

University of Louisville

ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository

College of Arts & Sciences Senior Honors
Theses

College of Arts & Sciences

5-2018

Prevalence of the French language in Algerian online news : a remnant of the colonial past.

Zofia A. Hetman
University of Louisville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/honors>



Part of the [French Linguistics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hetman, Zofia A., "Prevalence of the French language in Algerian online news : a remnant of the colonial past." (2018). *College of Arts & Sciences Senior Honors Theses*. Paper 168.

Retrieved from <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/honors/168>

This Senior Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts & Sciences at ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in College of Arts & Sciences Senior Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. This title appears here courtesy of the author, who has retained all other copyrights. For more information, please contact thinkir@louisville.edu.

Prevalence of the French Language in Algerian Online News: A Remnant of the
Colonial Past

By: Zofia Hetman

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation *summa cum laude*

University of Louisville
May 2018

“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.”
-Ludwig Wittgenstein

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Matthieu Dalle, for his untiring dedication, advice, and expertise. Thank you also to Dr. Julie Bunck and Dr. Susan Jarosi, whose suggestions were invaluable to improving this thesis.

Finally, I am infinitely grateful to my family for supporting me wherever my academic pursuits take me. This paper is dedicated to my parents, Joanna and Michal Hetman, my brother, Adam Hetman, and my grandmother, Jolanta Grodzka, without whose support this thesis would not have been possible.

ABSTRACT

A French colony for over a century, Algeria gained independence in 1962, yet its identity remains chained to its traumatic history. During the colonial period, French officials enacted laws to subvert the native population and its culture by discouraging the teaching of Arabic and, in its place, emphasizing French language and culture. Seeking to reclaim their national identity, leaders in post-independent Algeria created Arabization policies, which favored the use of Arabic and discouraged the use of French. Algerian society has therefore long been the target of linguistic control. As a result, language preferences of Algerians can be linked to the relative success and failure of subsequent governments to propagate either French or Arabic.

This paper sets out to explore the co-existence of French and Arabic in modern Algerian society through the lens of online news media. First, it examines Algerian history in terms of language, culture, and education to provide context for the subsequent research findings. Second, it presents quantified information on the popularity and prevalence of 58 websites categorized by principal language of publication. General-interest, sports, and business Algerian news sites are analyzed separately to lead to a more nuanced understanding of language preference in different contexts. The conclusions obtained from these research findings indicate both the long-term effects produced by forced imposition of a language and the resilience of language and culture in the face of steady suppression.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1: The Genesis of a Multi-Lingual State in Algeria	3
1.1 Algeria Before French Colonization	3
1.2 Algeria During French Colonization.....	4
1.2.1 French Conquest of Algeria.....	4
1.2.2 French Settlement in Algeria.....	5
1.2.3 Algeria in the First Half of the 20 th Century	7
1.2.4 Language and Education Under French Rule.....	9
1.2.5 Other Colonies in French North Africa	13
1.3 Independent Algeria	16
1.3.1 The Algerian War	16
1.3.2 Language and Education in Post-Independent Algeria	18
1.4 Conclusion	23
Chapter 2: The Algerian News Media	24
2.1 Overview of the Algerian Press	24
2.1.1 Historical Background.....	24
2.1.2 Media Consumption	26
2.2 The Rise of Online News Media	27
Chapter 3: French and Arabic in Online News	28
3.1 Overview of Research Methods	28
3.2 Algerian Online News	29
3.2.1 General Interest News Organizations.....	29
3.2.2 Sports News Organizations	34
3.2.3 Business News Organizations	38
3.3 International Online News Media	38
3.4 Discussion of Results	43
Conclusion	45

List of Figures

1. Language Proficiency of the Algerian Population in 2008	23
2. Relative Distribution of General Interest Websites as a Function of Language	31
3. Relative Distribution of Visitors to General Interest News Sites as a function of Language	32
4. Total Number of French General Interest News Organizations between 1964 and 2018.....	34
5. Relative Distribution of Sports Websites as a Function of Language	36
6. Relative Distribution of Visitors To Sports Websites as a function of Language	36
7. Algerian Male Language Proficiency, 2015	37
8. Algerian Female Language Proficiency, 2015	38
9. Relative Distribution of Business Websites as a Function of Language	39
10. Relative Distribution of Visitors to Sports Websites as a function of Language	40
11. Relative Distribution of Algerian Visitors to International News Sites as a function of Language	42
12. Visitors of Algerian versus International General Interest News Sites	43

List of Tables

1. List of General Interest News Sites, Principal Language: Arabic	30
2. List of General Interest News Sites, Principal Language: French	30
3. List of Sports News Sites, Principal Language: Arabic	35
4. List of Sports News Sites, Principal Language: French.....	35
5. List of Business News Sites, Principal Language: Arabic	39
6. List of Business News Sites, Principal Language: French.....	39
7. Top Five Non-Algerian News Sites in Arabic with Algerian Visitors	41
8. Top Five Non-Algerian News Sites in French with Algerian Visitors	41

Introduction

As the act of breathing sustains human life, so too language constitutes the very basis of human society. Like breathing, language is self-evident and automatic to the majority of people in the world. Yet a language consists of much more than just words or grammar rules – encrypted in its utterances are a people's history, pride, identity. These qualities give language enormous power that can be used to inspire and liberate or to subdue and oppress.

Algeria's turbulent history catalogues hundreds of years of strategic linguistic control. As a French colony for more than a century, Algeria was the target of colonial policies aimed at stemming Arabic education and replacing it with French education. An astounding rate of illiteracy among the general Algerian population and the development of a small, French speaking elite were the consequences of these policies. During Algeria's colonial period, French became a language of oppression, a tool used to differentiate between the privileged and the masses. Arabic, discouraged by the French colonizers, developed into a language of rebellion, of national pride. It became a cornerstone and rallying cry for the independence movement in the 1930s (Zack).

Algeria officially gained independence from France in 1962. New policies of Arabization were put into place encouraging education in Arabic in the hope of reclaiming a national identity severely weakened by years of colonial repression. Like many former colonies, Algeria quickly fell into an authoritarian regime. During that time, Arabic came to be associated with nationalistic, traditional, and religious values. French, on the other hand, grew to encompass modernity and Western ideas of liberalism.

Scholarly interest in the cultural schism created by colonization and subsequent Arabization has led to the publication of several studies, books, and essays on French and Arabic literature produced by Algerian intellectuals. Other studies on educational and economic

implications of the Algerian linguistic divide also surfaced, most of them published in the 1990s or earlier. However, there is a dearth of recent studies that describe language use in Algeria. Such studies are key to determining the long-term effects of efforts to sway language use of a population. Moreover, no studies that examine how years of lingual engineering are evidenced in the modern Algerian news media have ever been published. The press is a useful tool in analyzing the prevalence and popularity of a language, as it is a direct product of the society it represents.

This research paper sets out to explore the co-existence of French and Arabic in Algerian society through the lens of the online news media. Information on the popularity of news sites by language and on the quantity of publications in each language indicates the deep roots of French and Arabic in Algerian society. With this data, it is possible to make some conclusions about the long-term effects of linguistic control in Algeria. Given the violent struggle for independence from the French and the Algerian government's long standing policies of Arabization, Arabic websites would be expected to be much more popular and prevalent than French websites.

The prevalence and popularity of news websites in French and Arabic is quantified and analyzed to uncover trends in language preferences of Algerians, yielding some unexpected results. The first section of this paper examines Algerian history and research on language and education, both of which are key to understanding the current lingual situation in Algeria. The second section presents an overview of the Algerian media and a justification for the use of online news media statistics in analyzing language use in Algerian society. The final section contains all obtained statistics and their analysis.

Examining the effects of the imposition of a language on a society is highly relevant, as some governments still use similar tactics to subvert targeted ethnic groups. The Turkish government's effort to eradicate Kurdish identity manifests itself in laws forbidding classes to be taught in Kurdish and banning the usage of Kurdish in public (Aslan). These tactics closely mirror those of the French colonizers, so insight into the current linguistic situation in Algeria can enhance predictions about the long term effects on Kurdish society. While it is true that other French colonies in Africa experienced an imposition of the French language to some degree, Algeria stands out as the colony that was most integrated into France and French culture. As discussed later in this paper, neither Morocco nor Tunisia endured the same level of linguistic engineering, making Algeria a unique country to study.

Chapter 1. The Genesis of a Multi-Lingual State in Algeria

The aim of this paper is to examine the co-existence of French and Arabic through the prism of the modern Algerian online news media. A complete understanding of the current status of each language is dependent upon the comprehension of Algeria's complicated and traumatic history, in which lingual changes played an important role. More often than not, the sentiments expressed by Algerians towards one of the two languages is not based on the language itself, but on what role it played and what group of people it represented in Algerian history. As a result, current language status and history are inseparably linked.

1.1 Algeria before French Colonization

Today, Algerian Arabic, French and Berber constitute the most commonly spoken languages in Algeria (Chaker 136). Of these three, Berber, also known as Amazigh, has had the longest presence in Algeria's territory. Its origins can be traced to the pre-Arab inhabitants of

North Africa, known as the Berber. Arabic was introduced into Algerian territory with the spread of Islam and Byzantine military expeditions during the seventh century. However, the Ottoman conquest of Algiers in 1515 brought with it more extensive Arabization (Vatin 140). While the Berber population largely assimilated into Arabic culture, it succeeded in preserving its language. Today, the majority of the Algerian Berber-speaking population lives in the rural south, where the influence of both Ottoman and French education systems was weaker (Ekkehard).

The Ottoman Empire brought with it Koranic schools, in which boys were able to study Islam. The Arabic language was, and still is, innately linked to Islam. Arabic is the original language of the Koran, and observant Muslims continue to recite daily prayers in that language. Therefore, lessons of the Arabic language typically accompanied any efforts to spread the teachings of Islam, increasing literacy amongst local populations (Öztürk 215). The effectiveness of education under the Ottoman Empire is evidenced by a French report written in 1830 estimating the literacy rate in Algeria to be 40 percent (Chapan). In comparison, English populations exhibited an estimated 60 percent literacy rate during the same time (Mitch 344). Consequently, the Algeria invaded by France was not a country of primitive, unschooled natives, as many French politicians at the time claimed. Instead, French colonizers found themselves in a country with a functioning and intricate language, schooling system, and culture.

1.2 Algeria during French Colonization

1.2.1 French Conquest of Algeria

In the years leading up to 1827, France accumulated a large debt with Algeria, causing tension between the two countries. In April 1827 the Ottoman provincial governor of Algeria lashed a visiting French consul with his fly whisk. News of the incident rapidly made its way to Paris, where King Charles X ordered a naval blockade on Algeria. Although the treatment of the French consul became the official pretext for mobilizing the French military and its subsequent invasion of Algeria, conquest and colonization had gained much support in years prior. In 1830, the French army seized Algiers, toppling its Ottoman leaders from power. The period of French colonization in Algeria had begun (Chanderli et al.).

During the next seventeen years, France fought for control over Algerian territory. Faced with insurrections and mistrust from the local populations, the French deployed a large army and expended valuable resources. The tactics used in subduing unrest were characterized by their violence and brutality, even leaving some French politicians to disavow the colonization of Algeria. Moreover, instead of implementing the French system of civil law in Algeria, the colonizers used martial law when dealing with Algerians (Kohn 261).

