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Faculty of Letters and Languages

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**Investigating the Impact of Learning 'English', 'French' and 'Arabic'  
on the Algerian Students' Cultural Identities (clothing, gender  
status and language)**

**The Case of Master 01 Students of English, French, and Arabic at the  
Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University/Jijel**

*Dissertation* submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for *Master Degree in  
English in Foreign Language Didactics*

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**Dedication**

*In The Name of Allah Most Merciful Most Compassionate*

*I would like to dedicate this humble work to*

*My beloved mother*

*- Menouba*

*I would like to dedicate this humble work to*

*My beloved father*

*-Amina*

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### **Abstract**

The study of a foreign language entails the learning of a different language and culture. Accordingly, the experience of foreign language learning may influence the students' cultural identities. The present work compared the impact of foreign language learning on the English and the French language students' cultural identities with that of Arabic counterparts in terms of clothing, gender status, and language. It was hypothesized that the foreign language students' cultural identities are influenced by foreign language. In order to examine this research concern, an online questionnaire duplicated in three different languages (English, French, and Arabic) was administered to 180 Master one students in three fields of study at Mohamed Saddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel. After analyzing and comparing the questionnaire results, it was found out that the students of English and French are almost equally affected by the target language being exposed to its culture. More specifically, the results revealed that, first, the foreign language students had different styles and views from their Arabic counterparts concerning clothes and fashion; second, the status of gender is perceived differently by the foreign language learners and those of the Arabic language; third, the foreign language students favour their language of specialty over their mother tongue more than the students of Arabic do. Hence, the overall findings of this study underscore the necessity for syllabus designers to consider the aspect of the students' cultural identities in language learning programs and for teachers to understand their learners' identities in order to address the target culture accordingly.

Key words: Clothing, cultural identity, foreign language learning, gender status, language.

**List of Abbreviations**

**Big “C”:** Big Culture

**CBA:** Competency-Based Approach

**CNRSE:** The National Commission for the Reform of the Educational System

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**FL:** Foreign Language

**LMD:** License, Master, and Doctorate

**Q:** Question

**SLA:** Second Language Acquisition

**Small “c”:** Small Culture

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## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

### General Introduction

#### 1. Background of the Study

As identity is the core of individuals' personality, numerous studies have tried to investigate the impact of language teaching and learning on the different levels of identity (e.g. Norton, 1997). Within the same vein, many researchers have focused on the link between teaching or learning a foreign language and one's cultural identity. For instance, Baghi and Ashraf (2015) investigated the impact of EFL teachers' length of experience in language teaching on their cultural identity. In doing so, they administered a questionnaire that sought to find out whether teaching English would have any impact on the degree of their Iranian culture attachment. Surprisingly, the results indicated that there is no relationship between the two variables. Another study, however, showed different results despite being conducted in the same context. Rezaei and Bahrami (2019) Sought to probe the cultural identity of Iranian EFL teachers. The results of the study showed that the Iranian EFL teachers were not highly attached to their Iranian culture.

Correspondingly, many studies have showed mixed results with regards to the impact of foreign language learning on learners' cultural identities. For instance, Seppälä (2011) tried to investigate how English language learning has affected the cultural identity of Chinese university students. To accomplish this, a questionnaire was filled out by (78) students and (8) participants were interviewed. The findings highlighted the influence of English language learning on Chinese students' cultural identities. That is, the results suggested that Chinese English students favor both cultures. Studying English has expanded their understanding to a wider view of the world. Hence, these students were very interested in Westerners mode of life such as their freedom and self-independence. More importantly, Chinese English students seemed to adequately adapt some foreign cultural aspects to their cultural identities.

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The reviewed literature about the influence of foreign language learning on cultural identity reveals limited studies in Algeria. In spite of that, there are some research papers and studies conducted on foreign language learning in the Algerian context. For instance, Boukerkour (2016) investigated the effects of learning English as a foreign language on third year High school students of Salaheddine El-Ayoubi in Batna. This study aimed to shed light on the influence of learning English as a foreign language on learners' psychological and sociological behavior. The results obtained from the questionnaire revealed that personal features such as physical, mental, emotional, and social features of individuals are influenced by the process of learning English as a foreign language. Another study was conducted by Mellit and Boulkhodra (2016) aimed at investigating the process of identity reconstruction mediated by the study of French and English in order to improve the cultural component of the curriculum. The results highlighted the relationship between the exposure of foreign language learning and the students' identities in the context of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University. The study pointed out that the students of French and English have developed positive attitudes towards these languages and towards the Western culture which they perceive as superior and highly favorable.

Since identity refers to one's sense of self in general, many studies have focused on the term identity as a whole. It is necessary to highlight that identity is of several levels. Such levels include, but not limited to, social identity, self identity, and cultural identity. This makes the concept of identity very broad to investigate with regards to foreign language learning. Nevertheless, for successfully probing the influence of a foreign language in the Algerian context, one identity aspect should be studied. Thus, cultural identity is the chosen variable for this study because people's daily representations and beliefs reflect their cultural identities. The present study then, aims at investigating the impact of foreign language learning on the Algerian students' cultural identities.



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### 2. Statement of the Problem

Foreign language learning is defined as the process of learning another language other than the native language of a particular country. However, such foreign learning does not solely entail the mastery of grammar and vocabulary, but also the use of language in its cultural context. Consequently, foreign language learning has witnessed many controversial views as concerns its influence on the students' identities. For instance, Toohey (2000) suggested that learners' identities are negotiated, constructed, and shaped while learning a language, while Block (2007) argued that "the foreign language (FL) context provides few opportunities for the emergence of significant new subject positions mediated by the target language (TL)" (p. 113).

In the present circumstances, many learners claim that the Algerian students of foreign languages, English and French, tend to manifest themselves differently when compared to other students of different majors such as Arabic language students. These differences are claimed to be remarkable at the level of their cultural identity, but such claims remain questionable. In this regard, cultural identity refers to a sense of belonging to a particular society where its members share a similar cultural system that includes aspects such as norms, clothes, race, beliefs, religion, gender, and language (Chen, 2014). Therefore, the main concern of the present study is to investigate the impact of foreign language learning on the Algerian students' cultural identities emphasizing three components; clothing, gender, and language.

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### 3. Research Questions

In light of all the above, the present study poses three questions:

- 1- Do Algerian foreign language (English and French) students and Arabic language students have different clothing styles?
- 2- Do Algerian foreign language students and Arabic language students have controversial views concerning gender status?
- 3- Do Algerian foreign language students favor the foreign language over their mother tongue compared to Arabic language students?

### 4. Aim and Significance of the Study

In light of the above questions, this study aims at investigating the impact of foreign language learning (English and French) on the Algerian students' cultural identities and examining whether the cultural identity identifiers, namely, clothing, gender, and language, differ between foreign language students (English and French) and Arabic language students.

The present study could be a significant endeavor for syllabus designers, decision makers, and educators for fostering awareness about teaching foreign languages and revealing the potential influence of a foreign language on students' cultural identities. Hence, this study could enlighten educators and syllabus designers to consider appropriate implementations of teaching foreign languages.

### 5. Hypothesis

- The current research paper is based on the following hypothesis:
- The majority of students' cultural identities are influenced by foreign language learning (English and French).

## **6. Research Methodology**

In order to test the hypothesis of this study, a duplicate questionnaire of three versions, namely, English, French, and Arabic, will be respectively and randomly administered to a sample of sixty (60) master one students at each of the aforementioned levels at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel.

## **7. Structure of the Study**

The study at hand consists of two chapters; the first is theoretical and the second is practical. The first chapter is divided into two sections. The first section takes a broader look at the Algerian linguistic situation emphasizing the history, status, and teaching approaches of French and English. The second section, however, deals with cultural identity focusing on its three identifiers, namely, clothing, gender, and language. As far as the second chapter is concerned, it constitutes of three sections. The first section describes the methodology of research, the second section deals with data analysis, and the final section tackles the discussion of the results.

