbs, which tend to strengthen patriarchal values, Yoruba proverbs propagate moral values and collective responsibility without dividing into male and female.

All in all, Yoruba linguistic frameworks support a non-gender orientation that builds on inclusiveness and flexibility. The feminine and male identities have a common linguistic zone with their identical pronouns, job titles and adjectives. Yoruba linguistic neutrality as Ajiboye (2011) points out implies the cultural ideals that divide social functions and linguistic limits so that roles could be bargained out in context, not according to grammatical category.

Sociolinguistic Consequences of Gender Distinctions in Hausa and Gender Neutrality in Yoruba

The linguistic systems adopted by communities have a profound impact on social norms, identity and power relations that prevail in communities. Hausa language has the gender markers incorporated in grammatical and lexical structures, whereas Yoruba has a gender-neutral language structure. Such structural differences have a great influence on societal attitudes toward gender roles, etiquette, work thoughts, and personal identity (Holmes, 2013; Romaine, 2000).

1. Gender and Social Hierarchy

The social hierarchies of Hausa are supported by the language differentiation of the gendered pronouns and nouns (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013).

- *Shi ya tafi kasuwa* – He went to the market.
- *Ita ta tafi kasuwa* – She went to the market.

By comparison, the Yoruba pronouns are gender-neutral:

- *Ó lọ sí ojà* – He/She went to the market.

Aikhenvald (2016) notes that language neutrality of Yoruba allows social flexibility in interpretation of roles with gender differences being less important in everyday language.

2. Gender and Occupational Perception

The use of gender-specific professionalities in Hausa, including *Malami* (male teacher) and *Malama* (female teacher) continues to hold on to the traditional perceptions of the suitability of occupations. As Jakiela and Ozier (2018) argue, gendered language systems shape the beliefs in society that there are certain occupations associated with both sexes. On the other hand, Yoruba like titles like *Olùkó* (teacher) are gender neutral with the aim of creating equal perceptions on male and female engagement in professional arenas.

3. Power, Courtesy, and Social Status

Gender-based honorifics *Yallabai* (Sir) and *Hajiya* (Madam) are used by Hausa speakers, which refer to the respect and separation of social groups (Meyerhoff, 2015). However, Yoruba is based on kinship and delineation of age like *Bàbá* (father/ elder man) and *Ìyá* (mother/ elder woman) that is founded on social precedence and not gender privilege (Adegbite, 2016). This trend is consistent with Yoruba sociocultural beliefs according to which respect is attributed mostly to age and status, and not gender, thus creating an egalitarian social interaction.

4. Language and Gender Identity

Zimman (2017) observes that non-binary or gender-fluid individuals might face challenges in expressing identity in gender-marked languages, including Hausa, which do not have inclusive systems of pronouns. The Yoruba, through its universal pronoun *O*, enables and encourages other types of gender while also facilitating self-expression (Boroditsky, 2011). This inclusivity shows how linguistic non-partisanship helps in having a wider gender representation and psychological comfort during communication.

5. Transmission of Gender Norms through Proverbs and Culture

Traditional gender ideologies are preserved in Hausa proverbs:

- *Namiji shi ne ginshikin gida* – A man is the pillar of the home.
- *Mace ta zauna, gida ya zauna* – When a woman is stable, the household is stable.

Gendered expectations are maintained through such expressions and affirm patriarchal values. Conversely, the Yoruba proverbs use neutral tones and are communal in their contexts:

- *Ohun tí a bá fì owó ra, a máa fì ẹ̀sẹ̀ dẹ̀* – What we buy with money, we do not treat carelessly.

Corbett (2013) argues that language systems that have few gender distinctions have more equal gender relations.

On the whole, gendered social organization in Hausa lingo is ensured by language distinction in the use of pronouns, titles, and greetings, whereas in Yoruba, social linguistics is neutral, promoting gender autonomy. Language, as Romaine (2000) concludes, is both an indicator and maker of social reality, and as such, the occupation of certain gender roles, occupational chance, and status of respect is greatly influenced by the linguistic design.