1.2.2 French Settlement in Algeria

During the French campaign to occupy more Algerian territory, the French forced thousands of Algerians to leave their homes and land. The assets they had to abandon became the property of the government and its officials. While some Algerians received compensation at the time, most did not. Beckoned by government land grants and the opportunity of a low-cost life, colonists from Europe began to pour in. They came to be known as the *Pieds Noirs*, or Black Feet. Most were workers and farmers from France, although some came from Spain and Italy. By 1848, approximately 109,000 of these colonists had settled in Algeria (Ruedy). This number

continued to grow as time went on. The influx of Europeans led to the creation of three types of living settlements in Algeria.

The richer, more powerful colonists lived in neighborhoods reserved for Europeans. In such areas, the settlers were largely self-governing – they could elect their own mayors and officials. At the same time, many native Algerians found themselves in Arab-only living areas, with land inferior to that seen in European living areas. Here, the residents had no power of representation, and were directly under the French colonial government. Finally, mixed settlements saw the Algerians and colonizers living together, in theory providing more opportunity for cultural exchange. French authorities allowed these mixed settlements limited power to select of their own officials (Chapan).

In 1848, the French government recognized Algeria as an integrated French territory, rather than just a colony. Consequently, the French Ministry of Interior, rather than the military colonial office, was placed in charge of the majority of Algerian territory. This important step increased the integration of Algeria into France, at least from the French colonist's perspective. Algiers, Oran, and Constantine set up civil governments parallel to those found in *départements*, or administrative regions, in France. Additionally, the French granted Algeria greater autonomy and representation in the French legislative branch. The French government handed this new power, however, to the European settlers, not the native population (Kraft 593). Such colonial policies created a deeply rooted resentment within the Arab–Berber population. A local, civil government that placed power in the hands of the European settlers was often proved to be more oppressive to the Arab population than the French government itself. In 1892 Jules Ferry, a French statesman, wrote “It is difficult to make the European settler understand that there are rights other than his in an Arab country, and that the natives are not a race subject to taxes and

forced labor at will.” (qtd. in Kraft 595). For the inhabitants of a French territory, travel was unrestricted between Algeria and France after 1848. Even more settlers could now move to Algeria without restriction.

The 1860s provided a short interlude from the expansion of European settlers into native lands. Napoleon III, the Emperor of France at the time, sympathized with the local Arabs and tribesmen. He created laws to prevent further expropriation by the Pieds Noirs and made plans for some lands to be returned to their original owners. Furthermore, Napoleon III enacted laws giving Arabs equal protection under French law and the right to serve in the French army as the equals of Europeans. Locals were given the option of becoming full-fledged French citizens if they agreed to place themselves in the jurisdiction of French courts, rather than Islamic ones (Murray-Miller 4). Most opted out of citizenship. The Emperor’s overtures were short-lived, however, as his reign ended in 1870. The European settlers, who had resented the new policies, moved quickly to dismantle protections of local land. During the next decade, thousands of acres were taken from Arab farmers, who were forced to find a livelihood elsewhere (Kraft).

1.2.3 Algeria in the First Half of the 20th Century

The advent of World War I further strengthened the links between France and Algeria. As a result of the growing nationalism in Europe, the French government implemented an obligatory military service in 1912, incorporating many Algerian men into the French army. During the war approximately 173,000 Algerians served as soldiers. Many of these soldiers were called up by their obligatory service, but others volunteered (Chapan). While in the army, the Algerians served alongside native Frenchmen, and gained exposure to the privileges granted to French citizens. Considered French nationals instead of French citizens, who would be given

legal rights, the Algerian men did not enjoy the full privileges granted their comrades when they returned home.

Of the men who did not serve in the French army, a large portion travelled to France to serve as factory workers. They helped to increase the production of weapons and other goods, thus allowing France to continue in the war. In 1918, at the end of the war, as many as 120,000 Algerians worked in French factories (Pervillé 840). In France, they discovered a quality of life and freedom to which they had been unaccustomed under the oppressive rule of the European settlers. At the same time, they were exposed to a culture opposed to quiet submission in the face of injustice. Historian Gilbert Meynier argues:

The men became accustomed to the worker's life and the world of the factory, which is to say, to protest and strikes. They could sometimes get to know and visit French men and women. In any case, they assumed certain habits that were not compatible with the maintenance of the former colonial order. They adopted the spirit of the "French worker" and the syndrome of the "liberated tirailleur" (infantryman), meaning that they increasingly dared to argue back and contest authority.

Many of these workers and soldiers returned to Algeria and saw their homeland with a fresh perspective. A sense of nationalism was born.

Three principal nationalist groups evolved in the time period between the two World Wars. The Algerians who had worked in France created the most radical group of the three. It is from this group that the National Liberation Front, or the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) evolved. The second group, composed of Algerian elites who had attended French schools, argued that Algerians should be given the same rights as French citizens and favored a more complete unification with France. The third group argued for the return of an Islamic society in Algeria. Grounded in religion, this movement effectively spread nationalist feelings throughout the Algerian population (Chanderli et al.).

World War II further served as a catalyst for a nationalist movement. France's capitulation to Germany in 1940 placed Algeria under the rule of the Vichy government. This played an important role in the Algerian nationalist movement, as France no longer seemed invincible. In 1942 the allied powers captured Algeria, and the local population was no longer under the rule of the official French government. As in World War I, many Algerians served in the French army, joining the Free French resistance movement after 1940. Paralleling the previous war, 350,000 Algerian men worked in French factories by 1945 (Chanderli et al.). Having once again assisted France in its fight, the Algerians demanded more rights and equal treatment. In 1947, following escalating tensions and violence, the National Assembly in France granted all Algerians full French citizenship and created an Algerian Assembly to allow greater self-governance. Although these measures quieted the rising separatist movement for a short time, they did not subdue it.

1.2.4 Language and Education under French Rule

As soon as the French began their occupation of Algiers, they made French the city's official language. Up to that point, Arabic and Berber had been the principal languages used, and the forced imposition of the French language made it difficult for locals to interact with their occupiers or to hold any power. When the French fought to conquer and rule over the Algerian people in the nineteenth century, they quickly realized the power that controlling education of the native population would give them. Koranic schools had been the principal means of education before colonization. As propagators of Islam and Arabic, forces contrary to the subjugation of the Algerian people, these schools were to be avoided at all costs. The French closed many Koranic schools, taking over their buildings and transforming them into colonial offices. They also stemmed funding to those Koranic schools that remained. Consequently,

hiring teachers became increasingly difficult (Queffelec 34). The Arabic that was learned and spoken by subsequent generations was therefore taught at home or not at all.

Colonial officials not only effectively disbanded the formal teaching of Arab culture and language, but also set about propagating their own. French became the official language of instruction in schools, and students were taught French history, literature, and culture. The instruction of these subjects can be attributed to two causes. First, the colonial officials believed that such an education would eventually lead to the internalization of French values and identity by the local population. This internalization would help avert any inopportune outbursts of Algerian nationalism and resistance. Perhaps the most absurd example of Arab children being taught to associate with France is a lesson in which they learned that the Gauls were their ancestors (Heggoy 183). Second, most French government officials did not think that anything productive could be learned from native language or culture. Alexis de Tocqueville, a well-known French diplomat and authority on the subject of Algeria, wrote in the 1840s, “These half-savage African countries are now undergoing a social development very much like that which took place in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages.” Observers such as de Tocqueville believed that by teaching the French language and culture, the French were civilizing the local population. This sentiment did not change with time, and was echoed fifty years later in a speech given by the French statesman Jules Ferry in 1897:

...the superior races have a right [over the lower races] because they have a duty. They have the duty to civilize the inferior races. In the history of earlier centuries these duties have often been misunderstood...But, in our time, I maintain that European nations acquit themselves with generosity, with grandeur, and with sincerity of this superior civilizing duty.

The instruction of French was therefore not just a practical policy of subduing the resistance of brooding locals. It was also a moral policy of bringing the light of French civilization into Algerian society.

In both these aims, colonial education tactics failed to affect the majority of the Arabs. There were few schools in Algeria, and these were mainly reserved for the children of European settlers. Even in the schools that existed, the curriculum did not match that of schools in France (Heggoy 185). In 1882, Jules Ferry brought about the establishment of mandatory, free, and secular education for both girls and boys in France. Since Algeria was an integrated French territory by that time, the same rule applied to its educational system. In practice, however, the new law was only enforced on the European settlers, while most Arab children were not reached. Moreover, many local parents chose not to send their children, especially girls, to secular schools, fearing a bad influence (Cooke 59).

The few boys that did receive a French education and assimilated into French culture came to be known as *les évolués*, which translates to “the cultivated”. They formed the elite of Arab Algerian society and usually opposed any movements to separate from France (Chapan). This had been one of the original aims of the French educational effort, but the small number of students it reached through schools prevented it from being successful on a larger scale.

Following World War I and the sacrifices made by Algerians in the French army, politicians made an effort to spread literacy and education more effectively. In 1917 the government enacted a law directing all Arab boys to receive primary schooling. At the same time, many of the workers and soldiers returning from France desired their children to receive an education, so that they may have a chance of a better life. As a result, many more Arab children found their way into the French school system.

After World War I, an increasing sense of nationalism pervaded Algerian society. Given Arabic's close link to the Algerian sense of nationalism, local leaders advocated its use and teaching. However, French authorities in Algeria continued to marginalize the language. Following the end World War II, Algerian nationalist groups made an even greater push for the legitimization of Arabic. The members of the French National Assembly initially ignored these movements; however, in 1947, they attempted to soothe local unrest by naming Arabic as one of the official languages in Algeria. Additionally, they ordered Algerian schools to teach Arabic for two and a half hours per week along with fifteen hours of French (Cooke 59).

While noteworthy for their symbolic value, these new statutes did not bring about significant change. Following years of repression of the Arabic language, school officials found it difficult to recruit instructors capable of teaching it. Moreover, there were still too few buildings and classrooms to accommodate all the potential students. As a result, less than 15 percent of the school-aged Algerian children were registered in schools by 1954 (Heggoy 186). Only after the beginning of the Algerian War for Independence did the French government move to aggressively enroll children – both girls and boys – into primary schools.

Not satisfied with the changes brought by new policies, nationalists used the status of education and language in Algeria as an argument for separation from France. Hussein Ait Ahmed, a key leader of the FLN, wrote in a 1955 article:

The national language of the Algerian people is Arabic. Colonialism has sought to stamp it out. This policy is characterized at present by the refusal to allow the teaching of Arabic in Government schools and by hindrances to free education. Only in the higher Institute of Islamic studies, and three secondary schools, attended by less than 500 students, are Arabic studies pursued. In the French secondary schools, Arabic is taught as a foreign language. The opening of free primary schools is hampered by the authorities who frequently close them down and arrest the teachers. A teacher, Chei'kh Zerrouki has been condemned to four years imprisonment for teaching Algerian history. Even in French, education is very limited. Illiteracy is 90 percent.

The situation described by Ahmad was far from resembling the civilized Algerian society envisioned by Jules Ferry. Even with rising rates of enrollment in French schools, it seemed that the French colonial policies were unsuccessful in bringing the French culture to the forefront of Algerian society. In fact, only 6 percent of men and 2 percent of women were literate in French in 1954. Furthermore, although Arabic was sparsely taught in governmental schools, the 1940s and 1950s saw the creation of many new Koranic schools, which instilled in its students Islamic values and pride (Heggoy 190).

