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The Shift from French to English in Algeria: Practices and Perceptions of Generation Z in Tebessa

The Case of Medical Students at **Echahid Cheikh** Larbi Tebessi University

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language Sciences

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"It always seems impossible until it's done."

Nelson Mandela

Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

I rewrote the dedication dozens of times. Words and expressions failed me this time.

I dedicate this work first to my dear father, who worked hard to get me here.

To my brothers, who are always there and supported me in completing this dissertation.

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To my dear friends who have always been like the sisters I never had.

And everyone who accompanied me during this journey

The largest part of the dedication goes to my sister, my friend, my love, and my whole life, my dear mother.

كل سطر .....كل كلمة .....كل حرف ... هو هدية لكي غاليتي

أنت الأمان والمأمن ..أنت الروح ودواء الجروح ...

أنت هبتي وحظي الوحيد في هذه الدنيا ..

شكرا لأنك كنت دائما إلى جانبي

اللهم ارزق أمي فوق عمرها عمرا وفوق صحتها عافيه ولا تحرمني من وجودها ورضاها واجعل سعادتها كظلها ترافقها

ربّ أبعد عن أُمي متاعب الدّنيا، ولا تذقها طعم الألم، ولا دموع الحزن، يا ربّ بحجمِ سمائِك السابعة أرح قلبها، وأسعدها وأحفظها لي .

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Dedication

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم"وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا" سورة طه الآية (144)

إلى نفسي أولا،

إلى تلك المرأة التي قاومت التعب، واحتضنت المسؤوليات، وسهرت الليالي بين كتب العلم وضوضاء الحياة، أقول :شكرًا لي على صبري حين ضاق الوقت، وعلى قوتي حين خارت العزائم.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CA: Classical Arabic

CoA: Colloquial Arabic

Gen Z: Generation Z

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

SPSS: Statistical Package of Social Sciences

THE SHIFT FROM FRENCH TO ENGLISH IN ALGERIA: THE PRACTICES AND PERCEPTIONS OF GENERATION Z IN TEBESSA

THE CASE OF MEDICAL STUDENTS AT LARBI TEBESSI UNIVERSITY

by

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Department of Letters and English Language

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Abstract

This study investigates the evolving language dynamics among Algeria's Generation Z, with a particular focus on the shift from French to English in the aftermath of the Hirak movement. Adopting a mixed- methods research design, the study combines quantitative data from a trilingual questionnaire (Arabic, French, and English) and qualitative insights from open-ended responses. The research sample consists of 43 first-year medical students from Larbi Tebessi University in Tebessa. The study addresses two main research questions: what are the functional uses of English in comparison to French among Generation Z? And how does Generation Z perceive the shift from French to English? The findings reveal a noticeable preference for English, driven by perceptions of modernity, international opportunities, and career advancement. However, students also recognize significant sociolinguistic, institutional, and generational challenges that hinder the complete replacement of French. Students report that English is increasingly used in academic and digital contexts, but French remains entrenched in institutional and everyday communication. The study recommends expanding future research to include broader geographic and disciplinary samples, integrating more qualitative methods, and addressing potential academic biases. These findings contribute to ongoing discussions on language policy, identity, and the future of multilingualism in Algeria.

Keywords: Algeria, English, French, Generation Z, Hirak movement, language attitudes, language shift, multilingualism

General Introduction

Background of the Study

Language serves as both a marker of identity and a tool of sociopolitical negotiation, especially in post-colonial contexts. Algeria's current linguistic landscape is the product of centuries of cultural interaction, colonization, and political reform. Over time, multiple languages indigenous, colonial, and global have interacted to form a layered system of communication, identity, and power (Benrabah ,2013). In recent years, a sociolinguistic transformation has been unfolding, marked by a shift in language preference among younger generations, particularly toward English (Sahraoui ,2021). This linguistic evolution is most noticeable among Gen Z, a demographic cohort commonly defined as individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. Globally recognized for their digital fluency and global outlook (McKinsey & Company, 2024), members of Gen Z are reshaping communicative norms in Algeria. Their engagement with English has extended beyond formal education into digital, social, and political domains (Lev, 2021). As Algeria reconsiders its language education policies, the adoption of English in earlier stages of schooling and its growing symbolic capital represent a critical pivot in national identity discourse.

The increasing functional and symbolic value of English in Algeria is the main focus of this study, particularly since it intersects with Gen Z experiences. The change has been most evident after El-Hirak, during which language had been employed as a tool of resistance, modernization, and global exposure. While previously English had been relegated to the margins of public space in Algeria, its deployment by young people today illustrates broader intergenerational shifts in taste for languages and cultural identity (Hamane, 2024; Sahraoui, 2021; Ozyaba, 2021).

Furthermore, Gen Z's language practices characterized by hybrid forms, code-mixing, and English dominant discourse online signal a shift not only in preference but also in linguistic ideology (Ozyaba, 2021). This shift challenges the dominance of French and repositions English as a language of modernity, innovation, and international engagement. Despite its increasing relevance, this phenomenon remains insufficiently examined in scholarly literature, particularly within the Algerian context (Sahraoui ,2021).

This study explores the new language phenomenon of English gaining functional and symbolic significance among Gen Z in Algeria. The focus is on how Gen Z engages with English in everyday and academic life, especially after El-Hirak has turned language use into a form of cultural expression and global connection. Rather than defining causality, the work presents descriptive data on language use patterns, evolving tastes, and sociolinguistic attitudes that may be employed in refuting language policy, identity, and globalization discourses. By doing so, it bridges an evident lacuna in literature on contemporary language dynamics in Algeria.

Statement of the Problem

Algeria's linguistic landscape is notably complex, shaped by a coexistence of Classical Arabic, Algerian dialects, Berber, French, and, increasingly English. In 2023, English was introduced at the primary school level instead of middle school, marking a policy shift . Due to the fact that it is deeply embedded in the digital era and globalized culture, Generation z is likely to be the most welcoming (Lahlou et al., 2023; Djiar, 2022). However, whether this enthusiasm towards language shift is translated in their linguistic practices in daily communication in person or via social media is unclear. Particularly because French remains dominant in official domains, including government, higher education, and several professional sectors. Overall, the growing societal push to elevate English across these fields indicates intensifying linguistic competition.

While international studies have thoroughly addressed multilingualism and language contact, Algerian sociolinguistics continues to focus primarily on Arabic French bilingualism. The emerging role of English, especially among Gen Z in the post-Hirak era, remains underexplored despite its visible expansion in online and informal communication spaces. This underrepresentation is particularly evident in less researched regions like Tebessa. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the linguistic behaviors and underlying motivations of Gen Z, contributing to a better understanding of Algeria's evolving linguistic dynamics.

Significance of the Study

This research holds significance within the Algerian context, particularly as it investigates the growing shift from French to English among youth. It aims to highlight the impact of globalization on language preferences and the rising prominence of English in the digital age. Gen Z, shaped by global media exposure and technology driven communication, is central to this transformation. By documenting their language choices, the study provides a predictive glimpse into Algeria’s future linguistic landscape.

Moreover, the study contributes to post-Hirak sociolinguistic literature, offering insight into a generation that is redefining linguistic identity and practices in a rapidly changing society. The findings serve as a valuable reference material for future academic inquiries, particularly for those interested in regional variation or longitudinal trends. While the current research focuses on medical students in Tebessa, it sets a precedent for broader investigations that could encompass other regions of Algeria.

Additionally, the results may inform policymakers especially in the education sector on how to better design curricula that reflect linguistic realities. English instructors can draw from this study to enhance teaching strategies that align with Gen Z’s communicative preferences and to better prepare for educating Gen Alpha. By employing generational theory

as a sociolinguistic lens, the research offers a nuanced understanding of how age, culture, and language interconnect in Algeria's current context.

Aim of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to explore the linguistic shift from French to English among Gen Z in Algeria, focusing on their language preference and perceptions. Specifically, the research seeks first to identify how often and where the use of English and French by Algerian youth occurs in everyday life, academic settings and social interactions. This is to evaluate whether English is replacing the functional language use of French. Second, it explores the participants' opinions about the necessity, challenges, and importance of the shift to English, specifically in academic, professional, and social aspects, and assess their openness to this language shift. Achieving these objectives helps in understanding whether English can gain the same cultural and institutional position that French currently holds.

Research Questions and Assumptions

To address the aim of the study, the following research questions are posed:

1. What are the functional uses of English in comparison to French among Gen Z?

2. How does Gen Z perceive the shift from French to English?

On the background of these questions, we hypothesize the following:

1. English is replacing French in formal and informal writing, in settings where international communication is prevalent like airports, in communicating with friends , teachers, discussing topics such as emotions, technology, and lifestyle. However, it is failing to do so in other communicative settings like home and doctor’s office, and in talking to family members and strangers, and in discussing medical topics.

2. Gen Z welcomes the shift from French to English due to the necessity of English in various domains and due to the crucial opportunities in contributes with to the society as a whole. However, this shift is hard to implement in reality.

These questions guide the selection of the methodology and ensure a coherent and evidence-based research process.

Methodology

This study adopts an exploratory research design to discover the linguistic preferences of Gen Z and to understand the nuanced perceptions of students in a multilingual context regarding language shift. The research is situated in post-Hirak Algeria, where English is gaining sociolinguistic traction. The study sample consists of first-year students from the medical department at Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi University. These students represent a key demographic. They are young adults exposed to global linguistic trends and digital technologies, and they are additionally taught in some part with English. In addition, medical students in Algeria are witnessing a linguistic shift from French, which is the primary language used in this field, to English .Making them ideal participants for examining evolving language practices. Their responses provide crucial insight into broader societal shifts. Data collection relies on a survey that was administered in three languages, Arabic, French, and English. Data analysis is performed quantitatively using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software to process the questionnaire responses. This involves calculating frequencies percentages, to show language proficiency and usage patterns across various contexts. Additionally, mean scores are computed for Likert-scale items, indicating perceptions towards the language shift. Furthermore, Open-ended questions are also qualitatively analyzed to have more in-depth understanding of the language use preferences of the participants. The responses are read and coded with thematic analysis. This involved close reading of all the responses, identifying recurring concepts or themes, and coding these into themes related to language use, preference, and perception. These issues are then discussed to understand participants' attitudes in changing from French to English, the environments in

which they prefer one language to the other, and the factors underlying their use of one language over the other. to provide insights about the participants' linguistic choices.

The Structure of the Dissertation

this dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter One is a review of literature that constitutes the theoretical framework of the study. It presents the most important concepts concerning the phenomenon of language shift among the new generation in Algeria, with a focus on the social and political context following the uprising. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides the theoretical backgrounds related to language shift and generational theory, in addition to presenting the characteristics of Gen Z and Algeria's multilingual context. The second section deals with language and identity, the status of French and English in Algeria, and the causes of the shift from French to English.

Chapter Two is devoted to the methodology used in the study and consists of three parts. The first part introduces the methodology used, instruments for collecting and analyzing data, and sampling. The second part explains the data in terms of the appropriate statistical methods and presents the findings in the forms of tables and graphs. The third part presents the findings and juxtaposes them with previous research findings, highlighting the study's outcomes and making future recommendations to decision-makers and researchers.

Chapter One: Review of Related Literature

Introduction

In his book *English as a Global Language*, Crystal (2003) highlights the influence and widespread use of the English language. He explains the economic, historical, and technological factors that contribute to its global status around the word including Algeria. The latter presents a complex linguistic environment shaped by its colonial history and diverse cultural influences. After independence, French remained the dominant second language used in many fields. However, a notable linguistic shift occurred after El-Hirak (2019), where English began to be an important means of instruction, reflecting a change in linguistic and cultural orientation. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section, *Overview on Language Shift and Generational Theory*, examines the theoretical foundations of language shift, focusing on its sociolinguistic dynamics and the role of generational attitudes in driving linguistic change. The second section, *The Linguistic Situation in Algeria*, provides an in depth analysis of Algeria's multilingual landscape, exploring the historical, social, and political factors that shape language use in the country. Together, these sections offer a comprehensive understanding of the forces influencing language evolution in contemporary Algeria.

Section One: Overview on Language Shift and Generational Theory

An Overview of Language Shift

The theory of language shift has dominated sociolinguistics since Fishman (1964), who originally advocated it as a process by which a community discards its mother language to acquire another. The evolution tends to cross generations and is driven by a combination of social, economic, and political factors. In his later work, Fishman (1991) emphasized that language shift is most apparent in multilingual populations where dominant languages increasingly replace heritage languages in public domains and subsequently private domains.

Mufwene (2020) broadens the notion by placing language shift as an ecological and evolutionary adjustment to social forces. He argues that language change is not the top-down dictate but a gradual, adaptive response by speakers to shifts in the environment most significantly when a language is believed to be more helpful for socioeconomic advancement. He notes how global languages, particularly English, can be embraced enthusiastically not due to coercion, but because they are congruent with modernity, education, and opportunity.

Kandler and Steele (2017) provide a modeling-based explanation of language shift as a dynamic process driven by demographic density, urbanization, and neighborhood influences. Their cross-disciplinary model includes significant drivers such as perceived language status, use frequency, and the influence of bilingual education. Perhaps most importantly, they demonstrate that the more affluent socioeconomic status languages will dominate unless robust support from the local community supports the minority language.

Contemporary scholars such as Pennycook (2007) and Blommaert (2010) advance a poststructuralist stance, contending that language shift during the period of globalization can sometimes imply less loss. Instead, it could be an aspirational shift, where groups or individuals employ global languages such as English as a tool of identity formation and social mobility. Such claims are well-suited for youths in the Global South, who employ English in online and cultural environments voluntarily.

The Burst of Language Shift in El-Hirak

El Hirak, or *The Smile Revolution* (Djiar, 2022), was a peaceful, nationwide movement of protests that erupted in Algeria during February 2019. It showcased its lack of violence, lack of organized leaders, and mass participation from regions and generations. As noted by The Makboula (2024), El Hirak was “a peaceful, leaderless movement calling for political reform and greater transparency” (p. 91) Beyond partisan political motivation, the movement demanded general calls of justice, dignity, and a break from the long-standing political

system, and was thus, as Maraf and Osam (2021) note “these protests are the only reason for the change in political decisions, but they have acted as a driving force that propelled the introduction of English language-related decisions”(p. 4). Aside from politics, significance in El Hirak rests in the rich text it offers for linguistic, cultural, and social expression in contemporary Algerian society.

The protesters used a mixture of languages Arabic, Tamazight, French, and, English on signs, in chants, and on social media. Even though Arabic predominated, the open and deliberate use of English was a telling sign of a new shift in Algeria's linguistic scene. Chants like "Game Over," "No More Lies," "Go Out," and "Free Algeria" as shown in Figure 1 are observed widely in Algiers and other large cities, conveying not only a political message but also a symbolic choice in language.

Figure 1

The Use of English in the Protests



As scholar Djiar (2022) argues, the deployment of English was in no way accidental. Rather, it was one aspect of a broader tidal wave of English enthusiasm that Hirak released. English proved to be a powerful medium to reach out to worldwide listeners, especially international media, framing the needs of the protesters in a contemporary and universal

perspective. Moreover, it assisted in identifying the Algerian youth with global democratic and social justice movements therefore declaring a cosmopolitan identity and distancing themselves from the historically imbued associations of French (the colonial language) and the political ramifications of Arabic (normally linked with state power or religion) (Djiar, 2022). This specific linguistic choice also suggests a broader social change. As seen in studies by Lahlou et al (2023), the majority of Algerians had already regarded English as a modern, neutral language to be used as a marker of openness, of modernity, and of break from the colonial past.