Cultural and Historical Factors Influencing Gender Differentiation in Hausa and Gender Neutrality in Yoruba

Language is regarded as a cultural warehouse, which is a product of the historical and social framework of the individuals who speak it. Hausa language has a pronounced gender division, and Yoruba language is mostly gender-neutral this is based on the historical and cultural development of both cultures. These language differences have developed over centuries of exposure to religion, governments, economical systems and colonialism (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013; Romaine, 2000).

1. Influence of Islamic Civilization on Hausa Gendered Language

The influence of Islamic civilization on the Hausa society can be seen until the fourteenth century, which influenced the civilization and the language structures of the Hausa. Last (1988) argues that Islam came to be a powerful ideological and sociopolitical movement that characterized the Hausa patterns of social order and communication. Brockett (1997) observes that gender differences were institutionalized in Hausa language use by Islamic scholarship and introduction of Arabic script (Ajami) in the Hausa language as *Malam* (male scholar) and *Malama* (female scholar).

Other titles including the *Alhaji* and the *Hajiya* which refers to the men and women who have completed the Hajj pilgrimage also indicate this language conformity to Islamic standards. These Arabic-inspired formations of gender have now been incorporated into Hausa identity, and as Owens (1998) notes, this strengthens binary gender identity in both the speech and social practice.

2. Pre-Colonial Political and Social Structures

The pre-colonial Hausa polities especially the Sokoto caliphate was based on centralized monarchies which retained political and religious leadership to men. Male rulers (Sarakuna) and officials (Waziri, Galadima) ruled the system and a culture of patriarchal communicative culture that favored male power was formed. This political monopoly was manifested in language in the form of gender-specific titles and sayings to the superiority of men.

In comparison, the Yoruba political institutions were more liberal and featured prominent women like Moremi Ajasoro and Efunsetan Aniwura (Akintoye, 2010). This is because, in the Yoruba language, the neutral word *Oba* is used to refer to both male and female rulers unlike Hausa where there is a difference between *Sarki* (king) and *Sarauniya* (queen). This language neutrality is a reflection of the fairly open sociopolitical system of Yoruba, which in the past gave women an influential presence in the community.

3. Gender Roles in Traditional Economic Activities

The Hausa traditional society had well defined divisions of labour. Man was also usually involved in trade, religious studies and politics whereas women were restricted to home based chores or the unofficial market (Callaway, 1987). These two economic terminologies are emphasized by Bagari (2005), in which marital and gendered labour is defined as *Miji* and *Mata*, and gender specific economic involvement is denoted as *Sana'a* and *Kasuwanci*.

On the other hand, the Yoruba community was more economically fluid. Women tended to take up leadership roles in market networks like the *Iyalaja* (market leader) and they were actively involved in long distance trade (Sudarkasa, 1986). The egalitarian economic customs can be the reason why the Yoruba language system is neutral gender-wise, and professional and job-related words do not carry gender connotations.

4. Colonialism and the influence on the perception of Gender and Language.

The colonial administration in Northern Nigeria (1900-1960) affirmed patriarchal structures in the region through advancing and promoting male-dominated education and administration (Lugard, 1922). Introduction of Western titles of bureaucratism entrenched the gender divisions that were already existing in Hausa society which further entrenched language and occupation differences between men and women.

In the Yoruba areas, on the other hand, colonial policy found an established social structure in which women already possessed access to trade, education, and leadership of the community. Consequently, colonialism failed to impose gendered linguistic markers to Yoruba. The language also did not succumb to grammatical gender differences prevalent in other colonial situations by retaining its neutral pronouns and professional titles.

5. Proverbs and Oral Traditions in the formation of gender perceptions.

Proverbs are cultural documents on which moral and social values are passed. The Hausa proverbs tend to uphold male dominance as well as female domesticity by the following proverbs:

- *Namiji shi ne ginshikin gida* – A man is the pillar of the home.
- *Mace ta zauna, gida ya zauna* – When a woman is stable, the household is stable.