The French colonial officials had enacted policies meant to suppress Arabic and spread French ever since their arrival in Algiers in 1830. After approximately 130 years in power, they had fundamentally failed to accomplish either goal because of the poor implementation of education laws. They did succeed, however, in instilling in the Algerian people a resentment towards French language and culture.

1.2.5 Other Colonies in French North Africa

France colonized three countries in North Africa – Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. All three have similar Arab-Berber origins, language, and religion (Catroux 283). Morocco and Tunisia, therefore, provide a useful comparison to Algeria, showing that Algeria's level of integration into France is truly unique. Of these three regions, Algeria experienced the greatest domination at the hands of the French, both politically and culturally.

The first difference between Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia is simply the duration of French control over each country. Morocco became an official French colony in 1912 and gained full independence in 1956 – a total of 44 years under French rule (Miller et al). Tunisia gained independence the same year as Morocco, after having been under the control of the French for 75 years (Barbour et al.). Algeria, on the other hand, gained independence in 1962, following 132

years of French domination. The French remained in Algeria almost twice as long as they did in Morocco and three times as long as they did in Tunisia. As a result, their policies favoring the French language over Arabic had an impact on more generations than they did in the other North African colonies.

Not only did Morocco and Tunisia experience shorter periods of colonization, they also retained a greater amount of independence during that time. The French gained control over Algeria after a prolonged and violent conflict. Several years later, the French signed treaties with both Tunisian and Moroccan leaders following little to no armed resistance from local populations. In signing treaties with the French, the Moroccans and Tunisians had more power to negotiate for greater freedom, especially since the French had little desire to repeat the violent campaign they had led in Algeria. Morocco and Tunisia became protectorate territories of France, retaining their national legal personalities (Catroux 286). Algeria, on the other hand, turned into an integrated French territory, giving it no national or international autonomy. The different legal status in the other North African colonies led to colonial policies in stark contrast to those that led to the subjugation of Algerian politics, culture, and language (Barbour et al.; Miller et al.)

First, Tunisia and Morocco retained their monarchic government structure under French rule. While the French were able to influence the Tunisian and Moroccan governments, they could not legally infringe upon their internal sovereignty (Catroux 287). This was not the case in Algeria, where the French removed traditional Algerian leaders and replaced them with colonial officials. As a result, the French did not confiscate land from locals in Moroccan and Tunisia as they did in Algeria, and a significant population of European settlers never made its way into the two countries. Additionally, Algeria's status as an integrated territory meant that Algerians could

travel freely between their home country and France. The French did not grant Moroccans and Tunisians the same privilege, as their countries were not considered part of France (Chapan). Finally, neither Moroccans nor Tunisians experienced an obligatory military service in the French army, as did the Algerians (Pervillé 840). Overall, political status of Morocco and Tunisia as protectorate territories led to less exposure, but also less resentment, to French language and culture.

In addition to granting greater autonomy, French colonial officials did not significantly obstruct Islam in Morocco and Tunisia, education, or culture. In Algeria, many religious schools and mosques closed under French rule, their buildings and grounds expropriated by the French government. However, colonial officials in Tunisia and Morocco never seized these same institutions (Damis 78). French was not made the official language in either country, and was therefore not as heavily privileged as it was in Algeria (Barbour et al.; Miller et al.) As a result, local Moroccan and Tunisian populations were less likely to learn French. A portion of the elites in these countries learned French, but to a lesser degree than those in Algeria.

Compared to other culturally similar former colonies, clearly Algeria endured the strongest efforts by colonial forces to propagate French and suppress native languages. Abdallah Mazouni, a professor of Arabic and prolific writer on culture and education, wrote: “Algeria is, of all the Arab countries, including Lebanon, the one in which the French language is most deeply rooted.” Despite the fact that most Algerian locals did not use French, the French-speaking minority still represented a greater portion of the total population than it did in the other colonies. A study of the usage of different languages in contemporary Algeria is therefore all the more interesting, as Algeria represents a country which experienced linguistic control and imposition in the extreme.

1.3 Independent Algeria

1.3.1 The Algerian War

Escalating tensions between Algerian nationals and the French government following the end of World War II set the stage for direct confrontation. In 1954 a prominent nationalist group called the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) led a guerrilla attack against French military targets, killing seven. Although this event generated little attention from the general public, French troops were sent into Algeria to retaliate against the perpetrators (Horne 46). At the time, the French *Président du Conseil*, the equivalent of a Prime Minister, Pierre Mendès-France, reacted to the events in a speech:

One does not compromise when it comes to defending the internal peace of the nation, the unity and the integrity of the Republic. The Algerian departments are part of the French Republic. They have been French for a long time, and they are irrevocably French... Between them and metropolitan France there can be no conceivable secession... Never will France...yield on this fundamental principal.

Mesdames, Messieurs, several deputies have made the comparison between French policy in Algeria and Tunisia. I declare that no parallel is more erroneous, that no comparison is falser, or more dangerous. Here, this is France.

Mendès-France's words reflect a widely-held French belief at the time – that Algeria was irreversibly, absolutely French (Cohen 228). This attitude significantly contributed to the length and brutality of the ensuing conflict.

Over the next seven years, a war of terror and torture dominated the Algerian landscape. The principle organization fighting for Algerian independence was the FLN, though other unaffiliated groups contributed to the effort by staging guerrilla and terrorist attacks. The FLN targeted not only French troops and European settlers, but also any native Algerians they deemed to be sympathetic to the French cause.

Fighting against the insurgents was the French army, which executed and tortured thousands of militants and suspects (Horne 21). While most native Algerians sided with the FLN

out of nationalism, anger, or fear, hundreds of thousands aided the French. They came to be called the *harkis* by their compatriots. Scholars believe that, following the end of the War, up to 150,000 harkis were killed by fellow Algerians seeking retribution (Choi 30). All harkis were granted French citizenship, and could immigrate to France if they wished. Most stayed in Algeria (Daum).

In 1961 then-president Charles de Gaulle ordered a referendum in both France and Algeria on the question of Algerian self-determination. The FLN ordered a boycott on the vote in Algeria, but in France the referendum generated a 75 percent voter turnout. Tired of the war, the majority voted in support of Algerian independence (Coryell 8). While the violence raged on in Algeria, the French government entered into talks with the FLN with the support of citizens living in France. Over the next year, the peace talks were broken and restarted, and more referendums, all in favor of independent Algeria, were conducted in both France and Algeria. In 1962 the two sides finally reached agreement with the Evian Accords (Horne). Following 132 years of French rule, the Algerians had succeeded in gaining independence.

Independence came at a cost, however. At the end of the war, between 500,000 and a million French and Algerians had been killed (Horne 234). Over a million *piets noirs* were forced to leave their homes and relocate to France, a country many of them had never seen before (Hubell 62). Neither the French nor the Algerians have forgotten the war. Sociologist Lizabeth Zack wrote in 2002: “The Algerian War made a profound imprint on a whole generation of people and has continued, to this day, to haunt the political culture, collective memories, historiographies, and people’s psyches in both France and Algeria.” The war was jarring not only because of its brutality, but also because it brought up questions of identity: what

did it mean to be Algerian? To be French? Was accepting the French language and culture enough to be considered French?

Ironically, the French language, and especially French culture, played an important role in the Algerian War. Exposure to the French culture during the World War I inspired the formation of the first nationalist organizations. These eventually evolved into the FLN and other groups that participated in the War. Additionally, the FLN gained much of its funding and many of its supporters through French worker's unions for Algerians (Zach 59).

Most Algerian pro-independence organizations publicly endorsed the teaching of Arabic language and culture. However, they themselves made substantial use of the French language. During the war, both the FLN and French produced propaganda written in both Arabic and French. The FLN produced some of its propaganda posters targeting Algerians written only in French (Sparks). The influence of the French language can also be seen in the names of the two most powerful insurgent organizations: *Front de Libération Nationale (FLN)* and *Parti Communiste Algérien (PCA)*. Despite being responsible for copious amounts of rhetoric criticizing the unjust suppression of Arabic in favor of French, these organizations chose their names in the language of their enemy. This shows the far-reaching influence the imposition of the French language had on the elites of the country (Saadallah 72).

1.3.2 Language and Education in Post-Independent Algeria

The forced imposition of the French language and concurrent restrictions on Arabic during French colonization became a rallying point for many Algerian nationalists. After the war, Algerians found themselves in a country in which the elites spoke French, and the general population the Algerian dialect of Arabic. Not having received a formal education in Arabic, few

of these people were literate in the language. Even less were fluent in literary Arabic, which would normally be used in education, but which was not spoken on the streets.

At the time Algeria gained independence, French was commonly used in urban areas, schools of both lower and higher education, news media, and even the governing body of the FLN. Hussein Ait Ahmed, a leader of the FLN, confessed “It cannot be concealed that...the French language has been the principal, if not exclusive, vehicle, on a certain level of abstraction, of communication, oral and written, in the hearts of the leading organs of our district and party.” Despite the fact that the majority of the Algerian population did not speak French, the language could not be expunged easily. Generations of Algeria’s elites who now found themselves in power had attended French schools and spoken the French language in official settings.

Nevertheless, Algeria’s new leaders recognized the importance of the Arab language in erasing the mark colonialism had left in the form of French. Ahmed Ben Bella, Algeria’s first prime minister following the war, reiterated his support for the teaching of Arabic in schools during a speech he paradoxically delivered in French (Kashani-Sabet 268). He initiated a period of Arabization during his time as head of state. Arabization policies were not without controversy. Fawzi Abdulrazak, former president of the Middle East Librarians Association, best explains the complex situation in Algeria following the end of the war:

Seventy to eighty percent of the people were illiterate. The majority was enthusiastically in-favor of efforts to restore Islamic values and culture, for which they had fought for their independence. The remaining educated minority was mainly divided between the French-speaking Algerians who favored adoption of progressive programs to catch up with the civilized Western world and those who were concerned about their loss of national and culture identity under the French regime and were interested in building a new Arabo-Islamic based civilization.

Those in favor of modernizing Algeria were also proponents of the French language, which they saw as an important gateway to a modern society resembling that of Western Europe. However, seeking to pacify the majority demanding Arabization, Ben Bella enacted a new law requiring the teaching of Arabic in primary schools for at least seven and a half hours per week. The Algerian government recruited teachers who could instruct Arabic, but qualified instructors proved to be a scarce commodity (Chapan). As a result, the language of instruction in many schools remained French, and the new law reflected the government's wishes rather than reality. Another objective of the Algerian government was to decrease illiteracy among the population. In this regard Ben Bella's policies were successful, as school enrollment increased dramatically (Abdulrazak 25). Ironically, efforts to educate the Algerian masses led to the propagation of the French language, which remained the language of instruction in most schools.

General dissatisfaction with the pace of change produced by Ahmed Ben Bella's government gave Houari Boumedienne, former minister of defense under Ben Bella, an opportunity for a successful coup d'état. In 1965 he named himself president of Algeria, a position he would hold until 1978. During Boumedienne's time in power, the Algerian government adopted a more aggressive approach to Arabization (St. John 292).

