



Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English

# MASTER THESIS

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Submitted and Defended by:

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## **Title**

**An Investigation into the Factors that Determine Language Choice in Multilingual Communities**

A Case Study of Foreign language learners at CEIL Chetma, Biskra

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Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Sciences of Language

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### **Declaration**

I, SAAD Tasnime, hereby declare that the current research is my own work and it has never been submitted to any institution or a university for a degree.

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### **Dedication**

Praise is to Allah who has granted me the power to accomplish this work.

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents, who supported me all the way through  
this journey.

To my dearest aunt.

To my siblings Nour El Yakine, Soujoud, Nabih, Rahaf and Mohdja

To all my friends and family.

Thanks for your endless love and support

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### **Abstract**

The current Algerian linguistic scene is diverse and complex. Due to historical, social and economical reasons, the Algerian community developed a rich linguistic situation with the existence of several languages namely; Algerian dialect with its varieties, Berber with its varieties, Standard Arabic, French and some other foreign languages. Accordingly, the current study explores the choice of language for people who speak more than one language in such multilingual environment. Through highlighting the factors that determine these choices. Therefore, a qualitative approach was adopted in this study. In relevance to this approach, we opted for two data collection tools. First, a questionnaire was distributed to foreign language learners in CEIL Chetma. In addition, we interview English foreign language teachers at University of Mohamed Kheider. The results indicated several factors that govern language choice in our community as such; social, economical and political factors. The finding also suggested a progress concerning the future of language choice in Algeria.

**Keywords:** multilingualism, language choice, the Algerian society, factors, Algeria.

### **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**AA:** Algerian Arabic

**CEIL:** Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des langues

**EFL:** English Foreign Language

**ENG:** English

**FR:** French

**Q:** Question

**R:** Respond

**RQ:** Research Question

**SA:** Standard Arabic

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# **General Introduction**

## **Introduction**

Multilingualism in Algeria is a hotly debated topic in sociolinguistics; the term multilingualism refers to the use of two or more languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community. The widespread of multilingualism contributes to the study of various related concepts as such; language choice.

Language choice refers to the choice made multilingual speakers in multilingual contexts. Whenever speakers of two or more language together, a decision has to be made about which of these languages to be used. There are several factors that affect such choice, hence; they may be thought that the factors determining the choice of language are few and simple, but such is not the case. Often the wrong choice could lead to several issues and conflicts. Accordingly, linguists' attention has been directed toward language choice and the factors that governs it in multilingual communities.

### **1. Statement of the Problem**

Historically, Algeria is known for being a homeland for several ethnicities and races. That was the reason for developing diversity in cultural, social, and linguistics fields (traditions, norms, ethics and languages).

Recently, the English language has made a significant appearance in the Algerian community; along with native speakers' languages (local Arabic, Tamazight), the standard Arabic as an official language and the wide use of French as the first foreign language. As a result, we find that Algerians acquire one or more languages with their native tongue, and the use of each language depends on different factors.

As a member of this multilingual society and as a student in the applied linguistics field, it seems interesting to investigate this sociolinguistic phenomenon. Thus, this study aims to

explore more the language choice in the Algerian society and how it occurs in this environment.

## **2. Research Questions**

**RQ1:** What are the factors that determine language choice in multilingual society?

**RQ2:** What is the future of language choice in Algeria?

## **3. Aims of the Study**

General aim:

The general aim of this study is to investigate a multilingual phenomenon, which is language choice in a multilingual environment.

Specific aims:

- a. Explore how individuals interact in multilingual communities.
- b. Identify the different factors that affect language choice for multilingual people.

## **4. Research Methodology**

### **4.1 Research Approach**

This research is a descriptive- analytical study; therefore, the qualitative approach is used for the purpose of investigating the case of language choice in multilingual situations in the Algerian community. Since we adopted the qualitative approach for this study, we used two different data collection methods. First, online questionnaire was distributed to foreign language learners at CEIL Chetma. Also, we used face to face interview for English foreign language teachers at Mohamed Khider University to know their point of view concerning the future of language choice in our society

## **4.2 Significance of the Study**

This research is up to observing a sociolinguistic phenomenon, which is multilingualism. Through this study, we will explore multilingualism in Algeria, the choice of language for people who speak more than one language in some multilingual environments, and the factors that determine their choice.

## **5. A Provisional Structure of the Dissertation**

This study consists of three chapters. The first two chapters are devoted to the theoretical part. Initially, the first chapter displays an overview about concepts related to language choice

### **CHAPTER 01**

This chapter provides an overview about language choice in multilingual communities through defining it, mentioning its importance and the factors that determine this choice.

### **CHAPTER 02**

Involve a deeper sight into multilingualism. Starting with, multilingualism and multilingual societies. Then, an overview about the Algerian linguistic diversity, reasons, major challenges, and how to benefit from it.

### **CHAPTER 03**

Is devoted to the discussion and analysis of the gathered data through two data collection methods: a questionnaire for multilingual individuals and an interview for foreign language teachers. To add credibility to the study, the researchers analyse both research instruments descriptively and this chapter presents the summary of the results.





# **Chapter One:**

# **Language Choice**

## Introduction

### 1.1 General Background

### 1.2 Language Varieties

#### 1.2.1 Bilingualism

#### 1.2.2 Multilingualism

#### 1.2.3 Code switching

### 1.3 Language and Policies Planning in Algeria

#### 1.3.1 Language policy eras in Algeria

#### 1.3.2 Language planning during the colonial period (1830 – 1962)

#### 1.3.3 The post-independence period: The Arabization era (1962 – late 1990)

#### 1.3.4 The period of reconciliation: the educational reforms (2000 – present)

### 1.4 Language Choice in Multilingual Settings

## Conclusion

## **Introduction**

This chapter will introduce few terms that are related to sociolinguistics, starting by general background of the Algerian linguistic situation, and then explaining few concepts as language varieties, bilingualism, multilingualism and code switching. Furthermore, the researchers will tackle Algeria's language planning through history. At the end, we will talk about the choice of language in a multilingual community mentioning few factors that determine it.

### **1.1. General Background**

Algeria as a North African country is known for its long unique history that developed its linguistic profile. This complex linguistic situation is varied due to several languages. Starting with Berber which represent 30% of the Algerian population (Chaker ,1997) its varieties i.e. Chaoui, Mzabi,..., the Algerian Arabic , standard Arabic as the official language of the country since 1962 , French due to more than a century of colonization, as well as the spread of the English language as the second foreign language.

### **1.2. Language Varieties**

The term language variety, in sociolinguistics, refers to any distinctive form of language or linguistic expression. This may include any subcategories of a language, dialect, register, styles, and accent. R.L. Trask (2005) argued that variation occurs in all aspects of language (including phonemes, morphemes, syntactic structures, and meaning). Variation in language use among speakers or groups of speakers is a notable criterion or change that may occur in pronunciation (accent), word choice (lexicon), as well as in grammar. Varieties of languages develop due to a number of reasons as contextual differences, geographical reasons and social classes.

### **1.2.1. Bilingualism**

Bilingualism is described as a speaker's ability to communicate using two languages. This description supports the definition explained by Grosjean (1982), He said, "Bilingualism is the regular use of two (or more) languages, and bilinguals are those people who need and use two (or more) languages in their everyday lives", however; there are different thoughts on who should be called as bilingual. On one hand Bloomfield (1933) who introduced the term native like, argue that an individual is a bilingual if he/she did reach a native-like control of one of both languages. On the other hand, Haugen (1953) suggests that bilingualism begins at the point where a speaker of one language is able to produce complete, meaningful utterances in other language. Other researchers even go further with describing the term bilingual as Macnamara (cited in Hamers& Blanc, 1983) who allows people with minimal competence in a second language to squeeze into the bilingual category. They argue that a bilingual is anyone who possesses a minimal competence in only one of four major skills; speaking, writing, reading and listening comprehension in a language other than his mother tongue.

