



Politeness and Power in Moroccan Political Discourse: The Strategic Use of French Honorifics

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between politeness and power in Moroccan political discourse, focusing on the strategic use of French honorifics by political figures. Drawing on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, it explores how linguistic strategies assert authority and navigate face-threatening acts in high-stakes interactions. Using multimodal discourse analysis, three video recordings of Moroccan political figures, including interviews and speeches, were analyzed to uncover patterns in the use of honorifics across various social and political contexts. The findings reveal that honorifics function as tools for maintaining social hierarchies, where power dynamics are influenced by age, social status, and cultural norms. Additionally, honorifics not only signify deference and respect but also carry nuanced implications that reflect the complexity of political communication in Moroccan society. This research highlights the critical role of linguistic strategies in shaping authority and social relationships in political discourse, offering insights into the interplay between language, identity, and power. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of cultural and contextual factors in understanding the mechanisms of politeness in a multilingual and politically dynamic setting.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates the complex interplay between politeness and power as reflected in the use of French honorifics in Moroccan political discourse. Building on the theoretical foundations of politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), the study examines how linguistic strategies, particularly the use of honorifics, are employed to negotiate social relationships and assert authority in political settings.

Politeness, as a universal yet culturally specific phenomenon, plays a pivotal role in political interactions, where maintaining face and managing interpersonal relationships are crucial (Holmes and Stubbe, 2015). The concept of "face," encompassing the desire for autonomy and social approval, underpins much of the linguistic behaviour in such settings (Bargiela, 2003; Sifianou and Tzanne, 2021). In Moroccan political discourse, where French remains a prominent language of formal communication, honorifics serve as markers of deference, respect, and power dynamics, reflecting broader sociocultural norms and hierarchies (Ennaji, 2005).

The use of French honorifics in Moroccan political discourse not only underscores the enduring influence of colonial legacies but also highlights the intersection of age, social class, and authority in linguistic practices. Prior studies on honorifics have predominantly focused on their sociolinguistic functions in daily interactions (Agha, 2007) or their cultural significance in specific communities. However, the application of these strategies within the high-stakes arena of political discourse in Morocco remains relatively underexplored.

This study aims to address this gap by analyzing how Moroccan political figures strategically employ French honorifics to assert power, manage face-threatening acts, and navigate complex social relationships. Through a detailed discourse analysis of Moroccan political interviews, this research sheds light on the pragmatic functions of politeness strategies and their implications for understanding power and hierarchy in political communication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Politeness

The term "polite" can be traced back to the 15th century, derived from the late Mediaeval Latin "politus," meaning "smoothed and accomplished." Initially, it was associated with refinement and polished manners. By the 17th century, the Oxford Dictionary of Etymology described a polite individual as one exhibiting refined, courteous manners. In medieval Europe, upper-class individuals adhered to values like loyalty and reciprocal trust, aiming to achieve social distinction. Similarly, in Persian, "adab" (politeness) refers to knowledge that helps avoid faults in speech and behavior, fostering harmonious relationships (Dekhoda, 1980).

Politeness is vital for maintaining social interactions. It manifests as negative politeness—avoiding offense through respect and restraint—or positive politeness—building social bonds by expressing care and approval. Negative politeness addresses potentially offensive situations with mitigation strategies, while positive politeness fosters solidarity and emotional connection. Politeness also reflects cultural norms, shaped by Lakoff's (1973) conversational maxims: Quality, Quantity, Relevance, and Manner.

Prosodic features and non-linguistic elements like gestures contribute significantly to politeness. As Marquez-Reiter (2002) notes, prosodic elements can either amplify or soften the illocutionary force of an utterance. Thus, politeness depends not only on language but also on social norms, conversational principles, and extralinguistic factors.

2.2. Politeness Theories

Fraser (1990) highlights that societal norms dictate politeness, forming conventions like conversational routines and politeness formulas. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle underscores efficiency in communication, governed by maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner. Violating these maxims often implies a strategic attempt to convey additional meaning rather than a breach of politeness.

The Conversational-Contract view emphasizes negotiated social relationships, aligning with the Social Norm view by advocating adherence to agreed-upon conversational codes. However, it allows for renegotiation of rights and obligations during interactions.

2.3. Face-Threatening Acts

The concept of 'face,' introduced by Goffman and Newill (1967) and further developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), refers to an individual's public self-image. Maintaining or losing face depends on verbal acts during interactions. Face-threatening acts (FTAs) jeopardize another's public image, often through direct commands, whereas face-saving acts mitigate such risks using indirect speech acts (Yule, 2006).