Government officials encouraged schools to hire Arabic teachers from foreign countries when they could not find enough Algerians competent in the language. Primary schools increased the number of hours students were taught in Arabic until their courses were deemed "successfully Arabized." In secondary schools, French still predominated in the 1970s, although most humanities courses were taught in Arabic. French continued to be the principal language of all courses in Algerian Universities (Kashani-Sabet 273). Arabization under Boumedienne reached not only the educational system, but also the government itself. In 1968, the president

signed a law requiring government officials to have a cursory knowledge of Arabic (Chapan). Although the FLN made extensive plans to enforce the Arabization of the government, the only ministry that could claim complete Arabization in 1982 was the Ministry of Religion and Fundamental Education (Abdulrazak 31). The difficulty Boumedienne experienced in converting governmental proceeding from French to Arabic reflects the deep roots French had grown among educated Algerians.

In 1976 the government passed more measures to bring Arabic to the forefront of Algerian society and to expunge French along with its colonial connotations. Car license plates, street names, public notices were changed from French to Arabic. The forced Arabization policies created by Algerian politicians were criticized by some Algerian scholars, who advocated instead for the natural development of a bilingual state (Kashani-Sabet 275). Still others criticized the social divisions Arabization inherently propagated within Algerian society. Khaoula Taleb Ibrahimi, Algerian linguist, observed in 1997:

The well-off predominate in bilingual courses while the Arabized courses are left to the most deprived social groups, to such an extent that we can consider that one of the ironies of the policy of Arabization has been its transformation into an instrument of social selection aiming to exclude from competition [in the job market] all those less favored individuals who know only Arabic...More and more, one has the impression that Arabization is nothing but a rhetoric for the masses, one which is affectively gratifying but completely at odds with the facts.

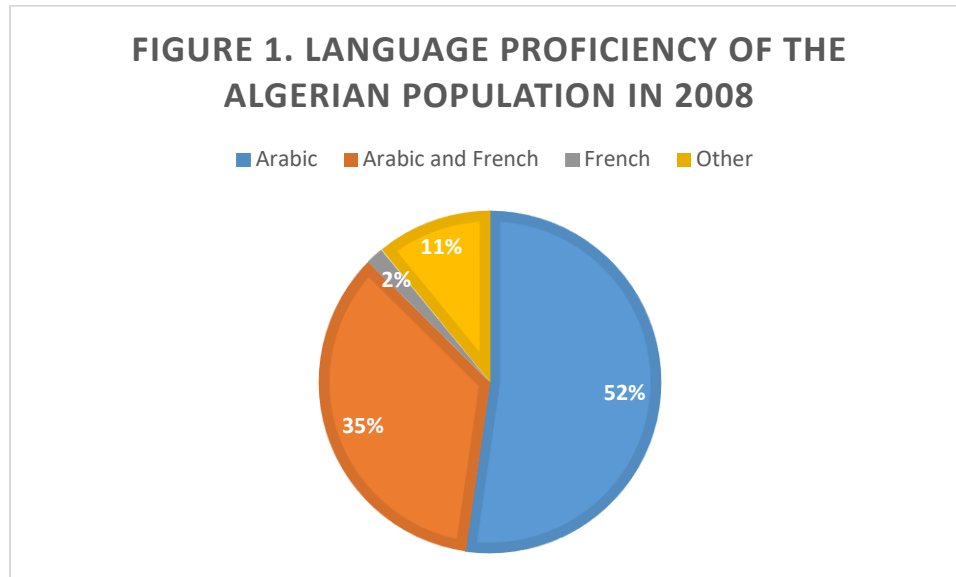
Many of those speaking only Arabic grew to resent bitterly the benefits gained by their French-speaking compatriots. In the 1980s the frustration felt by these disadvantaged students led to wide-spread protests in favor of an immediate and complete Arabization of the Algerian public sphere (McDougall 253). These protests led to more government rhetoric on the importance of the Arab language, but did not appear to have any effect on the status of the French language. The advantage gained by knowing French is still observable in Algeria today. In 2007 Mohamed

Benrabah, a sociolinguist, wrote of Standard Arabic and French that they “are in complementary distribution: the former occupies the functions related to cultural power and the latter to economic power.”

By the 1990s Arabization had failed to accomplish what many had hoped for – the elimination of the French language in Algerian society and its replacement with Arabic. Instead, a linguistically divided society emerged. Most of the Algerian population became bilingual to a certain degree. Many Algerians speak Arabic fluently and have a working understanding of French, though not enough to be considered literate in the language. The elites mostly remain fully fluent in both French and Arabic. Borrowing words from French when speaking in Arabic is a common phenomenon, demonstrating the continued influence of the French language (Hassain 23).

In 1999, following years of unrest in Algeria, Abdelaziz Bouteflika became president. He has remained in power ever since. Under his administration, the pressure to Arabize all spheres of Algerian life diminished. Before, governmental leaders and Islamic groups discouraged use of French in the public domain. However, Bouteflika’s ministers and even Bouteflika himself have been known to speak French in the presence of the reporters. Sensing an easement on linguistic scrutiny, Algerian society responded by using more French (Kashani-Sabet 277). It reappeared on public signs, leaflets, and in advertising campaigns, even those produced by the government. Advanced research, even in the humanities, remains French almost in its entirety (McDougall 255). It would seem that not only has French not been erased from Algerian society, but that it has experienced a resurgence following a slackening of government restrictions on language.

A 2008 official Algerian census tabulated the number of Algerians over the age of five speaking different languages (figure 1, below). As of that year, 35 percent of the population was bilingual in Arabic and French.



Source: United Nations Statistics Division, "Population by Language."

1.4 Conclusion

Algeria's complex lingual situation is a direct product of its history, in which language and culture played a central part. Algeria's indigenous populations spoke Berber, which still exists today in Algeria's rural south. Following the Arab conquest of the region, most of the indigenous population learned Arabic through Islamic religious education. Later, 132 years of French colonization eroded public access to Arabic education, and in its place installed a French schooling system for the elites. Through colonial policies and the eventual integration into France itself, the higher spheres of Algerian society became dependent on the French language. French colonization in Algeria led to a much deeper infiltration of the French language into society than it did in other similar colonies.

Following the brutal Algerian War, nationalists advocated the use of Arabic to reclaim what they perceived to be traditional Algerian culture and language. As in colonial times, the

government ruling Algeria became invested in directing language use. This time, however, the nationalists emphasized Arabic and discouraged French. This effort succeeded in increasing literacy and restoring Arabic in cultural settings. It failed, however, to eliminate French, which has remained dominant in higher education, especially in science, as well as in business.

Chapter 2. The Algerian News Media

2.1 Overview of the Algerian Press

2.1.1 Historical Background

Two years after Algeria gained independence from France, most of its news organizations – newspapers, television agencies, and radio programs - were nationalized and censored. In the name of preserving unity within the newly independent nation, the Algerian government maintained strict control over published articles. These became de facto pulpits of government officials spreading their dogmas and policies. In addition to lauding the government, newspapers served another purpose – spreading literacy, specifically that of Arabic. Daily papers, instructed by the government, placed special pages containing easy Arabic in their publications (Gafaïti 53). Significantly, illiteracy in Algeria following independence was close to 80 percent, so most newspapers were incomprehensible to the majority of the population (Abdulrazak 28).

As time passed after the end of the Algerian War, governmental control of the press tightened. A law enacted in 1976 prohibited the circulation of international newspapers in Algeria, restricting the propagation of potentially unorthodox beliefs (Chapan). Algerian journalists continued to be monitored closely, but most wrote articles in line with the government's agenda without dispute. The year 1988 became significant in Algerian journalism

as it marked the first time a noteworthy group of journalists rebelled against the government. During massive protests, the Algerian army fired on crowds, killing an estimated 500 people (Gafaïti 55). Shocked that Algerian soldiers would kill their compatriots, journalists collectively decried the government that had allowed such a massacre. Around 70 journalists gathered to create the Movement of Algerian Journalists (MJA), an organization aimed at increasing independence from the Algerian government (Gafaïti 56).

The MJA was effective in pressuring the government to grant journalists more freedom in 1989. However, divisions among the journalists of the MJA caused it to disband that same year. Hafid Gafaïti, scholar of the Algerian press, writes of these divisions: “In general, arabophone journalists had considered their francophone colleagues too ‘political’ and committed to Western-type liberal ideas instead of defending the nationalist principles and traditional values of the country, such as Islam and the Arabic language.” In this case, language correlated with political leanings, with journalists writing in Arabic more likely to support the Algerian establishment, and those writing in French more likely to criticize an authoritarian regime.

In the early 1990s the Algerian government changed course, and began to encourage the establishment of independent newspapers. One law even provided a three-year salary to journalists who created new, independent publications. Restrictions on the freedom of press diminished, and many new news organizations came into being, such as *Le Quotidien d’Oran* or *Le Soir d’Algerie* (Chanderli).

This liberal and fruitful journalistic atmosphere was short lived. In 1992, Algeria entered into a state of political unrest. Once again, the government expected journalists to report stories lauding its actions and demonizing its enemies. At the same time, followers of an Islamic movement targeted journalists, especially if they appeared to oppose the creation of an Islamic

republic in Algeria (Chapan). Between 1993 and 1995, more than fifty journalists were killed in Algeria. In 1999 a new Algerian government restored political order in the country. As a result, violence aimed at journalists decreased, but restrictions on journalistic freedom remained (“Freedom of the Press: Algeria”).

Today, journalism is still closely surveilled by the government, with repercussions for those who criticize the government too openly. In 2016, two media executives were arrested on fictitious charges after they aired satirical shows covering subjects such as corruption (Khettab). Algeria boasts more than 80 newspapers, but only six of these are independent of the government. Moreover, newspapers are typically printed on government-owned presses, giving officials greater control over what reaches the public (“Freedom of the Press: Algeria”).

2.1.2 Media Consumption

Effective policies aimed at educating the public have decreased illiteracy from 80 percent in 1962 to 20 percent in 2015 (United Nations Statistics Division, “Adult Literacy”). As a result, the majority of the Algerian population is now capable of reading the press. Therefore, the relative popularity of different newspapers in French and Arabic can now be supposed to reflect the linguistic preferences of the Algerian population. However, differences in reading habit, economic power, and newspaper availability between different segments of the population can impact such popularity statistics, and should be taken into account during analysis.

No reliable information about the average circulation of printed newspapers in Algeria currently exists. The most recent data was collected in 1996, when the average daily newspaper circulation per 1,000 people was found to be 37.55 (United Nations Statistics Division, “Daily Newspapers”). This statistic indicates that, despite high literacy rates, not many Algerians accessed the press.

In 2015 a government census found that 38.2 percent of Algerians use the internet regularly (United Nations Statistics Division, “Individuals using the Internet”). The number of internet users has risen since, as 3G mobile internet was introduced into Algeria in 2015. The online news media proliferated as a result. As of 2016, more Algerians read news online than on printed newspapers (Algerie Focus – La Rédaction).

2.2 The Rise of Online News Media

The online news media serves an important role in Algeria for several reasons. First, it provides an outlet for news agencies chafing at governmental control. Not having to print physical copies of their articles on a governmental press, journalists have greater freedom to reach the public directly and to write stories more critical of the government. As a result, some newspapers that appear both in print and electronically feature different articles in each medium (“Freedom of the Press: Algeria”). Second, the internet provides Algerians with access to foreign media. The Algerian government restricts potentially subversive information spread through international news outlets, including TV broadcasts, newspapers, and radio stations. However, Algerians with access to the internet can reach foreign news agencies without governmental intervention.