English was both a vehicle for political speech and cultural resistance. It was utilized as not just a tool for communication, but as a values expression. Thus, the Hirak was not only a political revolt it was a cultural and linguistic redoing. The conscious use of English in protests shows how language became part of the protest itself. It symbolized the protesters' imagination of a new Algeria: one that is open, democratic, networked, and unshackled from its colonial and authoritarian past.

A Shift towards English in Post Hirak Algeria

Mufwene (2020) explains that "The shift is the consequence of changes in the socioeconomic structure of their polity and the outcome of the structural erosion and/or functional atrophy of the vernacular among the language shifters" (p. 2). The language shift process in Algeria differs partially from standard models of language substitution. This is not state-mandated nor economically motivated. Rather, it is symbolic and ideological. English is a language of forwardness, neutrality to French colonial past, and global affiliation for many young Algerians. English learning is consciously and warmly embraced as a result of exposure to global media, the internet, and international education.

Thus, Algeria is undergoing what may be described as an attitudinal and functionally motivated French-to-English shift. This is not yet a full language replacement but an evolving

linguistic reorientation in key social contexts specifically, among youth in urban areas. As Mufwene(2020) observes, such developments have a tendency to begin at the individual level but can become population-wide trends provided that they are encouraged by the ambitions of a generation and world identities.

According to Khelifa (2023), usage of English for educational purposes has grown immensely. English is now crucial in world academia, trade, and science, which has made it an imperative for Algerians seeking to attain career progress and gain information from the international world. Globalization and rising English prominence within the global economy are the main causes of this trend. Khelifa (2023) describes that most students in universities, especially in technical courses, prefer to learn English as opposed to French. The impact of this language shift is deep and complex. English dominance is a step towards globalization and modernization that allows Algerians to participate in global discourse, but it is, on the other hand, endangering indigenous languages like Arabic and Berber that are central to Algerian identity and culture. In general, language change in Algeria is a world phenomenon where superworld languages push indigenous ones. It is worth noting that language shift is related to the language attitudes that citizens hold, especially the young one among them, which is why the remainder of the section covers language attitudes and Gen z.

Language Attitudes Underlying Language Shift

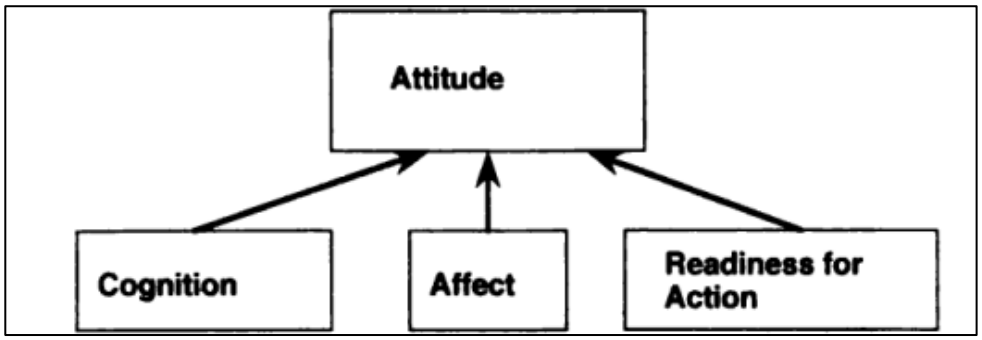
A thorough discussion of language shift has to be founded upon a clear grasp of the theoretical models that define and explain language attitudes. In postcolonial and multilingual settings such as Algeria, language attitudes toward certain languages (in our case, French and English) are mediated by complex sociocultural, political, and historical processes. Attitudes are not mere superficial likes or dislikes but complex multidimensional constructions that influence and reflect social behavior.

Ajzen (1988) defines an attitude as "a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event." (p. 4), McGuire (1985) remarks that attitudes involve evaluative judgments that place objects of thought on a continuum from negative to positive. These definitions serve as the foundation for investigating Algerian Gen Z's perception and placement of English and French in their social context.

Building on these definitions, Baker (1992) remarks that attitudes consist of three related aspects as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2

The Hierarchical Model of Attitude



This three-component model allows researchers to quantify attitudes not only in terms of stated opinion but also in terms of beliefs underlying and action tendencies. In the model, cognitive stands for information and beliefs about the language, (for example, English being globally useful). Additionally, affective refers to emotional responses (such as, pride in French heritage vs. excitement about English media). Finally, conative/behavioral refers to the readiness to act or behavioral intention (such as, choosing to use English on social media).

For instance, a student may cognitively accept the utility of French in school, be affectively indifferent to it, but chooses to use English in practice; a difference that attests to the dynamic interplay between the components. Baker (1992) also argues that attitude can be both input and output in language learning and use. As an input, positive attitude towards English can

enhance motivation to learn and use the language. As an output, more exposure to English-medium through media and education can reinforce positive attitudes reciprocally.

Finally, Allport's (1935) foundational definition of attitude as "a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related " (p. 11) provides an enduring context within which language attitudes can be understood as both socially conditioned and dynamic.

Generational Theory

Generational theory has received significant attention in the social sciences for its ability to explain variations in behavior, communication, and attitudes across age-based cohorts. The foundational assumption of this theory is that individuals born within the same historical period are shaped by common socio-political events and cultural forces, which contribute to the development of a shared generational identity (Strauss & Howe, as cited in van Eck Duymaer van Twist & Newcombe, 2021). The Strauss–Howe Generational Theory, introduced in the early 1990s, presents a non-linear view of history, positing that it follows cyclical patterns characterized by recurring generational archetypes across approximately 80–90-year cycles (saeculum). Each generational archetype is associated with specific traits and societal roles that repeat predictably over time (van Eck Duymaer van Twist & Newcombe, 2021) i.e. it investigates how groups of individuals born within specific periods experience similar social events and thus share values and behaviors. It provides a robust framework for examining shifts in language use across time.

Strauss and Howe (1991) developed a widely cited model of generational segmentation, proposing that generations typically span around two decades and are shaped by collective experiences during their formative years. These experiences include major historical events and cultural shifts, which influence each generation's worldview and behavior. According to

this model, historical cycles tend to repeat, with each generation embodying certain traits influenced by the conditions under which they mature.

For instance, the Baby Boomer generation (1946–1964) came of age during a time of economic prosperity following World War II and is often associated with traditional work ethics. Generation X (1965–1980), by contrast, faced economic downturns and rapid technological advancement, fostering traits of skepticism and self-reliance (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Generation Y, or Millennials (1981–1996), are the first to grow up immersed in internet technology, while Generation Z (1997–2012) has been fully integrated into a digital, hyperconnected world, with early exposure to mobile technology and social media platforms (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Each of these generational cohorts exhibits distinct orientations to communication, culture, and language based on their socio-technological contexts.

Generational cohorts continue to offer valuable insights into language change, particularly as language reflects broader societal transformations, such as the ongoing shift from French to English in Algeria (Benrabah, 2013). Thus, generational theory serves not only as a sociological concept but also as a key lens for examining cultural and linguistic evolution.

The theory is central in sociolinguistics due to its focus on the intersection of language and generation, as language is both shaped by social processes and capable of influencing cultural norms. Particularly, when applied to language, generational theory illuminates the ways in which societal change whether political, social, or technological affects language attitudes and usage patterns. For example, younger generations tend to adapt and transform language in response to new cultural and technological realities, including the proliferation of digital communication and increasing multilingualism in the 21st century (Belmihoub, 2018). The categorization of generations into cohorts allows researchers to explore intergenerational variations in linguistic behavior and values systematically.

In applied fields such as education, communication, and management, this theory has helped explain how generational diversity influences interaction patterns and productivity. For instance, Appelbaum et al. (2008) analyzed generational differences in workplace settings and found that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials differ in terms of values such as authority, autonomy, and technological proficiency. These disparities often result in miscommunication or generational conflict, especially in collaborative settings that demand teamwork and adaptability.

Nonetheless, the application of generational theory has drawn criticism. Costanza, et al. (2021) argue that generational labels risk oversimplifying complex human behaviors and may inadvertently reinforce stereotypes. They suggest that factors such as age, life stage, and socioeconomic background provide more nuanced explanations for behavioral variation than generational cohort alone. Despite these concerns, the authors acknowledge that generational theory can be a helpful analytical tool when used critically and supported by empirical data.

In language studies, generational attitudes help scholars interpret evolving linguistic norms and identity formations. Aisy and Wahyudi (2024), for example, found that Indonesian members of Gen Z tend to adopt a pluralistic view of English, appreciating multiple varieties and moving away from traditional standards like British or American English. This openness reflects broader trends in globalization and online communication, which have significantly shaped Gen Z's linguistic identity. Their findings demonstrate the utility of generational theory in understanding sociolinguistic change, particularly how emerging generations reimagine language conventions in a global context.

Additionally, Gen Z's distinct socio-psychological traits, such as digital fluency, entrepreneurial spirit, and adaptability, directly influence their linguistic practices. As noted by Appelbaum et al. (2008), generational shifts affect not just workplace dynamics but also broader societal structures, including educational systems and language ideologies. Hence,

while generational theory must be applied with caution, it remains a valuable heuristic for exploring how Gen Z navigates and reconstructs language in postcolonial globalized settings.

Overview of Generation Z

Gen Z, born between 1997 and 2012, represents a uniquely positioned cohort shaped by a complex mix of technological, political, economic, and cultural transformations. Researchers have employed generational theories, particularly the Strauss–Howe framework, to understand the defining characteristics of this group (van Eck Duymaer van Twist & Newcombe, 2021). Gen Z matured in the context of the 2008 global financial crisis, the explosion of social media, rising climate consciousness, political instability, and the global COVID-19 pandemic. These experiences have fostered a generation that is digitally native, socially aware, and resilient.

In the workplace, Gen Z has introduced new expectations and values. According to Appelbaum et al. (2008), younger generations, including Millennials and Gen Z, prioritize meaningful work, flexible structures, inclusivity, and mental health support. They tend to favor collaborative environments and horizontal leadership styles, differing markedly from older generations in both communication preferences and organizational attitudes. However, their entry into the workforce has also prompted intergenerational tensions, particularly due to differing digital competencies and value systems.

Despite criticisms of generational labeling, some scholars argue that Gen Z warrants study as a discrete phenomenon due to identifiable behavioral and psychological trends. Costanza et al. (2021) maintain that while generalizations can be problematic, generational theory is still useful when integrated with intersectional data. They call for more comprehensive methods that consider individual variation alongside generational markers.

Twenge (2017) offers a data-driven psychological profile of Gen Z. She identifies this generation as more tolerant, safety-conscious, and emotionally sensitive, though also more

prone to social isolation and anxiety. Twenge (2017) attributes these traits to the heavy influence of digital technology, which has transformed socialization patterns and mental health outcomes. Her work provides essential context for understanding how Gen Zengages with the world, including their approaches to communication and language.

Aisy and Wahyudi (2024) contribute to this understanding by exploring how Indonesian Gen Z users relate to English. Their study reveals a strong acceptance of linguistic plurality, with participants embracing various English dialects and rejecting the idea of a singular correct form. This linguistic flexibility reflects the broader generational shift toward hybrid language use, especially in digital spaces where language functions both as a communication tool and a marker of identity. Gen Z's linguistic creativity is evident in their use of emojis, abbreviations, code-switching, and nonstandard grammar, all of which serve expressive and social purposes.

Such findings support the view that Gen Z is redefining linguistic norms through global and technological exposure. While critiques of generational theory highlight its limitations, the observable linguistic behaviors of Gen Z affirm the generation's relevance as a subject of scholarly inquiry. Their acceptance of cultural and linguistic diversity exemplifies a broader movement toward pluralism in global identity construction.

Language Attitudes of Generation Z

Language change is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a social one driven by evolving attitudes across time and across generations. In Algeria, and particularly among Algerian Generation Z, increased English demand and continued French decline are indices of more profound youth attitude shifts toward languages in the daily context. As Baker (1992) comments, "attitudes do not just reflect external influences—they guide and shape the direction of language change" (p. 97). Attitude change here is not a reaction to language change but an incentive to it. When there is a change in attitude among a generation, usage

and language preference tend to follow. Baker (1992) comments on a number of mechanisms which account for why and how language attitudes change, particularly around adolescence:

• Transitions of Age: “Changes in attitude often precede changes in behavior... especially in the teenage years when identity is being formed” (Baker, 1992, p. 106). Young people are more flexible in the mind and less biased in adopting new language identities. Algerian Gen Z is more likely to adopt English as a modernizing influence and mode of expression.

• Social Influence and Peer Group: Youth culture and peer norms govern language usage. Baker (1992) explains that “group pressure and the need for social identity create uniformity in language attitudes" (p. 109). For Gen Z, English is typically associated with hipness, computer expertise, and global culture, and it makes legitimate a shared enjoyment of the language.

• Institutional and Media Influences: English exposure through higher education, television, media, and digital media like YouTube and TikTok creates more positive attitudes. Baker quotes that “mass media has a powerful capacity to influence language preferences” (p. 110). English dominates these fields in Algeria, which makes it more prestigious and valid in terms of perception.

Situational and Ritual Effects**:** Language choice in public situations like school celebrations, demonstrations, or religious ceremonies also dictates linguistic identity. As Baker shows, “rituals, protests and institutional ceremonies can consolidate attitudes to language” (p. 112). For example, in the Hirak movement, English had been used symbolically to signify openness and change, whereas French was seen by some as colonial.

These practices demonstrate that Algerian youth are not somehow passively imitating language fashion—but they are participants in the active re-negotiation of their own language selves in harmony with social, cultural, and political development. Their English positive attitude is a cause and an effect of such larger-scale language change.

This process of shifting to English may also be characterized using Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model. Language users can have an instrumental motivation for learning a language. They do so for practical reasons, such as international studies, access to international knowledge, or seeking employment. Additionally, they can have an integrative motivation. They learn a language in order to be identified as part of a group of persons or to gain a desirable social identity. English in Algeria is playing not only motivational roles. It is not only perceived as useful (instrumental), but also as a marker of international identity and postcolonial belonging (integrative). The model shows as well that attitudes are dynamic. They develop over time due to exposure, interaction, and feedback. Increased exposure to English in the classroom, on the web, and in social life increases the motivation of Algerian Gen Z, reaffirms their identity, and accelerates the shift in language.

Overall, change in attitude and language accompany each other. As Baker and Gardner demonstrate, attitude change peer pressure and mass media-conditioned, institutionally generated, and identity generational-based is what produces linguistic change. Young Algerians' heightened demand for English is not by chance but is the result of an irretrievable, inward move in the way language, modernity, and identity are being thought about.

Language Preferences of Algerian Generation Z

Language attitudes among Algerian youth are shaped by a combination of historical legacies and contemporary realities. According to Belmihoub (2018), while MSA retains symbolic status as the national language, many young Algerians view it as less practical in professional and economic contexts. Only 25% of surveyed youth considered MSA essential for securing employment. In contrast, foreign languages—particularly French and English—are perceived as more valuable in the job market.

