

Language Use and Language Attitudes among Algerian Students

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Abstract: The present study aims at understanding Algerian first year students' language use and their attitudes towards the languages/varieties at play in Tlemcen University: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Algerian Arabic (AA), their mother tongue on the one hand, and French on the other. Moreover, it looks at the field of study as a factor affecting students' language use and language attitudes. To achieve the aims of the study a questionnaire was designed by the authors and administered to a sample of 78 participants. The results reveal a high degree of AA use as compared to French and MSA and much lower use of MSA as compared to AA and French. However, as regards language attitudes, we have found out that participants hold a highly positive attitude towards MSA as compared to AA and negative attitudes towards French. The study also reveals some unexpected results where AA is highly preferred as a secondary language in education used to facilitate lessons especially in scientific disciplines and the wish to move towards the replacement of French with English as a language of instruction in scientific fields. Moreover, the results disclose that despite the participants' comfort in using MSA as a medium of instruction, they do not favour it in scientific fields. Finally, our findings prove that the field of study plays a role in determining students' language choice.

Key Words: language use, attitudes, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), French, Algerian Arabic, medium of instruction (MI).

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I INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The complexity of the Algerian linguistic profile results from a number of historical and political events. Berbers, the indigenous people of Algeria, witnessed long-term colonization by Romans and Byzantines before the arrival of the Arabs in the 7th century when Islam spread a

nd parts of the country started being arabized. In fact, Arabic progressively replaced the Berber varieties in most parts of the country with a few communities having maintained their linguistic identity but accepted Islam as a new religion and thus Arabic as its language. The Spanish and the Ottomans had some linguistic impact on a few Algerian communities during their occupation, but it was French colonialism which had the greatest consequences on the linguistic profile. All these events successively turned the Algerians into multilingual people with a unique colonial history that shaped their sociolinguistic and linguistic systems (Benrabah 2014).

Today, the Algerian people consist of two linguistic groups, Arabic-speaking communities forming a large majority and Berbers as a minority in scattered parts of the country. Arabic in its standard form – labeled by Ferguson (1959) as the High variety – has been the official language for the whole nation since independence from France in 1962 while the various dialectal forms of it, the Low variety, make up the real mother tongue of most people. Indeed, just as in other Arabic-speaking countries, this diglossic relationship is clearly reflected in that MSA is not the mother tongue of any portion of the society as it is only used in 'higher' functions and formal contexts including the media, written and spoken, religious speech, education and certain administrations. For everyday interaction, the people use their vernaculars, Algerian Arabic (AA) dialects in most of the country and Berber varieties in some areas, though most Berbers are also acquainted with AA. Such linguistic relation, termed *diglossia* (Marçais 1930; Ferguson 1959), has made the language setting richer but more complex.

During the French colonization, the rulers mainly focused on implementing deleterious policies to eradicate the Algerian identity and undermine Arabic by preventing its learning and granting French education to a very small portion of Algerians while most of the people (90%) were left illiterate (Nashif, 2011; Miliani, 1996 and Benrabah, 2014). After independence, Algeria looked forward to implementing *the nationalist transition* process to Arabize the country and retrieve Arabic as the one and only official language in the country

to restore the Arabo-Islamic identity of its people (Benrabah, 2014). Arabization is the process of shifting from the use of a foreign language to the use of Arabic as the main language of the country as in the case of the Maghreb countries to detach the area from French colonization (Nashif, 2011 and Dekhir, 2013).

The implementation of the Arabization process in education was one of the earliest policies of independence which was seen by some as doomed to failure for some linguistic and sociopolitical reasons as “the authorities did not take into account Berber and dialectal Arabic as the people’s first languages” (Benrabah, 2014:51), that is, the government did not consider the status of the Algerian society’s mother tongue(s). In this regard, Hamed (2014:359) focused on the political power role in the process of language planning in the country where linguists had to apply the political decisions though it lacked “basic principles in, for instance, psychology and sociology ...” Furthermore, Benrabah (2014) added that Arabic was ‘confused’ with the teaching of Islam instead of teaching the language itself. Moreover, the government wanted just to detach itself from the ex-colonizer and was not ready to implement such a decision due to the lack of qualified teachers, programs, material, educational equipment and experience. A lot of Algerian teachers had been trained by the French and could not adapt to teaching in Arabic. Despite the nationalism movement towards de-Frenchifying the country, French still possesses among Algerians a higher status than Dialectal Arabic and is still widely used along MSA in different sectors such as media, education, administration. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika regards French as ‘a treasure of war’ which denotes the importance of the language in the country where most of the elites in Algeria after independence were good at French (Benrabah, 2005: 382).

II RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude, whether verbal or non-verbal, is a concept that reveals the individual’s ‘state of mind’ and their ‘feelings’ towards a person, an object or an event, which allows us to predict their behaviour to either encourage or discourage that behaviour from appearing again (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980:54). From a social psychological perspective, ‘attitude’ is a controversial term that has been defined variously, from general to specific and from simple to complex. For instance, Allport (1935), one of the first who perceived attitudes as an innate process, states that it is “a mental and 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” (cited in Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980:54). By contrast, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980:54) recognize attitude in terms of “a person’s general feeling of favorableness or unfavorableness”. It is realized that some researchers discuss attitudes based on the performed behavior while others define it based on the composition of its three components: cognition, affection and behaviour. By and large, language attitude is the feeling of an individual that s/he may hold towards a language and its speakers. Thus, language attitude in this study is defined as the opinion and feelings of students towards variety of languages that may generate either positive or negative behaviour.

Attitude encompasses then of three components: the cognitive component which tells us about the person’s innate thinking about the attitude object/person; the affective component which refers to the person’s feelings about the attitude object/person; the behavioural component which reveals the readiness of performing a behaviour based on the person’s attitudes. However, Ajzen, and Fishbein (1980) and Baker (1992) assert that the three components of attitudes may not match and may contradict each other. In other words, attitude is an inner state of mind (cognition) that develops certain feelings towards the object/person (affection) which may lead to predict either a negative or positive behaviour (readiness of an action) (Loureiro-rodriguez, Boggess, and Goldsmith, 2012 and Eltouhamy, 2015).

Studies conducted in the field of language and education have indicated that students need to be taught in their native language to guarantee a better level of successful achievement (Ellili-Cherif and Alkhateeb:2015). Studying in a foreign language with low language proficiency is demotivating them to easily grasp the scientific material which often results in failure. Several studies were conducted to examine the Algerian students’ attitudes towards the use of French at university level. For instance, Hassaine (2010) examined biology students’ attitudes at Tlemcen University towards the language of education (French and MSA) in terms of language difficulty, beauty of the language and language use. The findings indicated that, in terms of language difficulty, males showed more difficulty in studying in French; indeed 60% of the females preferred French as a medium of Instruction (MI). Another similar study in the same context undertaken by Djennane (2014) surveyed biology students’ attitudes towards the Arabization of sciences. His findings revealed that students hold a negative attitude towards French as MI and welcomed the idea of Arabizing sciences, whereas their teachers revealed negative attitude towards Arabization of science and rather suggested the need to switch to English rather than MSA since it is the international scientific language.

By the same token, Dendane (2010) examined students’ attitudes towards the use of MSA and French as medium of instruction in Islamic studies and medicine departments where the overall results showed students’ positive attitudes from both departments towards the use of MSA as a medium of instruction and revealed their high level of language competence. Moreover, students from Islamic department expressed their

satisfaction of their proficiency in MSA and their teachers confirmed their language mastery. By contrast, medicine students appeared to hold positive attitudes towards the use of French as MI and in their daily communication. Furthermore, their teachers expressed their worry about students' low proficiency in French which pushed them to use either MSA or AA to provide further explanation of the lecture.

In the same vein, Sahnoune (2013) examined students' and lecturers' language attitudes and language use at the medical departments where the results exposed teachers' worry about students' lack of proficiency in French and their inability to communicate, in both spoken and written forms which drove them to use AA to explain lessons. 91% of the students from different medical departments preferred to continue their scientific study in MSA while their lecturers exhibited negative attitudes towards the introduction of MSA as MI. Lecturers stated that the majority of students face difficulty in their studies due to their lack of competency in French and due to the Arabized education they had before moving to university. Moreover, they stated that students tend to memorize the material given to them and repeat it, which demonstrated their limited knowledge in their field and their poor ability in critical thinking.

The importance of the present study lies in its attempt to measure the current linguistic situation among young Algerian university students to shed light on their use of and attitudes towards MSA, French and Algerian Arabic as well as on their views on medium of instruction. Furthermore, it examines whether or not field of study plays a significant role in shaping students' attitudes towards MSA, French and Algerian Arabic.