The relative freedom of online news and its wide-spread popularity in Algeria makes it a useful tool in the analysis of language preference in the country, despite some drawbacks. One disadvantage of using online news sites is the lack of up-to-date statistics on how much of the Algerian population can access the internet. Another disadvantage is that the segment of the population that can access online news sites may not reflect a true cross section of the Algerian society; in other words, those who reach these websites might be, on average, more educated and presumably better French speakers. Nevertheless, Algerians are more likely to follow the news

online than they are in print form, making online sources more reflective of the overall population. The latest statistics on the popularity of news websites can be obtained easily using internet analysis programs, such as HypeStat or Alexa.

News sites dedicated to only business and sports can yield information on linguistic preferences in specific subject areas and of specific subsections of the Algerian population. Business news is expected to appeal to an audience with a higher level of education, while sports news is not expected to discriminate against those without such education. Analyzing news sites that appeal to different demographics yields a more nuanced understanding of language preference in the overall population.

Chapter 3. French and Arabic in Online News

After over a hundred years of oppressive French colonial policies and a brutal war for independence, Algerian attitudes towards France, and by extension the French language, can be described as complicated, at best. The subsequent decades of Arabization policies further pushed Algerian society, at least in theory, away from French. Therefore, an analysis of current online news media might be expected to show a high preference for Arabic news websites. However, this study shows that, while the Arabic language is favored, a significant portion of the population also reads the news in French. Moreover, despite a smaller readership, French online news sites are more common than Arabic ones.

3.1 Overview of Research Methods

The purpose of this research paper is to uncover trends in the prevalence and popularity of online news websites in French and Arabic, so as to better understand the status of each

language in Algeria. In order to address this overarching question, I quantified prevalence and popularity using 58 individual websites, which I divided and analyzed according to two different categories: 1) Website specialty: general interest, sports, or business, and 2) Website source: Algerian or non-Algerian. For all of the Algerian websites in this study, the location of at least 90 percent of the visitors was in Algeria.

The popularity of the websites is assessed by the average number of unique visitors a website attracts per day. The number of unique visitors reaching a website should not be confused with the number of times a website is viewed. One person can check a website several times a day, creating a superficially high website popularity. However, the use of the number of unique visitors avoids this confounding variable. HypeStat, an internet statistics and analytics service, provided website visitor information. Alexa, another internet statistics program, contributed information on the demographics of specific website visitors, especially in assessing education level.

3.2 Algerian Online News

3.2.1 General Interest News Organizations

General interest news websites are unique in that they provide an all-encompassing range of news topics. As such, they attract a large audience without discriminating against specific interests, as sports or business journals might. Typically, these sites have sections for business, culture, sports, national, and international news. *The New York Times*, *BBC News*, and *The Washington Post* are examples of commonly known general interest news sites in English.

Traditional print journals, such as *El Watan*, *Ech Chorouk*, and *El Khabar*, often have corresponding online editions. These are included in the analysis of the internet news media, as

they attract a significant portion of Algerian internet users. Based on the data obtained (table 1), it seems that print journals often draw larger online audience as compared to online-only journals. This trend may be due to print journals enjoying a greater name-recognition and established reputation.

General interest news sites in French and Arabic with over 1,000 unique visitors per day are listed in tables 1 and 2. Tables 1 and 2 were used to generate the information seen in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 shows the relative number of these news sites attracting more than a 1000 visitors per day according to language. Figure 3 shows the distribution of total daily visitors of online journals according to language.

Table 1. List of General Interest News Sites, Principal Language: Arabic

News Organization	Average Daily Unique Visitors*
El Bilad	100,500
Ech Chorouk	79,000
Djelfa Info	65,000
El Khabar	56,000
El Nahar	55,500
Ouarsenis	33,900
Djazairiess	19,500
APS	5,600
Algeria Times	4,100
Akher Sa	2,500
Al Fadir	2,400
El Massa	1,800
Akhabar El Youm	1,400
El Massar	1,200

*number of visitors rounded to the nearest hundred

Source: hypestat.com

Table 2. List of General Interest News Sites, Principal Language: French

News Site	Average Daily Unique Visitors*
Liberte	37,500
Le Soir D'Algerie	29,000
Algerie Focus	17,000
TSA-Algerie	17,000
El Watan	14,200
APS	13,000

Algerie 1	12,200
Algerie 360	11,600
Le Matin	5,900
Le Quotidien D'Oran	4,700
Info Soir	4,500
Presse Dz	4,000
Le Jour D'Algerie	3,800
Le Jeune Independent	3,400
Horizons	2,900
La Depeche de Kabylie	2,100
Reporters	2,100
El Moudjahid	1,900
Reflexion	1,700

*number of visitors rounded to the nearest hundred

Source: hypestat.com

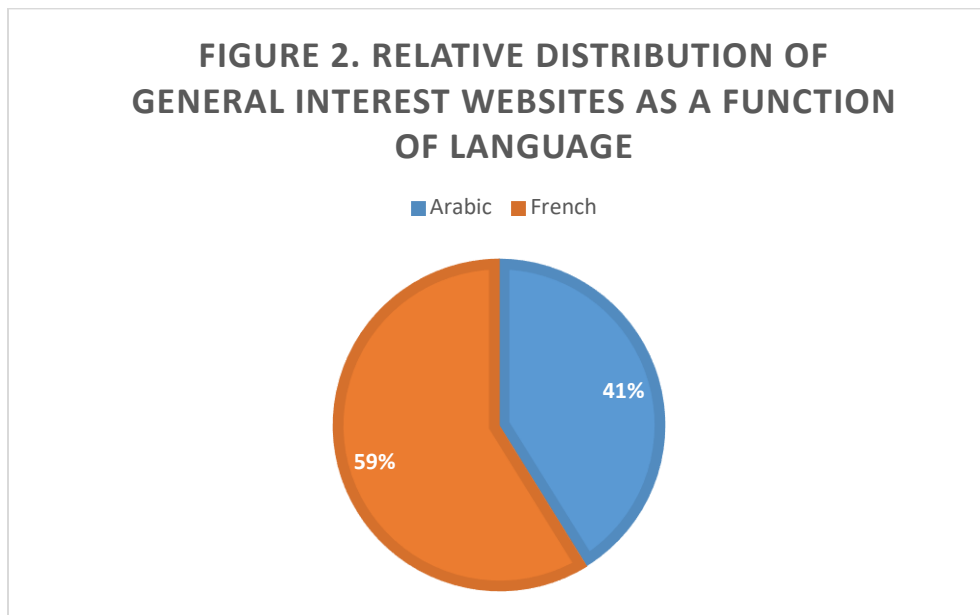


Figure 2 generated from the total number of general interest news websites in each language.

FIGURE 3. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS TO GENERAL INTEREST NEWS SITES AS A FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE

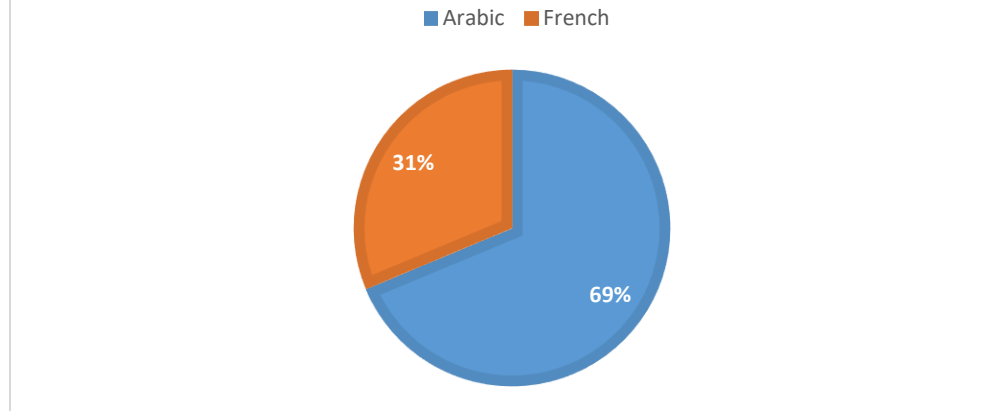


Figure 3 obtained using the total number of average daily visitors each website attracted.

The relative popularity of the French and Arabic language websites in terms of daily visitors (figure 3) is not especially surprising. Given the broad audience general interest news sites are likely to attract, the visitors of such websites might be expected to reflect the linguistic capabilities and preferences of the general population. Approximately 37 percent of the total Algerian population is literate in French and 87 percent in Arabic when bilinguals are included in the total for each category (figure 1). If the popularity of the general interest news media exactly reflected this distribution in language literacy in the Algerian population, the expected percentage of visitors to French websites would be 29.8 percent and 70.2 percent to Arabic websites¹. This expected distribution in popularity is very close to the findings presented in figure 2, with 31 percent of total visitors going to French websites, and 69 percent going to Algerian websites. In fact, the percent difference between the expected relative popularity of

¹ Expected percentage of popularity calculated as follows:
Ratio of total French: Arabic speakers is 37:87 (Based on Figure 1, bilinguals included in each category)
Relative percentage of French speakers $100 * [37 / (37 + 87)] = 29.8\%$
Relative percentage of Arabic speakers $100 * [87 / (37 + 87)] = 70.2\%$

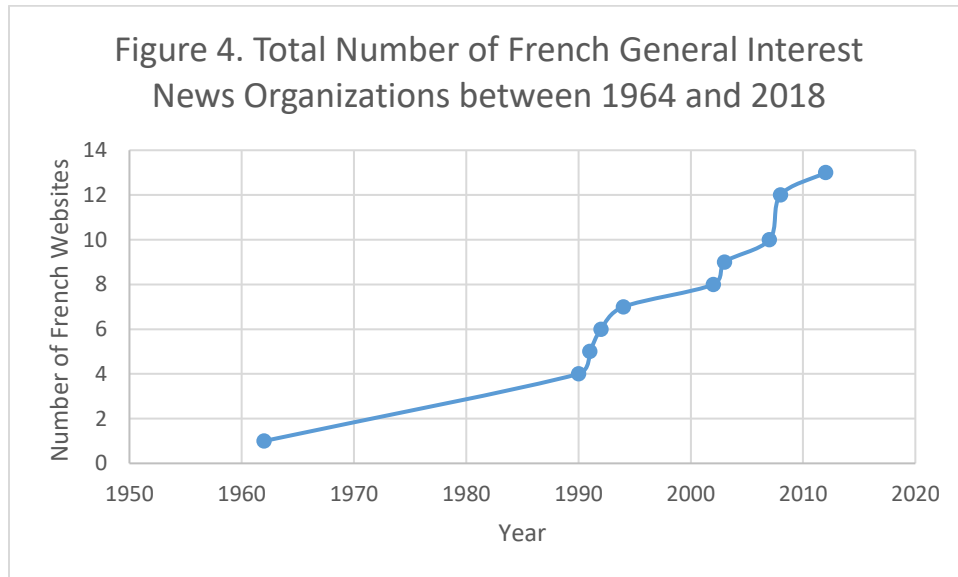
French websites and the actual popularity is 3.9 percent². Although the French websites attract slightly more visitors than predicted, this might be explained by the fact that not all Algerians have access to the internet, and those that do are more likely to have received an education, and, as a result, be more fluent in the French language. On the other hand, close to 90 percent of the Algerian population speaks Arabic at home, which might be expected to lead to a preference of reading the news, especially news relating to Algeria, in Arabic. Factors such as a desire to improve French language skills and the perceived political associations of journalism in French or Arabic might contribute to such a significant portion of readership in French.