These expressions indicate the patriarchal ideology and legitimize the male leadership idealism in Hausa culture.

Yoruba proverbs are however not usually gendered and tend to focus on community values and respect between generations:

- *Àgbà kì í wà l'òjà, k'òrè ó má bàjé* – When elders are present, things do not go wrong.
- *Kò sí bí a ɣe ɣe rẹ, ẹnì tí ó bá gbé ilé ta, ó ti ta baba rẹ* – Whoever sells the family home has sold his father.

The lack of gender division in these utterances implies that the Yoruba oral traditions put more emphasis on social harmony rather than gender hierarchy.

To conclude, the Hausa language is gendered because it interacted with Islam throughout history, has a centralized government, and has shrewd socio-economic segregations, which supported the dominance of masculine rule. Yoruba, however, developed in a more equalized social structure that enabled women to be seen in leadership, trade, and culture- some of the aspects that made it gender neutral in a language. These cultural and historical contexts are crucial in the deciphering of the mechanisms of gender sociolinguistics in the African languages.

Language Policy and Education Implication

The topic of gender representations in Hausa and Yoruba languages is the key to the development of language policy and educational reform in Nigeria. Educationists and policy makers should understand the role of language forms in gender equity, access to education, and assimilation into a country (Bamgbose, 1991; Igboanusi, 2008).

1. Gender Sensitivity and Language Policy

The National Policy on Education in Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) focuses on the application of indigenous languages in early childhood education. The gendered nature of Hausa however brings some challenges to the inclusive learning. Gender norms are usually reinforced in educational materials and classroom relationships.

Indicatively, Hausa refers to *maigida* (head of household male) and *uwargida* (senior wife), whereas Yoruba uses a gender-neutral *olukuluku* (individual). Masculine expressions are the dominant elements of Hausa official discourse, and as such, they miss out on female learners.

In order to encourage inclusiveness, language policies are to be designed to use gender-sensitive expressions and persuade the use of gender-neutral terminologies continuously. It is important to eliminate linguistic bias in Hausa so as to enjoy equal access to education and that gender balance in the development of the curriculum and teacher communication.

2. Challenges in Curriculum Development and Teaching

Gender stereotypes are usually reproduced in Hausa-language educational contents, with men being leaders and women being caregivers. Conversely, the fact that Yoruba uses the term *oun* to signify both he and she would allow equal representation in the classroom.

Reform of curriculum should cover:

- Checking textbooks to find out and delete gender prejudice.
- Encouraging the use of neutral or inclusiveness in learning resources.

- Promoting gender roles and linguistic diversity discussions in the classes.

The teachers in the Hausa speaking areas are to demonstrate equality where they should use Malam and Malama whereby they indicate both the male and female professionals. These practices will contribute to the destruction of implicit gender hierarchies in language learning.

3. Training Teachers in Gender-Inclusive Language

Educators are very instrumental in influencing the linguistic and social awareness of the students. Social distinctions are enforced through gendered greetings in Hausa-speaking classrooms like *sannu da aiki Yallabai* (male) and *sannu da aiki Hajiya* (female).

The sociolinguistic materials teaching about the connection between language and gender should be incorporated in teacher education. Training should focus on:

- Detection and prevention of gender-biased language.
- Replacing the use of gendered variations where necessary.
- Raising student awareness with regard to gender identity and expectations in language.

In Yoruba speaking environments, the inherently gender neutral construct of language already facilitates teaching gender inclusively, with a minimum of gender bias with no intentional language reform

4. Media and Public Speaking Language Policy

Media are effective tools of influencing gender perceptions in the society. The Hausa based media, including Arewa24, have gender terms such as *saurayi* (young man) and *budurwa* (young woman), which further strengthens social expectations (Newman, 2000). Compared to this, the Yoruba media discourse is rather gender-neutral, since professional titles or pronouns have no gender indicators.