Tamazight, although constitutionally recognized and culturally significant, especially for Berber-speaking populations, lacks strong professional utility. Nonetheless, many speakers

express pride in their heritage and support greater visibility for the language (Belmihoub, 2018). French continues to dominate administrative, educational, and scientific sectors, a legacy of colonialism that remains entrenched despite Arabization policies. Approximately 90% of respondents in Belmihoub's study considered French indispensable for work.

More recently, English has gained popularity among Algerian youth. It is associated with international communication, career advancement, and access to global culture. Belmihoub (2018) found that over 70% of participants viewed English as important for employment and supported its introduction in early education. This shift reflects both global linguistic trends and the digitally connected lifestyles of Gen Z (Twenge, 2017).

The theory of multilingual pragmatism offers a helpful lens for understanding these attitudes. Algerian youth do not exhibit ideological loyalty to a single language; instead, they navigate linguistic choices based on practical needs and opportunities (Benrabah, 2013). Benrabah's research highlights how state language policies often generated resistance, particularly among French and Tamazight speakers. However, contemporary youth are more likely to see multilingualism as a strength rather than a threat, with 80% affirming that linguistic diversity benefits Algerian society.

In essence, Algerian youth engage with a dynamic multilingual environment with both awareness and adaptability. MSA and Tamazight hold cultural and identity-related value, whereas French and English are prioritized for professional and global engagement. These preferences suggest the need for updated language policies that preserve Algeria's linguistic heritage while empowering youth to participate in an interconnected world.

Challenges to the French-to-English Language Shift

While there has been growing interest in English in Algeria, French-to-English language shift comes with vast linguistic and structural challenges. Mounnes and Bouhadjar (2024) mention that French is still dominant in scientific and technical domain, and the switch to

English usually involves domain loss. Algerian researchers at times struggle with the presentation of complex ideas because local English vocabulary does not exist, resulting in hybrid texts that are a mix of French and English, particularly in scientific documents. They mention that “Algerian researchers face difficulties in producing fully localized scientific content in English, resulting in frequent code-mixing and terminological borrowing” (p. 337), which suggests the conflict between global exposure and linguistic precision.

Jacob (2019) critically examines the unequal opportunities to access English language instruction and learning resources, noting that opportunities remain mostly confined to urban areas and resource-abundant institutions. She states that English instruction promises social mobility but “often reproduces existing inequalities, as access to quality instruction remains limited” (p. 149). This suggests that English is likely to reinforce social stratification such as French's past role and not democratize opportunity.

Another conundrum is the policy-practice gap. Despite institutional interest in English, Jacob (2019) identifies a significant dearth of qualified teachers, modern curricula, and appropriate instructional materials. In her view, “institutional policies promoting English often fail to translate into effective classroom practice, resulting in superficial language competence” (p. 91). This indicates that the call for integrated pedagogical reform and sustained investment for effective competency achievement is urgent.

Mounnes and Bouhadjar (2024) also refer to the cultural consequences of the trend. They warn that the growing prominence of English, as well as French, reinforces a linguistic imbalance which can endanger sidelining Arabic and Tamazight, languages constitutive of Algerian national identity. This implies the delicate balancing act policymakers have to walk in encouraging global integration without endangering regional cultural heritage.

Finally, Jacob (2019) elaborates the complex ideological relationships of English in Algeria, pointing to its ambivalence. On the one hand, English is very highly regarded as a

source of modernization and international interaction. On the other, it is also regarded as a potential vehicle of new cultural domination, “occupying an ambivalent position both a vehicle for progress and a potential instrument of new cultural domination” (p. 114). This ambivalence underscores the overall contradiction of language policy, where international aspirations are usually counterpoised to entrenched local realities.

Section Two: The Linguistic Situation in Algeria

This section seeks to understand the linguistic background of Algeria and Algerian youth's perceptions of French and English. It also examines the main sociolinguistic perspectives on the emergence of English in the Algerian context.

The linguistic landscape in Algeria mirrors its political, historical, and social developments. Classical Arabic (CA), Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and colloquial Arabic (CA) are commonly used in daily communication, in addition to the Berber community which has its own verities, such as Chaoui, Mzabi, and Tergui. French continues to play a dominant role in many fields, including education and administration, due to its colonial legacy. English, while traditionally limited to academia, has gained popularity in recent years. The period before 2019 marked a relatively stable multilingual environment, which underwent significant change following El-Hirak. Algeria’s linguistic diversity highlights its complex sociolinguistic reality and calls for deeper academic exploration.

Arabic and Its Variants

Arabic holds religious and cultural importance in the Arab world due to its association with Islam and the Quran. Daoudi (2020) asserts that Arabic represents a symbol of Islamic identity and heritage. However, confusion often arises between its different forms: CA, MCA, and CoA.

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From Classical Arabic to Modern Standard Arabic

According to Khrisat (2015), CA is a fossilized literary language derived from medieval tribal dialects and has been kept alive by the Qur'an. CA is distinct from the early dialects and the current spoken varieties of the Arab world. It dates back to the 6th and 7th centuries AD. It was the spoken language of Mecca and the Arabian Peninsula at that time. Its association with the Quran gives it both sacred status and linguistic prestige (Zughoul, 1985). CA refers to the ancient form of Arabic primarily used in mosques and for religious worship. It is used by Muslims globally for Quranic recitation, regardless of their native language. Hoggett and Mifflin (1994) state that "Classical Arabic is used by approximately one billion Muslims for prayer and scholarly religious discourse" (p. 412). This emphasizes the widespread religious importance of the language, even though it is not the mother tongues of its users.

As for MSA, although not explicitly named, one can assume that it is the modern, formal continuation of CA used in writing and formal contexts. In contrast, MSA, although often taught separately from varieties of the past, it has many features of CA, excluding borrowed and arabized aspects, and remain in very common use in everyday communication. It is the offspring of Algeria's revolution (1954–1962), when tension arose between revolutionary leaders and traditional scholars regarding the role of CA. Language reforms, particularly the Arabization campaign, led to significant changes. One such change includes the simplification of grammar, especially in the loss of morphological markers such as case endings.

Table1

The Shift from CA to MSA

CA	MSA	GLOSS
[kitābʊn]	[kitāb]	Book
[rajulʊn]	[rajul]	Man
[ʕamalʊn]	[ʕamal]	A camel

Table 1 demonstrates the linguistic evolution from CA to MSA, particularly in the reduction of case endings. The examples highlight the morphological decrease from CA to MSA. The -un marking of the nominative indefinite case in CA is one of the examples of the complex case system characteristic of Classical Arabic grammar. In MSA, the case marking is virtually eliminated in speech and reserved only for fully vocalized formal writings, such as Qur'anic recitation or classical poetry. Furthermore, CA feminine nouns that end in -at(un) generally appear as -ah or -a in pronunciation in MSA, both from phonological weakening and morphological simplification.

Saïd (1967) notes that MSA is the form used in books, political speeches, and media. It is more accessible and practical than CA, especially for populations with limited education. Today, MSA is widely used across Arab countries in education, administration, and broadcasting. In Algeria, it is taught from the primary school level and functions as the official language of instruction (Yousef, 2020).

From Modern Standard Arabic to Colloquial Arabic

During the 19th century, when Arab countries are brought nearer to European countries by colonization, trade, and modernization, they began getting loads of new ideas, ways, and institutions. This cultural and political contact introduced a tide of foreign terms into Arabic language, naturally those terms that had no parallel in the traditional Arabic terms.

Many foreign words are introduced into Arabic during the nineteenth century due to contact with Western cultures and modernization. Examples include television (تلفاز), radio (راديو), bureaucracy (بيروقراطية), and parliament (برلمان). These lexical borrowings contribute to the development of MSA, a modernized version of Arabic used in contemporary literature, journalism, education, and political discourse. Arabic adopted these loanwords in a straight transfer from European languages, mainly French and English. They are either adapted to fit

Arabic script and sound or borrowed in the donor language with little change in pronunciation.

It contributed to the development of MSA, a standard, modernized dialect of Arabic. MSA was created for fulfilling the world's contemporary communications requirements, for instance, areas such as media, education, science, and administration. Unlike CA, which is equally anchored on ancient religious and literary use, MSA is more free and responsive to lexical innovation, such as foreign word-borrowing.

MSA is the official language of Algeria. It is used in formal domains such as education, the media, official documents, and governmental communication. After Algeria gained independence in 1962, the state initiated an Arabization movement aimed at replacing French with Arabic (Ben Rabah, 2013).

According to Mokhtar (2018), Algerian Arabic is the native language used by the majority of Algerians. It is primarily used in informal conversations and everyday interpersonal interactions. Although it is mostly spontaneous, there have been some occasional instances where it has appeared in writing, most notably in the satirical newspapers of the 1980s and 1990s, radio dramas, Bedouin poetry, and soap operas. Despite its oral character, Algerian Arabic has a central role in Algerian everyday language.

CoA is the most commonly spoken variety in Algeria. It is informal and widely used in daily communication. It is a unique blend of several linguistic influences, including Arabic, Berber, French, Turkish, and Spanish a reflection of Algeria’s complex historical and cultural interactions (Aitsiselmi &Marley, 2008). For example, the word /bɪs.ta.ra/ (meaning blanket) comes from Turkish, while gare (meaning 'train station') is borrowed from French.

Mazounis (1969) emphasizes the sociolinguistic significance of Algerian Arabic, stating that it is one of the defining features of the population. He argues that instead of dismissing (CoA), researchers and educators should study it and use it as a bridge to develop and

reinforce MSA. From his perspective, it has evolved through unique linguistic developments, distinguishing it from MSA.

In contrast to CA and MSA, Algerian Arabic has the most considerable differences on many linguistic levels.

- Phonetically, Algerian Arabic reduces the pronunciation by suppressing or eliminating a large number of the vowels in MSA, which are instead substituted with a neutral schwa sound as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Comparing MSA and CoA Phonetically

MSA	CoA	Gloss
[ʃariba]	[ʃərab]	he drank
[ʔakala]	[kəlæ]	he ate
[dakhala]	[dəkhel]	he entered

- Morphologically, it is easier as it lacks case markings and there are no dual or feminine plural inflections required in special situations as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparing MSA and CoA Morphologially

MSA	CoA	**Gloss**
[bana:t]	[bnat]	Girls
[kutub]	[ktub]	Books
[muʕallima:n]	[zu:ʒ mʕallma:t]	two female teachers

- Syntactically, even though both Algerian Arabic and MSA allow VSO (verb–subject–object) and SVO (subject–verb–object) word orders, Algerian Arabic is inclined towards SVO in most oral contexts as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Comparing MSA and CoA Syntactically

MSA	CoA	Gloss
[ʔumma:hu tuħibbu ʃ-ʃa:j]	[mmu ṯeb eʃ-tay]	His mother likes tea
[saʔaltul-muʕallima suʔa:lan]	[səqsi:t l-muʕallma]	I asked the teacher a question
[yaktubu ad-dars]	[yekteb f ed-dars]	He writes the lesson

- Lexically, Algerian Arabic has a significant number of loanwords, most notably from French, in response to the nation's history of colonization and sociolinguistic facts.

Table 5

Comparing MSA and CoA Lexically

CoA	French origin	Gloss
[briki]	Briquette	Lighter
[vista]	veste	a jacket
[loṭo]	auto	a car

Berber

Berbers are the indigenous people of North Africa, and their earliest linguistic form was Libyk, which is considered the oldest variant of modern Tamazight. Elimam (2004) notes that the foundational aspects of Tamazight culture, including language and traditions, date back to the Neolithic era. Although the language initially lacked a standardized writing system, it was historically transcribed using a Phoenician-derived alphabet. According to Chaker (1980), this script, known as Tifinagh, continues to be used by the Tuareg communities. However, the scarcity of written Tamazight records presents challenges for reconstructing its historical development (Mercier, 1888).

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Souag (2017) highlighted that Berber has absorbed elements from various languages through contact, leading to linguistic variation across regions. Algeria's Berber-speaking communities reflect this diversity, with dialects such as Kabyle, Chaouia, Tashelhit, and Mizabi. These varieties showcase the rich linguistic mosaic within Algeria. The influence of colonial and post-colonial language policies also shaped Berbers' status. During the French occupation, the imposition of French limited the use of Berber, and later, Arabization policies contributed to its further marginalization.

Despite these pressures, Tamazight endured through the efforts of its speakers. The Algerian government eventually recognized Tamazight's significance. In 2002, a constitutional amendment granted Tamazight official national language status, affirming its importance as a mother tongue. Further efforts in 2016 introduced Tamazight into the national educational curriculum across several regions. This marked a significant step toward preserving Algeria's cultural identity and linguistic heritage.

Algeria's complex linguistic situation is a product of centuries of cultural and historical interactions. The evolution of language use from Berber to Arabic, and later to French and English reflects a broader narrative of sociopolitical change. Each linguistic transition in Algeria adds to its rich heritage, emphasizing the resilience and adaptability of its people.

French

The linguistic situation in Algeria is deeply influenced by its colonial history with France, which lasted from 1830 until 1962. During this time, French was imposed as the dominant language across education, governance, and public life, replacing Arabic in an attempt to suppress Algerian identity and culture (Chami, 2009). Even after independence, the imprint of French persisted.

Benrabah (2013) characterizes this persistence as a form of linguistic imperialism, highlighting how French evolved from a tool of communication into a marker of social

prestige and authority. By 1962, French had become widespread, particularly among the urban elite and educated classes. After independence, the Algerian government introduced Arabization reforms aimed at re-establishing Arabic in public life. Yet, the transition was slow and partial.

Despite policy efforts, French maintained its strong hold in key sectors such as higher education, medicine, science, and media (Ali-Khodja, 2007). This duality led to a diglossic reality: Arabic was the official language, while French functioned as a powerful de facto second language. French remained highly visible in the education system and was widely used by the youth, especially in urban environments.

Haddad (2021) argues that French became a form of soft power associated with technological advancement, international connection, and economic aspiration. Even before the Hirak movement of 2019, French dominated scientific, commercial, and social domains, reflecting a complex linguistic coexistence shaped by historical resistance, trauma, and colonial legacy.

The Perceptions of Algerians towards French

French has a contradictory position in Algeria. It continues to be a language of prestige and intellectual worth, particularly for areas such as medicine, law, and engineering. Jacob (2019) refers to French as a proxy for status, linking it with institutional power, networks of elites, and gateways to scientific knowledge. French continues to have strong roots in higher education and administrative sectors despite post-independence efforts at Arabization.

Underlining this functional intent is deep ideological ambivalence. French enables socio-economic progress of urban elites just as it carries the weight of colonial history. French is more viewed as a language of the past by more individuals as connecting it with colonial imposition, not with cultural aspiration (Mounnes & Bouhadjar, 2024). This symbolically

based devaluation is particularly in younger generations who are likely to view it as ideologically burdensome.

Empirical evidence also reveals how French is thought to be shaped by socio-economic, regional, and generational considerations. Benrabah (2007) emphasizes its very limited availability, being largely the domain of city-dwelling elites, and reports a generational shift in which younger Algerians view French with distrust as foreignness and exclusion. Similarly, Chachou-Samad (2016), surveying 320 university students, reported French as useful, but not loved; tolerated only for its usefulness in the academic environment, English inspiring more enthusiasm and emotional involvement.