What is surprising in these results is the clear dissociation between figures 2 and 3. French sites account for just 31 percent of the total number of visitors to general interest news websites, but they represent 59 percent of the total Algerian general interest news websites. Why are general interest websites in French attracting less visitors than those in Arabic even though French news sites are more prevalent?

One possible explanation might lie in a greater name recognition of Arabic websites. A significant portion of the Arabic online newspapers originates from print publications, whereas many of the French websites came into existence in the past three decades, and do not publish a corresponding printed version. As a consequence, the French websites are not as well known, attracting fewer visitors. Figure 4, below, shows the recent creation of thirteen of the listed French websites in table 2 (foundation years of the other sites could not be found). All except one of the news organizations were founded during or after 1990, when the government lessened restrictions on the media were lessened and decreased pressure to use only Arabic. At least five of the websites in French were founded since 2000, indicating that the demand for French is not

² Percent difference between 29.8% and 31% calculated as follows: $100 * \frac{\{31-29.8\}}{[(31+29.8)/2]} = 3.9\%$

decreasing; Moreover, the data could indicate that French websites are on the rise, and by association, the prevalence of French in Algeria.



Source: Foundation dates of 13 Algerian general interest news organizations found on their corresponding websites

The foundation years of Arabic general interest organizations in table 1 could not be found for more than five websites. Of these, only one newspaper was founded after 2000. While not enough data could be obtained to show a statistically significant trend in the creation of Arabic general interest news sites, it seems that their number is growing at a slower rate than that of French news sites.

If general interest news sites are indeed reflective of language fluency, as they appear to be based on the relative popularity of French and Arabic websites, then this information could indicate a present resurgence of French in Algeria. In any case, this data disputes any claims that French is dying out or that it will be permanently replaced by Arabic in the near future.

3.2.2 Sports News Organizations

In 1991 James Frey, an American sociologist, wrote: “Sport is a very prominent social institution in almost every society because it combines the characteristics found in any institution with a unique appeal only duplicated by, perhaps, religion.” The universal appeal of sport allows it to transcend educational boundaries. Entertaining and relatively easy to understand, sport does not discriminate against those who might find business and politics uninteresting. The only significant social group not as likely to follow sports is women (Hartmann). In a traditional society such as Algeria, where women are much less likely to participate in sports than men, this is especially true (Mezahi).

Sports news sites in Arabic and French with more than 100 unique visitors per day are listed in tables 3 and 4. Since there are fewer sports journals than other general-interest news sites, the threshold for including websites was lowered from 1,000 unique visitors to 100. Tables 3 and 4 were used to generate the information seen in Figures 5 and 6. Figure 5 shows the relative number of these news sites attracting more than a 100 visitors per day according to language. Figure 6 shows the distribution of total daily visitors of sports online journals according to language.

Table 3. List of Sports News Sites, Principal Language: Arabic

News Organization	Average Daily Unique Visitors*
El Heddaf	81,000
Echibek	55,000
El Khaber Er Riadhi	7,600

*Average unique visitors rounded to the nearest hundred

Source: hypestat.com

Table 4. List of Sports News Sites, Principal Language: French

News Organization	Average Daily Unique Visitors*
Le Buteur	21,000
Competition	7,800
DZ Foot	9,500
Algerie Football	500

*Average unique visitors rounded to the nearest hundred
Source: hypestat.com

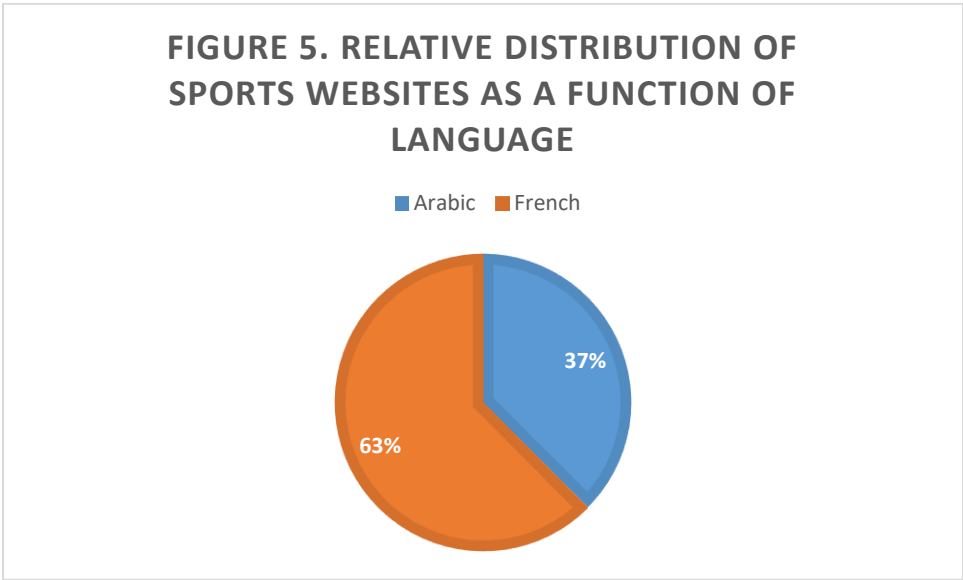


Figure 5 generated from the total number of sports news websites in each language.

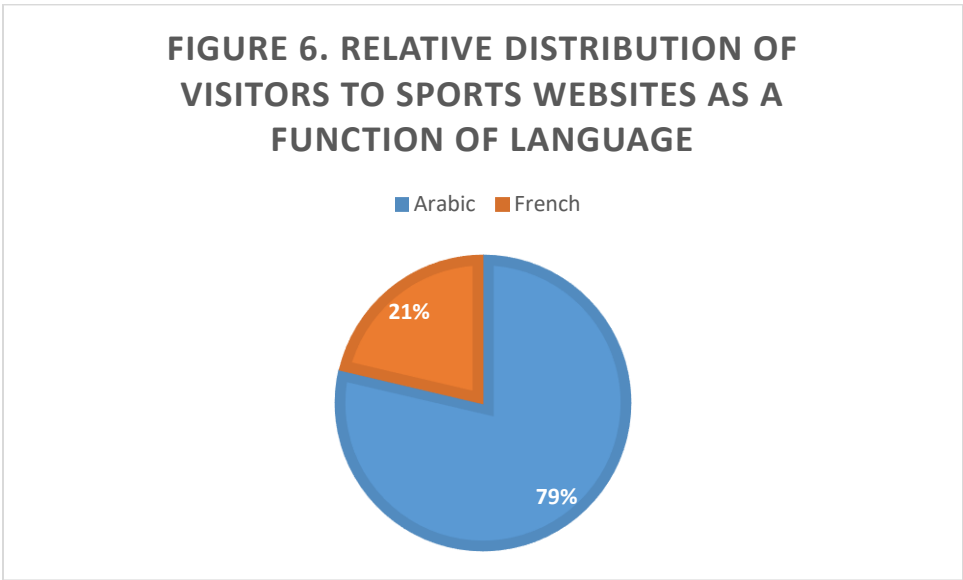
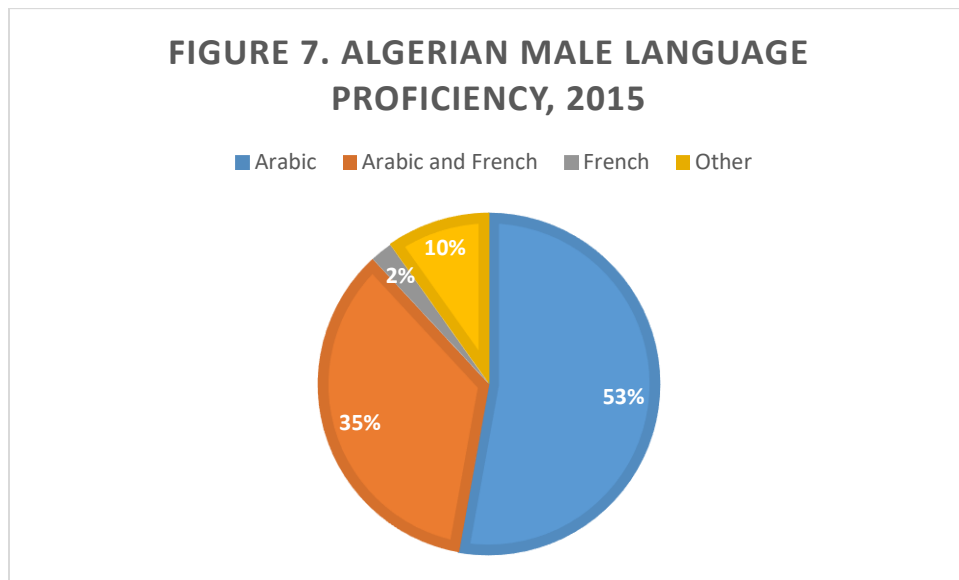


Figure 6 obtained using the total number of average daily visitors each website attracted.

Figure 6 shows the overwhelming popularity of sports news sites in Arabic as opposed to those in French. To examine why this is the case, visitor demographic data for *Le Buteur* and *El Heddaf*, the most popular sports websites in each language, was obtained using Alexa, a website

statistical service. For both websites, the number of female visitors was significantly below average while the number of male visitors was above average. However, language proficiency of Algerian men and women is too similar for visitor gender bias to account for the vast popularity of Arabic sports websites (see figures 7 and 8, below).

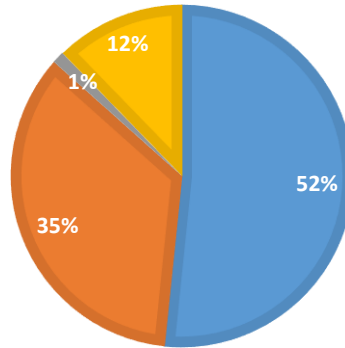
Visitor education level proved to be the most significant demographic difference between these two websites. *Le Buteur*, the French sports website, attracted visitors who had a higher-than average likelihood of having attended graduate school. For *El Heddaf*, the Arabic sports website, the opposite was true. The correlation between the French language and higher education is therefore reflected in these findings.



Source: United Nations Statistics Division, "Population by Language."

FIGURE 8. ALGERIAN FEMALE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, 2015

■ Arabic ■ Arabic and French ■ French ■ Other



Source: United Nations Statistics Division, “Population by Language.”

As is the case with the French general-interest news media, the popularity versus prevalence of French sports media exhibits a significant disparity (figures 5 and 6). Although a minority of the total visitors go to sports sites in French, these constitute over half of the total websites with over 100 daily unique visitors. This could be attributed to the same causes as the general interest media – the relatively recent creation of many of the French websites as compared to Arabic ones. However, a dearth of information on the years of creation of sports websites makes it difficult to suggest any definitive explanations.

3.2.3 Business News Organizations

Of general interest, sport, and business news, the latter attracts the narrowest population of visitors. Business lacks the universality of general interest news and the appealing nature of sports news. It is expected to attract visitors with some degree of education, as they are more apt to understand website content. Additionally, visitors of business websites are more likely to have jobs or interests in business.

All business news sites in Arabic and French registered as Algerian websites are shown in tables 5 and 6. Since there are few Algerian business websites, and these attract an a priori small audience, a minimum value of daily visitors was not used to eliminate any of them. Tables 5 and 6 were used to generate the information seen in Figures 9 and 10. Figure 9 shows the relative number of business news sites according to language. Figure 10 shows the distribution of total daily visitors of business news sites according to language.