In order to foster a balanced and inclusive media policy, it should:

- Issue editorial policies that support neutral or equal representation of sexes.
- Make sure that such public messages portray equal professional roles of men and women.
- Encourage linguistic innovation which is not only inclusive, but also does not change fundamental cultural meanings.

5. Considerations of Multilingual Policies and National Integration

The gendered variations in language have a ramification on the multilingual national identity of Nigeria as well. Another subtle appreciation of these language systems may lead to intercultural communication and even national unity.

As an example, legal and educational texts should use gender-neutral equivalents in translating Hausa words *wanda* (he who) and *wacce* (she who). The policymakers should understand that gender differences in languages of Nigeria need specific approaches in terms of national planning.

The use of gender considerations in multilingual policy can facilitate equal presence in a wide range of different languages.

To conclude, the implicit differences between the gender marked language system of Hausa and the gender neutral system of Yoruba have significant ramifications to education and language planning in Nigeria. By targeting gender bias in Hausa-language education, which will be achieved through policy change, teacher

training, curriculum revision, and publishing in non-sexist media, gender equity will be achieved and national integration reinforced. The option of adopting the inclusive language practices in Yoruba provides useful example of enhancing equity and equality in the educational and sociolinguistic growth of Nigeria.

Findings of the Study

The findings of the research uncovered critical findings that were manifested across the linguistic and sociolinguistic and educational sphere during the study of Hausa gender distinction and Yoruba gender-neutral speech. According to these findings, gendered language has much influence on social roles along with communication methods and education systems and policy-making processes in Nigeria.

1. The Hausa Language maintains strong separations between the female and the male elements

In Hausa language women and men are distinguished with the assistance of separate pronouns use and various occupational names and family names besides social address typography. The existing disparities establish and provide gender-based social functionalities within the community framework.

- The Hausa language describes pronouns in terms of shi, which means male pronouns and ita, which means female pronouns but however Yoruba language employs the same pronouns oun, which denotes male and female pronouns.
- There are no gender-specific occupational names in the Yoruba language as the job descriptions use the independent male-female terms such as malami (adult man teacher) versus malama (adult woman teacher) or oluko (teacher) and Hausa mostly differentiates between the genders by using the malami (male teacher) versus malama (female teacher).
- There is also a difference in the terms of kinship used as Hausa has specific terms to refer to elder brother (yaya namiji) and elder sister (yaya mace) whereas Yoruba has language terms aburo (younger sibling) and egbon (elder sibling) to refer to any sibling.

The linguistic constructions define how the communities perceive established gender rules in Hausa speaking regions.

2. Yoruba Language encourages neutrality in communication between genders

The genderlessness of the Yoruba language forms a language which incorporates all genders in its language usage.

- The language has a single pronoun (oun), that cuts across the male and female sexes.
- Gender-neutral terms are applied in the medical and educational fields via job titles that are dokita (doctor) and oluko (teacher).
- The Yoruba culture does not have gender-specific terminology and relationship of family members where individuals can impose strict gender roles.

Linguistic neutrality encouragement of the use of language reduces traditional gender role reinforcement thereby influencing the concept of gender equality within the Yoruba society.

3. The cultural context of society dictates the ways in which individuals use language which is gender specific

The Hausa language male-female roles are based on the cultural-historical North Nigerian patterns that integrate the Islamic teachings that embraced the male dominant power systems (Newman, 2000).

- The use of the words *sarki* meaning king and *hakimi* meaning head of the district prevail in the general arguments as a way of asserting the dominance of males.
- Although females do not have titles with them as males do, females do not have such titles when they are married and do when they are not.

In the Yoruba culture women are the governors of the *Ìyálójà* market and are given the title of Kingship as *Oba*, although both men and women are capable of taking over the leadership role.

4. Educational and Language policy implications

Hausa social conditions determine the development of educational content and classroom practice as well as social perceptions of students regarding gender-based responsibilities.