Regional studies replicate the trend. In Tlemcen, Dendane (2013) observed that French is generally perceived as formal and distant, used more formally but less frequently in everyday life. This perception is reflected in its declining integration into everyday linguistic identity. Boukhatem & Boukhatem (2021) also, using a mixed-methods study of 18-to-24-year-olds, concluded that French was widely referred to as the language of our parents or professors, not our own, showing symbolic disconnection with continuous functional utility.

Jacob's (2019) ambivalence and subsequent empirical research all imply an evolving linguistic order within Algeria where French is both preserved and disavowed, required but ideologically doubted. This double vision also manifests in scholarly debates. For some researchers, French is an indispensable cultural and scientific capital, whereas for others, it is a means to perpetuate neocolonial hierarchies. Attitudes towards French are therefore not monolithic but depend on generational, class, and institutional experiences.

English

Algeria's linguistic landscape has long been dominated by Arabic and French, the legacies of its post-colonial development. However, prior to the Hirak movement in 2019, English began to emerge as a significant presence, particularly among younger generations. Despite

not being formally institutionalized, English gained traction in areas like global communication, science, and technology.

Belmihoub (2018) identifies English as a symbol of modernity and opportunity for Algerian youth, especially university students seeking to engage with global academic and professional communities. Still, the rise of English in Algeria faced structural challenges. Zougagh (2019) criticizes the Algerian educational system for its exam-oriented instruction, which emphasizes memorization of grammar and vocabulary over communicative competence.

While English is extensively taught in schools and universities, students often lack real-world language skills. Le Roux (2017) highlights Algeria's multilingual reality where Arabic retains official status and French continues to dominate academia and administration, thereby marginalizing English to a peripheral role.

Nevertheless, English has increasingly gained visibility in public discourse, social media, and university debates. According to the British Council's report *The Spread of English in Algeria: Uses and Attitudes* (2019), English enjoys a positive reputation among the youth, who view it as a gateway to modernity, career advancement, and global integration.

Despite its growing symbolic and functional importance, English remains a foreign language for most Algerians. Institutional constraints and the entrenched status of Arabic and French prevent it from being fully integrated into everyday life. As of 2019, English is in a phase of progressive acceptance, yet its development is moderated by Algerias complex linguistic heritage(Mounnes & Bouhadjar ,2024).

The Perception of Algerians towards English

English has, in recent years, emerged in Algeria as a language perceived to be open, progressive, and neutral, and one that contrasts strongly with the ideological weights of French. Jacob (2019) and Mounnes & Bouhadjar (2024) both point out that English is

increasingly regarded not only as an international language of communication but also as a sign of modernity and empowerment. Jacob (2019) notes that English is widely seen by Algerians to be free of colonial associations and hence a socially and politically safer language to employ. She explains how English allows speakers to "escape entrenched linguistic hierarchies" and operate "outside the French-Arabic binary" (pp. 114–117). Its symbolic neutrality makes it particularly attractive in a multilingual nation with complex postcolonial dynamics.

This idea is well captured in Jacob's assertion that “English is seen as modern and neutral... a way to reposition oneself within global flows, detached from the French-Arabic binary” (Jacob, 2019, p. 116). The quote captures the gist of her argument. English in Algeria is not only a facilitator of communication but a symbolic escape from the ideological struggle between French and Arabic. By referring to it as neutral, Jacob highlights how English avoids the affective and historical burden attached to the other two dominant languages. It is not another language it's a world of reinvention, especially for institutions and individuals seeking a new linguistic identity for conformity with world currents but without the weight of colonial wounds.

Jacob's assertion that English provides Algerians with an opportunity to "escape entrenched linguistic hierarchies" (2019, p. 114) also adds further support to this notion. French, and by extension French colonialism, is associated with elite status, whereas Arabic is associated with religion and nationalism both inescapably political. English, on the other hand, is viewed as being inoculated against these internal hierarchies and offering speakers a clean slate of identity and social climbing. This works to further the case that language in Algeria is ideological and not practical.

English's position is also expressed in educational and cultural contexts. It is common in clubs, signboards, workshops, training sessions, and websites, all of which contribute to

projecting an image of English as a language linked to TEDx speeches, entrepreneurship, and self-improvement campaigns. All these reflections contribute to further placing English as dynamic and innovative. Mounnes & Bouhadjar (2024) report a high preference among Algerian scholars to publish research in English. They note that "The English language gained predominance in scientific communication driven by the force of international norms and enhanced visibility in the international scientific scene" (p. 335). This emphasizes the enhanced institutional and academic status of English in Algeria, where the use of the language is inspired by the quest for social mobility, scientific legitimation, and greater international cooperation. Publishing in English opens up access to indexed journals, global networks, and professional recognition.

Mounnes & Bouhadjar (2024) note that English is more and more used as a lingua franca by young researchers and students who envision it as an “international language, especially in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics” (p.343). This illustrates a shift in Algerian youth positioning in the global linguistic order, choosing English because of its symbolic neutrality as well as pragmatic usability.

At the same time, these writers present a reasonable perspective, cautioning that while “English offers many opportunities for Algerian researchers, it also presents some challenges based on linguistic and cultural barriers” (Mounnes & Bouhadjar, 2024, p. 337). This is in acknowledgment that the shift toward English, although appealing, faces hurdles in the shape of unequal standards of competence, limited access to training, and the difficulty of surmounting cultural barriers.

English in Higher Education

The employment of English as the dominant language for instruction in Algerian higher education is a far cry from Algeria's national strategy of aligning Algeria's system of higher education with international standards. To address these demands, the Algerian Ministry of

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Higher Education and Scientific Research has implemented policies to encourage the use of English in the universities. Despite that, French continues to have a firm grip in Algerian higher education. According to Benrabah (2013), French continues to be deeply rooted in the majority of academic fields, specifically law, business, and the humanities. It is looked upon as the language of intellectual debate and professional identity. French's historical role in Algeria means that it still plays the role of the gateway to world knowledge and professional networks. While English is gradually replacing French in some technical fields, this has not happened consistently across all categories of education. The employment of English in university education has been welcomed with mixed emotions by students and lecturers. (Chekhaba & Bounab, 2023).

Chekhaba & Bounab (2023) questionnaire of 75 students and 21 instructors sought to prove that there is general acceptance of the increasing usage of English in higher education. The research indicated the fact that both instructors and students referred to the importance of English in providing the latest research, improving academic performance, and improving career prospects. There are some reservations, however, regarding the preparedness of students and teachers alike for such a change, i.e., whether there would be sufficient resources available and how they would adjust to a new language environment

Also, Saidani (2023) found that even though there is hope for English being introduced in higher education, there is a genuine question of whether Algerian universities can do this successfully. The teachers are worried that they had no professional development programs to allow them to teach in English, and students are worried about their ability to effectively grasp and understand course material in a foreign language.

The study focused on possessing a complete method to empower the students and the instructors with linguistic competence and materials required to overcome the teaching and learning English barriers. Despite such obstacles, English adoption at Algerian higher

education is viewed to a significant degree as an obligatory move toward boosting Algeria's position in the global scholarly and professional community. As Khelifa (2023) contends, proficiency in the English language has increasingly been important in the context of gaining access to international research partnership and career prospects in the purview of an internationalized economy.

In this regard, English has been viewed as an important resource for purposes of improving Algeria's international reputation and preparing its students to compete in an increasingly-globalizing world. But the transition to English will require serious investment in curriculum, teachers, and materials to be realized.

The Emergence of English in Different Fields

The growth of English in Algeria has accelerated with the country seeking to become more modernized and take part more actively in the international economy, English has increasingly come to be accepted everywhere as a symbol of the new era of expansion and international relations.

Maraf (2023) explains how English is increasingly coming to spread more and more throughout the cities of Algeria, precisely through bottom-up signals such as advertising, billboards, and public messages. This is in line with a more general cultural transition towards English as world language that is linked to globalization and modernity. Popular opinion underwent a real change following the Hirak protests, where English became the symbol of economic and social progress, particularly among young people eager for greater prospects at home and abroad. In the educational sphere, English gained popularity especially in science and technology.

In business, English has also been identified as critical to Algerian businesses that seek to venture beyond the domestic market, particularly in global business, marketing, and management (Khalifa, 2023). With more businesses dealing with more Middle Eastern and

European markets, English is now being adopted even more as the business planning and business communication language of choice. Hirak also greatly impacted the media sector where English is being used more and more in combination with Arabic and French in traditional and digital media. Maraf (2023) notes that youth media alternate codes from French to English, especially in digital media, social media, and commercials. This is one aspect of a broader pattern of code-switching and multilingualism in Algeria, as English becomes increasingly a normative presence in the public sphere, a reflection of the changing linguistic tastes of an increasingly globalized society.

Overall, modern English in Algeria is no longer so much a foreign tongue but a functional and symbolic vehicle embodying aspirations for upward mobility, globalization, and identity reformation in postcolonial times. Its rising prestige signals a striking transformation not just in communicative practice but also in the positioning of Algerians, especially the youth, in world linguistic flows.

Conclusion

The shift from French to English in Algeria is a reflection of a deeper generational and ideological shift. English is not just an international language of communication; it has also become an icon of neutrality, of modernity, and of forward-looking identity, especially for Generation Z. French, while remaining still dominant in most institutions, is increasingly ambivalently viewed in the light of its colonial past. The role of Arabic and Tamazight remains significant but vulnerable, as globalization and virtual culture redescribe the language preference. Youth are busy reshaping linguistic norms, driven by aspiration, peer influence, and access to international platforms. However, this shift is asymmetrical, being constrained by uneven quality of education, limited resources, and risks of cultural imbalance. What presents itself is a multifaceted, dynamic linguistic landscape in which language use contributes to wider battles over identity, history, and access to opportunity.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

The previous chapter provides the theoretical basis of this study as it exploring the French to English language shift in Algeria and the language perceptions of Gen Z towards this language shift. From that foundation, this chapter is the methodology heart of the dissertation. The chapter presents the research design used to explore the problem determined and validate or disconfirm the research assumptions. In particular, this chapter gives a clear explanation of the research methodology, data collection tool, sampling processes, and analytical techniques. It also delineates the research findings and their discussion.

Section One: Research Methodology

Research Paradigm

A post-positivist research approach supports methodological pluralism, whereby methodologies ought to be chosen firstly in terms of the questions being studied and not necessarily from within a single paradigm. This contradicts the dogmatic certitude of classical positivism, a shift introduced by physicists Werner Heisenberg and Niels Bohr, who dwelled more on probability rather than on absolute certitude. They portrayed the scientist, rather than as a receptive finder of immutable laws of nature, as an active constructor of knowledge. As Crotty (1998) shows, “no matter how faithfully the scientist adheres to scientific method research, research outcomes are neither totally objective, nor unquestionably certain” (p. 40). This stance, post-positivism or logical empiricism, is a weaker form of positivism that embraces fallible observation and provisionality of knowledge. Post-positivists believe that both social scientists and natural scientists seek much the same research goals and frequently employ similar modes of investigation, while remaining aware of the limitations and situational biases built into any inquiry. Therefore, the post-positivist paradigm provides a dynamic and balanced framework for this study that allows the use of quantitative data

collection tools such as questionnaires while recognizing a need for critical reflection on interpretation of findings. Therefore, the post-positivist paradigm is the most suitable and effective philosophical framework for this research, for it allows for a thoughtful, systematic analysis of Generation Z's language attitudes and the shift from French to English in Algeria taking into account the complexity, limitations, and contextual variables involved in their study.

Research Methodology

This research adopts the mixed-method research methodology, which is “an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks” (Creswell, 2014, p.4). This methodology combines the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research, resulting in an in-depth representation of the research problem.

Creswell (2014) define quantitative research as a means of testing objective hypotheses by examining the relationship between variables. These variables can be measured with instruments so that data in numerical form may be subjected to statistical examination. This allows for the collection of standardized measurable data to be analyzed statistically for the purposes of testing hypotheses and determining trends within the population. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is "set to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem, the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting” (Creswell, 2014, p.4). This approach has the goal of collecting rich, vivid descriptions and meanings from people so more can be known about complex social phenomena. The mixed method design is particularly appropriate for this study as it combines objective measurement of

linguistic variables and participants' subjective understanding of their linguistic choices and perceptions towards them.

Research Design

The research design in this study is exploratory and follows a mixed-method strategy. Exploratory research is used where a problem is poorly defined or unclear, and it aims to offer insight, uncover patterns, and formulate hypotheses but not test them. It comes in particularly handy when investigating new trends or little-researched topics, such as the present shift from French to English among Algerian youth. Exploratory studies are very flexible in design and, in most instances, rely on open-ended data collection methods that allow participants to answer at will, which can guide future research and theory development (Stebbins, 2001).

In this study, the exploratory design is employed to investigate Generation Z's perceptions and practices regarding the shifting linguistic landscape of Algeria. The design allows the researcher to see how language preferences are shifting and why and with what social functions English and French are used.

Population and Sample

This study targets first-year medical students from Gen Z, at Echahid Chikh Larbi Tebessi University, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study. The population consists of 180 students. To ensure the credibility of the research, we opted for probability sampling; all the members in the population have an equal and known chance of being selected in the sample *(Makwana et al., 2022)*

This is particularly suitable if the population is highly homogeneous as it is here in the case of this research environment, where all the subjects share the same academic and demographic backgrounds. We also chose simple random sampling. This method involves the selection of participants by chance in a manner that every member of the population has an equal likelihood of being chosen. Simple random sampling minimizes selection bias and

enhances the generalisability of the findings since the process is based on chance and randomization rather than on systematic selection criteria. This strategy is maximally suitable in the context of homogeneous populations, which ensures the internal validity of the study (Makwana et al., 2022). The aimed at sample is 123 participants as provided by an online sample size calculator. However, we conducted the questionnaire in person with all available students in the amphitheater, ensuring that there are no exclusions or pre-selections. A total of 43 students completed questionnaires, while some are uncooperative, the majority never attend as we learned later from the head of the department.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection tool applied in this study is a questionnaire. The Oxford English Dictionary (1989) define questionnaire as a written list of questions that are answered by a number of people so that information can be collected from the answers major strengths of questionnaires have been the focus of Bird (2009), who emphasizes their effectiveness in sampling a wide range at the relative inexpensive cost. Further, questionnaires also guarantee the respondent's anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, which makes replies honest and frank. The questionnaire is distributed to medical students at Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi University. A trilingual questionnaire (English, French, Arabic) is administered (Appendix). In this way, participants' language use would be documented and the perceptions of each participant towards the languages and the overall dynamics of language shift in Algeria are gathered offering invaluable information. The instrument is chosen due to its efficiency in obtaining large-scale data and its ability to ensure participants' anonymity.

Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire utilized in this research is designed to investigate the linguistic routines and sentiments of Gen Z towards the shift from French to English. The instrument is divided into three significant sections as follows:

Section 1: Demographic Information and Linguistic Profile. This section collects some basic demographic data and language background. It contains five questions. The age of the participants is collected to validate their belonging to Generation Z. Additionally, their gender are gathered to investigate whether it affects their choices and perceptions. Furthermore, participants are asked to indicate their mother tongue and which language varieties they are able to speak. They are also asked to rate their own proficiency in the four language skills speaking, writing, reading, and listening on a scale from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high) in order to see whether their choices are driven by their proficiency level or not. It is worth mentioning that the writing and reading skills for Algerian Arabic and Berber are not collected because they are mostly spoken varieties.