Politeness involves managing face through respect for universal social dynamics, despite cultural variations. For instance, Brown and Levinson's distinction between positive face (the desire for acceptance) and negative face (the desire for autonomy) underscores the cultural relativity of politeness.

2.4.Honorifics

Brown and Levinson (1987) regard honorifics as markers of politeness that minimize conflict and express respect. Honorifics can denote social rank or serve specific linguistic functions, varying across cultures. For example, English uses titles like "Mr.," "Ms.," and "Dr.," while Japanese employs a complex system distinguishing addressee and referent honorifics (Campus, 2011). Feminist critiques highlight honorifics' potential to reinforce gender inequality, advocating for egalitarian alternatives.

2.5.Pronouns and Positioning

Pronoun usage reflects social relationships and speaker positioning. Brown and Gilman's (1960) study of the "T/V" distinction (e.g., French "tu" vs. "vous") illustrates how pronouns convey solidarity or hierarchy. Norrby and Warren (2012) emphasize the interplay between common ground (sameness) and social distance (difference) in shaping pronoun choice, which ultimately reflects identity and relational dynamics.

2.6.Political Discourse

Political speech embodies ambiguity, conflict, and subtle critique, making politeness and indirectness essential for navigating power dynamics (Obeng, 1997). Grice's theory of implicature explores how conversational meaning extends beyond literal content. Implicatures are characterized by cancelability, non-detachability, calculability, non-conventionality, and non-determinability (Obeng, 1997). Wilson and Sperber (1981) critique Grice's approach, arguing that indirect strategies like metaphor and irony require more than adherence to conversational norms.

2.7.Indirectness in Political Discourse

Indirectness allows politicians to navigate contentious topics and appeal to diverse audiences. Politeness strategies mitigate potential conflicts, balancing clarity with the need for diplomatic ambiguity. Brown and Levinson's framework (1987) provides a lens to analyze these strategies, emphasizing the cultural and contextual factors that shape political communication.

The interplay between politeness and political discourse reveals the nuanced ways language mediates social interactions and power structures. From historical roots to theoretical frameworks, the study of politeness and political discourse underscores the cultural specificity and strategic adaptability of communication practices.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1.Context and Data Selection

This study is grounded in the analysis of video recordings as primary data sources, examining the use of honorifics in Moroccan political discourse. Three videos were selected based on their relevance to the study's objectives, capturing key moments involving Moroccan monarchs and their interaction with French discourse.

Video 1 (1989)

Broadcast by Antenne 2, a French TV channel, this video features King Hassan II on "L'heure de Vérité," a live program from the Royal Palace in Rabat.

Video 2 (1979)

This archival documentary, produced by the Moroccan Army's official channel (Les Forces Armées Royales), provides insights into the childhood of King Mohammed

VI. It includes interviews conducted by a French journalist in an informal palace setting.

Video 3 (2017)

Filmed during the 28th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, this video features King Mohammed VI delivering a speech in French to African Union leaders.

These videos collectively represent diverse temporal, social, and political contexts, enabling a robust examination of honorific usage.

3.2. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design, employing discourse analysis to investigate how language reflects and shapes social structures and power dynamics. Discourse analysis is particularly suited to exploring verbal and non-verbal elements within video data, considering the interaction between language, context, and meaning.

Video analysis is integral to this approach, allowing for the examination of visual cues, tone, and context alongside verbal communication. This multimodal analysis provides a deeper understanding of the use of French honorifics in Moroccan political discourse.

By analyzing these three video sources, this study aims to uncover patterns in the use of honorifics and their connection to age, power, and social context.

3.3. Data Description

3.3.1. Video 1

This section focuses on the description of the first case study, which primarily examines the relationship between honorifics and power. The case study revolves around a political interview between King Hassan II of Morocco and François-Henri de Virieu, the main interviewer and moderator.

During the interview, François-Henri de Virieu introduced four participating journalists: Alain Duhamel, Jean Daniel, Albert du Roy, and Geneviève Moll. Among them, only Geneviève Moll posed questions submitted by the viewers.

(0 :29) INTERVIEWER : **Majesté, chef d'état, le chef spirituel et le chef temporel** du royaume du maroc...

(0:42)INTERVIEWER: **Vous êtes l'héritier d'une dynastie qui règne** ici dans ce pays depuis 330 ans et d'autre part **vous êtes descendants du prophète et commandeur** des croyants...