- Traditional male-preying narratives dominate the text and media content that uses the Hausa language.
- The Yoruba origin of educational materials leads to inclusive representation of identities because the language does not associate itself with any particular group or identity.
- Educators teaching in the Hausa regions adopt gender-specific welcome terms between *yallabai* for males and *hajiya* for females but teachers in Yoruba areas maintain neutral student-language (*èyin omo akèkòò*—students).

The data indicates that educational strategies using gender-specific approaches in Hausa-language teaching programs would enhance educational equity.

5. Language and Gender Perceptions in Media and Public Discourse

Modern Hausa-language broadcast media constantly repeat and support the division between men and women.

- Characters of both sexes maintain their typical roles throughout news media broadcasts and cinematic roles.
- In public speaking together with religious discourse through the Hausa language gender-specific terms become prevalent which upholds social standards.

The Yoruba media framework shows balanced representation because it has no specified gender after its creators built a neutral structure thus expanding possibilities to portray various gender-based roles.

The research discovered that Hausa uses language markers which uphold conventional gender norms yet Yoruba lacks such distinctions and maintains an inclusive language system. Linguistic variations between Yoruba and Hausa language create important consequences for education systems and national language policies together with gender presentations in media and public discussions. The efforts to promote gender inclusion within Hausa-speaking communities must specifically address language variables in educational settings along with official and media transmission channels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research establishes proposals that work to battle gender distinctions in the Hausa language while increasing gender equality in educational settings and governmental procedures and public interactions.

1. Promote Gender-Inclusive Language in Education

- The review process of Hausa-language courses together with instructional materials should become a responsibility of educational policymakers for eliminating gender bias and promoting gender inclusion.

- Educational staff in Hausa-speaking areas should receive training that enables them to choose gender-neutral language when teaching while distributors need to maintain equivalent mentions of male and female roles during academic conversations.
- The development of new gender-neutral expressions should be encouraged in language initiatives by following the example of the natural gender-neutral communication found in Yoruba speech.

2. Encourage Gender-Sensitive Language Policy

- The Nigerian government and language planning agencies must revise current policies to develop gender-neutral language expressions for official documents and educational materials and broadcast media in Hausa.
- Standardized translations of legal academic and professional terms should be created for Hausa language to prevent gender marking in order to prevent the reinforcement of social inequalities.
- The enforcement of education policies in various languages needs to embrace gender-specific linguistic patterns across Nigeria's multiethnic territories to develop inclusive academic communication channels.

3. Media and communication channels should work together to increase popular recognition about this issue.

- Media institutions using the Hausa language should carry out balanced language expression to decrease the reinforcement of conventional gender stereotypes in their broadcasting platforms.
- Broadcasters and journalists along with scriptwriters should adopt either non-gender-specific terminology or language which treats men and women equally when delivering news reports or crafting their stories.
- The impact of gendered language on societal roles should be known widely through awareness programs that demonstrate Yoruba's equal treatment of genders as a model of unbiased language.

4. Research on sociolinguistics should become integrated into the development of language.

- Research needs additional exploration regarding gendered language sociolinguistics in Hausa along with its social effects on societal perceptions about gender.
- Language policy reform needs studies which analyze gender representation techniques in Nigerian languages outside Hausa along with Igbo for an expanded understanding of cultural perspectives within Nigeria.
- Linguists along with educators need to team up to collect emerging gender-neutral expressions found in Hausa for analyzing their effectiveness in linguistic communication.

5. The development of both teacher training and curriculum development needs enhancement.

- The training of Hausa-language teachers must include methods that build gender sensitivity as a foundation for creating an inclusive learning environment with students through classroom activities.
- Teachers should build gender and language diversity discussions into educational material for language education to teach students about linguistic gender indicators.
- Educational institutions that teach Hausa and Yoruba languages should implement exchange programs which will create better communication and acceptance between students from both linguistic backgrounds.

Hausa-speaking communities should implement education-based media and policy reforms which focus on utilizing language that respects gender equality. Through integration of Yoruba ways to avoid gender specification Hausa language can transform its linguistic structure to fit modern social progress without sacrificing its core elements. These guidelines establish a framework to boost equality between genders during all forms of communication and public exchange.