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## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

### Introduction

The notion of language learning and cultural identity has attracted much interest recently. Such interest, however, were mainly directed to second language acquisition. That is to say, few studies have explored the relationship between foreign language learning and people's cultural identities. Hence, the present study attempts to address this gap by investigating the influence of foreign language learning, namely, French and English, on the students' cultural identities in the Algerian context. Speaking of the Algerian context, the first section of this chapter opens with the history of languages in Algeria including its official languages (Berber/Tamazight, Arabic) and foreign ones (English, French). After discussing the linguistic situation of Algeria, further titles will tackle the status of both English and French in Algeria, and finally, the approaches for teaching these languages are introduced. The second section, on the other hand, addresses the concept of cultural identity. It starts with a definition of culture and its two types. It further deals with culture and its relationship to foreign language teaching, and finally, to identity. Similarly, identity is also defined and introduced in foreign language contexts. After the two terms are covered, the concept of cultural identity is introduced and reviewed with an emphasis on its three identifiers (i.e., clothing, gender, and language). Finally, and most importantly, a transition is made to the core topic of the present study, namely, cultural identity and foreign language learning.

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### 1.1.1. Overview on the History of Language Education in Algeria

After Algeria had gained independence in 1962, several policies were put in place to restore traditional, social, religious, and cultural values (Miliani, 2012). The purpose of such policies was to overcome the assimilationist process that was imposed on the country during the period of colonization (Heggoy, 1973). In fact, the assimilation had serious impacts on the Algerian people. Dunwoodie (2006) stated that “Algeria became French by right of conquest and through the colonizing efforts indigenous Algerians –Arabs and Berbers – underwent a process of acculturation and identity reconstruction” (p. 64). In addition to that, about 90% of the Algerian population was illiterate by the time of independence (Holt, 1994).

Given these points, post-independence decision-makers chose promoting a mono-cultural policy of nation-building. Thus, strict policies of Arabization were launched in all areas including the social, educational, and cultural life (Miliani, 2012). According to Benrabah (2005), Arabization meant to eradicate all traces of the French presence in Algeria. In this regard, Arabization is defined as follows.

In North African countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), which were former French colonies, ta'rib means the replacement of French by Arabic in all walks of life (education, administration, milieu, media, etc.) as well as the use of the latter language as an instrument for national unity and the affirmation of an identity that is exclusively Arab. (Benrabah, 2005, p. 410)

In other words, with regards to the Algerian context, Arabization refers to the process of replacing the French influence by adapting the Arabic language and culture. In fact, Arabization was essential for the de-colonization process. That being the case, the authorities put into operation a systematic Arabization without adequate means, ignoring the warnings of Algerian intellectuals who expected negative outcomes (Benrabah, 2014). What they

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considered as important was that the Arabic sessions increased at all levels and all subjects were taught in Arabic. French then, was taught as a subject and it was the first mandatory foreign language while English was regarded as a second foreign language (Benrabah, 2007).

However, the process of Arabization failed. Ironically, Algeria became the second largest French-speaking community in the world (Oberlé, 2004 as cited in Benrabah, 2014). One of the reasons behind such failure is due to the ignorance of the country's diverse socio-cultural heritage (Miliani, 2012). In addition to this, Algeria experienced a complex language situation which had resulted from diglossia (i.e., Classical Arabic as the high variety and Algerian Arabic dialect as the low variety), along with having untrained teaching staff. But more importantly, Arabization failed because it was based on the ideology of re-Islamising the country (Miliani, 2012).

In 1970, the Ministry of Education had been divided into three independent ministries, namely, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Islamic Education (Benrabah, 2005). Furthermore, a new schooling system was launched in 1976. This system promoted a fundamental school that combined primary and middle school. In this regard, all subjects were taught in Arabic except for foreign languages and scientific subjects such as mathematics and biology (Rezig, 2011). Moreover, further reforms took place with regards to foreign languages teaching. According to Rezig (2011), 1993's experimental program meant to give the opportunity to choose between French and English as a compulsory foreign language in order to enhance foreign languages teaching (Rezig, 2011). The program, however, was abandoned because the majority of parents preferred French.

Despite the failure of some policies, the literacy rate went up from around 10% in 1962 to 52% in 1990, and rose to 70% at the beginning of the new millennium. This increase



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in literacy rate resulted from the increase in the number of enrollments in primary and secondary schools; it rose from 3.9 million in 1979 to 7.8 million in 2003, and then up to 8.2 million in September 2011 (Benrabah, 2014).

As far as high education is concerned, the Algerian universities underwent several reforms as well. At the beginning, a system based on the French model was adapted. However, apart from the fact that French was widely used for instructional purposes (Benrabah, 1999), this system caused hardships for students who were instructed in Arabic in previous stages; consequently, they were weak in French (Allal, 2005; Mauz & Rouadjia, 2005). Moreover, further reforms were introduced in 1971 and 1988 to modernize the university system. Nevertheless, the universities were still following the French model, and French was still the language of instruction (Rezig, 2011).

Ultimately, in 2003, the Algerian authorities launched the Reform of National Education. This time they highlighted competency-based education. In the meanwhile, the Higher Education Reform undertook the License, Master, and Doctorate (LMD) model in an attempt to catch up with most Western European countries (Miliani, 2012).

To cut it short, despite that this whole series of policies and reforms meant to construct an Algerian identity, it had also created a unique linguistic context in Algeria. In fact, the historical development of the Algerian educational system explains the status of the foreign and the native languages, and how they are presented in the Algerian classroom. This is in order to point out any potential impacts of the foreign language learning process on the cultural identity.

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### 1.1.2. Official Languages in Algeria

It is necessary to identify the difference between an official language and a national language. According to Holmes (1992), an official language is the state given to a particular language to be used in official settings, such as administration and parliament. On the other hand, a national language is a language spoken by the majority of residents of the country. That is to say, it refers to the users' rate of the language. On this account, there are two official languages in today's Algeria; Arabic as specified in the constitution of 1963 and Tamazight (Berber) since the revision of the constitution in 2016.

#### 1.1.2.1. Berber (Tamazight)

Historically speaking, the original population of North Africa in general, and Algeria in particular are the Berbers. Their existence dates back to at least 2000 years BCE. According to Benrabah (2014), Berbers were unsuccessful as rulers, for that they allowed several foreign groups to dominate their lands. However, they remained monolingual in Berber, except the few urban centers located along the coast where bilingualism and multilingualism became the norm (Benrabah, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, two foreign settlements left a deep impact on Algeria's linguistic profile; the Arabs and the French. When Arabs came from the East to spread their religion, North Africans gradually converted to Islam. Most of the population had become Sunni Muslims thus introducing Arabic was something necessary (Gellner 1973). Therefore, "the Arabic language spread progressively, and more and more Berbers abandoned their mother tongue to become Arabophones" (Ageron, 1993; Julien, 1994 as cited in Berabah, 2014, p. 43). However, despite the abandonment of Berber, Berberphones still represented about 50% of Algeria's population right before the French takeover (Valensi, 1969).

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The French occupation, on the other hand, displaced Berber language through colonial violence and scorched-earth policy (Horne, 1987; Ruedy, 1992). Their assimilation policy was so aggressive that it led to the dramatic retreat of Berber (Benrabah, 2005). However, it is worth mentioning that the French colonial was after ‘The Berber/Kabylian myth’. They claimed that Algerians are of two separated races; Berbers and Arabs. According to this myth, Berbers are superior to Arabs because they were descendants of Europeans (Turin, 1983) which caused hatred among them. Based on this point, Berbers were more susceptible to assimilation through the French schools that attracted rural Kabylis (Colonna, 1975).

By and large, the Berber language survived all foreign settlements. Yet, it was shaped by the languages that came in contact with it, mainly Arabic, Turkish, and French (Benrabah, 2005). Currently, Berberophones represent 25–30% and live in communities spread all over the country (Benrabah, 2014). They are of four major language groups: the Touareg in the southeast and southwest borders of Algeria, who are estimated at few thousands; the Mozabites in the Mزاب region in the Sahara, who are estimated between 80,000 and 100,000; the Chaouias in the further east, south of Constantine and they are estimated to be around 1 million; and the Kabylis in the Mediterranean coast, east of Algiers, who represent about two-thirds of Berberophones (Chaker, 1998; Dalby, 1998).

After independence, officializing Berber did not gain much societal approval. In fact, the Arabophone mass, including the elite, was labeling Berber as a mere “dialect” spoken by minorities which cannot be an official language (Djennane, 2016). Despite that, Berber was promoted to be the second national language of Algeria according to the third article of the 2002’s constitution (Benrabah, 2005). In 2016, Berber/Tamazight had finally gained an official recognition by the legal ratification of the constitution despite the opposition of some Arabophones.