(2:06) INTERVIEWER: Dans cette salle palais royal de rabat nous avons **Alain Duhamel jean daniel** directeur du nouvel observateur **Albert du Roy** mais aussi à paris nous avons **Geneviève Moll** qui centralise les questions posées par téléphone et par minitel la parole tout de suite aux téléspectateurs avoue **Geneviève Moll** avoué ce...

Majesty, head of state, the spiritual leader, and the temporal leader of the kingdom of Morocco...

you are the heir of a dynasty which has reigned here in this country for 330 years and on the other hand **you are descendants of the prophet and commander** of the believers

In this palace royal room in Rabat, we have **alain duhamel jean daniel**, director of the new observer, **Albert du Roy** but also in paris we have **Geneviève Moll** who centralizes the questions asked by telephone and by Minitel, the floor immediately to viewers admits **Geneviève Moll** confessed this...

(2 :26) Moll: bonsoir **majesté** les français sont bien sûr très préoccupés par ces questions de religion et je vais vous poser si vous le permettez la première question

(2 :53) H: bonsoir **madame** molle et à travers elle à toutes les personnes qui au cours

(6 :20) INTERVIEWER : ...avec **Alain Duhamel** pour un quart d'heure avec **Duhamel** qui a beaucoup de questions

(12 :01) H : Je ne peux mieux citer que les paroles que vous a dit **le président** de la République **monsieur François**

(21 :53) INTERVIEWER : merci **Alain duhamel**. Majesté est ce que vous accepteriez de recevoir **jean Marie**

(25:17) INTERVIEWER: **Jean Daniel** pour un quart d'heure **jean Daniel** directeur du nouvel observateur.

(25:27)*Jean Daniel: la question c'est quel est **selon vous** à l'égard de la femme la position de l'islam...

(41:25) H: je **vous** dirais tout simplement....

*(45:57) Albert du Roi: j'aurai encore des questions à poser aux **chefs d'état** que **vous êtes** aux **chefs religieux vous êtes... vous êtes souverain, vous** vivez dans un palais....

Moll: Good evening, **majesty**, the French are of course very concerned about these religious questions, and I will ask you if you allow me the first question.

Good evening **Mrs.** Moll and through her to all the people who during

...with **Alain Duhamel** for a quarter of an hour with **Duhamel** who has a lot of questions

I cannot quote better than the words that **the President** of the Republic, **Mr François**,

Thank you, Alain Duhamel. Majesty, would you agree to receive **Jean Marie**

Jean Daniel for a quarter of an hour **Jean Daniel** director of the new observer

the question is what do **you** think is the position of women regarding Islam...

I would simply tell **you**....

I still have questions to ask the chefs status (**you are**) to religious leaders (**you are**) ... **you are sovereign, you** live in a palace...

3.3.2. Video 2

This second case study deals with the relationship between honorifics and age. The data for this section comes from a video titled "*FARMAROC/SM le Roi Mohammed VI_1976*", featuring an interview with Prince Mohammed VI (the current king of Morocco) conducted by a French interviewer. The purpose of the interview was to provide insights into the prince's personal life and to learn more about the future monarch.

The analysis is based on quotes from conversations involving the prince, his teacher, his comrade, his sister, the school's chef, and the interviewer. This study aims to explore the extent to which age influences the use of honorifics and shapes the dynamics of their application.

All the extracted quotes, representing various contexts in which the French interviewer and reporter present the former prince's personal life, are provided below.

Discourse	Translation	Participants	Time
" <u>mon seigneur</u> "	my lord	teacher <i>to</i> the prince	0:33
" <u>le prince</u> "	the prince	teacher (about the prince)	0:55/ 6:22
"quels sont <u>vos</u> lectures en ce moment?"	what are your readings at the moment?	interviewer <i>to</i> the prince	1:38