III METHODOLOGY

A purposive sample was employed in this study. It consisted of 78 first-year students, 35 males and 43 females enrolled at Tlemcen University with age ranging between 18 and 27 from different departments: politics (23), medicine (19), psychology (21) and biology (15). The language of instruction in politics and psychology departments is Modern Standard Arabic, while it is French in biology and medicine: thus, 44 students had MSA as MI while 34 students studied in French. The study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- What is students' actual use of MSA, French and Algerian Arabic, in particular, in relation to the field of study?
- 2- How do they react to these three codes in attitudinal terms within and outside the study context?

To collect the data, the authors designed a questionnaire based on previous studies and via an open discussion with Tlemcen University students carried out to get a bird's eye view about their satisfaction about the language used in their field of study. The rationale behind using the Likert scale for this study is because measuring attitudes in the field of language attitudes differs from one study to another. The demographic part of the questionnaire contained questions about age, specialty, medium of instruction and a yes/no question about whether participants want to replace French with English as a second foreign language in Algeria. The second part is devoted to investigate students' use of MSA, French and Algerian Arabic in three main domains: a- social interactions, b- university and c- media and technology. It is worth noting here that in informal and semi-formal settings, students use French and MSA often mixed with Algerian Arabic to various extents, including borrowings and code-switching. Plain French and plain MSA are only used in constrained situations, in class in particular.

Finally, the last part is a Likert scale of 3 points (agree, undecided and disagree) consisting of 21 items. Following the remarks of some experts who reviewed the questionnaire and a pilot study with 32 students, some items were deleted while others were reworded to simplify the language. The data were collected between January and March 2017. The researchers seized the time between lectures and distributed the questionnaire sheets to the target sample. The questionnaire took six to ten minutes to be answered and the sheets were collected immediately after being filled. For the quantitative analysis of this study the Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to obtain statistical analysis (descriptive, frequencies, means, standard deviation, one-way ANOVA test and post-hoc test). The Alpha Cronbach of the overall items reached .786.

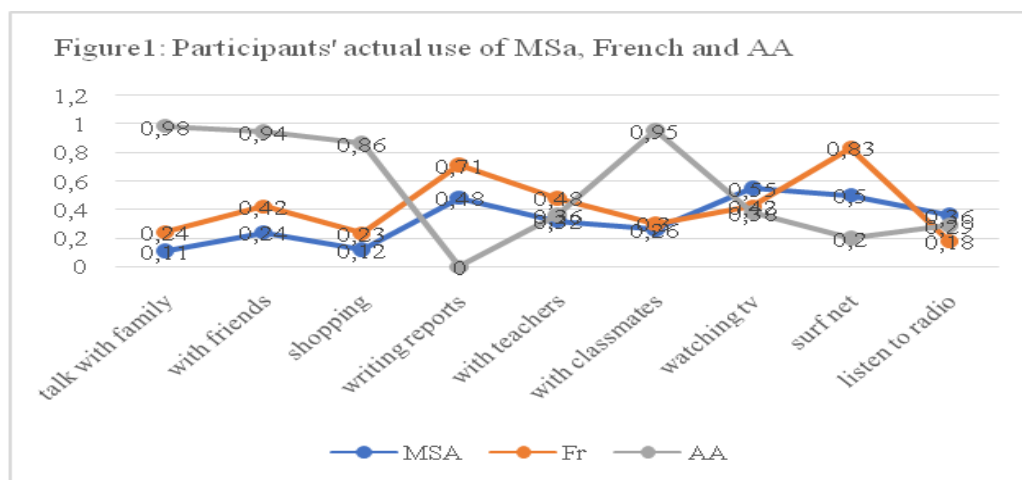
IV RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First research question: 1- What is students' actual use of MSA, French and Algerian Arabic, in particular, in relation to the field of study?

In addition to our interest students' attitudes towards the language of instruction, this study seeks to gain insights into the role their field of study plays in shaping their attitudes towards the mentioned varieties. The findings related to language use among the students demonstrate that AA (M= 1.79, SD= .18) is highly used as compared to the use of French (M= 1.38, SD=.233) and the use of MSA (M= 1.26, SD= .28).

A- *Domain of language use:* Social interaction. Figure 1 below indicates that AA is mainly used in social interactions such as talking to family members, friends, shopping, advising and communicating with classmates whether inside or outside the classroom. All 78 students use AA while communicating with family members; 26.2% of them use much French in their AA with family and only 19.2% use some MSA with their families.