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### 1.1.2.2. Arabic

In post-independence Algeria, two varieties of Arabic are used. One is Classical Arabic and the other is the Algerian Arabic, or the so-called Algerian Arabic. The two varieties differ in their forms and usage settings. According to Essayahi and Kerass (2016), Classical Arabic is the language taught at schools as being the first language, while Algerian Arabic is the main language of communication within the Algerian society. Additionally, Classical Arabic or 'al'arabiya al fusha, the pure or clear language, is the written language of the Quran. The colloquial language or the Algerian Arabic, on the other hand, is known as darija or lahja and it refers to a language that is depreciated by the majority of its speakers for they consider it as devoid of grammar (Benrabah, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, Arabic was never spoken in Algeria before the Arabs took over the Byzantines in 647/648 CE. At that time, Berber was the sole spoken language. Nevertheless, the spread of Arabic in Algeria is due to two major reasons. Firstly, Arabic is the language of religion, hence, converting to Islam requires learning its language. Secondly, Berber was less developed than Arabic for it did not have a developed written system. Accordingly, Berbers admitted the superiority of Arabic language (Bentahila, 1983 as cited in Benrabah, 2014).

For all that, Arabic did not displace Berber completely. Right before the French occupation in 1830, about 50% of Algerians were still monolingual in Berber (Benrabah, 2014). In fact, Arabic and Berber's co-existence caused a mutual influence between them. Both languages belong to the Afro-Asiatic language family. Thus, each of them influenced the other lexically, phonologically, morphologically, and syntactically. This influence explains why North African Arabic is distinguished from the other Arabic language groups (Benrabah, 2005).

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Nevertheless, during the French invasion of Algeria, Algerians were banned from using their native languages. They were forced to learn French because the invaders believed in the superiority of their French language and culture. Consequently, code-switching Arabic and French became the norm in Algeria because Algerians tend to associate French with a more developed culture. Currently, the Arabic-speaking community in Algeria consists of about 70–75% of the total Algerian population while the rest of the population speaks Berber (Benrabah, 2014). On this basis, and despite the tension between the two speaking communities, Arabic and Berber are the linguistic identifiers of the Algerian culture.

In sum, the literature about the history of Arabic in Algeria and its current language profile are of a great importance for the present study. In fact, it is important to point out that the Arabic language taught at the Algerian instructional institutions is by far different than that acquired by children in natural settings. Thus, by learning Arabic in schools and universities, pupils and students are being exposed to a language that is exclusive to the academic setting.

### **1.1.3. The History of Foreign Languages in Algeria**

Within the one hundred thirty-two years of colonization, The French left profound traces in Algeria. In fact, the extensive assimilation policies inculcated a French character in the country. At this point, French was the only official language, while indigenous languages of the country were banned from use in official contexts (Al-Khatib, 2008).

After 1962's victory, Algeria's elites believed that they could completely replace French by Arabic. Thus, the first step was the legal ratification of Classical Arabic in 1963. It was declared as the national and the sole official language of the state. French, on the other hand, was relegated to the status of a foreign language (Benrabah, 2005). However, such

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decision denied the status of the languages spoken in Algeria (i.e., Algerian Arabic and Berber) (Roberts, 2003).

Nevertheless, Classical Arabic was regarded as unable to cope with modernization and technology. For this reason, anti-arabization lobby suggested promoting French as an official language. Such suggestion seemed convenient since most of the Algerian population was highly illiterate in Arabic and French was a more familiar language to them (Djabri, 1981). Despite Arabization's failure, French was still given the status of the first mandatory foreign language which was taught starting from the fourth grade in the primary school.

Later on, the Ministry of Education introduced English in primary school in 1993 as an attempt to replace French. In doing so, pupils had to choose their first mandatory foreign language. Surprisingly, out of 2 million schoolchildren, a very small percentage chose English (Benrabah, 2007). In the same year, the number of French speakers in Algeria estimated to be 49% of the total population (Rossillon, 1995). Therefore, in 1996, the use of foreign languages in official settings was prohibited in Algeria (Grandguillaume, 1997). Likewise, minor foreign languages such as German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish were eliminated from Middle Schools (Benrabah, 2005). The objective behind such decisions was to ensure that Algerians were more exposed to Arabic language than to other foreign languages (Mostari, 2004).

The twenty first century in Algeria was characterized by the transition to the market economy which led to a rivalry between the four world languages, namely, Arabic, Chinese, English, and French. In order to cope with the new world's demands, the authorities openly declared that it was time for bilingual education (Benrabah, 2014). In this regard, in 1999, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika acknowledged Algeria's cultural and linguistic plurality, as he

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stated that “Algeria does not belong to Francophonie, but there is no reason for us to have a frozen attitude towards the French language” (as cited in Morsly, 2004, p. 181).

In this respect, the National Commission for the Reform of the Educational System (CNRSE) suggested that French should be reintroduced as the first mandatory foreign language in Grade Two of the primary cycle. The CNRSE also recommended that scientific disciplines should be taught in French instead of Arabic in secondary schools (Sebti, 2001).

English, On the other hand, has become more outstanding in Algeria’s linguistic landscape. In fact, the Algerian youth’s awareness of the position of English has significantly increased. In this regard, Benrabah (2013) conducted a survey at the University of Mascara in which he asked 204 Master students from three language departments the following question: “Out of the following 10 languages, what is the language you consider the WORLD language today? (ONE choice only)” (Benrabah, 2014, p. 51). The 10 language options were German, English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French, Hindi, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian. Out of the total number of responses, over 92% of the students chose English (Benrabah, 2014). Hence, the findings of this survey highlighted the Algerian youth’s recognition of the English language.

More recently, another competitor to French and English has appeared in the Algerian linguistic landscape. Chinese has become more familiar to Algerians since its writing can be found everywhere especially on construction sites. This is due to the fact that China has become Algeria’s most important imports partner since the beginning of the new millennium. Despite its importance, the Algerian government is still refusing the introduction of Chinese Institutes in Algeria (Benrabah, 2014).

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### 1.1.4. The Status of Foreign Languages (French and English) in Algeria

It is important to note that each language used in Algeria has a particular socio-cultural position and each position is influenced by certain historical developments. Thus, the languages used in the Algerian linguistic landscape are of different status. Languages' status, in fact, can be determined by their importance in socio-linguistic and political levels (Mostari, 2005).

#### 1.1.4.1. The Status of French Language in Algeria

The status allocated to any language depends on the power struggle between the central powers (Queffelec, Derradji, Debov, Smaali-dakdouk & Cherrad-benchafra, 2002). For instance, the status of the ex-colonial France had determined the status of its language. After the independence, French was officially ratified as a foreign language in Algeria. However, this status was "absolutely theoretical and fictitious" (Queffelec et al., 2002, p. 36) since it was the most spoken language in the country.

Despite the Algerian government's efforts to eradicate the French language, ironically, certain decisions reinforced its status in the country. For instance, Act No. 91-05 of the 1998 Algerian constitution prohibited the use of languages other than Arabic in all official settings, but the status of the French language remained the same (Benboune, 2002). After more than four decades of Arabization policies, French is still present in Algeria and many Algerians regarded it as a language of modernity (Mostari, 2004). Since it was the language of government and urban society, Algerians had few opportunities for employment without proficiency in French. More to the point, for the Algerian elite, French was the reflection of modernization and technology. Consequently, it continued to be the language of technology even though Arabic was the language of instruction (Clark, 2006).



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Regardless of the prediction of French disappearance from the Algerian linguistic landscape, the status of French in the 1990's was the highest. However, Benrabah (2014) argued that English had been granted the same status as French due to youth's awareness of its global position. Therefore, he predicted the French disappearance owing to the rivalry between the world languages.

### 1.1.4.2. The Status of English Language in Algeria

In the literature of the world language dominance, English is referred to as a "world" or "global" language (Benrabah, 2014). It is also considered as a lingua franca along with French. However, the English function has outdistanced French and become the "foremost" world language. In fact, English holds a unique position in terms of status and function, in addition to its economic strength. Thus, the status that English holds motivates people all over the world to learn it (Benrabah, 2014).

As far as its status in Algeria is concerned, the pro-Arabization lobby aimed at promoting English inside Algeria in order to displace the ex-colonizer's language. So, under their influence, the Ministry of Education suggested introducing English in primary school (Benrabah, 2014). Unexpectedly, their proposal was refused by the Algerians and English remained of a lower status.

Nevertheless, the more Algeria opens up its economy to the world, the more English spreads in the country. Accordingly, the Algerian youth have come to recognize the global position of English (Benrabah, 2014). This explains the recent increase in the students' enrolments at the departments of English in several Algerian universities (Benrabah, 2014).