“quel est <u>votre</u> sport préféré?”	what is your favorite sport?	interviewer to the prince	1:53
“combien d’heures faites <u>vous</u> du sport?”	how many hours do you exercise?	interviewer to the prince	2:01
“ <u>sidi Mohammed</u> ”	my master Mohammed	reporter (interviewer)	2:07/ 3:46/3:52/ 5:26/6:41
“ <u>le jeune prince</u> ”	the young prince	reporter (interviewer)	4:36
INTVW: “ <u>vous</u> allez venir à Paris?” prince’s sister: “si <u>vous</u> avez 5 minutes, si le protocole <u>vous</u> laisse un peu de temps, qu’ <u>aimeriez vous</u> faire?”	are you going to come to Paris? if you have 5 minutes, if the protocol gives you some time, what would you like to do?	interviewer to the prince	4:27
“ <u>sidi Mohammed prince héritier du Maroc</u> ”	my master Mohammed prince heir of Morocco	reporter (interviewer)	3:08
“ <u>le prince héritier</u> ”	the crown prince	interviewer to the prince’s sister (Meryem)	4:25/ 6:51
“quel sont <u>vos</u> matières préférées <u>sidi Mohammed</u> ?”	what are your favorite school subjects master Mohammed?	interviewer to prince	5:40
“ <u>vous</u> parlez plusieurs langues?”	do you speak several languages?	interviewer to prince	5:50
“bon appétit <u>sidi</u> ”	bon appetite my master	chef to the prince	6:13
INTVW: “comment tu l’appelles <u>le prince</u> ?” comrade: “ <u>smit sidi</u> ”	INTVW: what do you call the prince? comrade: the name of my master	interviewer to the prince’s comrade	6:25
“ <u>vous vous tutoyez</u> entre vous?”	do you talk to each other?	interviewer to the prince’s comrade	6:37
“ <u>vous vous battez</u> parfois?”	do you fight with each other?	interviewer to the prince’s comrade	6:39
“si <u>vous n’étiez pas prince héritier</u> , quel métier <u>auriez vous</u> aimé faire?”	if you were not crown prince, what job would you have liked to do?	interviewer to the prince	6:56

3.3.3. Video 3

The last case study examined in this section focuses on the use of honorific expressions in political discourse interviews. The data is derived from a televised interview sourced from the YouTube channel of the French National Audiovisual Institute (*Institut National de l’Audiovisuel* or INA). The original broadcast was produced by the French channel TV5 on December 17, 1989.

The participants in this interview include the late King Hassan II of Morocco, who is interviewed by multiple journalists and pundits. The panel of interviewers features notable

figures such as François-Henri de Virieu, who moderates the discussion, alongside Alain Duhamel, Jean Daniel, and Belgian journalist Albert du Roy.

The context of the interview is marked by challenging questions posed by the journalists, often carrying a critical undertone. These questions target King Hassan II's policies and perspectives on several sensitive and controversial topics. The themes addressed include gender roles in Morocco, the status of Islam in Moroccan society, foreign policy concerning other Arab nations, freedom of speech, economic cooperation between France and Morocco, and other significant issues brought to light during the dialogue.

1-(0:22) Interviewer: Il ne sont pas habitué à nous voir ce soir dialoguer avec un roi	They[viewers] are not used to see us tonight have a dialogue with a king
2-(0:36) Interviewer: vous n'êtes pas un chef d'état comme les autres	You are a head of state unlike any other
3-(0:40) Interviewer: vous êtes à la fois le chef spirituel et le chef temporel du royaume du maroc	You are both the spiritual and temporal head of the kingdom of Morocco
4-(0:44) Interviewer: D'une part vous êtes l'héritier d'une dynastie qui règne ici dans ce pays depuis trois cents trente ans	On the one hand you are the heir of a dynasty that has reigned here in this country for three hundred and thirty years
5-(0:48) Interviewer:...et d'autre part vous êtes descendant du prophète et commandeur des croyants	And on the other hand, you are a descendant of the prophet and commander of the believers
6-(1:06) Interviewer:... votre personne et sacrée et inviolable	your character is sacred and inviolable
7-(1:31) Interviewer: je rappelle que vous êtes en ce moment président du sommet de la ligue des 21 pays arabes	Let me remind you that you are currently sitting as president of the 21 countries involved in the Arab League summit

Excellence Monsieur le Président 00:05	Excellency Mr. President
Mesdames et Messieurs les chefs d'État 00:09	Ladies and Gentlemen Heads of State
Madame la Présidente 00:12	Madame President
la commission excellences 00:13	the excellence committee
Mesdames et Messieurs 00:15	Ladies and gentlemen
je rentre enfin chez moi vous vous retrouvez avec bonheur vous m'avez tous manqué 00:30	I'm finally home to find you with happiness I missed you all
monsieur frères chefs d'État 00:48	Sir brothers, heads of state
devant vous 1:05	In front of you

4. RESULTS

4.1.Video 1

As the first data above demonstrates, the interviewer and the journalists employed various forms of honorifics to address the king. From the outset, the interviewer consistently referred to the king as “Majesty,” avoiding any use of his first or last name at any point during the interview. Similarly, Moll, one of the journalists, also used the honorific title “Majesty” when addressing the king. Notably, she sought permission before posing her first question. Additionally, Albert du Roy addressed the king using other honorific expressions such as “leaders” and “sovereign” during his turn to speak. However, the remaining journalists, Alain Duhamel and Jean Daniel, did not use any of these honorific titles.