### **1.2.2. Multilingualism**

Multilingualism is a complex phenomenon that can be studied from different perspectives such as in linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and education. The term multilingualism known as the ability of an individual or a community to communicate in more than two languages. Yet there is no specific decision about the level of proficiency that an individual need to achieve to be counted as multilingual. Wei (2008, p. 4) considers "anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading)" to be multilingual. Various studies in multilingualism pointed out factors influenced this phenomenon such as colonization, globalization, political, social and educational context (Cenoz, 2013).

Multilingualism is understood as " the presence in a geographical area, large or small, of more than one 'variety of language' . . . ; in such an area individuals may be monolingual, speaking only their own variety." (Cenoz, 2013). By this definition, and due to the existence of different language varieties namely Berber and its varieties, Arabic and its varieties and also the French language, Algeria is considered as a multilingual country.

### **1.2.3. Code switching**

Code switching (or language switching) occurs in bilingual or multilingual context. Romaine (cited in Makhtari 2018) defined code switching as "the use of more than one language, variety, or style by a speaker within an utterance or discourse, or between different interlocutors or situations". This phenomenon occurs when the speakers are capable of using more than one language in the same context easily to facilitate communication. Furthermore, Makhtari (2018) states that "switching between languages is a communicative option available to a bilingual member of a speech community, on much the same basis as switching between styles or dialects is an option for the monolingual speaker"

There are several reasons for language switching. First, the lack of proficiency in a specific language. Also, people tend to switch codes in order to avoid misunderstanding since certain concepts are better to explain in a certain language. Lastly, the nature of the topic could trigger someone to use certain language subconsciously (Torto 2011) in order to express his thoughts effectively.

### **1.3. Language and Policies Planning in Algeria**

Language policy makers in Algeria have seen foreign languages as a tool to educational and technological development, as well as economic prosperity. Since independence, Algeria's language policies have gone through several phases due to historical, political and social events.

### **1.3.1. Language policy eras in Algeria**

Algerian history consists of three main phases that affected language policies. According to Baghzou(2017) the first phase was during the French colonial period. The latter adopted an assimilation policy to the country by imposing the French language and culture upon the Algerian society, and Arabic was marginalized. The next phase lasted from 1960 to the late 1990, the government adopted what was called the Arabization policy by generalizing Arabic to all spheres of the Algerian society. This era also introduced English for the first time to the Algerian educational system. The third phase was shaped by the consequences of the previous one specially the sociopolitical instability late 1990. During this period, starting from early 2000, the Algerian linguistic profile has seen some major changes; the conflict between the French and the English language with French being the first foreign language for the country, establishing Berber as an official language, with less assertive Arabization policy.

### **1.3.2 Language planning during the colonial period (1830 – 1962)**

Algeria's educational system prior to the French settlement, consists of two types of institutions: Quranic primary schools, known as Masjid, where young pupils were taught to read, write, and memorize the Quran, Quoranic secondary schools known as Zaouia or Madrassa where instructors teach Arabic language and literature as well as some basics of Islamic law.

Algeria was well known throughout the world as a French colony between 1830 and 1962. The colonizer wanted to put an end the use of Arabic during this period. As a result, the colonial authorities imposed strict language policies that weakened and marginalized Arabic whereas French became the sole language of administration and instruction (Ennaji, 1997).

During this period, France's general educational policy was to spread the French language as a national and official language (Murphy, 1977 cited in Baghzou2017),Hence all community schools, where Arabic was taught, were closed and Arabic was introduced as a second language in some schools (Ezzaki and Wagner, 1992). Its application was widespread throughout Algerian society.

In this regard, Gordon states that "When the Portuguese colonized, they built churches; when the British colonized, they built trading stations, when the French colonize, and they build schools" (Gordon 1962, p.7). He sums up the French strategy that was based on promoting education for maintaining its long time existence.

### **1.3.3. The post-independence period: The Arabization era (1962 – late 1990)**

Unsurprisingly, Algeria adopted an Arabic policy to recover its pre-colonial past and asserting the country's Arab-Islamic identity. The policy of linguistic Arabization firstly introduced by the first Algerian president in 1962. The French language gradually decreased and the Arabic teaching become obligatory in all programmed and all levels. Arabization policy succeed spreading in most of the state sectors especially during Boumediene presidency (1965-1978). Hayane (1989) pointed out that, despite the claims of political sovereignty; Algeria relied greatly on France in several sectors, as in science and technology, also this era witnessed a bilingual education. While Arabic was used for teaching the Social sciences, French was for science and mathematics. Furthermore, the English language first appearance into the educational system was in 1969.

Two main sociopolitical events have affected the Arabization era mainly in education. First, the economic-liberal policy (1980-1991). Arabic continue to be the main language of instruction, French re-instated as the first foreign language taught in fourth grade of primary school and English taught in middle school. The British Council's 1984 report, a



comprehensive sociolinguistic profile of English in Algeria described English as a third language. Hence, during this time, more English departments were established in universities, as well as the creation and publication of Algerian-made English language teaching textbooks and learning materials. Second, the Algerian civil war (1991-1999). Some important events took place during this period. Arabic was re-confirmed in the 1996 Constitution as the 'only' national and official language, and that by law it had to be generalized and used in all state sectors January 16, 1991 article 04 .The Berber language proponents criticized this law considering Arabization as an undemocratic policy that neglected the minority language, namely Berber (Congres Mondial Amazigh, 1997). Another remarkable event was the introduction of the English language in primary school in 1993. Although, it did not last for a long time, but it was seen by experts as a significant shift in the Algerian foreign language education (Benrabah, 1999).

#### **1.3.4. The period of reconciliation: the educational reforms (2000 – present)**

Upon the selection of Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, series of political and economic reforms were lunched to the purpose of reconciliation. Including language education policies, which the government consider as an essential element to political and economic prosperity (Toualbi-Thaalibi & Tawil, 2006). As far as foreign languages is concerned, French is re-instated as the first foreign language for the country was taught in r3d year of primary school and established as the language of higher education and sciences , and English in first year of middle schools ( Baghzou, 2017 ).

In order to regain its political and social stability in addition to its multilingual identity, the government established the Berber as an official language in 2002. Mokhtar (2018 ) states that "the new Algerian Constitution represents a historical turn in that it acknowledges Berber as a national language and as an integral part of the unified Algerian linguistic and cultural identity. Article 3a (adopted April 10, 2002)".

To sum up the Arabization policy has succeeded at schools, i.e. replacing French. However, local varieties, i.e. Algerian Arabic, Berber and their varieties are still the main means of communication in the Algerian society.

#### **1.4. Language choice in multilingual settings**

Multilingual speakers are continually making choices as what language to use in a given settings and with whom (Duranti, 1997) he also added that dialect choice depends on the realization of the capacities of the speakers. On the other hand, Scholars have identified a number of factors which they believe influence language choice and language. Fishman (2000), argued that language speakers tend to link certain languages to specific domains. For example, the language used at home or in one's neighborhood may differ from the language used at school or at work. Language choice also could be influenced by the topic under discussion. "Certain subjects are some way or another dealt with way better in one dialect than in another, in specific multilingual contexts" (Fishman, 2000). Other scholars suggested that speakers have an impact on language choice and that may be connected to their age or gender differences (Lawson cited in Genemo, 2021).

#### **Conclusion**

This chapter covered some major points related to language varieties, multilingualism and code switching. In addition, those multilinguals tend to code switch due to several reasons. In addition, we shed the lights on Algeria's language policies, and the main eras of language planning since independence as well as how that effected the Algerian sociolinguistic situation. This chapter concludes with defining the term language choice and identifying the major factors that determines it.