By and large, English, due to its international standing, has become the mark of globalization and the medium of international affairs. Hence, it is considered as the most important language for Algeria and its economy. However, the teaching process of English as

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the linguistic identifier of a foreign culture entails the presence of the target culture in the Algerian one; thus, teachers must be apprised of the approaches for teaching foreign languages in Algeria.

### 1.1.5. Approaches for Teaching Foreign Languages “French and English” in Algeria

In recent decades, political and economic developments in Algeria have brought various changes and innovations in language teaching. In this respect, the report of Ministry of Education (2006) stated the following:

Recent social changes that were triggered by the new political and economic visions of our country, the need of the Algerian society for development and progress, the opening on the world through modern technology, lead us to define new strategies...this cannot be achieved without a full reform of the educational system. (pp. 17-18) [Translated from French]

In other words, the recent political and social situation in Algeria called for a radical reform of the Algerian educational system.

Such fundamental reform requires changes in approaches to shift away from reading and writing proficiency and concentrate on the learners' oral proficiency. The term approach is defined by Anthony (1963) as “theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching” (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 16). In other words, approaches provide the theoretical basis needed for the practical teaching process.

In order to meet the need of a pseudo-commercial language of investment, markets, and products, the objective-based approach was substituted by competency-based approach (CBA). The former teaching approach was characterized by teaching in a definite period of

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time regardless of whether or not learners had achieved any outcomes (Benadla, 2013). CBA, on the other hand, “focuses on the outcomes or outputs of learning in the development of language program” (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 141). In other words, CBA aims at training competent learners through engaging them in the learning process. Such training enables them to solve their life problems relying on what they have learnt in school (Benadla, 2013).

This new model of teaching, championed by the French competency-based writers and scholars, differs from other models in its characteristics. For instance, it organizes teaching basically on the principle of integration. Such principle focuses in essence on successful functioning in society. More to the point, learners are taught in the classroom how to cope with the demands of the world through transferring the skills and knowledge they acquire at school to real world contexts (Boukhentache, 2018). Similarly, Auerbach (1986) described CBA as a learner-centered approach which focuses on the learners’ role rather than the teacher role. Finally and most importantly, CBA is not based on teaching a language in isolation, but on training students how to use a language in real life communication.

For a functional communication outside the classroom, foreign languages are suggested to be presented in their cultural context. Swiderski (1993) believed that “Culture is not learned as language is, yet language is not learned until culture is” (p. 6). That is, learning a given language relates to learning its culture either explicitly or implicitly. Moreover, for a fluent language use, learners need to learn the socio-cultural and world knowledge along with linguistic, pragmatic, discourse, and strategic competences (Willems, 1996).

That being said, teaching culture may create a problematic issue. In fact, the foreign language classroom offers the possibility of culture transmission. According to Swiderski (1993), “language learning is gaining a skill, culture learning as assimilation is transforming identity” (p. 23). That is to say, the exposure to a foreign culture involves comparing one’s

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native culture to that of the target language; hence, this may entail rethinking one's cultural identity. In this respect, Kramsch (1998) noted that teaching foreign languages along with their culture has traditionally created a conflict between the strain for universality and the desire to maintain cultural particularity. On this basis, for successful foreign language learning, teachers must enlighten students on the different dimensions of both cultures; the native culture and the foreign one.

In conclusion, foreign language teaching in Algeria requires the presentation of foreign cultures in order to prepare competent users of world languages. In fact, for the Algerian youth, English represents the land of dreams and the pass card to almost any country in the world. French, on the other hand, symbolizes the educated elite in Algeria. This representation may, as may not, influence the way that the foreign language students view their home culture.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY****Section Two: Cultural Identity**

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### Section Two: Cultural Identity

In this section, attention is directed towards cultural identity. The concept of cultural identity is composed of culture and identity. Thus, this section begins with a definition of culture and its two types. It further deals with culture and its relationship to foreign language teaching, and finally, to identity. Similarly, identity is also defined and introduced in foreign language contexts. After the two terms are covered, the concept of cultural identity is reviewed with an emphasis on its three identifiers (i.e., clothing, gender, and language). Finally and most importantly, a transition is made to the core topic of the present study, namely, cultural identity and foreign language learning.

#### 1.2.1. Definition of Culture

The concept of culture is vast in scope and difficult to define. It has been defined and perceived differently by various disciplines such as ethnography, anthropology, sociology, sociolinguistics, and psychology. For instance, in the field of anthropology, there has been a long debate over the search for an appropriate definition of culture; however, Edward B. Taylor's (1987) definition is regarded as best classical. He perceived culture as "That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p. 1). As for Kramsch (1998), culture is "membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings" (p. 10). Another definition provided by Sysoyev (2001) in which he stated that culture is "a system of symbols, meanings and norms passed from one generation to the next, which differentiates groups of people united by certain characteristics such as origin, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic class, or political views" (as cited in Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002, p. 513). As listed above, there are numerous definitions of culture because it is difficult to limit what constitutes one's culture. To summarize, culture refers to

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the cumulative knowledge and standards that members of a society share such as traditions, civilization, beliefs, clothes, folk art. In fact, each culture has a certain mode of life and a set of explicit and implicit manifestations expressed by its members making its presence unique, salient, and distinct to other cultures in the world. After defining what culture is, the following title focuses on its two major types.

### 1.2.2. Types of Culture

Every culture has a special system and a shared knowledge among members of a community. Such knowledge, however, is objective and subjective. That is, a culture can be observed as embedded in society. According to the vast majority of researchers (Brody, 2003; Chastain, 1976; Lee, 2009; Peterson, 2004), culture is divided into two general types; big “C” culture and Small “c”.

#### 1.2.2.1. Big “C” Culture and Small “c”

The big “C” culture reflects the formal side of culture. For instance, it refers to the set of facts and information related to history, arts, geography, business, festivals, and customs of a given society (Lee, 2009). Likewise, Peterson (2004) believed that big the “C” culture includes aspects such as geography, architecture, classical music, literature, political issues, society’s norms, legal foundation, core values, history, and cognitive processes. In few words, big C culture refers to what is most observable in a particular culture.

The small “c” culture, however, is the less obvious side of culture. Brooks (1971) defined it as the “Hearthstone Culture” (p. 57). It refers to what is invisible and profound such as values, norms, beliefs and socio-cultural variables including age, gender, and social status (Lee, 2009). Simply put, information about Big “C” culture is learned consciously as in institutions, while small “c” culture is learned unconsciously and spontaneously as shared by members of a community.

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The bellow figure represents a model of culture developed by Peterson (2004) for the purpose of illustrating the two types of culture. This figure depicts the concept of culture as an iceberg that consists of a surface and a bellow surface. That is, a top and a bottom. The top of the iceberg reflects the visible aspects of culture as defined above, while the bottom is mainly about the invisible ones. In other words, the top of the iceberg represents the Big “C” while the bottom reflects the small “c”.

Figure 1.2

### *The Iceberg Model of Culture*



(Peterson, 2004, p. 22)

### 1.2.3. Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

It is important to toss light on the position of culture in foreign language contexts because the process of learning another language entails the learning of a different culture. In explaining the relationship between language and culture, Brown (2000) stated that “the two



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are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (p. 177). However, the notion of incorporating culture in foreign language teaching has witnessed a number of changing perspectives. Traditional thoughts of language teaching neglected culture in foreign language contexts and primarily focused on the linguistic forms of language. Nevertheless, with the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching approach in the late 1970’s, the role of culture in foreign language teaching has changed. Culture has finally gained recognition and support from the majority of researchers (e.g. Brooks, 1986; Byram, 1989; Kramsch, 1991).

Additionally, apart from the language four skills, culture has been regarded as a fifth skill for language learners (Vernier, Barbuzza, Giusti, & Moral, 2008). According to Kramsch (1991), learners of second or foreign languages should learn the target culture since a language cannot be learned without understanding the cultural context in which it is used. The presence of culture in a language learning process is explained as follows.