Conversely, the interviewer, François-Henri de Virieu, did not use honorific titles when introducing the journalists. For instance, he introduced Moll by mentioning only her role and referred to her solely by her full name. The same pattern was observed when he introduced the other journalists individually, as he avoided the use of any honorific forms, addressing them solely by their names. Throughout the interview, de Virieu managed the discussion and allocated speaking turns without employing any honorific expressions.

The data also reveals that King Hassan II used the term “madam” when welcoming the journalist, Moll. Furthermore, the king utilized additional honorific titles such as “the President” and “Mr.” when quoting François Hollande, who was then the President of the French Republic.

The entire interview was characterized by the use of the formal pronoun “vous.” At no point was the symmetrical “tu” employed. This formal pronoun was consistently used by the king, the interviewer, and the journalists, reinforcing the formal tone of the discussion.

Political discourse is distinct from other forms of discourse due to the influence of factors such as social distance, power dynamics, and societal norms. As demonstrated in the results, the consistent use of honorifics by the interviewer to address the king reflects an awareness of social distance and a need to maintain formal respect. This aligns with Fraser’s (1990) emphasis on societal norms dictating politeness conventions, where honorifics serve as a linguistic tool for upholding hierarchical relationships. Brown and Levinson (1987) similarly regard honorifics as a strategy for mitigating face-threatening acts (FTAs), with their usage reinforcing respect and minimizing potential conflict.

4.2.Video 2

It is evident, even at the first glance, that the interviewer employed several honorific expressions consistently throughout the seven-minute and sixteen-second interview. One notable expression is “Sidi Mohammed,” which is repeated approximately seven times. Other honorific phrases include “mon seigneur,” “le prince,” “le prince héritier,” and similar terms that emphasize formality and respect.

Additionally, it is significant that the interviewer addresses Prince Mohammed VI using the personal pronoun “vous.” In French, “vous” is both a plural pronoun and a formal singular pronoun, which contrasts with the informal singular “tu.” The choice of “vous” signifies respect and aligns with the formal context of the interaction, reinforcing the social norms and power dynamics at play.

A noteworthy moment occurs in an exchange between the interviewer and the prince’s comrade, where she asks the young boy, “*Comment tu l’appelles, le prince?*” (How do you call the prince?), and he replies, “*Smit Sidi*” (My Lord). This interaction highlights the deep-rooted cultural and linguistic conventions surrounding respect and honorifics when referring to figures of authority. The use of “Smit Sidi” by the boy reflects a cultural norm of addressing the prince with reverence, even among younger speakers, which further underscores the pervasiveness of honorific expressions in the social hierarchy.

4.3.Video 3

In the third video, the French journalist, Mr. de Virieu, addresses King Hassan with multiple honorific titles throughout his speech. He begins his introductory monologue by referring to the king as “a king,” as seen in line (1). In this context, he underscores how unusual it is for the French public to witness an interview with a person of royal status, emphasizing the significance of the moment. Following this, he uses a remarkable appellation in line (2), referring to the king as “a head of state unlike any other.” This expression not only emphasizes

the uniqueness of King Hassan's position but also frames him in a context that highlights his exceptional political stature.

Mr. de Virieu continues by listing several honorary titles in line (3), calling King Hassan "the spiritual and temporal head of the kingdom of Morocco." At first glance, this utterance seems to serve the purpose of providing viewers with additional information about King Hassan. However, its underlying function is to address the king with the utmost respect, adhering to the rituals and conventions of politeness that are culturally embedded in Morocco. The use of these titles aligns with the Moroccan social norm of addressing figures of authority with great reverence, particularly when engaging in formal discourse.

He further elaborates, stating that King Hassan is "the heir of a dynasty that has reigned here for three hundred and thirty years" (line 4). By stressing the longevity and historical significance of the royal lineage, Mr. de Virieu not only reinforces the king's royal authority but also underscores the deep-rooted legitimacy of his rule. The longevity of the dynasty serves as a reminder of the king's status and his responsibility as a link to Morocco's rich historical and cultural heritage.

In line (5), the interviewer extends further respect by addressing King Hassan as "a descendant of the prophet" and "commander of the believers." These titles add layers of sanctity and religious authority to the king's role. The interviewer's use of these expressions highlights King Hassan's unique position not only as a political leader but also as a figure with spiritual significance. Mr. de Virieu then follows these titles by referring to the king's character as "sacred" and "inviolable" in line (6). This explicit acknowledgment of the king's divine and inviolable status illustrates the deeply entrenched connection between religious and political authority in Morocco. The reverence for King Hassan is heightened by aligning him with both religious and temporal power.