# **Chapter Two: Multilingualism**

## Introduction

### 2.1. Multilingual Communities

#### 2.1.1. Major challenges

#### 2.1.2. Example to multilingual countries:

##### a. Canada

### 2.2. Benefits of Multilingualism

#### 2.2.1. In education:

#### 2.2.2. In economics:

### 2.3. History of Linguistic Diversity in Algeria

#### 2.3.1. Standard Arabic

#### 2.3.2. Berber

#### 2.3.3. French

#### 2.3.4. Algeria Arabic

## Conclusion

## **Introduction**

This chapter attempts to provide an overview about multilingual communities and highlighting the challenges that may occur in a multilingual countries. In addition, it mentions the benefits of being in multilingual community. Moreover, it introduces the history of few major languages in the Algerian linguistic scene.

### **2.1. Multilingual Communities**

The notion of multilingualism rests on the assumption that languages (and related concepts such as varieties, dialects, accents, etc.) can be identified, without this assumption there would be no sense in distinguishing multilingual from monolingual communities. We cannot determine how many languages exist in an area, however; we can account some factors that lead to the spread of this concept.

Many of the languages catalogued today are the outcome of colonization (the colonial powers imposed their language on the local population). Ech-charfi (2019) states that the European colonization in North Africa has brought different foreign languages to the area such as English, French, Spanish and Italian. Economic, globalization and the wide use of the internet are also associated with the spread of languages especially English. Warschauer, El Said, and Zohry (2002) argue that these factors create a strong demand for an international lingua franca, thus English presence as a global language. In other cases, immigration could be a factor to multilingualism. According to Cenoz (2013), immigrants who speak their first language(s) as well as the language(s) of the host countries are a representation of multilingualism. Additionally, language policies control the existence of languages in a country. Giroux ( 2001, p. 3 ) professes that

Teaching and learning are profoundly political at every moment of the circuit: in the conditions of production (who produces knowledge? For whom?), in the knowledges and knowledge forms themselves (knowledge to what agenda? Used for what?),

their publication, circulation, and accessibility, their professional and popular uses, and their impacts on daily life.(p. 3)

Last but not least, people tend to learn the language that associated with their religion. The main example is the spread of the Arabic language due to the Islamic empire. The Islamic education introduced the Arabic language through teaching religious topics, memorizing Quran and teaching history. (Ennaji, 2005)

### **2.1.1. Major challenges**

It is accepted as a fact that there are not as many countries as there are languages. There are more than four thousand languages in the world whereas; the number of countries is less than two hundred. Thus multilingualism is indeed a common phenomenon and most countries must have different language groups within its borders ( Extra 2007). Despite the fact that there have been numerous studies and debates on the prevalence of multilingualism, it can be both a problem and a resource. Multilingualism is challenging at both the individual and social levels.

Initially, linguistic standardization often arise issues in multilingual societies. While it delivers benefits in terms of increasing trade, improving economic performance and reducing social conflicts, language standardization may also promote or prohibit regional and minority languages and brings up the problem of linguistic disenfranchisements, introduced by Ginsburgh and Weber " disenfranchisements arises as a result of imposing restrictions on the linguistic rights of different linguistic groups" (2005). In other words it is the elimination and the restriction of the use of a language. For example, the United States has implemented various restrictive language policies: California eliminating Spanish language by the rewrote of its constitution in 1879, as indirect way to exclude Italians and Slavs, Pennsylvania made English proficiency a condition of employments in its coalmines in 1897, also during the World War 1 the German language was banned due to security concerns from schools,

streets, for religious contexts, and even over the telephone. ( Crawford cited in Jan, Ginsburgh & Weber, 2005).

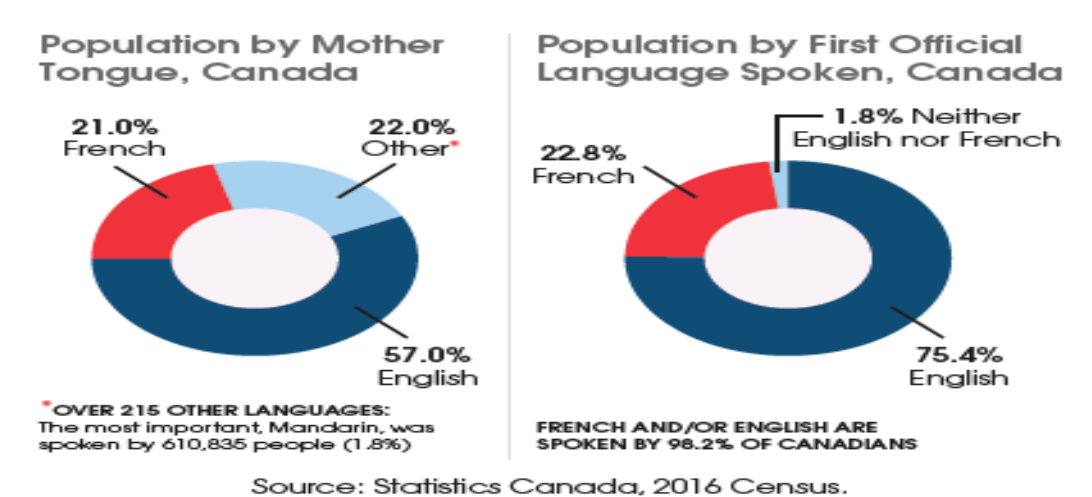
In other cases, language policies may lead to violent conflicts and movements of separation, due to wider use of ex-colonial languages ( as the case of some African and south Asian countries) rather than promoting and standardizing their native languages. The last may suffer from language lost or language death ( Mishina, 2020). Since languages are considered as not only a tool of communication, but at the same time as an act of identity ( Creese & Blackledge, 2010) speakers of this languages may feel less connected and magnitude to their societies.

### 2.1.2.Examples to multilingual countries:

Language plays a crucial role in the establishment and preservation of countries. It is a representation of the population's identity. Thus, it is considered as a tool for uniting people or dividing them. Canada is interesting example for countries that succeed in implying multilingualism as a vehicle for unity and development.

#### b. Canada

The linguistic scene in Canada diverse with French and English as official languages in addition to several mother tongues. The picture bellow illustrates the population of these languages, indicating three different language groups with English being the dominant.



**Figure 2.1:** distribution of languages in Canada

This richness and variety evolved over history. Canada has welcomed different people with different origins and linguistic backgrounds, including Europeans from French and British colonists, as well as Indians and Eskimo as the natives of the land.

Monolingualism's 'ideology' is precisely transparent and plain, unworthy of comment or critique, and thus impervious to the ascriptions of racism, nationalism, purism, and elitism often leveraged at beliefs about language. Ginsburgh p. 40

In that sense, the Canadian's language policy makers count on several acts to ensure effective bilingualism in the country. Tribet (2020) argue that the establishment of Canada's bilingual framework was the official language act of 1969 and 1988 ( the first one made English and French the official languages of Canada, and the last provides the English and French are the official languages in courts).

The changes in immigrations' laws in 1960s contributed (static Canada 6) increasing the number of immigrants from all over the world as such; middle east, Asia, Latin America and Africa. As a result, these changes enhance cultural and linguistic diversity in the land. In the same sense, to promote social and political harmony, Canada adopted schooling in minorities' languages. However, they still have French or English as a second language. (Cnigolani 2014)

Churchill ( 2003) noted that " the public opinion polls also show that language communities steadily support official bilingualism " in other words, language policies in Canada helped promoting social relationships and political stability.