CONCLUSION

The research indicates that Hausa reflects gender differences in its language form, whereas Yoruba exhibits gender-neutral forms of grammar. Hausa preserves the gender roles by using the gender marked pronouns, occupational titles and the kinship terms that have the ancient patriarchal and Islamic influences. In contrast to this, the non-sexist language of Yoruba facilitates the inclusion of everyone in communicating and minimizes gender prejudice by deleting the grammatical identities of gender in the language. These two contrasting systems demonstrate the way in which language represents, as well as creates cultural values, with Hausa (traditional) depicting divisions and Yoruba (more balanced) creating a more balanced social interaction.

The social implications of the linguistic differences of the two languages are far-reaching and evident in education, the media and the language policy. Gendered language in Hausa speaking nations reinforces the male centric thinking in classroom conversation, school text and cultural expression through media, whilst language neutrality in Yoruba encourages equal participation and gender equality. As a result, policymakers, educators, and media practitioners have a great need to implement gender sensitive reforms to enhance equality using language.

The practical interventions that can be considered in the future, to promote gender equality in gendered language societies, include language reforms, inclusive education interventions, and balanced media coverage as the future research direction. In addition, the analysis of dialectical differences within a region in both Hausa and Yoruba could reveal subtle manifestations of culture and gender. Lastly, a more complex approach that incorporates the viewpoint of the participants of various age groups and social classes might give a more in-depth understanding of how the structure of language predisposes individuals to exhibit everyday gendered practices and ways of societal expectations.

With this sustained investigation, language can be a mirror of culture as well as an effective tool of advancing equity, inclusivity and social change.

REFERENCES

1. Adegbite, W. (2003). *Linguistic diversity in Nigeria: A sociolinguistic perspective*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
2. Adegbite, W. (2016). *Language, gender, and politeness in Yoruba and English discourse*. Ibadan: University Press.
3. Adamu, M. (1999). *Gender and its linguistic representation in Hausa society*. Kano: Bayero University Press.
4. Adejumo, A. (2015). Gender neutrality in Yoruba language: A linguistic inquiry. *Journal of African Languages*, 12(2), 34–56.
5. Aikhenvald, A. Y. (2016). *How gender shapes the world*. Oxford University Press.
6. Aikhenvald, A. Y. (2018). *Gender and language*. Oxford University Press.
7. Aikoye, L. (2018). *The structure of Yoruba language and its implications on gender representation*. Lagos: University Press.
8. Akinwumi, O. (2004). *Language and gender in Yoruba society*. Ibadan: University Press.
9. Akintoye, S. A. (2010). *A history of the Yoruba people*. Dakar: Amalion Publishing.
10. Ajiboye, T. (2011). The role of language in gender perception: A Yoruba perspective. *African Linguistics Journal*, 8(3), 67–89.
11. Bagari, M. T. (2005). *Gender in Hausa language: A grammatical and sociolinguistic analysis*. Kano: Bayero University Press.