When talking to friends, 96.2 % use the dialect, 33.3% use French and only 26.9% use MSA. As for shopping, 88.9% use AA and 16.7% use French while only 10.3% use MSA¹



The overall use of AA in social interactions is due to its position as a mother tongue. In the Arab world, Arabs acquire Dialectal Arabic as a mother tongue; it is a variety used in daily activities and in communication. It is demonstrated to be closer to Arabs than the standard form MSA which is only acquired through school instruction (Fasold, 1984 and Dendane, 2014). It is a language that carries their memories, feelings and resembles their cultural belonging and provides them with emotional and psychological comfort (Djalawji, 2015). However, what is surprising is the frequent use of French within AA in social situations such as talking to family members, friends and while shopping, whereas MSA can only be heard in the use of some lexical items or phrases or when mentioning Quranic verses or Prophet’s sayings. Al-Mahmoud (2012) has reached the same results when examining Saudi male students’ actual language use of MSA, Saudi Arabic and English. His investigation revealed that Saudi Arabic was used more than the other two varieties in different formal and informal situations, and English was used more than MSA.

In the present study, 34 of the participants use French as a MI which may explain the impact of French not only in their academic life but also in their social life. Another explanation could be that French is seen among educated family members as a sign of education and prestige while some parents boast to see their children speak French which is thought to indicate their high social status. French, to Algerians is an *inherited* language from the colonization as the president indicated and should not be treated as the enemy’s language as it provides Algerians with modernity and development (Benrabah, 2005). The use of MSA was the least as compared to AA and French due to the gap between AA, the spoken variety and MSA, the formal and only written variety. In this regard, Al-Mahmoud (2012; 166) stated that “an increase in the use of CA (colloquial Arabic) resulted in a decrease in the use of SA (Standard Arabic) and vice versa”. Yet, in the current study, 47% of the participants indicate their use of MSA when advising others which states its religious connotation and sounds honest and more influential. This could be due to the use of verses from the Quran or religious sayings or even proverbs to convey a deeper sympathy with the listener’s misfortune.

B- Domain of language use: University. Figure 1 shows that French is considered to be highly used among the participants at university. In writing reports, 72.7% of the participants use French and 47% use MSA while obviously none use AA as it is not usually written. When communicating with teachers, 48.5% of the participants use French more than MSA (47%) and AA (34.8%). However, AA was marked to be highly used (95.5%) among classmates’ discussions whether inside or outside the classroom while only 30.3% use French and 25.8% use MSA. Indeed, French is considered an academic language used in a number of streams in higher education and its use among the participants emphasized the fact that it still enjoys a high status besides MSA in the country. Furthermore, participants can access recent research in their area of study via French since there is a considerable lack in the translated recent research in MSA (Al-Mahmoud, 2012; Al-Issa, 2017, and Hassan and Al- Hussein, 2016). The equal proportion of using French and MSA while communicating with the instructor explains the participants field of study since 44 of them are from psychology and politics departments where MSA is used as MI and 34 are from biology and medicine departments where French is used in instruction. Nevertheless, AA is marked to be used among classmates for discussion which indicates, as explained earlier, the attachment to their mother tongue and the easiness in expressing themselves and understanding each other better in AA whether in social or academic topics.

¹ It is important to mention again here that French use and MSA use in these types of interaction means ‘mixed with AA’.

C-Domain of language use: Media and technology. Finally, the results concerning media and technology reveal the use of the three varieties in different situations. For instance, MSA was mostly used while watching TV (47%) and listening to the radio (36.4%) as compared to AA (41.2% TV; 28.8% radio) and French (37.9% TV; 18.2% radio). This is mainly because of the official status of MSA: it is the language of broadcasting news both on TV and radio. Some participants also seem to use AA while listening to radio or TV on channels that broadcast social programs in AA. Yet, French was noted to be highly used while surfing the web (84.4%) more than MSA (51.5%) and AA the least used (19.7%). For many Algerians, French is still the language of technology and advancement; participants use French while surfing the web for scientific websites, social media and gathering information. It is also the language used while communicating with other people from the francophone zone since not all of them can communicate in English.

A one-way ANOVA test was performed to find out if there are any statistically significant differences in the participants' language use of AA in terms of their field of study. The analysis indicates that there are no such significant differences [$F(3,75) = 3.560, p = 0.18$]. This confirms that all participants use their mother tongue on an equal level since it is the variety used for daily activities and communication as explained earlier. Similarly, the results did not reveal any significant differences in students language use of MSA in terms of their field of study [$F(3,75) = 3.7, p = 0.19$].