## **2.2. Benefits of Multilingualism**

People who are able to use more than one language have the opportunity to strengthen their social relationships, communicating to a larger number of people, more opportunities for employment and trade. This positive appraisal of bilingualism was supported by Diamond (2010) saying that bilingualism brings with it many advantages

### **2.2.1. In education**

Early studies about multilingualism suggested that the acquisition of two languages at the same time in early ages has a negative impacts on children. indeed, Smith (1923) referred to bilingual acquisition as ' the problem of the bilingual child'. Scholars as Yoshioka also argued that ' bilingualism in young children is a hardship and devoid of apparent advantage ' (1923, p. 479). Thus, the feasibility of these studies has been questioned (Antoniou 2019) since they failed to take into consideration the participants' status, age, and degree of bilingualism.

By contrast, other researchers demonstrated bilingualism as an advantage. A study by Peal& Lambert (cited in Antoniou 2019) about bilingualism and cognitive advantages, found that bilingual children outperformed monolinguals in not only non verbal tests but also in some verbal intelligence tests. Moreover, bilingual children had better executive control and working memory. Morals et al (2013) proved this claim using the frog matrices task. In this task, children needed to remember the location of the frog. The results shows a prominent working memory advantage for 5 to 7 years old bilingual children, where they were able to indicate the location as well as the order of the locations. Furthermore, being a bilingual means that languages are always activated to a certain degree, are constantly interacting and influencing each other, also managing different linguistic repertoires will lead to a cognitive benefits, meta-linguistic awareness and creative thinking (Antoniou, 2019 ).

Enhancing multilingual education relies on both informal and formal multilingual practices. First, parents encouraging their children acquiring two languages by constantly speaking different languages at home, gives them the opportunity to be fluent in two home languages with the ability to learn a third or fourth language ( Okal, 2014). Furthermore, institutional FL education focuses on linguistics, grammar, socio-cultural and drama ( Okal, 2014) will help learners develop their communicative skills and enrich their cultural knowledge.

### **2.2.2. In economics**

The advantages that multilinguals have over monolinguals are not restricted exclusively to the linguistic domain, but also include cognitive, social, personal, academic, and professional benefits. (Lorenz, Baker, Verma, Corrigan, & Eirth, 1996)explain that multilinguals develop better communicative skills than bilinguals, they report lower levels of anxiety and their self confidence has grown accordingly. Foreign languages skills are increasingly viewed as an economic advantage for individual employability, companies competitive ( Gazzola, 2016, p.19 ). Phillipson praises the role of languages in economic prosperity by promoting foreign language learning as Chinese, French, Japanese, and Spanish as the most used languages in trade and multinational companies (2012). Gazzola (2016) also pointed out, the presence of migrants and different languages ( native language(s) of the migrants in addition to the language(s) of the host country) will certainly increases trade among countries. Additionally, multilingualism provides a competitive edge for job seekers. Besides the academic and professional credentials, fluency in more than one language develop someone's communicative skills. He would be able to communicate better with more costumers with different linguistic background as well as with his co workers in several multilingual contexts. Hence, multilingualism opens opportunities in various careers. ( Paradowski, 2011)

## 2.3. History of Linguistic Diversity in Algeria

Algeria is a pertinent example of a multilingual country, its linguistic scene characterized of four major languages; Algerian Arabic and its varieties, Berber and its varieties, Standard Arabic and French. Such rich linguistic resource developed due to several events.

### 2.3.1. Standard Arabic

The introduction of the Arabic language in Algeria was with the Islamic empire in the seventh century. The Arabic language spread progressively, and more Berbers abandoned their mother tongue to become Arabophones (Julien ,1994). The spread of language also came due educational establishments as Zaoui, the Islamic empire encouraged education and Islamic studies as such; the Arabic language, Fiqqeh, Sunna ( Ennaji 2005). Additionally, in 1962 the Algerian government adopted an Arabization policy to reset the linguistic situation after the French colonization. The policy aimed to gradually remove the French language and link the country to its Arabic Islamic identity. ( Baghzou, 2017)

### 2.3.2. Berber

Berber is the most ancient varieties that exists in north Africa, according to Ennaji, there is more than 6 million Berber speakers in Algeria ( cited in Ghoul, 2013). There are four major Berber varieties that exist all over the country. Kabyle in the northern part, Chaoui is spoken in the eastern parts, Mzabi and Tamahaq are spoken in the center and southern parts of the land (Kitouni & Aliouch, 2016). This language was consider as a national language in 2002 then in 2016 as an official language, which was the starting point for official bilingual Algeria.

### 2.3.3. French

The French makes its appearance into the Algerian linguistic scene during the colonization. The French government imposed assimilation strategies to realize their ' civilization mission'. First, they eradicated the Arabic language and spread their language to dominate the country. This was done through introducing the French educational system in the Algerian schools. In addition to language, the French has influenced the Algerian society in several aspects; some of these aspects still exist till today. ( Ghoul, 2013 )

Eveno (1994) states

"In fact, a lot of Algerians have some notions of French, receive French programmes by television and have relationships with emigrants setting in French. On another hand, a lot of teachers and institutions learn in French and French universities still accept Algerians."

In other world, the existence of the French language is everywhere starting from our daily products to our daily conversations. Balta (1982) also added " Algeria is the second most francophone nation in the world" ( cited Kitouni & Aliouch 2016)

#### 2.3.4. Algerian Arabic

Algerian Arabic is the language of the vast majority of the population. It is a mixture of several languages including Berber, French, Arabic, Spanich, Turkish,... Algerian Arabic(AA) or also called Colloquial or Darja, differs from region to another. We can identify three major varieties; eastern, western, and central. Mokhtar (2018) noted that " It is a Colloquial Arabic used for everyday-life situations and all interpersonal interactions. It is unwritten although one might encounter an informal written text in the Arabic script". AA is used in informal contexts however; it could be used for advertising , in TV shows or radio podcasts.

#### 2.3.5. English

The English language was first introduced in the Algerian educational system in 1969. In order to replace French as the dominant foreign language in the country, the government decided to "Algerianise" the English textbooks and teaching methods ( Mize 1978). Thus, due to economical impacts Algerian youth's awareness of the unique global position of English has increased significantly since the 2004 ( Benrabeh, 2014) .

### **Conclusion**

This chapter was an attempt to review multilingualism and multilingual communities. Initially, it introduced multilingual communities and Canada as a famous example. Also we presented the challenges and benefits of multilingualism. Moreover, we briefly discussed the main languages in the Algerian linguistic scene.



**Chapter Three: Data  
Analysis and Research  
Findings**

## Introduction

### 3.1 Research Methodology

#### 3.1.1 Research Approach

#### 3.1.2 Data Collection Methods

### 3.2 Foreign language learners' Questionnaire

### 3.3 Teachers' Interview

### 3.4 Population and Sampling Technique

### 3.5 Questionnaires analysis

### 3.6 Interview Analysis

### 3.7 Summary and Synthesis

## Conclusion

## **Introduction**

The current chapter deals with the fieldwork and the collected data analysis. Initially, this chapter will present the theoretical background for the selected methodology components namely; research approach, data collection method, data analysis procedures and sampling techniques. Moreover, it presents the analysis of the collected data followed by discussion of the findings to answer the research questions.

### **3.1. Research Methodology**

The present section attempts to discuss the theoretical background regarding the research methodology. It aims to define the research approach, population and sampling techniques, as well as the data collection methods.

#### **3.1.1. Research approach**

Research approach on its general sense, is the theoretical framework that it used for a particular study. Therefore, this study opted for a qualitative approach in order to explore the factors that determine language choice in Algeria. According to Craswell "a qualitative approach is an approach for exploring and understanding 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" (2018, p.41). Dornyei (2007) also added that qualitative approach involves descriptive data collecting methods and that its results are open- ended with non-numerical data. (p.24)

#### **3.1.2. Data collecting methods**

For gathering the required data to answer the research questions, the researcher adopted two data collection tools. On one hand, a questionnaire was distributed to CEIL



Chetma learners. The researcher opted for it to obtain the participants languages and their perceptions and attitude about language use. Taking into consideration the participants level of English, the questionnaire was translated. On the other hand, we interviewed 5 EFL teachers at Biskra University to obtain their feedback and point of view towards multilingualism and the future of foreign languages in our country.