Learning a language in isolation of its cultural roots prevents one from becoming socialized into its contextual use. Knowledge of linguistic structure alone does not carry with it any special insight into the political, social, religious, or economic system. Or even insight into when you should talk and when you should not. (Seelye, 1993, p. 10)

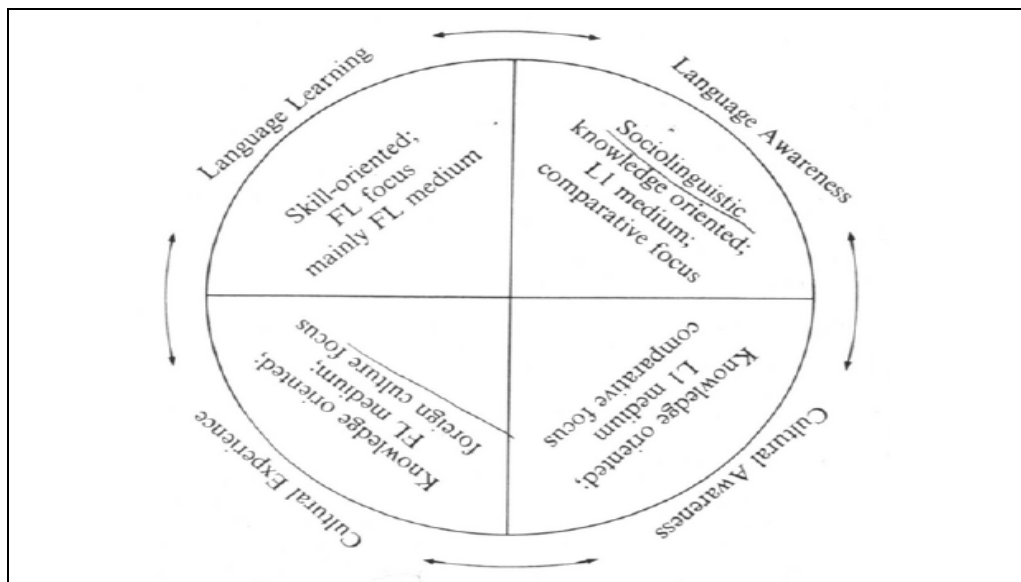
By way of explanation, learning a language should go beyond memorizing its linguistic structure (i.e., grammar and vocabulary) since such input is de-contextualized and does not promote a successful communication in real settings. However, by understanding the target culture, learners would know what to say and how to say it in the right environment without any misunderstanding and confusion. Therefore, success in a foreign language largely depends on understanding its culture because it helps learners communicate better and it increases their learning comprehension (Tseng, 2002).

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Moreover, the below figure demonstrates Byram's (1991) proposed model for teaching and learning culture in foreign language classrooms. In this model, two approaches can be used. The first approach entails the use of the students' mother tongue for learning the target culture. The second approach, however, is about combining language and its culture through using the foreign language. Besides, Byram's model includes four fundamental elements for foreign language education; Language learning, language awareness, cultural awareness, and cultural experience (see Figure 1.2 below). These four elements are not separated. As Byram (1991) explained it, "they are mutually supportive elements of a whole" (p. 29). The significance of this model can be seen in helping the students learn, understand, and develop awareness about themselves and about others (Byram, 1997a).

Figure 1.2

### *A Model of Foreign Language Education*



(Byram & Sarries, 1991, p. 15)

Additionally, Byram (1991) went further explaining that whenever students are learning a language and its culture, the objective of learning is not to imitate native speakers, but rather to develop students' cultural competence and shift it into an intercultural

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competence. In this regard, the intercultural competence refers to “The ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behaviour and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions” (Deardoff, 2016, p. 243).

To cut it short, the implementation of culture in foreign language classes does not solely enhance the students’ comprehension while learning the language, but it also exposes them into a wider and global scope of language use. Therefore, it is important for educators of foreign languages to raise learners’ awareness to the source culture and the target culture they are learning. In relation to the present study, the process of foreign language learning of “English and French” entails the teaching of target culture as well. However, in spite of the importance of culture in a foreign language learning process, the cultural identity of learners may get influenced by the target culture as they are exposed to a completely different culture from their own.

### 1.2.4. Definition of Identity

Definitions of identity vary greatly among fields of research. This is because identity is often regarded as unitary or multiple (i.e., someone can have a single identity as he might shift to different ones). It is also considered as real or constructed (i.e., identity can be innate as it can be established and built through social experiences). Additionally, identity can be stable or fluid (i.e., one’s identity can be well-balanced and stable over the years as it can be constantly changing). And finally, identity can be personal or social (i.e., a personal identity refers to self determination such as values, while social identity refers to the social category to which someone belongs to) (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). However, identity is generally defined as “the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race ,ethnicity, religion, language, and culture” (Deng, 1995 p. 1). Hogg and Abrams (1988) stated that identity refers to “people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others" (p. 2). Identity is also regarded as

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something unique possessed by individuals of a particular society, making them different from other societies. In other words, it refers to a larger social group that shares similar characteristics (Buckingham 2008). Hence, the concept of identity includes at least two statements; individuals' sense of who they are and their relationship to society (Kanno, 2003). After defining what identity is, it is necessary to discuss it within a foreign language context as well.

### 1.2.5. Identity in Foreign Language Context

The notion of language learning and identity has been a central theme in numerous studies. According to Norton (1997), the leading figure in research of identity and language, identity is highly related to language education. Wenger (1998) further explained that "Because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming" (p. 215). In previous research, exploring the relationship between identity and language learning has been primarily limited to second language acquisition (e.g. Norton, 1997). Studies on identity and SLA were commonly conducted in countries where the rate of immigrant learners was high like in Canada. Shortly afterwards, identity was introduced in foreign language learning contexts. The foreign language context is defined as follows.

The FL context is the context of millions of primary school, secondary school, university and further education students around the world who rely on their time in classrooms to learn a language that is not the typical language of communication outside the classroom. (Block, 2007, p. 112)

China is the largest country involved in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Therefore, interest in identity and FL learning has particularly increased after Gao, Li and Li

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(2002) revealed that EFL students in China can forego their psychological and cognitive constraints and go beyond the level of language skills to construct their self identity.

Sa'd (2017) conducted a research at the Iran Language Institute to explore the relationship between foreign language learning and identity reconstruction of forty-five male learners of EFL. The data were collected by means of focus-group interviews. The findings, however, indicated that learning English had a profound impact on how learners perceive their identity. In fact, nearly all learners regarded such impact as highly positive and beneficial to the course of language learning.

More recently, Teng (2019) sought to explore how one's perception as an EFL learner can impact his/her involvement in the learning process and whether such foreign learning influences the learner's identity. This case study was conducted through a narrative inquiry with three Chinese EFL students at Hong Kong Baptist University. The findings indicated that the learners' identity has an impact on their investment in English learning; similarly, it was found that foreign language learning impacts their identity formation. Based on the findings of both studies, it is worth mentioning that identity can be negotiated and shaped by foreign language learning and vice versa.

### 1.2.6. The Relationship between Culture and Identity

The relationship between culture and identity is not commonly addressed. This is because the two concepts are often used interchangeably in social cultural studies. Nevertheless, Grimson (2010) stressed that "The relationship between culture and identity is extremely complex, yet the two are closely connected in various social processes" (p. 75). More to the point, the relationship that links culture and identity lies in the fact that "culture is part of identity" (Gunderson, 2000, p. 693). That is, whereas culture refers to the sum of beliefs, values, and traditions that are shared among members of community, identity refers to

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someone's feelings of attachments to that community and how he/she embraces this community's culture into her identity. As Grimson (2010) argued, "each person is made up of his or her own culture" (p. 63). In short, culture and identity are interrelated; however, for avoiding confusion, it is preferable to approach each concept separately.

### 1.2.7. Definition of Cultural Identity

After defining culture and identity separately, cultural identity gathers both terms together but it denotes a different concept. In recent decades, cultural identity has gained a salient visibility in social and cultural studies. Cultural identity is defined as follows.

Cultural identity refers to identification with, or sense of belonging to, a particular group based on various cultural categories, including nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, and religion. Cultural identity is constructed and maintained through the process of sharing collective knowledge such as traditions, heritage, language, aesthetics, norms and customs. (Chen, 2014, para. 1)

Hence, cultural identity embraces all what members of a community share in common (Shizha, 2012). For instance, it may hold a number of elements such as race, class, education, religion, and gender (Weaver, 2001).

Taylor (1997) stated that the cultural knowledge of a society is unconsciously and naturally acquired by its individuals. Therefore, these individuals would intuitively recognize their society's norms and values so that to behave accordingly. However, Osborne and Sablonnière (2014) stressed that "Not all groups or individuals even, undergo the same kind of cultural identity construction and transformation processes" (p. 422). The authors added that a clear cultural identity represents two main points; a clear knowledge of shared behaviors, values, norms, and characteristics of a given group and a clear insight of how such elements have shifted and changed with time (Osborne & Sablonnière, 2014).