Section 2: Linguistic Practices. This section investigates the real language practice of the participants in daily life situations in various contexts and activities. Question 6 targets language use in writing tasks, such as academic writing, emailing, social media use, text messaging, and personal journaling. Participants also reported which language (other than Algerian Arabic) they tend to use most in various settings, such as university, home, shops, and restaurants (Question 8). Then, question 10 targets language use according to the interlocutor, such as addressing friends, parents, and teachers among others. This section also examines language preferences when talking about particular topics, such as emotions, technology, religion, and lifestyle (Question 12). Finally, question 14 targets tasks that relate to language, such as the default language of the mobile phone, thinking, and counting. Additionally, each of these questions is followed by an open-ended question where participants are required to explain their language choices.

Section 3: Linguistic perceptions. This third section analyzes the perception of the participants regarding the shift from French to English in Algeria. It is comprised of 21 statements on a five- point agreement Likert-scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to

"Strongly agree." Statement one to seven seek the participants' agreement with the need for language shift statements eight to 14 target their evaluation of the hardship of the shift, and the last set of statements (from 15 to 21) gathers their agreement on the country wide importance of language shift. The last question is open-ended; it requires the respondent to comment on their own opinion on the ongoing linguistic change.

This questionnaire gathers extensive information about the demographic, linguistic, and perceptual features of language use among Gen Z and is a crucial tool via which the background of the language shift in Algeria can be examined.

Data Collection Procedures

Data are collected by distributing a hard copy of the questionnaire to first-year medical students during their assigned lectures over four consecutive days. The questionnaires are distributed to almost all students present in the lecture hall, as well as in the library, to ensure broad coverage and a high response rate. Despite the intensive distribution strategy, only 43 responses are obtained. This response rate indicates a significant decline in student participation.

The research team intentionally avoided using electronic formats such as Google Forms for several reasons, including providing three versions (Arabic, French, and English) to each student, being on-site to clarify any ambiguity regarding the questions, and considering the poor performance of students due to the academic pressures they face as a result of recent university strikes. Therefore, face-to-face distribution is deemed more effective under the current circumstances.

Data Analysis Procedures

To analyze the obtained quantitative data, SPSS is used. it allows for the calculation of various descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages to illustrate the distribution of responses to categorical variables (such as language proficiency levels and

language use in different contexts) and mean scores for Likert scale items assessing perceptions. These statistical calculations provided quantitative insights into the language preferences, practices, and opinions of Gen Z participants, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of language shift. This rigorous statistical approach enhances the subsequent discussion of results, ensuring an objective, data-driven exploration of the research questions. Additionally, the open-ended question are analysed qualitatively by grouping similar responses into broad categories.

Validity and Reliability:

For validity and reliability assurance in this study, a mixed-method research design is employed where quantitative and qualitative analysis are combined to ensure a multi-dimensional understanding of the phenomenon of study. The questionnaire is developed with great caution in three languages (Arabic, French, and English) to fit the linguistic background of the participants, thus ensuring the instrument is valid in terms of suitability and clarity. It is pretested with a group of students prior to official use, enabling us to modify the questions' clarity and improve their wording, thus enhancing face validity.

For reliability, quantitative information are computed using SPSS, which facilitates proper statistical analysis like frequencies, percentages, and arithmetic means. Such are utilized to ensure the reliability and consistency of results. Thematic analysis is used in the examination of open-ended questions, ensuring systematic extraction of recurring patterns within participants' answers. Utilizing several tools of analysis and the blending of quantitative and qualitative results makes the research more valid and results in data interlinkage, which is termed as methodological triangulation, which enhances the accuracy of findings and lends them an air of objectivity and consistency.

Section Two: Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section presents the results of the questionnaire in order to explore Generation Z's language practices, proficiency, and perceptions towards the shift from French to English in Algeria. The 43 responses are divided into 13 responses in Arabic, 13 in French, and 17 in English. This slight difference in numbers is a reflection of people's personal preference and facility with each language, which is itself an indicator of Algeria's multilingual nature, and the still recurring preference of French in the Tebessian context even among generation Z.

The Obtained Results

Section 1: Demographic Information and Linguistic Profile . This section aims to collect basic background information about the sample, which is crucial for understanding their linguistic characteristics and confirming their membership in Generation Z.

Question 1: Age

Table 6

Age Distribution of the Participants

	Frequency	Percent
18	12	27,9
19	12	27,9
20	4	9,3
21	5	11,6
22	5	11,6
23	2	4,7
24	3	7,0
Total	43	100,0

since the sample comprises university students, the age of the 43 participants ranges from 18 to 24. Table 6 shows the age distribution of the participants. Most participants are aged 18 or 19 years old, constituting 27.9% of the total sample each. The whole sample belongs to

Gen Z which is relevant given the study's objective of exploring the perceptions and practices of this age group regarding language shift.

Question 2: Gender

Table 7

Distribution of Participants by Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	9	20,9
Female	34	79,1
Total	43	100,0

The majority of participants are female, comprising 79.1% (34 individuals), while males comprised 20.9% (9 individuals). Gender is not distributed equally in the sample. This Significant gender imbalance does not allow verifying the relationship between gender and linguistic practices or perceptions.

Question 3: What is your mother tongue?

Table 8

Distribution of Participants' Mother Tongue

	Frequency	Percent
Algerian Arabic	43	100,0

All participants reported that their mother tongue is Algerian Arabic, as it is clarified Table 8 in which is natural given that the research is conducted in Tebessa. This confirms the participants' native language background, laying the foundation for understanding their proficiency and use of other languages.

Question 4: Which of the following languages (or language varieties) do you master? (you can choose more than one answer)?

Table 9

The Linguistic Profile of Participants

		Responses		
		N	Percent	Percent of Cases
Linguistic.Profile	Algerian.Arabic	43	31,4%	100,0%
	Standard.Arabic	36	26,3%	83,7%
	Berber	1	7%	2,3%
	French	26	19,0%	60,5%
	English	31	22,6%	72,1%
Total		137	100,0%	318,6%

Questionnaire results show that Algerian Arabic is the most spoken language among participants 100% of respondents indicated proficiency, reflecting its status as the mother tongue and primary tool of daily communication. Standard Arabic follows , with a proficiency rate of 83.7%, indicating a strong presence that can be consolidated through formal education. Interestingly, English ranked above French in reported mastery, with 72.1% against 60.5%. Despite the cultural and historical importance of the Berber language in Algeria, only 2.3% of the participants in this study indicated their use of it, reflecting its marginal position within the linguistic repertoire (Table 9). It should be noted that this limited representation may be related to the fact that the study is conducted in a Non-Berber-speaking region, which affects the interpretation of the results and highlights the limited generalisability of the results to the rest of the country, particularly the Berber regions.

Question 5: Rate your level of proficiency in each of the following language skills by ticking the number that best describes your level.

Participants are asked to rate their proficiency in each of the following skills, each of which is rated according to a standard: speaking (ability to express oneself), writing (correct writing with respect to grammar), reading (understanding written texts and knowledge of terminology), and listening (understanding spoken conversations). The proficiency is measured in Algerian Arabic, Standard Arabic, Berber, French, and English on a scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

- Algerian Arabic

Table 10

Proficiency Level in Algerian Arabic Speaking and Listening Skills

The Speaking Skill				The Listening Skill			
		Frequency	Percent			Frequency	Percent
Valid	Moderate	1	2,3	Valid	Moderate	1	2,3
	High	2	4,7		High	1	2,3
	Very High	38	88,4		Very High	39	90,7
	Total	41	95,3		Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7	Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0	Total		43	100,0

38 out of 41 participants demonstrated a very high level of proficiency, and two participants did not answer this question which is indicated in Table 10 as missing. Additionally, 39 participants demonstrated a very high proficiency in listening, reflecting ease of understanding and engaging in oral contexts. Overall, the results show that most participants have a very high level of speaking and listening proficiency in Algerian Arabic, which is expected given that it is the mother tongue used daily in social life.

Standard Arabic

Table 11

Proficiency Level in Standard Arabic Skills

The Speaking Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	2	4,7
	Moderate	1	2,3
	High	4	9,3
	Very High	34	79,1
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

The Writing Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	2	4,7
	Moderate	3	7,0
	High	4	9,3
	Very High	32	74,4
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

The Listening Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	3	7,0
	Very Low	1	2,3
	Moderate	1	2,3
	High	5	11,6
	Very High	32	74,4
	Total	42	97,7
Missing	System	1	2,3
Total		43	100,0

The Reading Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	3	7,0
	Moderate	1	2,3
	High	9	20,9
	Very High	28	65,1
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

Table 11 shows that 34 participants demonstrate a very high level in the speaking skill, reflecting reliance on Standard Arabic in academic and religious contexts. While two

surprisingly indicated that they do not master it at all. Additionally, 32 participants demonstrate a very high proficiency in the writing skill, indicating good command of written production in Standard Arabic, four declared high proficiency, three moderate proficiency, and two no mastery at all maybe because of the diaglossic situation in the country they do not engage a lot in writing. Regarding the listening skill, 32 participants also demonstrated very high proficiency, indicating good comprehension of spoken discourse in Standard Arabic and five among them indicated a high proficiency. Finally, 28 participants demonstrated very high proficiency in reading and nine with high proficiency, which is expected given the abundance of classical Arabic texts in education. The overall pattern is due to its use in education and official media, which supports their proficiency.

- Berber

Table 12

Proficiency Level in Berber Speaking and Listening Skills

The Speaking Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	29	67,4
	Very Low	8	18,6
	Low	2	4,7
	High	1	2,3
	Very High	1	2,3
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

The Listening Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	29	67,4
	Very Low	6	14,0
	Low	2	4,7
	Moderate	1	2,3
	High	1	2,3
	Very High	2	4,7
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

Table 12 shows that 29 out of 41 participants reported not having any proficiency in speaking Berber, indicating its absence in their linguistic environment. However, eight participants reported very low mastery and two low mastery, although in question four, only one participant reported that Berber is part of their linguistic profile. This may be attributed to their knowledge of few words from media, but they do not consider themselves speakers of Berber.

The same number of participants also admitted not understanding Amazigh, with only 6 having a low to high listening level i.e. they have passive proficiency, this is why they did not mention Berber in their linguistic profile.

- French

The overall French proficiency of the participants is somehow unevenly distributed. The majority possess an intermediate level in the productive skills speaking and writing), while they have a slightly better command in the receptive skills, especially listening. This reflects the tendency of this generation to comprehend French but not use it and the decline in the status of French in the educational and social systems.

Table 13

Proficiency Level in French Skills

The Speaking Skill				The Writing Skill			
		Frequency	Percent			Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	2	4,7	Valid	No.mastery	2	4,7
	Very Low	1	2,3		Very Low	1	2,3
	Low	6	14,0		Low	7	16,3
	Moderate	12	27,9		Moderate	13	30,2
	High	9	20,9		High	12	27,9
	Very High	10	23,3		Very High	5	11,6

Missing	System	3	7,0
Total		43	100,0

	Total	40	93,0
Missing	System	3	7,0
Total		43	100,0

The Reading Skill

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	3	7,0
	Very Low	2	4,7
	Low	5	11,6
	Moderate	9	20,9
	High	11	25,6
	Very High	12	27,9
	Total	42	97,7
Missing	System	1	2,3
Total		43	100,0

The Listening Skill

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	2	4,7
	Very Low	2	4,7
	Low	3	7,0
	Moderate	14	32,6
	High	8	18,6
	Very High	11	25,6
	Total	40	93,0
Missing	System	3	7,0
Total		43	100,0

Table 13 demonstrates that ten participants have a very high level in speaking, and 9 high level, indicating good oral proficiency for approximately half of the sample. Additionally, 13 participants demonstrated high level, and only five very high level. Furthermore, 12 participants indicated very high level in reading and 11 have high level, meaning 23 out of 42 are very proficient readers of French. Finally, 11 participants only indicated very high level and eight with high level in listening, reflecting acceptable exposure to spoken language. Overall, the sample's proficiency of French is moderate.

- **English**

Results show that the sample possesses a high to a very high level of English proficiency, particularly in listening and writing skills. This reflects openness to digital and technological content, as English is the language of knowledge and globalization, which has increased youth's informal and intensive exposure to it.

Table 14

Proficiency Level in English Skills

The Speaking Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	4	9,3
	Low	6	14,0
	Moderate	8	18,6
	High	12	27,9
	Very High	11	25,6
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

The Writing Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	4	9,3
	Very Low	2	4,7
	Low	4	9,3
	Moderate	8	18,6
	High	13	30,2
	Very High	10	23,3
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

The Listening Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	4	9,3
	Very Low	6	14,0
	Low	2	4,7
	Moderate	8	18,6
	High	11	25,6
	Very High	11	25,6
	Total	42	97,7
Missing	System	1	2,3
Total		43	100,0

The Reading Skill			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No.mastery	4	9,3
	Very Low	2	4,7
	Low	6	14,0
	Moderate	8	18,6
	High	13	30,2
	Very High	8	18,6
	Total	41	95,3
Missing	System	2	4,7
Total		43	100,0

Table 14 demonstrates that 12 participant have high level in the speaking skill while 11 participants have very high one. In writing, 13 participants reported high proficiency and ten very high one. Within the same range, 11 participants have either high or very high level which constitutes the majority of the sample. Finally, 13 participants reported high level and 8 reported very high level in reading reflecting their use of English for academic or digital reading. Overall, their reported proficiency in English is higher than that of French.

To sum up, the sample is most proficient in Algerian Arabic and Standard Arabic, particularly in listening and speaking. Berber shows the lowest proficiency level, with the vast majority reporting no proficiency at all. English enjoys a relatively higher proficiency compared to French.

Section 2: Language Practices. The second section of the questionnaire aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' foreign language usage patterns. This is achieved by identifying the language most commonly used in various writing tasks, the preferred language spoken in various settings, the language spoken based on the interlocutor , and when discussing specific topics, in addition to other language-related tasks. This variety of questions allows for the collection of rich data on how individuals choose among French and English in their daily lives. It also helps to understand the function allocated to each language.

Question 6: Tick the language you use most for each of the following writing tasks.

This question aims to identify the languag used by the participants in seven different writing tasks.