### **3.2. Population and Sampling**

The population of this study were foreign language learners in CIEL Chetma. Such choice is justified by the fact that those student are already acquiring more than one language in addition to their mother tongue. Therefore, a sample of 60 out of 5000 students were chosen purposely using the purposive sampling techniques because we selected non-random sample based on the researchers' knowledge about the population and the objective of the study.

### **3.3. Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed to 60 language learners aged between 15 to 30 so that we can better understand the linguistic situation in our community and how Algerians communicate in their everyday lives.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections

- a. Section one: general information (gender, age and educational level)
- b. Section two: information about the linguistic background of the participants. On which we seek to know what languages do they know, at what age did they learnt it and where in addition to degree of proficiency.

c. Section three: language choice , this section meant to investigate what language do people use and in which context.

### **3.4. Teachers' Interview**

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with five EFL teachers in order to gather data about language learning in our society. Kothari (2004), "...involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. This method can be used through personal interviews and, if possible, through telephone interviews" (p.97). Consequently, the researchers opted for this qualitative instrument and the responses were recorded via smartphone, filtered, and analyzed.

### **3.5. Data Analysis Procedures**

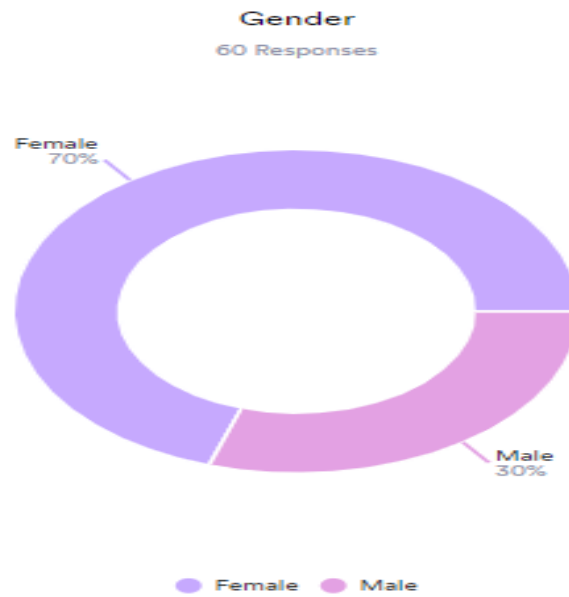
In this descriptive qualitative research, we rely on descriptive, interpretive approach for our data analysis. The following section will display the results gathered from the pre-mentioned data collection methods.

#### **3.5.1. Questionnaire analysis**

##### **Section one: general information**

This section aimed to gather information about the responds' gender, age, level of education

##### **Item 01: Gender**



**Graph3.1:** participants' gender distribution

The above graph demonstrates the distribution of gender in our sample. As it is shown, out of 60 respondent 70% (42) were females; whereas, 30% (18) of them were males. This question was used to set the ground for the upcoming questions concerning language use in order to know whether gender is one of the factors that affect language choice.

**Item 02:** participants' age

Data	Response	Percentage%
20 to 30	41	68%
15 to 20	14	23%
Above 30	5	8%

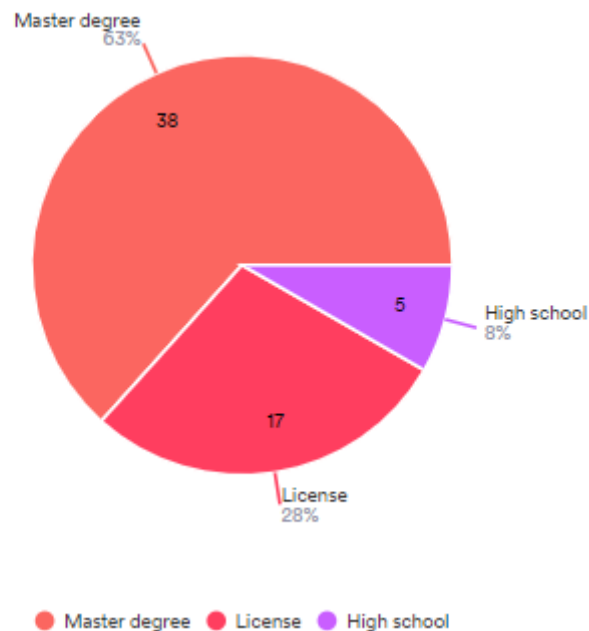
**Table 3.1:** participants' age

The results in **Table 3.1** show diversity in the participants' age. However, the majority(68%) are between 20 to 30 years old. The findings reveal that the majority of foreign language

learners are between the age 15 to 30. This results will also help in the upcoming questions concerning language choice.

### **Item 03:** educational level

This question used to set to reveal the participants level of education and whether it does affect their language choice.



**Figure 3.2:** Educational level

As indicated in **figure(3.2)**, the majority of the respondents were master students (63%), License degree represents (17%) of the respondents. And then high school with (8%).

### **Section two: information about languages/ dialects**

This section aims to display data about languages in our community. The participants were asked to insert information about the languages they speak, the age where they first learned it and place. Additionally, they were asked to evaluate their level of proficiency.

**Item 01: languages****a. First language dialect**

<b>Mother tongue</b>	<b>Number (N)</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Algerian Arabic</b>	49	81.6%
<b>Berber</b>	11	18.3%

**Table 3.2:** First language/dialect

The table demonstrates the results about respondents' mother tongue. It is clearly observed that the participants were introduced to only one of the two languages either Algerian Arabic or Berber. The results show that the majority were from Arabic background ( 81.6 %); whereas only 18% learned Berber as their mother tongue.

**Item 02: second language**

<b>First language</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
<b>Standard Arabic (SA)</b>	5 to 6	school	58	96.6
<b>Algerian Arabic (AA)</b>	Not identified	Home/ neighborhood	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>			60	100

**Table 3.3:** second language

The table above revealed that SA was the majority's second language. Since, it is the official language for schooling they admit they first learned it in schools. However, 2 out 60 said that their 2<sup>nd</sup> language to learn was AA . Relying on their answer about 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> language, they were raised in multilingual environment where Berber and AA exist. Accordingly they learned Berber, AA than SA.

**Item 03:** 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> language

Language	N	Age	Place
French	58	7/8	Primary school

**table 3.4:** 3<sup>rd</sup> language

Language	N	Age	Place
English	60	11/10	Middle school

**Table 3.5:** 4<sup>th</sup> language

asking about the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> language, the answers was about FR and ENG. Based on our results, the respondents revealed French as a 3<sup>rd</sup> language and English as the 4<sup>th</sup>. The majority affirmed that they first learned these languages in school. French at the age of 8/7/, whereas; English at the at the age of 11.