12. Balogun, A. (2004). Gender in Hausa and Yoruba: A comparative analysis. *West African Linguistic Studies*, 19(1), 44–67.
13. Bamgbose, A. (1971). *The Yoruba language*. Cambridge University Press.
14. Bamgbose, A. (1990). *Fonoloji ati girama Yoruba*. Ibadan: University Press.
15. Bamgbose, A. (1991). *Language and the nation: The language question in sub-Saharan Africa*. Edinburgh University Press.
16. Blench, R. (2006). *The Afroasiatic languages: Classification and reference*. Cambridge University Press.
17. Bodomo, A. (2019). *Language, gender, and African identity*. Accra: Ghana University Press.
18. Boroditsky, L. (2009). How language shapes thought. *Scientific American*, 304(2), 62–65.
19. Boroditsky, L. (2011). How language shapes thought: The languages we speak affect our perceptions of the world. *Scientific American*, 304(2), 62–65.
20. Brockett, A. (1997). *Studies in Hausa language and linguistics*. London: Kegan Paul.
21. Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
22. Callaway, B. (1987). *Muslim Hausa women in Nigeria: Tradition and change*. Syracuse University Press.
23. Corbett, G. G. (2013). *Gender*. Cambridge University Press.
24. Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013). *Language and gender* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
25. Fagborun, J. (1994). *Language and politics in Nigeria: A sociolinguistic analysis*. London: Edwin Mellen Press.
26. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2013). *National policy on education* (6th ed.). Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).
27. Greenberg, J. H. (1963). *The languages of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
28. Holmes, J. (2013). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (4th ed.). Routledge.
29. Ibrahim, M. (2014). Gender roles and linguistic expression in Hausa society. *International Journal of African Linguistics*, 5(2), 45–60.
30. Igboanusi, H. (2008). *Empowering Nigerian languages through print and non-print media*. Muenchen: LINCOM.
31. Jaggard, P. J. (2001). *Hausa: A reference grammar*. John Benjamins Publishing.
32. Jakiela, P., & Ozier, O. (2018). *Gendered language and the educational gender gap*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper.
33. Lakoff, R. (1975). *Language and woman's place*. Harper & Row.
34. Lakoff, R. (2004). *Language and woman's place: Text and commentaries*. Oxford University Press.
35. Last, M. (1988). The Sokoto Caliphate and Islamization in West Africa. In J. F. Ade Ajayi (Ed.), *History of West Africa* (pp. 635–670). Longman.
36. Loimeier, R. (2013). *Muslim societies in Africa: A historical anthropology*. Indiana University Press.
37. Lugard, F. D. (1922). *The dual mandate in British tropical Africa*. William Blackwood & Sons.
38. Mba, N. (1982). *Nigerian women mobilized: Women's political activity in southern Nigeria, 1900–1965*. University of California Press.
39. Meyerhoff, M. (2015). *Introducing sociolinguistics* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
40. Newman, P. (2000). *The Hausa language: An encyclopedic reference grammar*. Yale University Press.
41. Ogunbowale, O. (1970). *Yoruba proverbs and their meanings*. Lagos: Longman.
42. Ojo, O. (2009). Linguistic gender neutrality in Yoruba and its socio-cultural implications. *African Language Review*, 6(2), 90–112.
43. Olaoye, A. A. (2013). The impact of language on gender perception in Nigerian societies. *Journal of African Languages and Society*, 6(1), 22–38.
44. Owens, J. (1998). *Arabic influence on the Hausa language*. Routledge.
45. Owomoyela, O. (2005). *Yoruba proverbs*. University of Nebraska Press.
46. Oyetade, S. (1992). The gender dimension of language in Nigeria: A Yoruba perspective. *Studies in Nigerian Languages*, 7(1), 102–117.
47. Prewitt-Freilino, J. L., Caswell, T. A., & Laakso, E. K. (2012). The gendering of language: A comparison of gender equality in countries with gendered, natural gender, and genderless languages. *Sex Roles*, 66(3–4), 268–281.
48. Romaine, S. (2000). *Language in society: An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Oxford University Press.
49. Sapir, E. (1921). *Language: An introduction to the study of speech*. Harcourt, Brace & Company.

50. Sudarkasa, N. (1986). The status of women in indigenous African societies. *Feminist Studies*, 12(1), 91–103.
51. Ubah, C. N. (1985). Colonial administration and the spread of Islam in Northern Nigeria. *The Muslim World*, 75(2), 99–120.
52. Whorf, B. L. (1956). *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. MIT Press.
53. Yahaya, I. (2006). *Gender and language in Hausa society*. Kano: Bayero University Press.
54. Zima, P. (2007). *Language contact and linguistic variation in Hausa*. Walter de Gruyter.
55. Zimman, L. (2017). Gender as stylistic bricolage: Transmasculine voices and the relationship between fundamental frequency and /s/. *Language in Society*, 46(3), 339–370.