Table 15

Language Used for Writing Tasks

Task	Language	Frequency	Per cent
Academic Writing	French	18	41,9
	English	4	9,3
	Both	11	25,6
	None	10	23,3
	Total	43	100,0
Email Writing	French	12	27,9
	English	9	20,9
	Both	12	27,9
	None	10	23,3
	Total	43	100,0
Online Search (youtube or Google, for example)	French	10	23,3
	English	15	34,9
	Both	9	20,9
	None	9	20,9
	Total	43	100,0
Social Media Posts	French	7	16,3
	English	16	37,2
	Both	6	14,0
	None	14	32,6
	Total	43	100,0
Social Media Comments	French	6	14,0
	English	17	39,5
	Both	7	16,3
	None	13	30,2
	Total	43	100,0
Diaries writing / personal writing	French	8	18,6
	English	16	37,2
	Both	5	11,6
	None	14	32,6
	Total	43	100,0
Text Messaging (for example, WhatsApp or Messenger)	French	6	14,0
	English	11	25,6
	Both	9	20,9
	None	17	39,5
	Total	43	100,0

The results reported in Table 15 show contrasting patterns of language use in different writing tasks. French is the language used most for academic writing (41.9%), then a large

percentage of the participants (25.6%) uses both, while only 9.3% use English alone. This preference may be attributed to the long standing convention in the Algerian society that the medical sector is dominated by French. For email writing, French and the alternation of both languages are equally used with 27.9% each, while English is used to a lesser degree (20.9%). For online searching (YouTube or Google), social media posts, and social media comments, English is the preferred language with a percentage of 34.9%, 37,2%, and 39,5%, respectively, surpassing French. For journal or personal writing, English again dominates at 37.2%, with a significant proportion (32.6%) using neither language. This may be due to the fact that this type of writing is not performed by many language users For, text messaging, the largest proportion (39.5%) uses neither French nor English, indicating the dominance of Algerian Arabic

Overall, the results show that French remains strong in academic and formal contexts such as academic writing and email, while English dominates most digital and informal tasks such as online research and social media.

Question 7: Explain your choices in the previous question

This is an open-ended question. It is analysed qualitatively by creating broad categories in the form of reasons for language choice accoring to the participants' answers and grouping similar answers together. It should be noted here that this open-ended question is not analyzed using arithmetic means, but rather qualitatively using thematic analysis. This involved classifying answers into broad categories representing the various reasons for choosing a language, then grouping similar answers within these categories. The results are listed in Table 16 to illustrate these categories, with representative examples for each.

Table 16

Eplanation for Language Prefrences in Different Writing Tasks

Languages	Reason	Examples of Answers
English	Ease of Use and Comfort	"English is easier to communicate in," "Because I like writing in it," "More confident while using English," "I feel comfortable"
	Early Education and Experience	"Mastering English from an early age makes it used in any possible situation"
	Global Impact and Progress	"Impressed by the beauty of English and it is the language of the new life," "Using English to show that I am an educated person," "English for daily use"
	Objective/Professional Reasons	"English is supposed to be used," "I prefer to use English," "I only use Arabic, and if not, I prefer English"
French	Academic and Educational Reasons	"French only academically, English is rarely used," "The language used in education is French," "French, because I study in it"
	Habit	"French because of the nature of society," "Knowing French more than English," "There is no reason behind it, just using French because it is a habit"
	Unwillingness to Use English	"Lack of interest in English"
Both Languages	Dependence on the Situation/Context	"Depends on the situation," "Depends on the reason for using it, and sometimes just because I feel comfortable"
	For Global and Study Reasons	"Both languages, English because it is a global language, and French because I study in it"
	The Educational Reality Surpasses the Desire for Change	"Despite my desire to use English, the fact that we study French forces me to use it"

Table 16 presents participants' explanations for using both French and English. The answers range from a preference for English due to its ease of use and comfort in communication, to early mastery of the language. Its global influence also makes it a desirable language for demonstrating education and advancement, to situational reasons that presuppose or favour, its use in certain contexts.On the other hand, some prefer French for academic reasons, as it is the language of their studies or because of social norms and

prevailing customs. Another group prefers French simply because they are not interested in English.

As for those who prefer both languages or choose based on the situation, their decision depends largely on the context, purpose, or comfort level. Some prefer English because it is a global language and French is chosen for academic reasons. There are also those who express a desire to use English, but the educational reality, which relies on French, forces them to use it.

Question 8: In addition to Algerian Arabic, which language do you speak most in each of the following settings? Tick one language in every case.

This question explores the role of the setting in determining the preferred language of conversation.

Table 17

Language Used for Speaking according to the Setting

Setting	Language	Frequency	Percent
At university	French	29	67,4
	English	4	9,3
	Both	6	14,0
	None	4	9,3
	Total	43	100,0
At home	French	10	23,3
	English	10	23,3
	Both	7	16,3
	None	16	37,2
	Total	43	100,0
In shops	French	16	37,2
	English	4	9,3
At the doctor's office	French	29	67,4
	English	3	7,0
	Both	4	9,3
	None	6	14,0
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0
In a restaurant	French	24	55,8
	English	4	9,3
	Both	4	9,3
	None	10	23,3
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,

	Both	3	7,0
	None	19	44,2
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0

			0
At the airport	French	19	44,2
	English	8	18,6
	Both	7	16,3
	None	8	18,6
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0
At the post office	French	18	41,9
	English	4	9,3
	Both	3	7,0
	None	17	39,5
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0

As shown in Table 17, respondents prefer French for conversation at universities (67.4%), doctors' offices (67.4%), restaurants (55.8%), airport (44.2%), and post office (41.9%). At home and in shops they use neither with a percentage of (37,2%) and (44.2%), respectively. The percentage of English used alone remains below 20% in all of the aforementioned settings. Overall, French appears to be most commonly used in formal and semi-formal settings such as universities and doctors' offices, while Algerian Arabic is more commonly used in public settings such as shops and at home. English remains relatively limited in these contexts compared to either French or Algerian Arabic. Despite the participants' reported high proficiency in English, they fail to put it into practice in the aforementioned settings.

Question 9: Explain your choices in the previous question

Data related to this question, which sought to understand language choices based on context, are analyzed using thematic analysis, categorizing responses within major semantic themes representing the social, educational, and cultural motivations for using each language. The results showe that French remains strongly dominant in several contexts, and the reasons for this preference can be summarized in the following themes:

LANGUAGE SHIFT IN ALGERIA

- Colonial legacy and identity: The statement "French is an annoying part of our identity. Even if we want English, we are still Algerians who speak French because education and society already use French." The opinions of some participants reflect the societal imperative to use this colonial heritage, which makes abandoning it difficult and controversial, even if there is a desire to do so. Another example is the answer, "French because it is a colonial heritage and has become part of our identity,"wich confirms this profound dimension.
- Academic and professional necessity: "The nature of studying medicine requires French" is a reality. Many curricula, especially in fields such as medicine and exact sciences, are still taught in French at Algerian universities. This creates a "mandatory use of French" and makes its mastery essential for academic and professional success.
- Practical and social diffusion: "French can be used everywhere" and "a Francophone society" demonstrate that French is the common language for many Algerians. This, coupled with the "others' lack of proficiency in English," makes French the most popular practical choice.
- Personal preference: "Because I prefer French" is a personal viewpoint that reflects the fact that there is a segment of Gen Z that prefers and is accustomed to using French.

The participants who chose English, although they are small in number, show the clear and growing desire to adopt English. Their opinions include:

- Charisma and self-expression: "English to show charisma" and "love of English." Participants have a modern view of English as a symbol of modernity, openness, and personal distinction. "English is associated with global opportunities and broader communication," as well as the ability to communicate using it.

- Ease and universal diffusion: "English is simple and can be used everywhere" is a universal truth. English is the universal language of communication, and this is an undeniable fact.
- Proficiency challenges: "Inability to know French" and "Lack of English proficiency" highlight the difficulties faced by various segments of society in mastering both languages. However, this last point indicates that the weakness of English remains a major obstacle to its spread.
- "Linguistic capital": This phrase is frequently repeated among participants and may refer to a gap in educational resources, limited exposure to English, or even the lack of skilled English speakers in the Algerian environment, making its acquisition more difficult compared to the widespread French.

Some participants did not justify their choice of language, they simply stated that the reason behind it is the same as mentioned in the previous section.

Question 10: In addition to Algerian Arabic, which language you speak most to each of the following interlocutors?

Table 18

Language Used according to the Interlocutor

Interlocutor	Language	Frequency	Percent
Friends	French	7	16,3
	English	16	37,2
	Both	8	18,6
	None	11	25,6
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0
Parents	French	20	46,
Siblings	French	7	16,3
	English	12	27,9
	Both	5	11,6
	None	19	44,2
	Total	43	100,0
The Extended Family	French	12	27,9
	English	4	9,3

	h		5
	English	1	2,3
	Both	3	7,0
	None	18	41,9
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0
Strangers	French	14	32,6
	English	6	14,0
	Both	5	11,6
	None	17	39,5
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0
Members	sh		
	Both	5	11,6
	None	22	51,2
	Total	43	100,0
Teachers	French	27	62,8
	English	4	9,3
	Both	6	14,0
	None	6	14,0
	Total	43	100,0
Neighbors	French	14	32,6
	English	3	7,0
	Both	3	7,0
	None	22	51,2
	Missing	1	2,3
	Total	43	100,0

Table 18 reflects the significant influence of the relationship with the addressee on language choice. Unsurprisingly, French is most prominent in interactions with teachers (62.8%) and parents (46.5%), indicating its role in formal or traditional communication. In contrast, English appears as the preferred language only with friends (37.2%). Algerian Arabic remains the most common with family members, strangers and neighbors, emphasizing its social and everyday nature and that English still does not enjoy the aspired exposure.

Question 11: Explain your choices in the previous question.

This question focuses on the reasons why participants choose a particular language for communication (French or English), and how these choices are influenced by the type of interlocutor.

On the one hand the reasons cited by participants for choosing French are the following:

Social and environmental prevalence: "French because everyone uses it." This indicates that French is the dominant language in the Algerian society, making its use essential for effective daily communication. Other responses include "The community uses French" and "A Francophone society."

Proficiency and personal comfort: "French because I master it." Mastering a language makes using it more comfortable, confident, and spontaneous, which explains" I tend to use it in most situations". Other responses include "I used to speak French" and "I have used French since I is young."

Family influence: This is prevalent in responses such as "My parents speak French." The family environment plays a crucial role in consolidating language acquisition. If French is the language of communication at home, this reinforces its natural use.

On the other hand, the participants' motivations for using English are purely for learning. The response "Benefiting from speaking English in order to learn it" shows that the use of English here is not just for communication, but rather an investment in developing language skills. The same applies to "I want to learn English, so I use it."

Finally, those who prefer both (using both languages together/switching between them) show that the choice of language is based on factors beyond an absolute preference for one language. They claimed "it depends on the addressee." This cart demonstrates the ability to adapt to the needs of others. The willingness to switch between French and English to ensure clarity and comfort for the interlocutor reflects an awareness of the effectiveness of

communication among the younger generation. Another participant declared that "we need a foreign language, whether French or English, to keep pace with scientific developments" i.e. he equated English and French for this purpose.

Question 12: In addition to Algerian Arabic, which language you speak most when discussing the following topics?

This question seeks to understand the functional specialization of languages according to the topic.

Table 19

Language Used according to the Topic

Topic	Language	Frequency	Percent	Topic	Language	Frequency	Percent
Emotions	French	6	14,0	Religion	French	8	18,6
	English	25	58,1		English	8	18,6
	Both	4	9,3		Both	5	11,6
	None	8	18,6		None	22	51,2
	Total	43	100,0		Total	43	100,0
Technology	French	16	37,2	Social Issues	French	8	18,6
	English	19	44,2		English	18	41,9
	Both	5	11,6		Both	4	9,3
	None	3	7,0		None	13	30,2
	Total	43	100,0		Total	43	100,0
Diseases	French	25	58,1	Lifestyle	French	10	23,3
	English	6	14,0		English	25	58,1
	Both	5	11,6		Both	4	9,3
	None	7	16,3		None	4	9,3
	Total	43	100,0		Total	43	100,0
				Food	French	13	30,2
					English	12	27,9
					Both	9	20,9

	None	9	20,9
	Total	43	100,0

Table 19 shows that when discussing emotions and lifestyle, (58.1%) of respondents prefer using English. In the field of technology as well, English (44.2%) is preferred. However, when discussing diseases, French is used predominantly at 58.1%. The same applies to discussing food with a percentage of (20.9%). When discussing religion and social issues, they use neither. Overall, English clearly dominates modern and global topics such as emotions, technology, and lifestyle, while French remains dominant when discussing diseases. Algerian Arabic is most prominent when discussing religion and social issues, reflecting religious and cultural connections.

Question 13: Explain your choices in the previous question.

This question sought to uncover participants' motivations for their language choices by giving them the opportunity to freely express their opinions, with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of their linguistic orientations. The responses are analyzed using thematic analysis, which enabled participants to be classified into three main categories according to their language preferences:

- The first category includes those preferring French. They declared "French because everyone uses it", "society uses French", and "French-speaking society". This demonstrates the widespread use of the language. Since the majority of people in the participants' environment speak French, using it becomes essential for effective daily communication.

Other opinions include "French because I'm fluent in it". Speaking the language fluently gives one confidence and comfort when speaking it. It is natural that a person would choose the language he or she know best. Additionally, the domestic environment is central to language acquisition and use, which is clear in the opinion that My parents speak French.

- The second category includes those preferring English. They reported that the benefit of speaking English to learn it. This reveals a clear educational motivation. English is not only used for communication, but also for advancing language capacity and increasing fluency. Additionally, they declared that English is easier for explaining scientific, emotional, and technological topics. This indicates a functional preference for English in specific domains. They believe that English provides more appropriate terminology and structures for expressing scientific and technological concepts, or even emotional aspects. Example: I use English in all subjects; it is very expressive and persuasive.
- The third category includes those using both languages. They declared that It depends on the person I'm speaking to and their willingness to use the language they want to use. This point demonstrates a high degree of flexibility and awareness of the importance of adapting to the addressee. It highlights a willingness to switch between the two languages to ensure effective communication and the comfort of the other party i.e. the interlocutor is more important than the topic.

Another declaration is I use English for all subjects, but I use French for diseases. This demonstrates that the use of both languages is not random, but rather divided by field. English is a general language, while French is a specialized language (such as medical terminology or academic studies). This is asserted in the response of other participants; "French is limited to studies and medical terminology," "English is suitable for all the above subjects, but we have to use French."

Question 14: Tick the language you chose most for each of the following tasks.

This question seeks to capture language preferences in nonverbal and written tasks, including interaction with digital devices and content consumption.

Table 20

Different Practices Involving Language

Setting	Language	Frequency	Percent	Setting	Language	Frequency	Percent
The default language of your Smartphone	French	15	34,9	Counting	French	15	34,9
	English	19	44,2		English	12	27,9
	None	9	20,9		Both	3	7,0
	Total	43	100,0		None	12	27,9
Watching TV shows or movies	French	3	7,0		Missing	1	2,3
	English	25	58,1		Total	43	100,0
	Both	10	23,3	Thinking	French	7	16,3
	None	5	11,6		English	13	30,2
	Total	43	100,0		Both	3	7,0
Listening to music or podcasts	French	3	7,0		None	19	44,2
	English	24	55,8		Missing	1	2,3
	Both	8	18,6		Total	43	100,0
	None	8	18,6	Reading	French	7	16,3
	Total	43	100,0		English	15	34,9
					Both	7	16,3
					None	14	32,6
					Total	43	100,0

Table 20 shows that English emerges as the preferred language for smartphone setup (44.2%) media consumption (movies (58.1%) and music or podcasts (55.8%)), indicating its connection to the digital world and entertainment. However, Algerian Arabic remains the preferred language for non communicative tasks such as thinking (30.2%.) and reading

(32.6%) tasks, reflecting its essential role in personal cognitive processes. However, French is preferred for counting with a percentage of (34.9%).