**Item 04:** other foreign languages

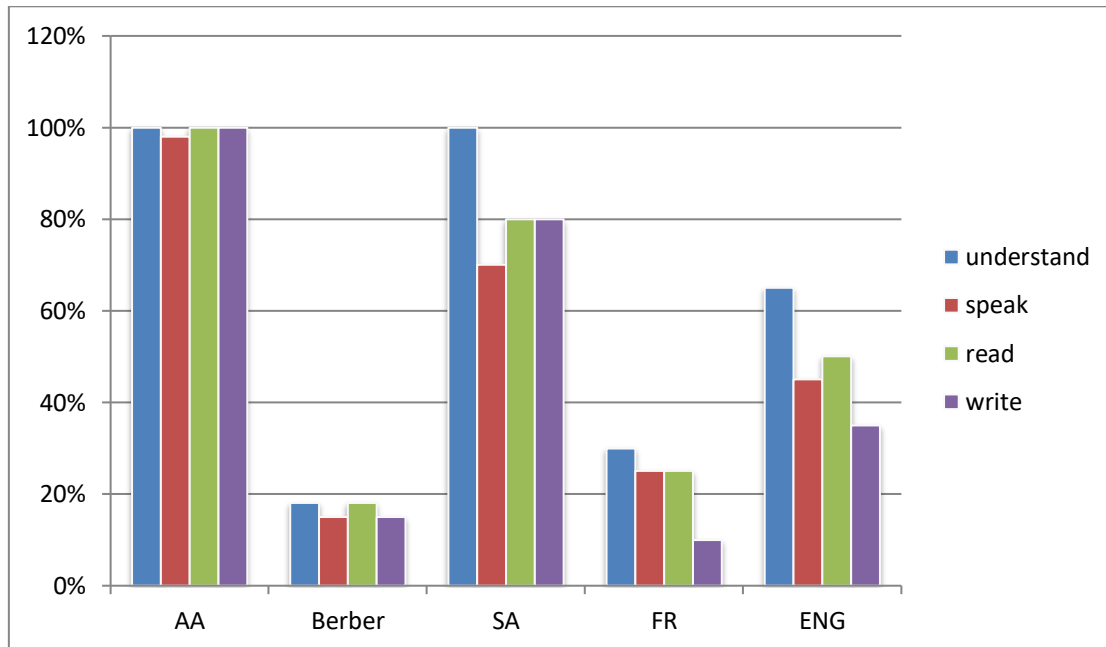
Languages	N	Place
Spanish	8	High school/ NET/ private school
Dutch	1	Private school
Korean	2	Movies/private school
Japanese	1	Anime/online
Others	3	Online

**Table 3.6:** other foreign languages

only 15 participants fill this question. The results diverts. In addition to their mother language (s). 8 revealed that Spanish was their 4<sup>th</sup> language while 5 learned it in high school as an option in foreign language branch. Others (3) admit that they learned it from the

Internet or private schools. Additionally, the data shows few other languages as Korean (2) , Dutch (1) , Japanese(1) and 3 did not specify.

**Item 05: proficiency**



**Figure 3.4: proficiency**

The results demonstrate full proficiency in mother tongue. However, surprisingly the participants did not consider themselves fully fluent in Standard Arabic although, it is the official language for the country and used in all academic, official papers. Such results refer to their choice of language, since SA is only used inside the classroom; they did not develop better skills in it.

Next, foreign language ( basically French and English as the results show). First, proficiency in French only 25% believed they understand it and were not competent in other skills. However, the fluency percentages were somehow higher in English. As more than 60% of the participants believed they do understand, speak, read English better. Analyzing this data

reveals that people are more interested in the English language than French due to the fact that English is a lingua franca that everyone seeks to learn.

**Item 04:** other languages that are used where you live/ work but which you don't know.

This question sought to determine the participants' interests in learning the languages which exist in their environment.

Responses	Frequency	%
No	46	76.6%
Berber	8	13.3%
French	6	10%

**Table 3.7:** learning language which exist in the participants' environment

As it is clearly observed from the table above, the frequent answer is NO. The respondents claimed that they already familiar with different languages in their community. Alternatively, they think that they need to improve their level in foreign languages for better job opportunities. However, the results show that 8 participants are interested in learning Berber. Those people are already interacting with Berbers in their society and learning the language will enhance their social relationships. Additionally, 6 respondents deemed that they are not able to understand nor interact using French. Giving the fact that French is a common language in our community, people tend to use it frequently in different contexts.

### **Section three: language choice**

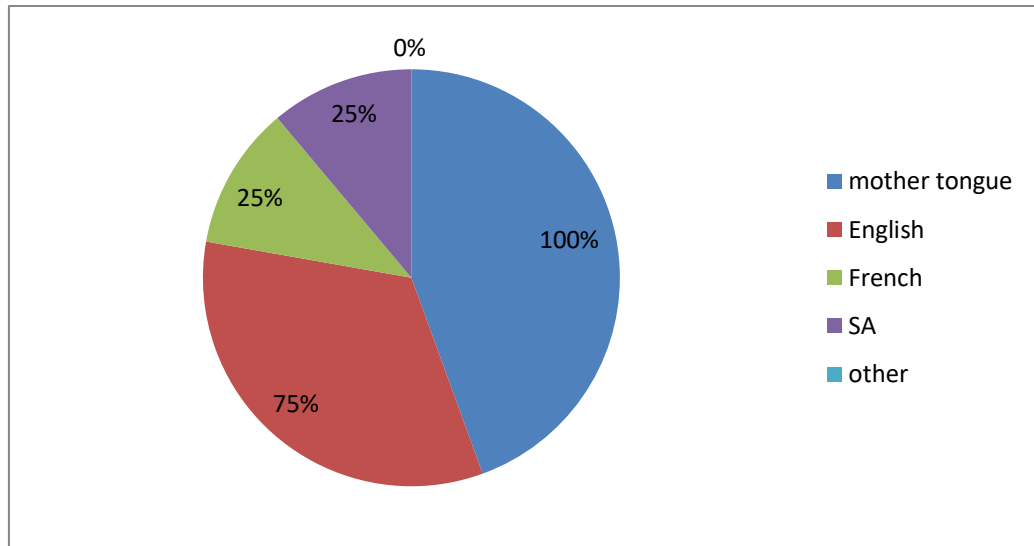
This section is designed to have an insight on language use among our participants. Which languages do they use usually and for what contexts. Accordingly, they were asked about how often do they use certain languages. Also, in a given situations which languages do they use.



**Item 01:** in a given day, which languages do you use at what percent.

The options are:

Less than 25%    25%    50%    100%

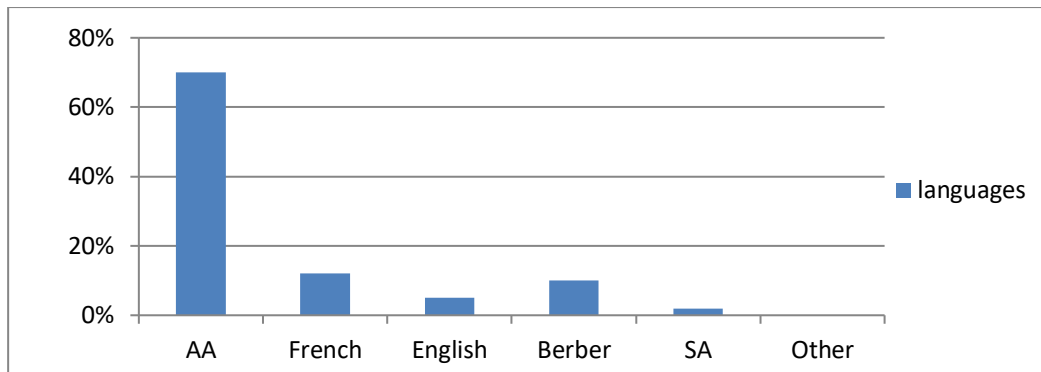


**Figure 3.5:** language use

The graph above shows that respondents give top rank to AA (81.6%) as the most used language in their daily lives. Whereas, 11 % affirm that Berber is used more. English is used next as our respondents assumed(75%). French and SA are used less ( 25% only) lastly, they ranked other foreign languages last as the less using.