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In brief, cultural identity refers to a sense of belonging to a particular society. It holds a set of shared cultural elements that identify groups or individuals of a community, but it is also seen “as layered, multifaceted and dynamic as any group’s values, norms and behaviors” (Usborne & Sablonnière, 2014, p. 442). That is to say, people’s cultural identities are not static. As the concept of cultural identity is defined, the focus now is directed towards its key identifiers.

### 1.2.8. Identifiers of Cultural Identity

Every society has a number of cultural characteristics shared among its members. Hence, when researchers address questions of societies’ cultural identities, they usually study the set of identifiers embodied within a society’s cultural identity. Such identifiers include, but not limited to, “location, gender, race, history, nationality, language, sexuality, religious beliefs, ethnicity, aesthetics etc.” (Aristova, 2015, para. 7). However, the present study tackles three concepts of cultural identity; dressing, gender, and language. These three markers were selected because they represent different cultural aspects, yet highly expressive elements of one’s cultural identity. To begin with, the following title is devoted to clothing.

#### 1.2.8.1. Clothing

Attitudes towards dressing are very personal and unique. People often express consciously or unconsciously their inner self through clothes. Clothing is simply defined as “any covering for the human body” (Sproles & Burns, 1994, p. 7).

The history of dress has undergone several changes. In the past, people used to consider a number of factors before selecting clothes. For instance, they would wear what is most appropriate to the environment to protect themselves from the extreme conditions of climate. At the present time, people are left with multiple choices for different clothes and

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styles. However, there are still some societal factors that influence people's choice of dressing such as the cultural identity of a particular society. As stated by Tajuddin (2019), people's clothes tend to be influenced by the habits, norms, customs, and traditions of the society they live in.

More importantly, clothing is one of the identifiers of cultural identity and it is used to discuss identity matters in cultural activities (Edensor, 2002). Thus, the aspect of clothing should be taken into account when trying to explain one's identity and culture. In this regard, it is also possible to unveil someone's culture from his/her clothing style because clothing reflects a culture and it is regarded as one of the cultural expressions (Tajuddin, 2019). The same author further explained that "Clothing is an expression, image and personality of a culture, because from clothing can be reflected the norms and cultural values of a nation" (Tajuddin, 2019, p. 24). Clothing then, can be used as a means of cultural identification and expression.

Thompson and Haytko (1997) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between the American students' identities and their dressing style by means of interviews. The findings showed that clothes help people to manifest their identity and to express their conformity to the culture they belong to through dressing themselves in ways that suit their groups' affiliation and vice versa.

However, as mentioned earlier, cultural identities are not static (Usborne & Sablonnière, 2014). Thus, change in someone's style is possible to occur. In an attempt to explain how this change might occur in the way people dress, Hristova (2014) stated that:

The process of development, which every society lives through, leads to social changes and reassessment of the traditional norms and values. For the present conditions we live in what is characteristic is an extreme mobility of the social



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processes, consisting of new environment and new forms of regulating the human behaviour. All these processes establish new trends in the way people dress. (p. 85)

The quote above shows that nowadays' societies are exposed to various experiences and processes of development that might influence people's dressing style. In this regard, it should be noted that the process of foreign language learning also exposes learners to a wider range of experiences and beliefs. Therefore, it is possible for language learners to get influenced by such learning experience and dress similarly to foreigners.

In addition, foreign language learners may get affected in terms of their dressing style because the world's system and centre of fashion is dominated by the western societies. For example, *Chanel*, *Louis Vuitton*, and *Dior* are regarded as some of the most successful brands in France. Similarly, *Nike*, *Calvin Klein* and many other fashionable brands are very famous in the U.S. as in the rest of the world (Akou, 2007). As regards to the Islamic world, the Islamic business has also established its fashionable space around *Hijab* and *Khimar* to adequately suit Muslims' values and follow the Quran and Hadiths of the prophet Mohammed (Hass & Lutek, 2019). This is totally opposed to the western clothing standards that favour "skirts, business suits, jeans, T-shirts" (Hass & Lutek, 2019, p. 3). Another important aspect of Muslims clothing style is modesty. However, not all Muslims are committed to such style of dressing. According to Alia Khan, the founder of Islamic Fashion Design Council, the Islamic fashion is defined as clothes worn by Muslims who are basically committed to the Islamic dressing standards (Khan, n.d. as cited in Ajala, 2017).

Besides, with the widespread of the internet, different clothing styles have reached various parts of the Islamic world (Akou, 2007). For instance, there are many Western influencers on social media who share their dressing style and mode of life on a daily basis. Consequently, many Muslim people may embrace such way of dressing to be modern,

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fashionable and distinct from the rest. Johnson (2009) supports this view by stating that people often strive to be modern even if it means abandoning their native culture.

In sum, people's cultural identities are clearly articulated in their mode of dress. However, someone's dressing style is flexible and modifiable depending on the experiences he/she has undergone. For instance, the experience of foreign language learning can possibly affect the student's cultural identities in terms of their dressing style. This claim is supported by the fact that cultural identities are dynamic and not static; hence, students' clothing style can get influenced and changed over time. After the first marker of cultural identity is reviewed, gender is next addressed as a second identifier.

### 1.2.8.2. Gender

There is a considerable variation on how gender is approached by cultures. This is because the cultural standards of humans differ from one place to another. It is necessary to note "Gender is the socially defined character traits that are prescribed for a particular sex within a given culture. These traits are what we typically think of when we think of masculine or feminine" (Britt, 2011, p. 194). That is to say, gender differ from the concept of sex because the latter refers to the biological differences between men and women while gender is used to refer to someone's role as being a male or a female in society.

The cultural identity of a particular society reflects the roles of both genders. Therefore, issues of gender cannot be understood outside the cultural setting in which gender is defined (Best & Williams, 2001). For instance, the division of tasks between men and women is a good example that illustrates gender across cultures. In New Guinea, for example, the Arapesh believe that the responsibility of rearing a child belongs to both genders equally; hence, the father shares the entire child's routine and tasks along with the mother (Oakley 1987). However, in the United States, as in many other countries, women are considered to be

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more gentle and patient; thus, more qualified than men in child-rearing (Best & Williams, 2001). This is to say that the question of gender is culture-specific; and it is influenced by the various dimensions that culture holds such as norms, religion, and values. All these cultural aspects define and determine the status of men and woman in societies.

However, knowledge is constantly updated, so are people's beliefs and values. For instance, the experience of learning a foreign language may affect people's views of gender status. The latter statement is supported by a doctoral study conducted by Mustafa (2017) on the impact of learning English as a foreign language on the identity and agency of Saudi women. The findings of the study revealed that foreign language learning had a positive impact on Saudi women identity. More importantly, the findings revealed the strong willingness of Saudi woman to challenge their traditional norms and allow more freedom to their gender.

As far as the status of gender in the Arab Islamic societies is concerned, Metcalf (2006) stated that "Arab nations strongly supported gender equality in education but not equality in employment" (p. 97). In other words, the role of men and women in the Arabic world is not equal with regard to employment. The reason behind such inequality is primary related to the cultural norms and the Islamic laws of Muslims. For instance, some labor areas are predetermined for men to protect their women and preserve their female modesty. Hence, men in the Eastern Islamic world are seen as providers and protectors of families (Metcalf, 2006).

Fish (2002) examined gender inequality in a religious and traditional context. Among his many findings, he argued that women have lower representation in governmental sectors. For instance, unlike the Western societies, no woman has ever been elected president in the Eastern Islamic world. Moreover, based on the World Values Survey, Norris and Inglehart (2002) noted that Muslims do not favor gender equality of rights and subjects like laws of

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marriage, divorce, and abortion in comparison to western societies (as cited in Rizzo, Abdel-Latif & Meyer, 2007). Furthermore, the image of women in the foreign societies is depicted as liberated in lifestyle and independent both socially and economically from men. This image stands in stark contrast to Muslim females who are seen as more submissive and dependent on their males than themselves. For example, they cannot travel without their father, brother, or husband approval (Sensenig, 2002). Also, unlike female westerners, easterners' Muslim females are regarded as more responsible for preserving their family honor (Barakat, 1985). For example, a woman, being single or married, should not be seen with a stranger man (The Arab World, 2007).