Section 3: Language Perceptions. The questions in this section of the questionnaire seek to find out the participants' attitudes regarding linguistic change between French and English**.**

Question 16: Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements which target your views about the shift from French to English in the Algerian context.

The twenty-one (21) statements included in the section on teachers' perceptions of the shift from French to English are classified into three main categories according to the aim of each group:

- Language shift as a necessity (Statements 1-7): These statements measure the amount of the sample's agreement on the fact that English is a necessary contribution to the Algerian context, due to its connection to academic and technological needs. This clearly indicates that English represents a practical and necessary alternative in light of the limited French perfection among the current generation, and to ensure excellence in the scientific field.
- Language shift as a difficult and complex process (Statements 8-14): This group of statements measure the perception of the participants' about the challenges facing the shift from French to English in Algeria, and the legacy of French's other sociocultural status in Algeria. These statements are realistic in their recognition of the social and societal difficulties accompanying the change.
- Language shift as a Strategic important step (Statements 15-21): These statements highlight the benefits that can encourage the use of the English language, such as enhancing foreign investment, strengthening international relations, developing higher education, and keeping up with new developments. This idea is strongly endorsed by participants, demonstrating their commitment to a global path toward innovation and creativity.

To interpret the findings of this question, the mean ranges are As shown in Table 21

Table 21

The Explanation of the Mean Ranges

Mean Ranges	Agreement
01.00-01.79	Strongly Disagree
01.80-02.59	Disagree
02.60-03.39	Neutral
03.40-04.19	Agree
04.20-4.99	Strongly Agree

Table 22

Perceptions towards the Shift to English

	Agreement Scale					Mean	Standard Deviation
Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
			Frequency				
1	2	5	11	15	10	3.60	1.116
			Percentage%				
	4.7	11.6	25.6	34.9	23.3		
			Frequency			3.79	1.301
2	4	3	8	11	17		
			Percentage%				
	9.3	7.0	18.6	25.6	39.5		
			Frequency			3.95	1.272
3	3	4	5	11	20		
			Percentage%				
	7.0	9.3	11.6	25.6	46.5		
			Frequency			3.81	1.139
4	1	6	8	13	15		
			Percentage%				
	2.3	14.0	18.6	30.2	34.9		
			Frequency			4.12	.981
5	1	1	9	13	19		
			Percentage%				
	2.3	2.3	20.9	30.2	44.2		
			Frequency			4.30	.887
6	0	2	6	12	23		
			Percentage%				
	0.0	4.7	14.0	27.9	53.5		
			Frequency			4.05	1.090
7	1	3	9	10	20		

			Percentage%				
	2.3	7.0	20.9	23.3	46.5		
			Overall Mean			3.95	
8			Frequency			3.49	1.316
	4	7	8	12	12		
			Percentage%				
	9.3	16.3	18.6	27.9	27.9		
9			Frequency			2.74	1.311
	6	18	7	5	7		
			Percentage%				
	14.0	41.9	16.3	11.6	16.3		
10			Frequency			4.23	.868
	1	1	3	20	18		
			Percentage%				
	2.3	2.3	7.0	46.5	41.9		
11			Frequency			3.40	1.433
	6	7	7	10	13		
			Percentage%				
	14.0	16.3	16.3	23.3	30.2		
12			Frequency			4.28	.854
	0	2	5	15	21		
			Percentage%				
	0.0	4.7	11.6	34.9	48.8		
13			Frequency			2.95	1.430
	9	10	5	12	7		
			Percentage%				
	20.9	23.3	11.6	27.9	16.3		
14			Frequency			3.42	1.295
	4	6	13	8	12		
			Percentage%				
	9.3	14.0	30.2	18.6	27.9		
			Overall Mean			3.50	
15			Frequency			3.00	1.589
	10	10	6	4	13		
			Percentage%				
	23.3	23.3	14.0	9.3	30.2		
16			Frequency			4.02	1.080
	0	5	9	9	20		
			Percentage%				
	0.0	11.6	20.9	20.9	46.5		
17			Frequency			4.07	.884
	0	1	12	13	17		
			Percentage%				
	0.0	2.3	27.9	30.2	39.5		
18			Frequency			3.91	1.192
	2	4	8	11	18		

	Percentage%						
	4.7	9.3	18.6	25.6	41.9		
19	Frequency					3.98	.963
	1	1	11	15	15		
	Percentage%						
	2.3	2.3	25.6	34.9	34.9		
20	Frequency					4.12	.956
	0	3	8	13	19		
	Percentage%						
	0	7.0	18.6	30.2	44.2		
21	Frequency					4.09	1.151
	3	1	5	14	20		
	Percentage%						
	7.0	2.3	11.6	32.6	46.5		
	Overall Mean					3.88	

Language Shift as a Need. *t*he majority of the responses showed strong agreement on the view that English is increasingly becoming a necessity.

Table 22 shows that Statement 1 has a mean of 3.60, an indication of agreement. As can be gleaned from this, the majority of students view the limited proficiency in French among their generation as one of the main drivers towards adopting English. Statement 2 has a mean value of 3.79, within the agreement range, which serves to further confirm the idea that English has become dominant in specialized and modern domains. Statement 3 is received with agreement 3.95; a recognition of the reality of English being the principal language of academic literature. Statement 4 is rated 3.81, validating the participants' recognition of English being essential for academic advancement. Statement 5 scored 4.12, reflecting an agreement with the proposition that English enhances one's employability. Statement 6 scored 4.30, the highest mean value for this section, indicating that the participants strongly agree with the fact that English is viewed as a common tool for communication, especially when traveling. Statement 7 scored 4.05, confirming the agreement of the participants with the fact that English is the preferred language of self-expression.

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Language Shift as a Difficult Process . Statements 8 to 14 probe responses regarding what is difficult and challenging in the adoption of an English language shift in Algeria. Statement 8 scored 3.49, expressing agreement that linguistic practices from generation to generation are difficult for language shift. Statement 9 obtained a mean of 2.74, indicating neutrality with inclinations towards disagreement, and suggesting skepticism regarding the achievability of an administrative reform. Statement 10 recorded a mean value of 4.23, the highest mean for this statement set, indicating a strong agreement with the difficulty of language shift in pedagogy. Statement 11 scored 3.40, showing agreement with the belief that French has cultural roots that are hard to shake.Statement 12 scored 4.28, which reflects a strong agreement on the gradual nature of language shift. Statement 13 scored 2.95, indicating a neutrality on role of media in language shift. Statement 14 scored 3.42, which goes in favor of the belief that French still holds symbolic capital in Algerian society. Overall, while participants support the shift towards English in general, they are very attuned to the structural and cultural obstacles that go with it. The absence of teacher training, resistance from institutions, and symbolic use of French are all seen as significant obstructions.

Language Shift as an Important Step .Statements 15 to 21 test the perceived national importance of adopting English due to modernization, international visibility, and economic progress. Statement 15 received a neutral mean of 3.00, indicating that language is not the only booster of tourism in a country. Statement 16 is rated 4.02, indicating strong agreement with English as a vehicle for modernization. Statement 17 is rated with a mean value of 4.07, showing agreement on the role of English in raising academic standards. Statement 18 is rated 3.91, showing agreement on the role of language policy as a factor in foreign economic interest. Statement 19 is rated 3.98 confirming the symbolic role of English as a marker of development. Statement 20 is rated 4.12, showing a strong agreement with the globalization role of English. Statement 21 is rated 4.09, demonstrating wide agreement in the diplomatic

utility of English. Overall, English is not only seen as a utilitarian language but also as a symbol of national development, modernization, and global competitiveness. This aligns with general worldwide trends that position English as the primary medium for international communication.

The quantitative findings illustrate a clear generational preference for English over French. Students perceive English as the gateway to academic success, global communication, and economic development. However, they are also aware of institutional and cultural forces likely to oppose instantaneous change. Overall, the findings describe a future-oriented, global-minded generation pragmatically committed to language shift, but also attuned to the embedded position of French within Algerian institutions.

Interpretation of the Overall Mean Values .The mean total score of all the statements regarding acceptance of the transition from French to English is 3.95, which falls within the category of "agree" on the Likert scale. This finding indicates a positive and overall trend among participants in favor of language shift. Despite acknowledging certain obstacles, such as the deeply entrenched use of French in public administration, pedagogical limitations faced by senior teachers, and limited exposure to English in popular media, (the overall mean value is 3.50). Overwhelmingly, the respondents saw the transition to English beneficial (the overall mean value is 3.88 indicating agreement). The commonly perceived advantages cross several fields, such as availability of scientific and technological know-how at the international level, increased employment opportunities, higher levels of education, improved international relationships, and a stronger international image for Algeria.

In general, statistics reflect a broad generational consensus on the part of English as an instrument of national modernization and development. Though the process is complex, the

prevailing mood is that it is a necessary step toward aligning Algeria with international linguistic and economic streams.

Question 17: Feel free to add any final thoughts about your views towards the shift from French to English.

This open-ended question is of utmost importance in any qualitative or mixed-method research. It allows participants to freely express their opinions without the constraints of the pre-defined options in the closed-ended questions.

Key Ideas from the participants' answers, with explanations and examples **.**By analyzing the recurring and prominent ideas in the 43 answers, seven key ideas can be extracted, each reflecting a different perspective on the participants' perceptions of language shift.

- The Inevitability and Necessity of Language Shift to Keep Up with Development: This idea reflects the conviction that shifting to English is not merely a luxury or a preference, but rather a mandatory path for Algeria to stay relevant to global progress and modern developments. Participants believe that not adopting English would mean falling behind in vital fields such as science, technology, and knowledge in general. For example, a participant declared that "It is inevitable to keep up with development."

- Promising Future Benefits of English: This idea revolves around the positive outlook for the future that Algeria can achieve thanks to the transition to English. Participants anticipate that this transformation will open up broad horizons in several sectors, such as higher education, international job opportunities, attracting investments, strengthening diplomatic relations, and improving the country's international image, propelling it toward a better global standing. For example participants declared that "This transformation heralds a bright future and must be pursued" or "Transformation is the path to globalization."

Major and complex challenges in implementation: This idea highlights the participants' deep awareness of the enormous difficulties and obstacles that the transformation process can

face on the ground. These challenges are multifaceted. First, teacher training and curriculum development represent the greatest challenge, as previous generations of teachers and professors are trained and taught in French, requiring massive investments in retraining them and developing entirely new curricula in English. For example, one participant declared "This entails difficulties, including the fact that the training of professors themselves is based on French." Second, French enjoys a penetration into identity and culture. French is not only a foreign language, but it has become ingrained in everyday Algerian dialect and associated with concepts such as social status and intellectual advancement, making it psychologically and socially difficult to disentangle and change this connection. A participant reported that It is difficult because French is so deeply embedded in Algerian identity. Third, the shift impacts sensitive disciplines (such as medicine). Participants expressed particular concern regarding disciplines that rely heavily on French. Some believe that the transition in these fields could pose significant risks to the quality of education and the well-being of students, and requires careful and gradual consideration to avoid any negative repercussions. For example, "For medical students, this decision must be carefully considered before implementation because it poses significant difficulties, especially since it is a discipline that uses French as its foundation".

- Expectations of a gradual and slow transition: Many expect that the transition to English will not be rapid or forced. They believe that the process will be long-term, occurring in stages, and may evolve naturally and gradually over time, even without a strict or coercive government plan. This reflects an understanding of the complexity of linguistic change in a society. Responses include: "It can happen step by step over time." Or "it will happen over time, even without the use of force."

- The desire of the new generation as a driving force: This idea suggests that the transition is driven in part by the desire of younger generations. The new generation prefers

English and may see it as a way to shake off the legacy of French colonialism and connect itself to modern global culture. This popular desire could be a decisive factor in accelerating the adoption process. For example: The generation loves English and wants to get rid of the traces of colonialism.

- The transition as an indicator of national progress: This idea sees the mere initiation of the transition to English as an international and national declaration of Algeria's ambition for development and modernization. It is a symbolic step. For example: "Transition, in turn, will achieve great victories."
- Division in some aspects or the presence of divergent opinions: Despite the general trend in favor of transformation, there are some opinions that differ or show hesitation. These opinions may stem from personal preferences for French, a lack of an urgent need for transformation, or a different appreciation of the advantages and disadvantages of the two languages. This reflects the nature of any major change in society, where there is not always complete consensus. This is clear in responses such as "There is no need. French It is easier and more user-friendly."

Section Three: Discussion of the Findings

This section discusses the most important finding are obtained through the questionnaire and explains them in light of the two research questions since they are interpreted in detail in the previous section. Additionally, these finding are examined in light of related literature in the theoretical framework.

Addressing the first research question "What are the functional uses of English in comparison to French among Generation Z?"

The findings of the research show that French continues to dominate in the domain of school and official contexts due to its historical priority and institutionalization. It remains the language of the formal curriculum, bureaucracy, and the learning of medicine, and there is a

trend toward this that supports the work of Jacob (2020) on the institutional retention of French in Algeria.

English, however, is increasingly becoming rooted in less formal but society-oriented domains. Its use is evident in the realm of technology communication, entertainment, and self-expression. This is corroborative with Mounnes and Bouhadjar's (2024) observation that English has also become Algerian youths' symbolic language of global access and modernity. Participants are using English when they communicate with technology and world culture shows just how it is becoming more functionally rooted. This change seems to be more generational than system-wide. The spread of English is not yet institutionally endorsed in all fields of academic study, but the fact that it seems to be featured in the multilingual repertoires of youth, particularly in online and private domains, implies a bottom-up change. According to Mufwene (2020), these developments begin at the individual level but cross over to the communal level as much as they are driven by intergenerational aspirations and global ambitions. Gen Z in Algeria, driven by a desire to be part of a globalized world, appears to be leading this transformation through the uptake of English as a language of future use.

Overall, the answer of the first research question is that the functions of English among Gen Z are confined to digital, personal, and expressive domains. It is used in informal writing including social media posts and comments and online searches. Additionally, it is used to speak with friends only, to discuss emotions, technology, and lifestyle. This makes the first assumption partially confirmed because French continues to be the language of academic and institutional domains and international communication in airports, for example. These findings support that English is no longer confined to the domain of foreign language instruction; it is becoming an influential discourse for identity formation, expression of individuality, and negotiation of modernity.

For Algerian youth, the choice of using English is not merely practical but heavily symbolic a step that places them within global cultural currents and quietly challenges the colonial heritage embedded in French dominance. In the virtual sphere, music, social media, and spontaneous speech, English is a tool of empowerment, inscription, and self-transfiguration. It is in such ubiquitous micro-choices that a generational shift is taking place, and that language shift in Algeria is being driven top-down change created by policy makers who see English as an emblem of future iterations of themselves, and of the Algeria they want to be: more open, autonomous, and world-oriented.

Addressing the Second Research Question: How does Gen Z perceive the shift from French to English?