**Item 02:** which languages do use in the following activities.

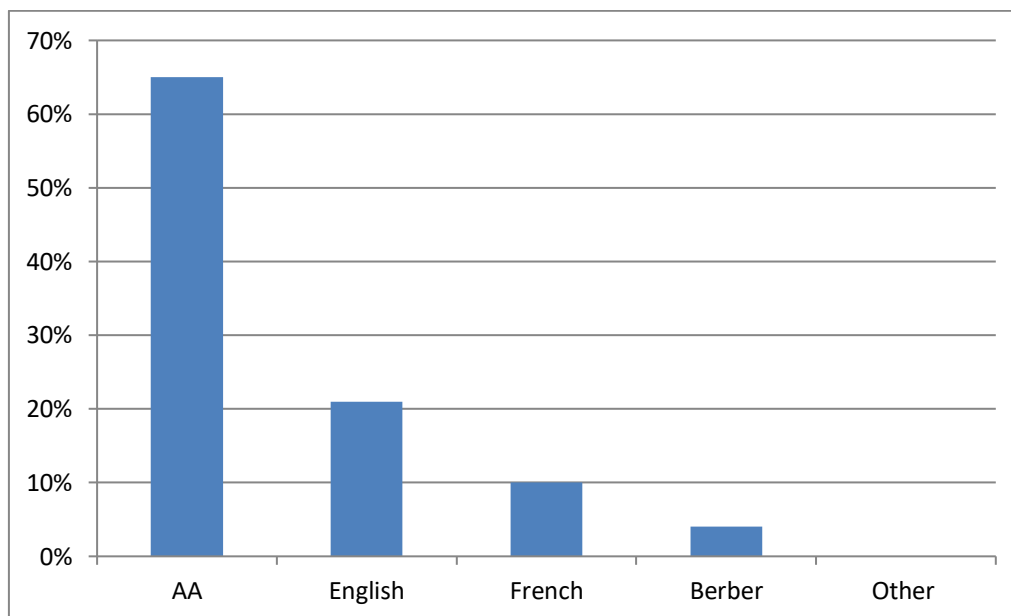
- With family



**Figure 3.6:** which language do you use with family

The majority of respondents (71%) revealed that they use AA the most with their families. French is used by (12%), English as well is used by 5% with their families, 10 % admit the use of Berber and lastly SA 2% only revealing using it often. 0 scores to 'other'.

- Chatting with friends

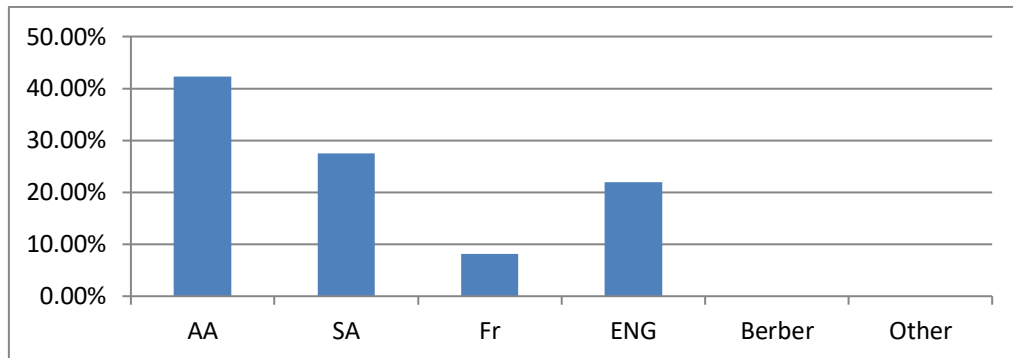


**Figure 3.7:** language used with friends

As it is observed in this figure, the majority of participants (65%) uses AA when chatting with their friends considering it is the majority's mother tongue. English represents

(21%) of the participants' results, French comes after with 10% and lastly Berber with only 4%.

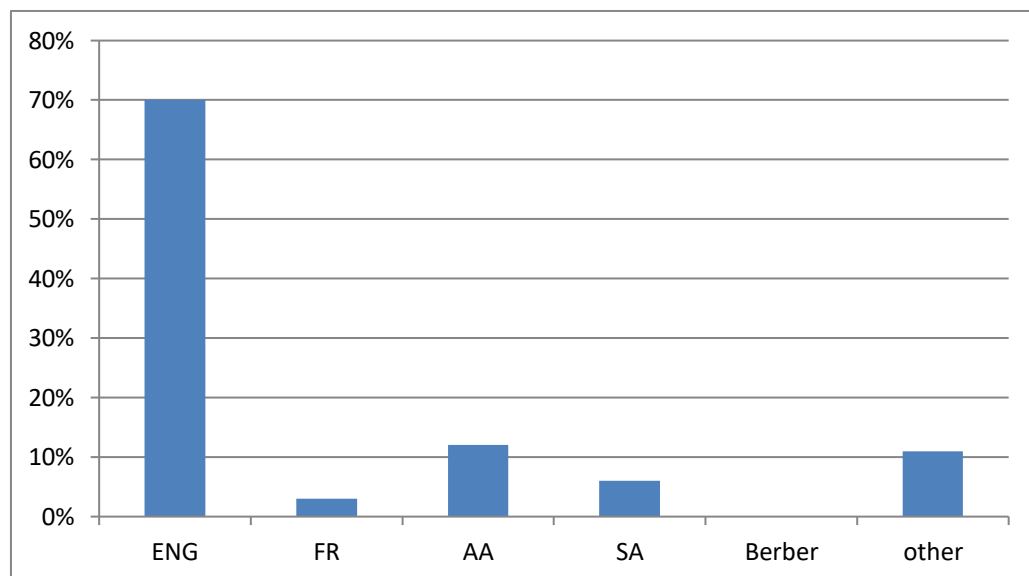
- Reading on the internet



**Figure 3.8:** language used while reading on the internet

The graph above demonstrates that most of our participants (42.3%) rely on AA when reading on the internet. Whereas, SA is used by (27%), English comes after by (22%) and last French by 7%. 0 score for both Berber and other languages.

- Listening to radio, watching TV or movies



**Figure 3.9:** language used when listening to radio, watching TV or movies

A quick look on the graph shows that (68%) of the respondents choose English as the most used language for listening to radio, watching TV or a movie. AA comes after with

12%, then with 11% our participants goes with other languages as their choice for the giving activity. Moreover, SA scores (6%) and ( 3%) for FR. Berber was not among the participants' choice.

- For religious purposes

Languages	N	Percentage%
SA	38	63.3
AA	22	36.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.8: religious purposes**

The results revealed that the majority ( 63.3%) uses SA in their religious contexts, and AA was the choice of 36.6%. 0 scores for other varieties.

- Writing emails, or reading for work

Apparently, the results differs depending on the participants fields of study

Languages	N	Percentage%
ENG	30	50
FR	22	36.6
SA	5	8.3
Other	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.9: language used in writing email or reading for work**

As shown in the table, 50% of the participants relay on ENG to write their emails and read for work. While 36.6% uses FR, SA is used by 5%, and (5%) do use other Foreign languages.

### 3.5.2. Teachers' Interview analysis

**Q01:** Do you consider Algeria as a multilingual country?

**R:** *All respondents agreed on the fact that Algeria is a multilingual country*

**Q02:** what do you think about bilingual education?

**R1:** *I am for, back when we used bilingual education we were better in terms of language competence and academic knowledge specially scientific modules.*

**R2:** *With English-Arabic bilingualism especially. As English is the language of science*

**R3:** *I believe it would be beneficial. As the majority of scientific branches in University using French or English for higher education. It would give advantage for the students.*

**R4:** *Not really, I assume that the new generation need to develop their competence in our official language first I mean Arabic. So, in order to include another language we must take that into consideration.*

**R5:** *With... However, I don't see it would be applicable for many reasons. Political, social, education.*

**Q03:** What do you think about the future of language in our country?

**R1:** *Not sure, I can never assume something in this country ... We've been through different linguistic phases. Due to political, social, economic factors.*

**R2:** *I like to be optimistic. That why, I believe we will have a bright future with more diversities.*

**R3:** *The new generation seem interested in learning languages. I hope our government embraces this energy and uses it. Also, if we had good teaching syllabuses, believe Me, good*

*syllabuses, good training for teacher, will improve the linguistic situation in our country. But till now it is not very promising.*