Finally, in line (7), Mr. de Virieu reminds the king of his role as "president of the Arab League summit." It is notable that this title is introduced towards the end of his speech, perhaps as a way of reinforcing the king's global influence and leadership, further emphasizing his multifaceted role on the international stage. This concluding mention highlights King Hassan's political weight beyond the borders of Morocco and places him within the broader Arab and international diplomatic community.

This sequence of honorific expressions, employed by the interviewer, reflects a deliberate effort to maintain the social hierarchy and demonstrate respect for the king's authority and dignity. The use of such titles is consistent with the cultural and political norms in Morocco, where the king's status is not only acknowledged but is also central to the discourse surrounding him.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1.Video 1

The results highlight that the use of honorifics is closely tied to the power dynamics within the interaction. The king, as a figure of authority, is addressed with titles such as "Majesty," while the journalists are referred to by their names, reflecting their equal standing with the interviewer. This corroborates Brown and Gilman's (1960) theory of pronoun usage, particularly the "T/V" distinction, where linguistic choices, including pronouns and titles, signify power hierarchies and solidarity. In this case, the asymmetrical relationship between the king and the journalists necessitates the use of honorifics to preserve the king's negative face—the desire for autonomy and respect (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Moll's use of honorific titles before posing her question underscores the importance of politeness strategies in mitigating FTAs. This reflects the principles of negative politeness, as

described by Brown and Levinson (1987), where deference and restraint are employed to avoid offense. Similarly, Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, particularly the maxim of Manner, is evident in the structured and respectful tone adopted by the journalists and the interviewer, ensuring clarity and formality in the interaction.

The data also reveal the contrasting dynamics in the use of honorifics. While the interviewer addresses the journalists by their proper names, reflecting a horizontal relationship, his deference to the king indicates a vertical relationship. This interplay between equality and hierarchy aligns with Norrby and Warren's (2012) findings on the role of pronouns in expressing solidarity and social distance. The symmetrical use of *vous* throughout the interaction further emphasizes formality, as it avoids the informality associated with *tu*. Such a choice adheres to social norms and reinforces the notion of face in formal settings (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The king's use of honorifics when quoting the French president or addressing the interviewer highlights his adherence to social norms and political decorum. This supports Goffman and Newill (1967) concept of face as a public self-image that must be managed during interactions. By employing honorifics, the king not only upholds his own face but also respects the face of his interlocutors, reflecting the reciprocal nature of politeness. Furthermore, the use of honorifics between political leaders, as seen in the king's reference to the French president, illustrates the horizontal relationship of mutual respect and solidarity among equals in positions of power.

The findings align with Marquez-Reiter's (2002) assertion that prosodic features and extralinguistic elements play a significant role in politeness. In this context, the consistent use of formal pronouns and honorifics, as well as the respectful tone, illustrates how political discourse leverages these elements to navigate power dynamics and preserve social harmony.

Finally, the results demonstrate how politeness strategies in political discourse contribute to maintaining the formal tone and minimizing potential conflicts. As Obeng (1997) observes, indirectness and politeness are crucial in political communication for addressing sensitive topics without escalating tensions. The strategic use of honorifics in this study reinforces the cultural specificity and adaptability of politeness, as it aligns with the social expectations and power structures inherent in Moroccan and French political contexts.

5.2.Video 2

The analysis of the second video reveals that the interviewer frequently uses honorific expressions, including "Sidi Mohammed," "mon seigneur," and "le prince," highlighting the use of formal titles to convey respect. These expressions align with Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion that honorifics serve as markers of politeness, reducing conflict and emphasizing social rank. Additionally, the use of the French pronoun "vous" instead of the familiar "tu" reflects the social hierarchy and reinforces the respectful distance between the interviewer and Prince Mohammed VI, consistent with Brown and Gilman's (1960) study on "T/V" distinctions.

A noteworthy moment occurs when the interviewer references the prince in a conversation with a child, who uses the term "Smit sidi." This demonstrates how the use of honorifics, like "sidi," permeates Moroccan society, including among younger generations. In political discourse, as Obeng (1997) notes, language serves to navigate power dynamics, and politeness strategies like indirectness are crucial. The interviewer's frequent use of honorifics helps preserve the prince's social face, reflecting the balance of power and respect in the conversation, as outlined by Brown and Levinson (1987). This use of formal language supports the cultural norms of respect and hierarchy in Moroccan society, maintaining a socially appropriate interaction.