Participants' responses illustrate awareness that English is not only more convenient for their upcoming academic and professional lives, but also better suited for their ambitions in the world. Their perception towards English is strongly influenced by it being associated with opportunity, development, and global access, supporting the arguments of Benrabah (2013) and Jacob (2020) that language choice among Algerians would more likely be influenced by pragmatic and symbolic motives. While the majority of participants view English as an empowering instrument, they are also realistic about the challenges of this linguistic change. They recognize that the transformation cannot take place overnight due to infrastructural limitations, lack of qualified teachers, and French institutional hegemony. Yet the prevalence of support for English among youth is reflective of a desire to engage in a gradual, intergenerational transformation. Remarkably, rather than demanding the complete replacement of French, most participants envision a future in which French and English coexist. This perception aligns with Jacob's (2020) argument that language choice in Algeria is more a matter of complementarity rather than competition. The desire for bilingualism reveals that Gen Z is mediating a multilingual identity wherein English signifies advancement

without entirely rejecting the existing linguistic diversity. Overall, the second research assumption is confirmed. Language shift from French to English is taking place from below, representing a generational rather than policy-based trend which is acknowledge as a lengthy and difficult process.

Limitations of the Study

Despite the efforts invested in conducting this study to fulfill its objectives, several challenges are encountered that introduced certain limitations to both the research process and its outcomes. These challenges primarily affected the sample scope and the data collection tools, thereby restricting the extent to which the findings can be generalized. Nevertheless, every possible effort is made to minimize the impact of these limitations and to preserve the reliability and overall quality of the research.

The study is conducted exclusively in the city of Tebessa, one of the 58 provinces in Algeria. As a result, the findings may not reflect the linguistic behaviors and perceptions of individuals in other regions, where different sociocultural and educational factors may apply.

Furthermore, the sample is limited to first-year medical students at Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi University. Due to limited student cooperation and the specificity of the sample, the generalizability of the findings to the broader student population remains restricted. In addition, the number of participants is very small, only 43 out of 180.

Additionally, it must be mentioned that most of the participants are females, so this research does not support intellectual differences between genders.

Another limitation lies in the use of a single data collection method—a questionnaire. While effective for gathering quantitative data from a large number of participants, questionnaires do not capture the depth and complexity of participants' attitudes, daily experiences, or contextual language use. The absence of qualitative methods such as interviews or observations further limited the richness and interpretive depth of the findings.

Moreover, since the data are self-reported, there is a risk of response bias; participants may have provided answers they believed to be socially acceptable or expected rather than fully accurate representations of their language practices. It is worth noting that gathering natural data from focus groups is intended but the non-cooperativeness of the sample led to discarding this additional instrument.

Finally, data collection is conducted over a short period during the academic year. This limited timeframe may not adequately reflect language use patterns over a longer duration or account for fluctuations in language attitudes and behavior over time.

Implications of the Study

This study adds to knowledge about the language change in Algeria since the popular movement of 2019 from the perspective of Gen Z and their choice of languages, with emphasis on the increasing shift towards English and its related cultural and identity change.

First, this research demonstrates that Algerian language shift is not so much a shallow linguistic process as an outcome of an interlocking social, economic, and political dynamics. Language shift is seen as adaptive multilingual process, rather than a top-down imposed policy. Language is introduced as a vehicle for social relocation and challenging traditional linguistic hierarchies.

Second, the increasing popularity of English among young people indicates an urgent need to reimagine language learning policy. This involves developing new curricula, training teachers, and school environments that facilitate actual multilingualism, reflecting the new language reality of students.

Third, the fact that English is used, particularly among Gen Z, is a sign of a shift in the balance of symbolic power. It may be understood as a step beyond colonial French dominance, or as an indicator of openness to the international world. In either case, though, it

raises questions about identity and belonging, and betrays a remaking of the language and cultural awareness of new generations.

Forth, the social movement underlines its role as a force of linguistic change, opening the grounds for new ways of using language and redefining the meaning of expression, citizenship, and identity. Language has been connected to political and social action and a tool to transformation and resistance.

Finally, the study opens a door for exploration into issues such as the viability of heritage languages, the impact of multilingualism on identity, the complementarity between linguistic change and digital change, and the ways education and media play in advancing new linguistic awareness. It also opens for other research into the Algerian context amidst the global context of language and identity changes.

Recommendations for Further Research

In light of the limitations faced by this study and its implications, a number of recommendations that would improve the quality of future research and enhance the credibility of the results can be proposed.

- Future studies are recommended to be conducted in different provinces of Algeria, both urban and rural, to give a broader and more realistic overview of language shifts geographically.
- The sample is recommended to be expanded to include students from different fields of studies (such as the humanities, technology, economics) to create comparability of trends in language across fields.
- It is recommended that quantitative and qualitative tools are mixed, such as individual interviews, focus groups, and field observation, to obtain in-depth information about language practice and perceptions as they are being used in day-to-day life.

- Future research is better if it considers academic specialization in the segregation of results to avoid generalizing findings that may have been influenced by professional or academic exposure to English.

General Conclusion

The present research aimed at exploring the dynamics of language shift in the Gen Z population of Algeria, i.e., the transition from French to English in the post-Hirak era. The current dissertation is segmented into two chapters. Chapter One provides the theoretical framework, which explores language shift, generational theory, and Algerian sociolinguistic context. It is divided into two sections: first gives an overview of language shift and its reason, while the second discusses Algeria's linguistic situation against the background of the roles played by Arabic, French, and English, as well as the impact of generational perceptions on language change.

Chapter Two presents the empirical study by detailing research methodology, data analysis, and result discussion. Chapter Two is divided into three sections. The first section presents the research design, sampling strategy, and data collection through a trilingual questionnaire. The second section analyzes the gathered data and interprets the language practices and perceptions of the first-year medical students at Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi University towards the shift from French to English. The last section discusses the finding in light of the research questions and assumptions.

The findings partially validate the first research assumption and confirms the second, indicating a firm preference for English by Gen Z in Tebessa since it is regarded as practical in studies, employment, and global applications. The findings illustrate how even though French remains strongly embedded in traditional and institutional settings, English is increasingly valued in computer-mediated communication, social media, and personal use.

English is regarded by the participants as an indicator of contemporaneity, neutrality, and global interconnectedness, unlike the colonial associations of French.

Evidence confirms that the language shift is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also a reflection of broader social, cultural, and ideological movements. Nevertheless, the study also acknowledges certain shortcomings such as its targeting particular populations (medical students of Tebessa) and reliance on self-reported data. These shortcomings offer a push for further studies in different areas and subject matters to support and complement these findings.

Overall, this study identifies the pivotal role of Gen Z in reshaping Algeria's language dynamics. The turn to English is both pragmatically required in response to globalization and symbolically a transformation of national identity. While the process continues, its full realization will require systemic change in education, policy, and attitude in society. Longitudinal changes and comparative research in other regions of Algeria may be areas for future research to better understand this emerging sociolinguistic dynamic.

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Appendix

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

We are second-year Master's students at Echahid Cheikh Larbi Tebessi University, English department, specializing in Language Sciences. First of all, we sincerely thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and contribute to our research, entitled "The Shift from French to English in Algeria: The Practices and Perceptions of Generation Z in Tebessa". This study aims to explore the views of Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2010) in Tebessa and the extent of its English language use given the shift in language use starting from 2019 where English is gradually replacing French.

Your answers will contribute significantly to our research. Please consider the following before starting:

- Your responses are anonymous and used strictly for academic purposes.
- The questionnaire will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Please answer honestly and based on your personal experience.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Section 1: Demographic Information and Linguistic Profile

1. Age: ……..

2. Gender:

[ ] Male

[ ] Female

3. What is your mother tongue?

[ ] Algerian Arabic

[ ] Berber

Other :……..

4. Which of the following languages (or language varieties) do you master? (you can choose more than one answer)

[ ] Algerian Arabic

[ ] Standard Arabic

[ ] Berber

[ ] French

[ ] English

[ ] Others:…….

5. Rate your level of proficiency in each of the following language skills by ticking the number that best describes your level. (If you are not proficient at all in one of the language skills of a language, strikethrough the whole line) (1 Very Low 2 Low 3 Moderate 4 High 5 Very High)

	Speaking (I am capable of expressing myself)					**Writing (I am capable of writting in an organized and grammatically correct manner)**					**Reading (I am capable of understading written texts including their vocabulary, grammar and meaning)**					**Listening (I am capable of understanding spoken conversations or audios)**				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Algerian Arabic																				
Standard																				

Arabic																			
Berber																			
French																			
English																			
Other																			

Section 2: Language Practices

If you do not perform any of the following tasks, strikethrough the whole line.

6. Apart from Arabic, tick the language you use most for each of the following writing tasks.

	French	English	Other(s)
1. Academic writing			
2. Emails writing			
3. Online search (youtube or Google, for example)			
4. Social media posts			
5. Social media comments			
6. Diaries writing / personal writing			
7. Text messaging (for example, WhatsApp or Messenger)			

7. Explain your choices in the previous question.

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8. In addition to Algerian Arabic, which language you speak most in each of the following settings? Tick one language in every case.

	French	English	Other(s)
1. At university			
2. At home			
3. In shops			
4. At the doctor's office			
5. In a restaurant			
6. At the airport			
7. At the post office			

9. Explain your choices in the previous question

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10. In addition to Algerian Arabic, which language you speak most to each of the following interlocutors?

LANGUAGE SHIFT IN ALGERIA

	French	English	Other(s)
1. When communicating with your friends			
2. When talking to your parents			
3. When talking to strangers			
4. When talking to your siblings			
5. When talking to the extended family members			
6. When talking to your teachers			
7. When talking to a neighbor			

11. Explain your choices in the previous question

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12. In addition to Algerian Arabic, which language you speak most when discussing the following topics?

	French	English	Other(s)
1. Emotions			
2. Technology			

3. Diseases			
4. Religion			
5. Social issues			
6. Lifestyle and fashion			
7. Food			

13. Explain your choices in the previous question

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14. Apart from Arabic, tick the language you chose most for each of the following tasks.

	French	English	Other(s)
1. The default language of your Smartphone			
2. Watching TV shows or movies			
3. Listening to music or podcasts			
4. Counting			
5. Thinking			

6. Reading newspapers or books			

15. Explain your choices in the previous question

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Section 3: Language Perceptions

16. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements which target your views about the shift from French to English in the Algerian context.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Mastery of French is limited among my generation that is why shifting to English is a must.					
2. Discussing some topics (such as technology) necessitates the use of English terminology more than French.					
3. Competence in English is more					

important than competence in French because the majority of scholarly documents are written in English.					
4. I need to master English in order to publish research in renowned journals, but French does not guarantee that.					
5. Mastery of English more than French is a need in order to get job opportunities.					
6. English is a need not a luxury because it guarantees communication when traveling abroad but French does not.					
7. I wish that a shift to English takes place because I am more confident expressing my thoughts in English than in French.					
8. Since the older generations are taught and trained in French, it is hard for English to replace it.					
9. Reforming the Algerian administration to be English based is an easy task.					
10. Teaching all fields in English is a good initiative but, teachers spent their whole career teaching in French. It is hard for					

them to shift with success.					
11. French is not only a second language, it is part of the Algerian dialect. Consequently, English will not be able to attain the same status.					
12. Shifting to English is an important step but it would take a long time to realize.					
13. Since English is still not visible on TV and advertisement, it cannot replace French.					
14. A shift to English is complicated because French is associated with social prestige and intellectual advancement in Algeria.					
15. A shift to English opens the gate for tourism or betters the country's image.					
16. Due to globalization, English allows us to keep up with technological innovations and advancements.					
17. It is important to base higher education on English not French boosts the					

education standards and ranking of the country.					
18. Shifting to English attracts international investments in our country.					
19. A shift to English must occur because it signals the nation's desire for progress.					
20. It is important to shift to English because it allows our local businesses to become global.					
21. English strengths the country's international relationships.					

17. Feel free to add any final thoughts about your views towards the shift from French to English.

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Résumé

Cette étude examine l'évolution de la dynamique linguistique au sein de la génération Z algérienne, en se concentrant plus particulièrement sur le passage du français à l'anglais suite au mouvement Hirak. Adoptant une méthodologie mixte, l'étude combine des données quantitatives issues d'un questionnaire trilingue (arabe, français et anglais) et des données qualitatives issues de réponses ouvertes. L'échantillon de recherche est composé de 43 étudiants en première année de médecine de l'Université Larbi Tebessi de Tébessa. L'étude aborde deux questions principales : quels sont les usages fonctionnels de l'anglais par rapport au français chez la génération Z ? Et comment la génération Z perçoit-elle le passage du français à l'anglais ? Les résultats révèlent une préférence marquée pour l'anglais, motivée par des perceptions de modernité, d'opportunités internationales et d'avancement professionnel. Cependant, les étudiants reconnaissent également d'importants défis sociolinguistiques, institutionnels et générationnels qui entravent le remplacement complet du français. Les étudiants signalent que l'anglais est de plus en plus utilisé dans les contextes universitaires et numériques, tandis que le français reste ancré dans la communication institutionnelle et quotidienne. L'étude recommande d'élargir les recherches futures afin d'inclure des échantillons géographiques et disciplinaires plus larges, d'intégrer davantage de méthodes qualitatives et de s'attaquer aux biais académiques potentiels. Ces résultats contribuent aux discussions en cours sur la politique linguistique, l'identité et l'avenir du multilinguisme en Algérie.

Mots-clés : Algérie, anglais, français, génération Z, mouvement Hirak, attitudes linguistiques, glissement linguistique, multilinguisme

ملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تطور ديناميكيات اللغة لدى جيل Z في الجزائر، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على التحول من الفرنسية إلى الإنجليزية في أعقاب الحراك الشعبي. اعتمدت الدراسة تصميمًا بحثيًا متعدد المناهج، حيث جمعت بين البيانات الكمية من استبيان ثلاثي اللغات (العربية، الفرنسية، والإنجليزية) والرؤى النوعية من الإجابات المفتوحة. تتألف عينة البحث من 43 طالبًا في السنة الأولى بكلية الطب بجامعة العربي التبسي في تبسة. تتناول الدراسة سؤالين بحثيين رئيسيين: ما هي الاستخدامات الوظيفية للغة الإنجليزية مقارنةً بالفرنسية لدى جيل Z؟ وكيف ينظر جيل Z إلى التحول من الفرنسية إلى الإنجليزية؟ تكشف النتائج عن تفضيل ملحوظ للغة الإنجليزية، مدفوعًا بتصورات الحداثة والفرص الدولية والتقدم الوظيفي. ومع ذلك، يدرك الطلاب أيضًا وجود تحديات اجتماعية لغوية ومؤسسية وجيلية كبيرة تعيق استبدال اللغة الفرنسية بالكامل. أفاد الطلاب أن اللغة الإنجليزية تُستخدم بشكل متزايد في السياقات الأكاديمية والرقمية، إلا أن الفرنسية لا تزال راسخة في التواصل المؤسسي واليومي. توصي الدراسة بتوسيع نطاق البحث المستقبلي ليشمل عينات جغرافية وتخصصية أوسع، ودمج مناهج نوعية أكثر، ومعالجة التحيزات الأكاديمية المحتملة. تُسهم هذه النتائج في النقاشات الجارية حول السياسة اللغوية، والهوية، ومستقبل التعدد اللغوي في الجزائر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الجزائر، الإنجليزية، الفرنسية، الجيل Z، حركة الحراك، المواقف اللغوية، التحول اللغوي، التعدد اللغوي