Table 5. List of Business News Sites, Principal Language: Arabic

News Organization	Average Daily Unique Visitors
Algeria Business Info	100

Source: hypestat.com

Table 6. List of Business News Sites, Principal Language: French

News Organization	Average Daily Unique Visitors
Le Maghreb	2,500
Transaction D'Algerie	553
Les Chiffres D'Affaires	50
Le Journal D'Affaires	15
L'Actuel	10

Source: hypestat.com

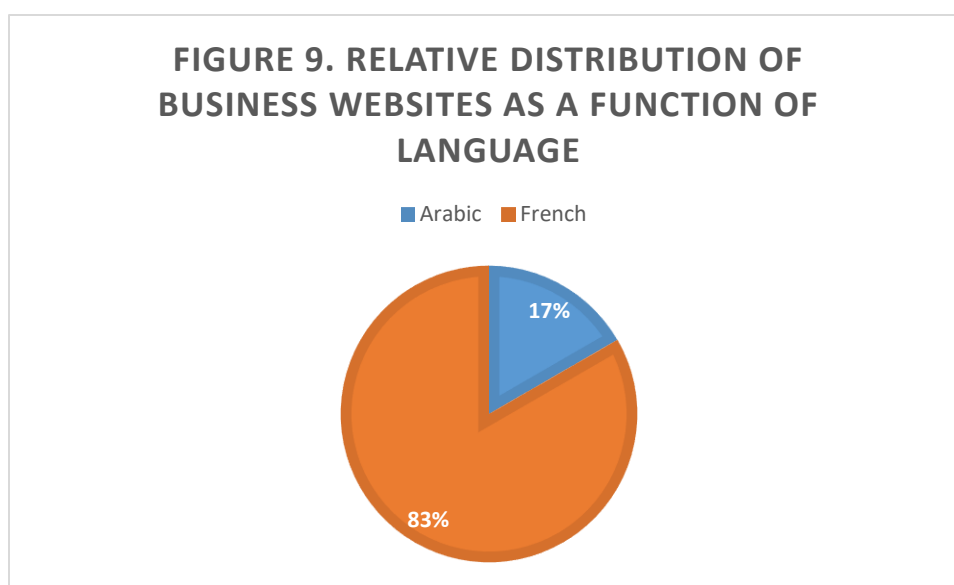


Figure 9 generated from the total number of sports news websites in each language.

FIGURE 10. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF VISITORS TO BUSINESS WEBSITES AS A FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE

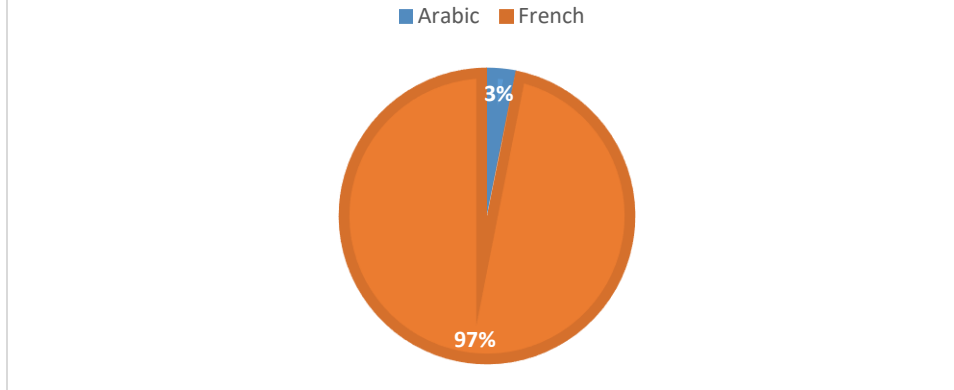


Figure 10 obtained using the total number of average daily visitors each website attracted.

Figure 9 shows the significant popularity of French business websites in comparison to Arabic ones. Figure 10 reflects this difference in popularity by showing that a minority of business websites are in Arabic. Demographic data was only available for the most popular business website, *Le Maghreb*. It showed that website visitors have a significantly higher than average rate of having attended graduate school. Since French is the principal language used in Algerian universities, a bias towards educated visitors would also imply a bias towards a working knowledge of the French language (Hassain). French is known to dominate the economic sector of Algerian society, and the results shown in figure 6 are in complete agreement with this observation (Benrabah).

3.3 International Online News Media

Access to the internet provides people with a unique opportunity to read news from foreign websites. Just as Americans might gather their information from *BBC News*, so too might Algerians from well-known international websites in French and Arabic. For the past several decades, Algerians have lived under a government that censors the Algerian press, and might be

wary of the information presented by the Algerian media. As a result, one could expect that many Algerians seek information from non-Algerian news sources. If true, information regarding the language preference of Algerians seeking such news would be essential to gaining a deeper understanding of the overall Algerian language preferences.

The number of Algerian visitors to the five most popular non-Algerian online news websites in Arabic and French is shown in tables 7 and 8, below. All the websites fall into the category of general-interest news. Only the top five websites in each language are shown, as less popular ones attracted an average of fewer than 1,000 daily visitors from Algeria. The Algerian general-interest websites listed in tables 1 and 2 have a minimum of precisely 1,000 daily visitors. The same threshold value for Algerian and international general-interest sites allows for a direct comparison between the two samples.

Table 7. Top Five Non-Algerian News Sites in Arabic with Algerian Visitors

News Organization	Global Daily Unique Visitors*	% Visitors from Algeria	Average Daily Visitors from Algeria
Youm 7	393,700	1.96	7,717
Aljazeera	173,500	8.00	13,880
Al Bayan	84,900	3.50	2,972
Ahram	69,500	2.40	1,668
Asharq Al-Awsat	36,900	4.22	1,557

*Average daily visitors rounded to the nearest hundred

Source: hypstat.com

Table 8. Top Five Non-Algerian News Sites in French with Algerian Visitors

News Organization	Global Average Daily Visitors	% Visitors from Algeria	Average Daily Visitors from Algeria
Le Monde	555,000	1.10	6,105
Le Figaro	525,000	1.30	6,825
L'Internaute	331,500	2.90	9,614
20 Minutes	321,000	1.00	3,210
France 24	107,000	2.60	2,782

*Average daily visitors rounded to the nearest hundred

Source: hypstat.com

FIGURE 11. RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ALGERIAN VISITORS TO INTERNATIONAL NEWS SITES AS A FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE

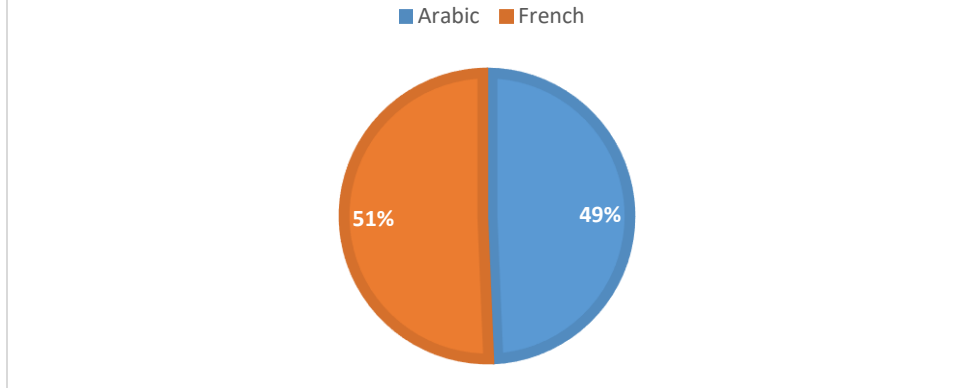


Figure 11 obtained using the total amount of daily unique visitors to websites in each language found in tables 7 and 8.

Since all of the international websites fall into the category of general-interest news, they could be anticipated to show similar visitor distributions between French and Arabic, as seen in the case of Algerian general interest news. Figure 3 presented Algerian websites using French as attracting 31 percent of total visits, and Algerian websites using Arabic as attracting 69 percent. The results for international news sites, presented in figure 11, are therefore unexpected. They show an almost even distribution between visitors choosing news in French and Arabic. The percent difference between the actual popularity of international French websites and their expected popularity based on population language literacy is 52.5 percent³.

Without detailed demographic statistics on the Algerians visiting international sites, an explanation of the surprising popularity of international news sites in French as opposed to Arabic is hard to find. One plausible justification could be that Algerians who receive an advanced education acquire more exposure to international news organizations and therefore are

³ Percent difference between 29.8% and 51% calculated as follows: $100 * \frac{[51-29.8]}{[(51+29.8)/2]} = 52.5\%$

the principal group accessing these websites. Since well-educated Algerians are demonstrably more fluent in French than other groups, this could account for the disparity between the expected and obtained results. No data exists support definitively this hypothesis, however.

Figure 12, below, shows the relative numbers of Algerian visitors to Algerian versus non-Algerian general interest news websites. Compared to the popularity of Algerian websites, international ones attract very little traffic. Given the far greater sample of Algerians visiting Algerian news sites, it can be surmised that the conclusions based on Algerian website visitors are much more reflective of the Algerian population as a whole.

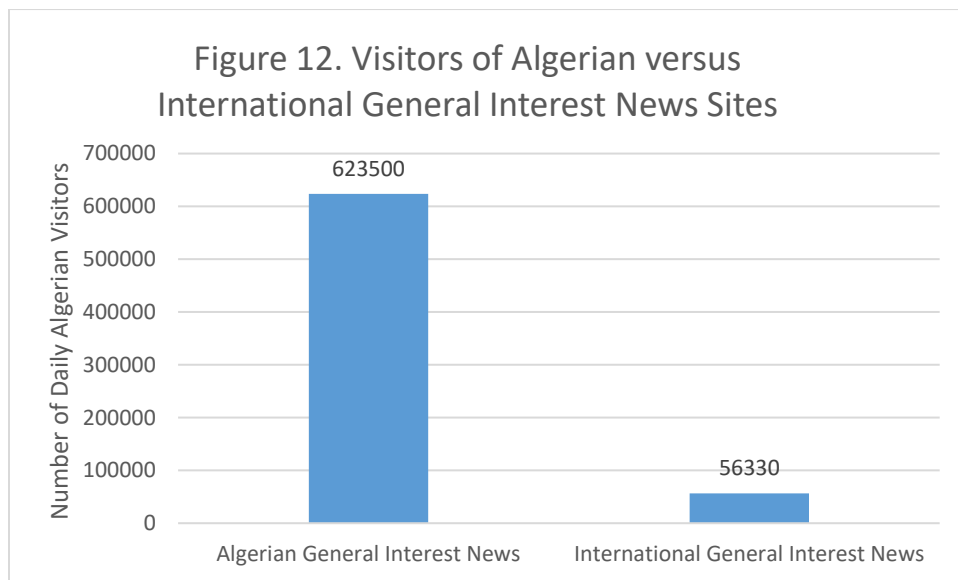


Figure 12 shows a comparison between the total Algerian visitors to Algerian and non-Algerian general interest news sites. Only websites with more than 1,000 daily unique visitors are included.

3.4 Discussion of Results

The data on popularity and prevalence of online news sites yields both expected and unexpected results. Websites in Arabic are more popular in the categories of general interest and sports, while websites in French are more popular in the category of business. This indicates that

Arabic dominates in unspecialized, every-day subject areas. Since most Algerians speak Arabic in familial settings, this result is hardly surprising (Hassain).