5.3.Video 3

In the third video, Mr. de Virieu's speech seems to follow a traditional vertical power dynamic, with the journalist addressing King Hassan respectfully using multiple honorific titles. However, a closer examination reveals a subtler, critical undertone behind these expressions, suggesting that politeness is used strategically rather than merely ceremoniously. While Mr. de Virieu adheres to Moroccan norms of respect (Brown & Levinson, 1987), these honorifics, such as "head of state" and "descendant of the prophet," also function to subtly challenge the king's policies.

This aligns with Fraser's (1990) view that politeness is shaped by societal norms but can be strategically employed to convey additional meaning. In this case, the honorifics not only maintain the king's public image but also mask a deeper critique of his political stance. Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of politeness strategies, which include the use of honorifics to preserve face, fits well here, as Mr. de Virieu's respectful language serves both to defer to authority and indirectly question it.

Additionally, the reference to King Hassan's role in the Arab League emphasizes his international importance but also subtly positions his actions within a broader global context, inviting scrutiny. Ultimately, Mr. de Virieu's use of politeness serves a dual purpose: it reinforces the king's authority while also engaging in a critical, indirect political discourse (Obeng, 1997).

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore how social factors such as power, social status, identity, and age influence the use of honorifics and pronouns in political discourse. By analyzing these linguistic choices, the study aimed to demonstrate how honorifics function in the negotiation of power dynamics in political settings.

Data for this research was collected through a qualitative approach, specifically discourse analysis, which involved examining three case studies drawn from video recordings of political interactions. This method provided an in-depth look at how honorifics are employed in various contexts, allowing for the identification of underlying patterns of power and politeness in political speech.

The study revealed several important findings. In the first case, the use of honorifics was found to maintain social distance and reflect the dynamic power between political figures, reinforcing a vertical power hierarchy in the interaction. The second case demonstrated that while age typically dictates the power distance between speakers, social status often supersedes age when determining the use of honorifics. This highlights the importance of politeness rituals in Moroccan society, where respect is a key social norm. In the third case, it was found that politeness strategies, while typically used to convey respect, can also carry an antagonistic undertone. This suggests that politeness in political discourse can sometimes mask deeper critique or conflict, adding complexity to the dynamics of power and respect.

Despite its contributions, the study has some limitations. The data were drawn from only three case studies, which, while revealing, may not provide sufficient scientific rigor to generalize the findings to a wider population. Additionally, the use of secondary data, while insightful, does not always address the specific research questions or provide the level of detail necessary to fully explore the phenomena under investigation.

Future research could benefit from expanding the sample size and incorporating firsthand data. Exploring the perspective of those addressed with honorifics, rather than just the referents, would provide a more nuanced understanding of how such terms are used to address individuals with high social status and power. Furthermore, examining the role of honorifics in different

political and cultural contexts could offer a broader perspective on their function in various social settings.

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APPENDICES

Video 1:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tu15CD6qT0&t=407s>

Political interview between Hassan II, the king of Morocco, and François-Henri de Virieu, the main interviewer, and the moderator of the interview. François-Henri de Virieu, and four journalists namely Alain Duhamel, Jean Daniel, Albert du Roy, and Geneviève Moll.

(0 :29) INTERVIWER : Majesté, chef d'état, le chef spirituel et le chef temporel du royaume du maroc...	Majesty, head of state, the spiritual leader, and the temporal leader of the kingdom of Morocco...
(0:42) INTERVIWER: Vous êtes l'héritier d'une dynastie qui règne ici dans ce pays depuis 330 ans et d'autre part vous êtes descendants du prophète et commandeur des croyants...	you are the heir of a dynasty which has reigned here in this country for 330 years and on the other hand, you are descendants of the prophet and commander of the believers
(2:06) INTERVIWER: Dans cette salle palais royal de rabat nous avons Alain Duhamel jean daniel directeur du nouvel observateur Albert du Roy mais aussi à paris nous avons Geneviève Moll qui centralise les questions posées par téléphone et par minitel la parole tout de suite aux téléspectateurs avoue Geneviève Moll avoué ce...	In this palace royal room in Rabat, we have alain duhamel jean daniel , director of the new observer, Albert du Roy but also in paris we have Geneviève Moll who centralizes the questions asked by telephone and by Minitel, the floor immediately to viewers admits Geneviève Moll confessed this...
(2 :26) Moll: bonsoir majesté les français sont bien sûr très préoccupés par ces questions de religion et je vais vous poser si vous le permettez la première question	Moll: Good evening, majesty , the French are of course very concerned about these religious questions, and I will ask you if you allow me the first question.
(2 :53) H: bonsoir madame molle et à travers elle à toutes les personnes qui au cours	Good evening Mrs. Moll and through her to all the people who during
(6 :20) INTERVIWER : ...avec Alain Duhamel pour un quart d'heure avec Duhamel qui a beaucoup de questions	...with Alain Duhamel for a quarter of an hour with Duhamel who has a lot of questions
(12 :01) H : Je ne peux mieux citer que les paroles que vous a dit le président de la République monsieur François	I cannot quote better than the words that the President of the Republic, Mr François ,
(21 :53) INTERVIWER : merci Alain duhamel . Majesté est ce que vous accepteriez de recevoir jean Marie	Thank you, Alain Duhamel. Majesty , would you agree to receive Jean Marie
(25:17) INTERVIEWER: Jean Daniel pour un quart d'heure jean Daniel directeur du nouvel observateur.	Jean Daniel for a quarter of an hour Jean Daniel director of the new observer
(25:27)*Jean Daniel: la question c'est quel est selon vous à l'égard de la femme la position de l'islam...	the question is what do you think is the position of women regarding Islam...
(41:25) H: je vous dirais tout simplement....	I would simply tell you....