In an Islamic society like Algeria, gender is seen through the lens of religion. On the contrary, in Western societies such as France and Britain, self-determination and independency are favored for both genders. However, since the process of foreign language learning involves the teaching of the target culture, students of foreign languages may get influenced by these foreign cultural views; hence, they may perceive the status of gender differently from other students. Now that gender is covered, the following title tackles the last identifier of the present study.

### 1.2.8.3 Language

Every society has a language or more used by its members to communicate. According to Bloch and Trager (1942), "Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates" (p. 5). In other words, language is a system that consists of certain sounds and written symbols used by humans for communication. Language is one of the crucial aspects of cultural identity (Rovira, 2008). The author justifies this claim by stating that language "is the means by which we convey our innermost self from generation to generation" (Rovira, 2008, p. 66). That is to say, language serves as a bridge for transmitting traditions to the next generation and as a means for keeping a culture alive. Khokhar, Memon,

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and Siddique (2016) stated that “languages are vehicles through which cultural identities are constructed, accumulated, stored and transmitted; hence, language is a mirror of culture” (p. 236). Therefore, a language is one of the fundamental systems on which a cultural identity is founded. More importantly, identities are of nonexistence until they are presented through language (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2007). As Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo (1995) asserted, “Language is essential to identity, authenticity, cultural survival and people’s learning and thinking processes” (p. 25).

Since cultures can be distinguished from one another by means of language, language then, is a means of identification. Concerning this, Edwards (2009) stated that language acts "as an emblem of groupness, a symbol, a psychosocial rallying point" (p. 55) while Khokhar, Memon, and Siddique (2016) argued that “language not only identifies any particular group but also sets its position inside that group as it may distinguish one’s dialect, social class, age, occupation, religion and even gender” (p. 234). Therefore, people may use language as a way to express their cultural identity or vice versa.

As concerns foreign language learning, Mercuri (2012) conducted a study in order to understand the interconnectedness between language choices and cultural identity construction of a Latina educator. This Latina named “Irma” came to the U.S.A at an early age. Consequently, her parents believed that speaking English, both at home and school, would be best for their daughter for many reasons. For instance, they believed that English possesses a higher social status than Spanish; hence, speaking English will help her get more opportunities in the future.

The findings of the study, however, shed light on the impacts of language ideology on language choices of minority students like Irma. Such impacts were depicted in Irma’s native language lost, not to mention the struggles that she has faced as a student with regard to

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cultural identity. For such reasons, when Irma became an adult, she was determined to revive her native language and her cultural heritage. Eventually and after various challenges, she regained her Spanish sense of belonging and became a bilingual teacher.

Irma's experience is a good example that depicts the strong link between people's language and their cultural identity. Moreover, this study reveals the impact of foreign language status on people's choice of language use. More to the point, learners of foreign languages may consider the target language as a bridge to ensure future success. For example, Iranian students prefer to use English because they believe that the target language opens the doors for further educational and professional opportunities (Ghamari & Khatib, 2011).

Nevertheless, when learners engage in foreign language classes, they may feel attached to the target language. In this regard, Sagsayan (2011) explained that she was unaware of the influence of foreign languages on identity formation until she suddenly realized that she felt more capable and comfortable to express her feelings and ideas in English than in Armenian (as cited in Ghamari & Khatib, 2011).

In short, language is one of the powerful expressions of cultural identity. However, as discussed above the experience of foreign language learning may influence students' cultural identities. Similarly, one of the aims of the present study is to question the influence of foreign languages learning, namely, French and English, on the Algerian students' cultural identities with regards to language. Based on what has been discussed earlier, the foreign language influence can be depicted in students' choice of language use outside the classrooms such as in different casual settings and situations. Beside shifts in language use, changes at a cognitive and emotional level are possible to occur.

### **1.2.9. Cultural Identity and Foreign Language Learning**

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The vast majority of researchers (e.g. Cook & Seidlhofer, 1995; Kramsch, 1998) support that language, culture and identity are essentially interlinked.

Apart from the cultural identity issues of first and second language acquisition, the relationship between foreign language learning and cultural identity is also worthy of attention due to the fact that learners enter foreign language courses with their own cultural views and identity. However, the process of foreign language learning entails the teaching of the target culture to ensure a good grasp of the foreign language. Spackman (2009) affirmed that "When learning a foreign language, it is necessary for the student to learn the culture of the foreign language, too (p. 2). The reason why culture should be incorporated into foreign language programs is because grammar and vocabulary are not sufficient for enlightening students on the foreign cultural knowledge. This cultural knowledge encompasses various topics and themes, such as taboos and stereotypes, which promote a deep understanding of the target culture and paves the way for a successful communication with foreigners (Dumitrašković, 2014). Accordingly, for a proper learning of foreign languages, learners need to adjust their views and beliefs, and surrender parts of their language and culture (Gunderson, 2000; Jund, 2010). These points highlight the strong link between the spoken language and cultural identity.

More to the point, the cultural identity of native students is different from the one they are exposed to in foreign language courses. This is where the question of foreign language learning influencing cultural identities is posed. In point of fact, the relationship between foreign language learning and cultural identity is regarded as twofold. That is, both can influence one another. However, this research paper is primarily concerned with the influence of foreign language learning on students' cultural identities.

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According to Dumitrašković (2014), “The classroom environment can play a crucial part in the development of a learner's foreign language identity” (p. 255). This identity construction takes place when learners are actively engaged in the learning process. For instance, when language learners discover the different sides of the target culture, their native culture gets into a direct contact with the foreign one. In the process, learners start to compare between both cultures and rethink certain phenomena. In this regard, Millrood (2016) stated that being exposed to another culture leads to both positive and negative changes in the students' cultural identity. For instance, on the positive side, it enhances the learners' flexibility and confidence to act properly in different social contexts. On the negative side, some students may misplace their native culture and waver between both cultures.

By and large, Labaton (2012) stressed that the process of learning another language may lead to dismiss some cultural aspects of the first language; thus, the process of foreign language learning can influence one's cultural identity. Furthermore, it is necessary to highlight that people's identities are not static, as Norton (2009) stated, “Each of us performs a repertoire of identities that are constantly shifting, and that we negotiate and renegotiate according to the circumstances” (p. 348). Hence, people's identities are negotiated and shaped by life experiences.

Razmeh, Davoodi, & Choubasaz (2015) conducted a study about the effects of learning English on the culture and identity change in Iranian EFL learners. In so doing, two semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were administered to 50 Master of Arts and 50 Bachelor of Arts students involved in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. The findings revealed that the influence of foreign language was more eminent in the Bachelor of Arts students' identities. These students showed more interest in shifting their identities towards the target culture than the Master of Arts students. Foreign language learning then, has a possible influence on students' cultural identities. This influence can be observed when



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students start to favor foreign languages over their mother tongue and use these languages outside the classroom environment.

In line with the present study, the Algerian foreign language students of French and English undergo a similar foreign language learning process. In fact, these students are immersed in an entirely new cultural experience where they can see the world from a different perspective. This is where they recognize that all humans are cultural beings who speak different languages and have dissimilar beliefs. Therefore, students of foreign languages can accommodate many foreign aspects into their cultural identity. For instance, this may include how they dress, their views about the status of gender, and their choice of language use.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter aims to review the influence of foreign language learning on cultural identities. In doing so, the first section is devoted to the linguistic situation of Algeria. That is, it deals with Algeria's official languages and discusses "French and English" as foreign languages. It further addresses the history, the status, and the teaching approaches of English and French in Algeria. The second section, however, is concerned with cultural identity. It attempts to provide deep definitions of concepts such as, but not limited to, culture, identity, and cultural identity. Moreover, as the present study is based on three identifiers of cultural identity (i.e., clothing, gender, and language), each marker is well defined and discussed with regards to foreign language learning contexts. Finally, the last title of this section highlights the possible influence of foreign language learning on one's cultural identity.