However, the one-way ANOVA test indicated significant differences in students' language use of French at $p < .05$ level for the four study of fields [$F(3,75) = 5.20, p = .003$]. A post hoc test was then performed using Tukey test to determine the significant differences. The test indicates that medicine students ($M = 1.55, SD = .21$) used French more than the biology students ($M = 1.38, SD = .17$), politics students ($M = 1.32, SD = .230$) and psychology students ($M = 1.31, SD = .21$) who scored the least mean in their use of French. The results confirm the importance of the field of study to determine the level of language use. Participants majoring in scientific disciplines, search, read and write in French and even use the language as a part of their daily activities. Therefore, the results confirm the fact that French is still a dominant language used in social life.

The second research question: How do students react to these three codes in attitudinal terms inside and outside the study context?

The participants' overall attitudes towards MSA is marked to be positively the highest ($M = 2.47, SD = .37$) as compared to AA ($M = 2.34, SD = .52$) and French ($M = 1.67, SD = .50$). Similarly, their attitudes towards MSA as a ME is considered to be the highest (2.48, $SD = .44$) as compared to their attitudes towards AA as ME ($M = 2.29, SD = .62$) and their attitudes towards French as ME (1.50, $SD = .58$). The following will illustrate more on the obtained results of attitudes towards MSA, AA and French.

Participants' attitudes towards MSA: Table 1 clarifies that students hold a high positive attitude towards MSA in general. 83.3% of the participants considered anyone who speaks MSA as an intellectual person and 79.5% felt proud of themselves when speaking in MSA. Furthermore, 79.5% of the participants believe that MSA holds a status that is higher than French in the Algerian society and only 34.6% believe that MSA possess a higher status than Algerian Arabic in the Algerian community. MSA is the language of Arabic heritage and the language of the Qur'an. To some point, participants' attitudes "were positively influenced by religious, linguistic, social and cultural factors" (Al-mahmoud, 2012:169; Dendane, 2010 and Djennane, 2014). Other interesting results that can be noticed from table 1 are items 4 and 5. Undoubtedly, 79.5% students held a clear positive attitude towards the superiority of MSA as compared with French in the Algerian society. However, when MSA was compared with AA in terms of language status superiority, more than one third of the participants seemed hesitant. The diglossic relationship between MSA (the high variety) and AA (the low variety) makes it difficult for the researcher to clearly identify what some participants feel and believe. Each variety is expected to perform a certain role depending on the domain of use. For instance, AA performs a role in people's social life where people connect with each other using their mother tongue. It is the variety that they have grown up with and that helps them best express themselves and identifies them as a group of people who belong to a certain geographical area, whereas MSA is the highest form that is used in formal settings which resembles their Arabic unity with the other 21 Arab countries, resembles their religious practices and represents their linguistic, cultural and social belonging as well.

Even though the participants held a significantly positive attitude towards MSA, they did not carry positive attitudes towards its importance in daily use and the majority (68%) were either unclear in their statements or held a negative attitude; only one third (32.1%) agreed with that statement. It is obvious that the participants admire MSA but hold negative feelings towards its use as some still consider it as the language of written forms only. Al-Mahmoud's (2012) and Al-Issa's (2017) results have revealed similar results, indicating avoidance of MSA use for its complex linguistic system.

Meanwhile, the results regarding MSA as a MI assert that students do feel at ease and more comfortable while using MSA. However, the obtained results carried some contradiction in the students' attitudes. For instance, 78.2% believe that they will obtain higher grades if exams were presented in MSA; they prefer MSA use during lectures due to their low mastery of French which affects their understanding of the

scientific material. (Dendane, 2010; Djennane, 2014; Sahnoune, 2013 and Hassiene, 2010). Furthermore, 66.7% of the participants agreed on the easiness of the scientific material if it were presented in MSA. However, only 39.7% agreed about the need to use MSA in scientific fields as a MI. It is obvious that some participants refuse the idea of Arabizing scientific fields though they feel at ease when the lecture is explained in MSA rather than in French. Our results are not in congruence with Dendane’s (2010) and Djennane’s (2014) results as their investigations concluded that students in scientific fields welcome the notion of Arabizing scientific disciplines. In the current study, participants’ conflicting answers about the use of MSA as MI in science though they assimilate better in MSA can be interpreted as due to the scarcity of scientific material written in MSA and the lack of translated sources into MSA. Furthermore, Arabizing sciences will create difficulties in accessing updated research in the foreign language and in communicating internationally with other researchers.