While websites in Arabic capture the majority of visitors seeking sports and general interest news, websites in French still manage to attract a not-insignificant audience: 31 percent of general interest website visitors, and 21 percent of sports website visitors. These percentages roughly correlate with the percentage of Algerians who speak French, 37 percent. Almost all of the French-speaking Algerians are bilingual (see figure 1) and could access websites in Arabic if they wished. However, it appears that a significant portion of Algerian bilinguals chooses to read general interest and sports news in French. Algerian business websites in French are more popular than those in Arabic, which reflects observations made by scholars that French predominates in business and university settings (Benrabah).

Surprisingly, there were more websites in French than in Arabic across all three categories, even though they had overall fewer readers. Some cursory data suggests that the recent creation of many of the websites in French, which do not yet enjoy widespread name recognition, could be responsible for this trend. However, more data would have to be obtained to better support this possibility. It is possible that despite attracting a smaller audience, French websites remain lucrative sources of revenue from advertising companies. The French-speaking portion of the Algerian population holds most of the political as well as economic power in the country. Therefore, advertisements targeting this segment of the population might be very profitable, leading to substantial sources of revenue for French online news sites.

Based on the overall results of the research, French shows a high degree of relevance in online news media, perhaps higher than might be expected given 50 years of Arabization. Lingual policies in post-independent Algeria made an impact on the Algerian population, but not

in the way many envisioned. In Algeria under French rule, the masses spoke Arabic but could not read or write in the language, with only a minor portion attending French schools. On the eve of the Algerian War, only 6 percent of men and 2 percent of women were literate in French (Heggoy 190). Since then, illiteracy rates have plummeted, and the principal language of average Algerians remains Arabic. However, approximately 37 percent of the population is now also fluent in French. Far from erasing the French language from Algerian society, the period of Arabization witnessed an increase in the proportion of French-speaking Algerians. Moreover, it is clear from online media analysis in this paper that the 37 percent census statistics reflects a segment of the population that not only has the *capability* of speaking and reading in French, but one that also actively *uses* the French language.

The unexpected rise in French speakers and the daily use of French could be linked to the language's continued grip on higher education and the rise of the Algerian middle class. A 2010 study lists Algeria as one of five African countries with the highest concentration of middle-class families (Deloitte). As more Algerians move into the middle-class social sector, more people are likely to obtain higher levels of education. The French language remains synonymous with Algerian higher education, so logically, the level of French speakers should rise.

It seems, therefore, that Arabization policies have not eradicated French because they have failed to replace French with Arabic in spheres of higher education. If French remains the principal language in the domain of education, it will foreseeably continue to thrive and grow in Algerian society.

Conclusion

Language, the cornerstone of human identity, defines which society we belong to, impacts how we perceive the world, perhaps even influences our personality. The forced imposition of one language over another is therefore a particularly cruel method of exerting power, as it rocks the very foundations of identity and society. Nonetheless, Algerian history has succeeded in blurring the difference between the language of politics and the politics of language over the course of hundreds of years of attempted language control.

The overarching purpose of this paper was to examine the effects of French colonial policies and the following period of Arabization on the lingual preferences of the Algerian population. Statistical analysis of the prevalence and popularity of online news in French and Arabic revealed not only that the French language is in use, but that it is in greater use than it was at the time of French rule. This finding suggests that French colonial policies made a lasting imprint on Algerian society, while Arabization policies proved incapable of fulfilling their very purpose – the eradication of French, a remnant of Algeria’s colonial past.

The success of colonial policies and parallel failure of Arabization policies seems to be tied to the domination of French in higher education. If Algeria’s middle class continues to rise, and with it the average level of education, French will continue to flourish.

Works Cited

- Abdulrazak, Fawzi. "Arabization in Algeria." *MELA Notes*, no. 26, 1982, pp. 22–43.
- Algerie Focus – La Rédaction. "Projet pour un pacte d'avenir/ Les médias électroniques plus fort potentiel pour développer des contenus algériens sur Internet." *Algerie Focus*, 12 Nov, 2017.
- Aït, Ahmed H. "Algeria's Struggle for Independence." *Pakistan Horizon*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1955, pp. 284–294.
- . *Mémoires D'un Combattant: Document*. Paris, France: S. Messinger, 1983.
- Aslan, Senem. *Nation Building in Turkey and Morocco*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Barbour, Nevill, et al. "Tunisia." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 18 Jan, 2018. Accessed 9 Feb, 2018.
- Benrabah, Mohamed. "The Language Planning Situation in Algeria." *Language Planning and Policy in Africa: Vol. 2*. ed. Richard B Baldauf, and Robert B. Kaplan. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2007.
- Catroux, Georges. "France, Tunisia and Morocco." *International Journal*, vol. 9, no. 4, 1954, pp. 282–294.
- Chaker, Salem. "Berber Challenge in Algeria: The State of the Question." *Race, Gender & Class*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2001, pp. 135–156.
- Chanderli, Abdel Kader, et al. "Algeria." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 13 Feb, 2018. Accessed 14 Feb, 2018.
- Chapan Metz, Helen, ed. *Algeria: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1994.
- Choi, Sung. "The Muslim Veteran in Postcolonial France: The Politics of the Integration of Harkis After 1962." *French Politics, Culture & Society*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2011, pp. 24–45.
- Cohen, William B. "The Algerian War, the French State and Official Memory." *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2002, pp. 219–239.
- Cooke, James J. "Tricolour and Crescent: Franco-Muslim Relations in Colonial Algeria, 1880-1940." *Islamic Studies*, vol. 29, no.1, 1990, pp.57-75.
- Coryell, Schofield. "France: The Death of an Illusion." *Africa Today*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1961, pp. 4–14.
- Damis, John. "Developments in Morocco under the French Protectorate, 1925-1943." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 24, no. 1, 1970, pp. 74–86.
- Daum, Pierre. "Q&A: What Really Happened to Algeria's Harkis." *Aljazeera*, 22 Aug 2015.
- Deloitte. "The Rise and Rise of the African Middle Class." *Deloitte.com*, 2010.
- Ekkehard Wolff. "Berber languages." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 26 Sept., 2016. Accessed 12 Dec. 2017.

- Ferry, J. F. C. (1897). Speech before the French Chamber of Deputies, March 28, 1884. Discours.
- “Freedom of the Press: Algeria.” *Freedom House*, 2014.
- Frey, James H., and D. Stanley Eitzen. “Sport and Society.” *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 17, 1991, pp. 503–522.
- Gafaïti, Hafid. “Power, Censorship, and the Press: The Case of Postcolonial Algeria.” *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 30, no. 3, 1999, pp. 51–61.
- Hartmann, Douglas. “The Sanctity of Sunday Football: Why Men Love Sports.” *Contexts*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2003, pp. 13–21.
- Hassain, Farah. *French and Algerian Arabic in a Bilingual Situation: A Case Study of Tlemcen Speech Community*. Dissertation, Aboubekr Belkaid University, 2011.
- Heggo, Alf Andrew. “Education in French Algeria: An Essay on Cultural Conflict.” *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1973, pp. 180–197.
- Horne, Alistair. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962*. New York Review of Books, 2006.
- Hubbell, Amy L. “The Wounds of Algeria in Pied-Noir Autobiography.” *Dalhousie French Studies*, vol. 81, 2007, pp. 59–68.
- Kashani-Sabet, Firoozeh. “The Swinging Pendulum: Linguistic Controversy in Post-Colonial Algeria.” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 32, no. 4, 1996, pp. 264–280.
- Khettab, Djamila Ould. “Algerian Media Faces ‘Hostile’ Environment.” *Aljazeera*, 15 July, 2016.
- Kohn, Margaret. “Empire's Law: Alexis De Tocqueville on Colonialism and the State of Exception.” *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne De Science Politique*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2008, pp. 255–278.
- Kraft, Joseph. “Settler Politics in Algeria.” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1961, pp. 591–600.
- Mazouni, Abdallah. *Culture Et Enseignement En Algérie Et Au Maghreb*. Paris: Maspero, 1969.
- McDougall, James. “Dream of Exile, Promise of Home: Language, Education, and Arabism in Algeria.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2011, pp. 251–270.
- Mendès-France, Pierre. “Reaction to the Incident in Algeria.” 1954, French National Assembly, Paris. Speech.
- Meynier, Gilbert. “Algerians and the First World War.” *Orient XXI*. 10 May, 2016.
- Mezahi, Maher. “Soumaia Fergani: The only woman in Algerian stadiums.” *BBC News*, 9 March, 2016.
- Micaud, Charles A. “Bilingualism in North Africa: Cultural and Sociopolitical Implications.” *The Western Political Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 1, 1974, pp. 92–103.

- Miller, Susan, et al. "Morocco." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 23 Nov, 2017. Accessed 2 Feb, 2018.
- Mitch, David. "Education and Skill of the British Labour Force," in Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain, Vol. I: Industrialisation, 1700-1860*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. p. 344.
- Murray-Miller, Gavin. "A Conflicted Sense of Nationality: Napoleon III's Arab Kingdom and the Paradoxes of French Multiculturalism." *French Colonial History*, vol. 15, 2014, pp. 1–38.
- Öztürk, Osman. "Basic Principles of Primary School Education in the Ottoman Empire." *Islam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi*, vol. 7, no. 1/2, Jan. 1978, pp. 213-220.
- Pervillé, Guy, and Meynier, Gilbert. "L'Algérie révélée: La guerre de 1914-1918 et le premier quart du XXe siècle". *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, vol. 37, no. 4, 1982, pp. 839-841.
- Queffelec, Ambroise, et al. *Le français en Algérie: lexique et dynamique des langues*. Bruxelles: Duculot, 2002. Print.
- Ruedy, John. "Land Policy in Colonial Algeria: The Origins of the Rural Public Domain." Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
- Saadallah, Belkacem. "The Rise of the Algerian Elite, 1900-14." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1967, pp. 69–77.
- Sparks, Benjamin. *The War without a Name: The Use of Propaganda in the Decolonization War of Algeria*. Dissertation, Brigham Young University, 2011.
- St. John, Peter. "Independent Algeria from Ben Bella to Boumédiène: I. The Counter-Revolution and Its Consequences." *The World Today*, vol. 24, no. 7, 1968, pp. 290–296.
- Taleb, Ibrahimi K, and Gilbert Grandguillaume. *Les Algériens et leur(s) langue(s): Éléments pour une approche sociolinguistique de la société Algérienne*. 2nd Ed, Alger: Editions el Hikma, 1997.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de. 2001. "Writings on Empire and Slavery", ed. and trans. Jennifer Pitts. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- United Nations Statistics Division. "Algeria: Adult Literacy Rate." *United Nations*.
- . "Algeria: Daily newspapers - Total average circulation per 1,000 inhabitants." *United Nations*.
- . "Algeria: Population by language, sex and urban/rural residence." *United Nations*.
- . "Algeria: Proportion of individuals using the Internet." *United Nations*.
- Vatin, Nicolas. "Note sur L'entrée d'Alger sous la souveraineté ottomane (1519-1521)." *Turcica: Revue D'Etudes Turques*, vol. 44, June 2012, pp. 131-166. EBSCOhost, doi:10.2143/TURC.44.0.2988848.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922.

Zack, Lizabeth. "Who Fought the Algerian War? Political Identity and Conflict in French-Ruled Algeria." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, vol. 16, no. 1, 2002, pp. 55–97.