**R4:** *We should agree first on the fact that a lot of people are learning foreign languages, specially English. My assumption are based on the number of learners in Ceil for example and private schools. Honestly, I assume it is just trend. I could be wrong. But yeah... It would bring them a lot of job opportunities.*

**R5:** *Yes, bright future I guess... we already have French and English. Our government seems more open, encouraging foreign languages.*

**Q04:** *What do you think about our society's viewpoint towards foreign languages?*

**R1:** *People will usually said yes, they are ' with' learning and teaching their kids foreign languages, but in reality it is just the opposite.*

**R2:** *They are open to several languages and cultures. Many do avoid French due to our history. However, they still insist on learning other languages to keep up with world needs.*

**R3:** *Even if they were against the existence of several foreign languages, the economical factors as job opportunities and multinational companies will force them eventually to except and learn more.*

**R4:** *We already live in a diverse community" linguistically " of course so I don't see it is a big deal for them to introduce few others specially, if we rely on good language teaching methods.*

**R5:** *I am not really sure, they seem interested in learning foreign languages, but if they are ready to the consequences of it. As introducing new cultures belonging to this languages?*

Relying on the teachers' responses during the interview, it can be observed that several answers have common points. All the interviewees were familiar with the topic and agreed on the fact that Algeria is a multilingual country. Moreover, the majority of our respondents shared similar thoughts about the second question, which was about their opinion concerning bilingual education. As they were with ENG-Arabic bilingualism arguing that, it would be an advantage for the students in the future. However, teacher 4 believed that we should first give much more attention to our first language (SA) whereas; teacher 5 added that the application of such educational method would be very difficult for many reasons. As for the third question, about the future of language choice in our country, our respondents assumed that our policy makers play a crucial role determining the future of our linguistic situation. They also agreed on the rising interest of foreign language learning among the new generation. Furthermore, the last question was about the society's viewpoint toward foreign language learning; both teacher 2 and 3 believed that learning new language is a must due to the world needs and our society will accept that eventually. On the other hand, teacher 1 assumed that our society is not that much open toward different languages.

### **3.6. Interpretation of the results**

To review, the aim of the present study was to identify the factors that determine language choice in our multilingual society. As a result, this research aimed to explore this sociolinguistic phenomenon to know how individuals interact in a multilingual environment. In doing so, the obtained information from our questionnaire and interview analysis, provide valuable responses to our research questions.

Initially, from the participant's responses to our questionnaire, we can identify several factors that affect the choice of languages in our society. To mention some, Social factors; Social relationships: the participants tend to use different languages with different groups of

people. (Mother tongue with family, while they added English and French when they interact with their friends). Also, Religious purposes: our respondents tend to use SA in addition to their mother tongue in their religion contests. Moreover, education: education was one of the factors that governed the participant's language choice. As it was the dominant language in their field of study they use it when writing their assignments and studying. Furthermore, the results also revealed economical factors; the participants choice differs were they were searching for information for work.

In the same vein, both questionnaire and interviews highlighted that government policies did affect language choice: they argued that our government does change the linguistic situation by improving language syllabuses encouraging foreign languages. Giving more attention and official statues to languages. Moreover, both sides feedback was beneficial answering the research question about the future of language.

The obtained data from both tools show that our society is interested in learning foreign languages if our policy makers would reconsider educational system; we will certainly have more competent learners.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter was devoted to the fieldwork. Initially, that was devided into two part. Theoretical background about the research methodology. Namely, research approach, data collection methods, population, and sampling techniques. On the other hand, the second part focuses on data analysis; student's questionnaire was distributed to CEIL learners and an interview to EFL teachers at University Mohamed Kheider. The second part aimed to answer the research questions by analyzing and discussing the finding.



## **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of this study, we provides the following recommendations:

- Future researches should explore the linguistic situation in Algeria.
- Future research should also carry out multilingualism in Algeria from different perspectives
- Language policies makers should give more interest to teaching standard Arabic and keep up with the new generations' needs.
- We should reconsider bilingual education with good teaching syllabuses.

## **Limitations of the study**

- Lack of previous research studies on the topic
- Teachers unavailability where conducting the interview, Most of them asked for Rendezvous and due to their timetable they offered only less than five minutes.
- Participants were not familiar with the topic nor what does first/ second language mean.

## **General Conclusion**

Language choice is a common sociolinguistic phenomenon that occurs in multilingual environment. Accordingly, several researches has been conducted to explore multilingualism and how individuals interact in multilingual contexts with the existence of multiple language recourses. Our study dedicated special focus on the factors that determine the choice of language in our multilingual community.

To review the literature, our research was divided into two major theoretical parts. Initially, the first chapter discussed the first variable; language choice, giving brief definitions to related concepts as such multilingualism, bilingualism and language choice. Furthermore, we dealt with language policies and planning in Algeria.

The second chapter shed the light on explaining multilingualism; in addition to introducing multilingual communities and two major examples namely; Canada and Ghana. We also identify the benefits and challenges that may occur in multilingual countries. Lastly, we introduced a brief history concerning the development of multilingualism in Algeria.

The third was devoted to field work and answering the research questions. In doing so, the researchers intended to use qualitative approach. Therefore, we opted for an online questionnaire for foreign language learners and an interview for EFL teachers in order to gain a better insight into the research study. The sample of this study includes 60 foreign language learners from CEIL Chetma and five foreign language teachers from University of Mohamed Kheider. The obtained data identify three main factors to language choice namely; social, economical and political factors. The finding also suggested increasing interest and existence of several languages in our community.

To sum up, language choice is a very common phenomenon in multilingual communities. There several factors that determine that choice as such; social factors including social relationships, religion and education. Also economical factors as job opportunities in addition to political factors as language policies. Furthermore, the Algerian society seems to be more open toward foreign languages. In same sense, there is increasing interest in learning foreign languages among youth that to expect more diverse rich linguistic scene in the future.

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# **Appendices**





Second language / dialect				Understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Speak	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Read	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Write	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third language				Understand					
				Speak					
				Read					
				Write					
Other languages				Understand					
				Speak					
				Read					
				Write					
Other languages that are used where you live/work but which you don't know									

### 3/ language use questions:

1. In a typical day, which languages do you use at what percent?

- Language \_\_\_\_\_: <25%    25%    50%    75%    100%
- Language \_\_\_\_\_: <25%    25%    50%    75%    100%
- Language \_\_\_\_\_: <25%    25%    50%    75%    100%
- Language \_\_\_\_\_: <25%    25%    50%    75%    100%

2. Which languages do you use in the following activities ?

- With family :
- For religious purposes :
- Listening to Radio, watching TV or movies :
- Reading on the internet :
- Chatting with friends :
- Writing emails, papers or assignments:
- Reading for work :

3. Any additional information that you would like to include?

*--Thank you--*

### المخلص

التعددية اللغوية هي قضية مهمة تشغل اهتمام الكثير من الباحثين في علم اللسانيات و اللسانيات اللغوية. أن التعددية اللغوية كمفهوم و تطبيق يقود إلى عدة مفاهيم أخرى ذات صلة حيث لا تتم دراسة واحدة دون الأخرى. من بين أهم المواضيع ذات الصلة بالتعددية اللغوية هو الاختيار اللغوي و العوامل التي تؤثر عليه في مجتمع متعدد اللغات. تسعى هذه الدراسة لتحديد العوامل المتدخلة في الخيار اللغوي للأشخاص و المجتمعات المتعددة لغويا. بداية بالتعريف به و ضبط مصطلحاته. لننتقل إلى دراسة المجتمعات المتعددة لغويا، العراقيل و الفوائد التي تنجم عن هذه الظاهرة اللغوية. ثم ذكر الوضع اللغوي في الجزائر. مع محاولة تقديم نظرة اوضح عنه و كيفية تجاوز الظاهرة و إستغلالها ايجابيا.