Table 1 Participants' attitudes towards MSA

Item	Statement		agree	neutral	Disagree
1	Anyone who uses Arabic is considered an intellectual person	Freq.	65	9	4
		Per.	83.3%	11.5%	5.1%
2	I feel proud of myself when I speak in Arabic	Freq.	62	11	5
		Per.	79.5%	14.1%	6.4%
3	I believe that mastering the Arabic language is important for those who want to live in Algeria	Freq.	25	24	29
		Per.	32.1%	30.8%	37.2%
4	Arabic language has a higher status than French	Freq.	62	9	7
		Per.	79.5%	11.5%	9%
5	Arabic language has a higher status than AA	Freq.	27	34	17
6	I think that the scientific material presented in Arabic is easier to understand than one presented in French	Freq.	52	16	10
		Per.	66.7%	20.5%	12.8%
7	My grades would be higher if the exam was in Arabic	Freq.	61	9	8
		Per.	78.2%	11.5%	10.3%
8	I think Arabic is suitable for scientific disciplines	Freq.	30	17	30
		Per.	39.7%	21.8%	38.5%

Participants attitudes towards Algerian Arabic: The table below expresses more about the participants’ beliefs and feelings towards AA. 85.9% believe that they express themselves better in their own dialect and nearly half of the them (46.2%) believe that AA better reflects their cultural belonging than MSA. In education, 51.3% consider that they would assimilate the lecture better if it was delivered in AA and 46.2% wished to be allowed to use it in the classroom. Moreover, 66.7% agree on the fact that AA should be a secondary medium of instruction to be used in the classroom alongside the main language of instruction, whether it is MSA or French. It is used as facilitating language to explain the scientific materials due to students’ low competence in French. These results are similar to Al-Mahmoud (2012) as Saudi students stated the fact about the easiness of lectures when delivered in CA (Colloquial Arabic) as the information will be passed to them faster and easier.

Table2 Participants' attitudes towards Algerian Arabic

item	Statement		agree	neutral	disagree
1	I can easily express my feelings in dialect	Freq.	(67)	(4)	(7)
		Per.	85.9%	5.1%	9%
2	I see that the dialect expresses my belonging to my culture more than standard Arabic	Freq.	(36)	(20)	(22)
		Per.	46.2%	25.6%	28.2%
3	I think that television programs presented in dialect are more understandable than others	Freq.	(42)	(17)	(19)
		Per.	53.8%	21.8%	24.4%
4	I will understand the lecture better when	Freq.	(40)	(16)	(22)

	presented in dialect	Per.	51.3%	20.5%	28.8%
5	I wish I could be allowed to speak in dialect when discussing the lecture delivered in the classroom	Freq.	(36)	(19)	(23)
		Per.	46.2%	24.4%	29.5%
6	I agree that the lecturer delivers his lecture in dialect along with the language of in	Freq.	(52)	(13)	(13)
		Per.	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%

Participants’ attitudes towards French: The results demonstrate that students hold unclear attitudes towards French. Only 30.8% felt proud when speaking French and nearly half of the participants (30.8%) believe that using French is an indicator of cultural progress. This is because the Algerian society is like any other Arab society where the foreign language is more wanted and used than the official language of the country. French is used in academia, administration and employment; mastering the language is needed for a better social position and professional career. It is also needed for students who travel abroad to Francophone countries to pursue their studies. It is a language that is more functional than MSA in different domains, especially in education.

However, when students were asked about the importance of French to live in Algeria, answers were equal between those who agreed (31) and those who did not agree (30), while 17 of the participants seemed unclear about its importance in order to live in Algeria. This indicates the dilemma that the Algerian individual is living between French as a language of prestige and education or French as the language of colonization and wishing to detach themselves from the language that reminds them of 132 years of turmoil or even believe it is time to welcome English as the current global language for advancement, technology and science in Algeria which is more useful and practical than French.