<p>*(45:57) Albert du Roi: j'aurai encore des questions à poser aux chefs d'état que vous êtes aux chefs religieux vous êtes... vous êtes souverain, vous vivez dans un palais....</p>	<p>I still have questions to ask the chefs status (you are) to religious leaders (you are) ... you are sovereign, you live in a palace...</p>
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Video 2:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmSvR5jjMHk&t=20s>

Video titled "FARMAROC/SM le Roi Mohammed VI_1976" of an interview report done with Prince Mohammed IV, the current king of Morocco, by a French interviewer.

“ <u>mon seigneur</u> ”	my lord	0:33
“ <u>le prince</u> ”	the prince	0:55/ 6:22
“quels sont <u>vos</u> lectures en ce moment?”	what are your readings at the moment?	1:38
“quel est <u>votre</u> sport préféré?”	what is your favorite sport?	1:53
“combien d’heures faites <u>vous</u> du sport?”	how many hours do you exercise?	2:01
“ <u>sidi Mohammed</u> ”	my master Mohammed	2:07/ 3:46/3:52/ 5:26/6:41
“ <u>le jeune prince</u> ”	the young prince	4:36
INTVW: “ <u>vous</u> allez venir à Paris?”	are you going to come to Paris? if you have 5 minutes, if the protocol gives you some time,	4:27
prince’s sister: “si <u>vous</u> avez 5 minutes, si le protocole <u>vous</u> laisse un peu de temps, <u>qu’aimeriez vous</u> faire?”	what would you like to do?	
“ <u>sidi Mohammed prince héritier du Maroc</u> ”	my master Mohammed prince heir of Morocco	3:08
“ <u>le prince héritier</u> ”	the crown prince	4:25/ 6:51
“quel sont <u>vos</u> matières préférées <u>sidi Mohammed</u> ?”	what are your favorite school subjects master Mohammed?	5:40
“ <u>vous</u> parlez plusieurs langues?”	do you speak several languages?	5:50
“bon appétit sidi”	bon appetite my master	6:13
INTVW: “comment tu l’appelles le prince ?” comrade: “smit sidi”	INTVW: what do you call the prince? comrade: the name of my master	6:25

“vous vous tutoyez entre vous?”	do you talk to each other?	6:37
“vous vous battez parfois?”	do you fight with each other?	6:39
“si vous n’étiez pas prince héritier, quel métier auriez vous aimé faire?”	if you were not crown prince, what job would you have liked to do?	6:56

Video 3:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5DW315nW9w&t=232s>

This video was recorded by AFRICA24 in 2017, during the 28th African Union summit in Addis-Abeba, Ethiopia, after Morocco's return to the African Union.

Excellence Monsieur le Président 00:05	Excellency Mr. President
Mesdames et Messieurs les chefs d’État 00:09	Ladies and Gentlemen Heads of State
Madame la Présidente 00:12	Madame President
la commission excellences 00:13	the excellence committee
Mesdames et Messieurs 00:15	Ladies and gentlemen
je rentre enfin chez moi vous vous retrouvez avec	I'm finally home to find you with happiness I missed
bonheur vous m'avez tous manqué 00:30	you all
monsieur frères chefs d’État 00:48	Sir brothers, heads of state
devant vous 1:05	In front of you

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