The results concerning student’s attitudes towards French as MI revealed that only 15.4% believe that French is a suitable language for education at university and more than a half (44.9%) disagree while 24.4% were undecided. Furthermore, more than a half (66.7%) think that French prevents their success during exams. 65.4% of the students did not regard French as the language to be used in scientific disciplines and only 9% of the participants agreed with that. Finally, 61.5% did not feel happy when presenting a research in French which indicates their difficulty and discomfort in using the language as MI. Students’ negative attitude towards French as MI could be due to their poor language competence in French where Hassaine (2010) indicated that male biology students exhibited a lower level of competence in French than their counterparts, females. Furthermore, results revealed the participants’ desire to replace French with English in scientific fields. This is shown when 55.4% of the participants agree on the replacement of French with English as a second language in Algeria. English is gaining a stronger position among Algerians as it represents nowadays the language of science technology, advancement, tourism and employment. This is indicated in Bouhmama’s (2016) study which concludes that students express their willingness to master English for a better career and academic profile, especially those who plan to travel abroad to pursue their studies.

Table 3 Participants' attitudes towards French

Item	Statement		agree	neutral	disagree
1	I feel proud of myself when speaking in French	Freq.	(24)	(19)	(35)
		Per.	30.8%	24.4%	44.9%
2	I think that French is more suitable for education in our university than Arabic language	Freq.	(12)	(20)	(46)
		Per.	15.4%	25.6%	59%
3	I see that using French in everyday life is an indicator of cultural progress	Freq.	(24)	(18)	(36)
		Per.	30.8%	23.1%	46.2%
4	I think that mastering French is important for those who want to live in Algeria.	Freq.	(31)	(17)	(30)
		Per.	39.7%	21.8%	38.5%
5	I think that the study in French increases the percentage of success in my exams	Freq.	(11)	(15)	(52)
		Per.	14.1%	19.2%	66.7%

6	I feel happy when I present a research in French	Freq.	(13)	(17)	(48)
		Per.	16.7 %	21.8 %	61.5%
7	Scientific materials must be studied in French.	Freq.	(7)	(20)	(51)
		Per.	9%	25.6 %	65.4%

V CONCLUSION

This study looked at language use and language attitudes among 78 Algerian students from scientific and social humanities disciplines at Tlemcen University. The results of this study cannot be generalized on the entire population of Tlemcen University as it investigated a small sample while deeper investigation is needed to learn about the real factors behind participants' inconsistency between their level of language use and language attitudes towards MSA, AA and French. On the one hand, the study concludes that participants overall use of AA is higher than the other two varieties. It is used mainly in social interaction and at university in discussions with classmates due to its status as a mother tongue and its easiness and effectiveness in communication. It is also surprising to find out that participants use French more than MSA, mostly in education and technology, which explains that French still occupies a high status in terms of academic, administrative and technological situations. Furthermore, the scarcity of the written material in MSA, lack of translation in different scientific fields, and the difficulty of the Arabic linguistic system urge students to use French more than MSA.

However, MSA was marked to be used at most while advising others due to its position as a language of religion and culture where Quranic verses, sayings and proverbs are used to put forward a piece of advice which carries more impact on the hearer's perception. It is also used more in the media, in watching TV and listening to the radio due to its status as an official language in the country. The results have also disclosed significant differences in the use of French and no differences were marked towards AA and MSA based on the students' field of study. French is significantly highly used by medicine students which may explain the role of field of study in determining the level of use of each variety.

On the other hand, the obtained results about attitudes towards MSA stress the fact that participants admire MSA and believe that it holds a high status in the Algerian society, more than French and AA. However, they do not believe that mastering MSA is necessary to live in Algeria. This is due to the fact that MSA is perceived more as a language of religion to Arabs than a language of daily use. In education, MSA seemed to gain the highest preference among the participants as participants agreed about its easiness in education as compared to French in terms of better assimilation and higher grades. Nevertheless, they do not prefer it as a MI in scientific streams due to lack and scarcity of resources and scientific materials written in MSA. Furthermore, it is a language that does not help them in obtaining better employment, when traveling abroad for study or communicating with international researchers.

It is not surprising that participants hold a good attitude towards AA comparatively to French due to its position as a daily used language. What is surprising is the high preference among the participants in using AA as a secondary medium of instruction mainly used in classroom for better assimilation of the course subject. Finally, attitudes towards French were negative and unclear. Participants do not seem able to decide how they think or feel towards French in general. In education, French is not a preferred language in scientific streams in spite of its necessity. Participants seem to believe that English is more useful and practical and it is high time to start substituting French with English as a MI in scientific streams.

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