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## Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Data Analysis and Discussion

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## **FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY**

### **Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Data Analysis and Discussion**

#### **Introduction**

The first chapter has aimed at providing theoretical evidence to support the influence of foreign language learning on students' cultural identities. This chapter, however, focuses on the practical part of the study. It seeks to present and answer the present research hypothesis which suggests that the majority of students' cultural identities are influenced by foreign language learning (English and French). The chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section tackles the research methodology employed to probe the issue at hand and it covers the research paradigm, the conceptual design, the research instrument, and the data collection. The second section deals with data analysis, and the third section covers data discussion, the study limitations, and the pedagogical recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## Section One: Research Methodology

### 2.1.1. Research Paradigm

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are vital for obtaining results from surveys but through following different procedures. That is, each research method has its unique way to gather and analyze data. A qualitative research method seeks to observe, describe, and understand certain phenomena in natural settings. In contrast, a quantitative research method seeks to collect numerical data using statistics to generalize the results (Daniel, 2012). Based on these two definitions, the aim of the present study is not to describe but to test, analyze, and generalize the obtained findings. Thus, the study's research paradigm is based on a quantitative approach because it is more focused than the qualitative one. That is, the hypothesis of this study has been clearly pre-determined and the goal is to test it in order to support or reject it.

Hence, the current study applies a quantitative research approach to investigate the impact of foreign language learning (English and French) on the Algerian students' cultural identities. This paradigm is deemed appropriate since this study aims at investigating and generalizing the results to the relevant population. Moreover, the quantitative approach is chosen over the qualitative one because the latter may not give reliable data since it is possible for its users to be misled in their interpretation of the obtained findings as a result of imposing their own understanding of a given phenomena (Bernstein, 1974 as cited in Cohen & Morrison, 2011). The quantitative research methods, however, aim for objectivity and this generates unbiased data. According to Creswell (1994), quantitative methods provide precise and objective measurements through statistical data to avoid personal bias. Furthermore, qualitative methods are more scientific, and researchers have more control over how data are gathered. In short, the research at hand is based on a quantitative approach because it aims at

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testing what is observed, at generalizing the results, and at drawing conclusions. This, hence, goes along with the purpose of the study.

### **2.1.2. Conceptual Design**

This headline forms the skeleton and depicts the core design of the present research. It starts with information about the setting and the chosen participants. Then, it tackles the implemented research instrument, pilot study, and data collection procedures.

#### **2.1.2.1. Setting**

The current study was conducted within the Algerian context. More precisely, it was carried out at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel. The setting represents the environment in which the study is conducted. Hence, such information is very important in terms of the applicability of research. As concerns the study's context, it is worthy to note that the history of French settlement made Algerians more used to French language in comparison to English. This is due to French profound roots and deep historical bonds in the Algerian society. The status of English and French then, is distinct in terms of language use and history. English is regarded as the language of future and French is always linked to the past. Such information may affect the findings of the study even though both languages are regarded as foreign languages in Algeria.

#### **2.1.2.2. Participants: The Students**

It is important to identify the participants of any research to enhance the understanding of the phenomenon under study. This research was addressed to Master one students of English, French, and Arabic language at the department of letters and foreign languages. As the present study is concerned with student's cultural identities, 60 students of each field of study were randomly chosen and this opportunity was given to both genders. The participants

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were chosen for two main reasons. First, students of English, French, and Arabic suit the Algerian linguistic context which is, as mentioned earlier, characterized by the competition between these languages. Second, Master one students had a better grasp of language learning as they were involved in a longer learning experience in comparison to other lower grades. Consequently, this may get them to judge their learning experience and its impacts, if there is any, on their cultural identities.

### 2.1.2.3. Research Instrument: The Questionnaire

The study at hand was carried out by means of an online questionnaire. More specifically, a duplicate questionnaire of three versions (English, French, and Arabic) was administered to the study's participants following the quantitative research method. It is worthy to note that a questionnaire refers of any written research tool that consists of a list of questions with the aim of getting answers either by writing them or selecting from the available options (Brown, 2001). Respectively, the survey questionnaire consisted of several questions through which learners could select from the pre- existed options.

In order to find out about peoples' beliefs, values, opinions, and preferences, a questionnaire is the appropriate research tool for exploring such a topic (Dornyei, 2003). In line with the current research, this study seeks to investigate whether the experience of foreign language learning influences the students' way of dressing, their perception of both genders, and their choice of language use. These three elements lie under the umbrella term of cultural identity as clothing, gender, and language. Thus, the proper way to address these identifiers is through designing a questionnaire that can target the three elements in three fields of study.

Moreover, given the country situation and the period of distance studies, the use of an online questionnaire was more applicable for collecting a large number of responses.

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According to Dornyei (2003), questionnaires are very effective when used with a large number of people in different situations and when targeting a number of topics. Furthermore, Munn and Drever (1990) supported the use of questionnaires for they preserve the anonymity of respondents and this, in turn, increases the transparency of their answers.

Since this work was carried out by means of an online questionnaire, it is worthy to highlight some of its advantages. Online questionnaires have been available since 1994 (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003 as cited in Harlow, 2010). Throughout the years, they were generally known for being effective tools of data collection (Doherty, 2012). Due to the widespread of the internet, online questionnaires can now reach a large number of potential respondents, yet in a short period of time (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006). Unlike paper questionnaires, online questionnaires have some technical options which guarantee that all questions were answered before submission. The use of an online questionnaire, then, reduces the respondents' errors (Weible & Wallace, 1998). Furthermore, in a study conducted by Glover and Bush (2005), they concluded that it is preferable to use online questionnaires than paper questionnaires for educational research. Hence, an online questionnaire was developed via Google forms to test the study's hypothesis. Google forms app was primarily chosen for its quick, free, and easy use. Besides, it has no limitation with regards to the numbers of questions and answers are automatically stored using database technology (Harlow, 2010).

Correspondingly, the study's online questionnaire followed a five-point Likert scale of ready-made response options (i.e., strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). Such items are objective elements; hence, they were primarily chosen to avoid the rater subjectivity. Moreover, as this research paradigm is based on a quantitative approach, Likert scales are suitable for statistical analysis since the responses can easily be coded into numerical data (Dornyei, 2003). In fact, Likert scales are generally known for being simple



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and reliable research techniques (Dornyei, 2003). Therefore, the aspect of clothing, gender, and language were respectively covered in an online five-point Likert scale displaying 1 duplicated Questions (in English, French, and Arabic) for each identifier.

### **2.1.2.4. Pilot Study**

Pilot studies provide valuable insights of the research design and its instruments. The pre-testing of a particular research tool is vital to assure its feasibility. Hence, as a start, the research underwent a pilot study to avoid any ambiguity with regards to the questionnaires' questions. According to Teijlingen and Hundley (2001), piloting the study is a necessary step to identify potential flaws and make necessary modifications. Therefore, the relevant questionnaire was distributed to 60 students in three fields of study (English, French, and Arabic). Then, these learners were interviewed about the difficulties they faced while responding to the survey questionnaire. Considering their suggestions and the obtained findings, some questions were modified and clarified as an attempt to achieve the feasibility and the effectiveness of the questionnaire. For instance, some questions were simplified through examples and some repeated questions were removed. Indeed, the procedures involved in this pilot study provided a better understanding of how to implement the questionnaire and how to strengthen its practical weaknesses.

### **2.1.2.5. Questionnaire Administration**

As mentioned earlier, a duplicate questionnaire of three versions (English, French, and Arabic) was respectively and randomly distributed to a sample of one hundred eighty (180) Master one students. That is, The English version questionnaire was administered to (60) English Master one students; The French version was administered to (60) French Master one students; and the Arabic version was administered to (60) Arabic Master one students.

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Nevertheless, due to Corona virus outbreak, there was a poor contact with students and most studies were limited to remote methods. To do it safely, the study opted for online procedures like administering the three questionnaires through social media and emails. For instance, by means of Google forms, the English version was published on Facebook at the English language department page and at the official group of master one students. In addition to the previously mentioned merits of Google forms, the latter supported the use of mobile phones, personal computers, and iPad. This, hence, made the questionnaire distribution even more practical.

### **2.1.2.6. Confidentiality and Anonymity**

As confidentiality and anonymity are concerns in educational contexts, participants were given assurance regarding the matter. According to Sapsford and Abbott (1996), confidentiality is promising that participants will not be identified. Anonymity, on the other hand, is promising that even the researcher will not be able to tell which responses came from which participant. Therefore, as a way of promising confidentiality and anonymity, the participants of the present study were asked to fill out the questionnaire without sharing personal information such as age, gender, or names. This is in order to make sure that the study's participants are comfortable enough to share their honest point of views regarding clothing, gender status, and language with no concerns of being judged over personal questions.

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### 2.1.2.7. Data Collection

The tool selected for collecting data is an online questionnaire. After the questionnaire administration, the collection of the entire learners' responses was completed in two weeks, a set of questions were provided and the students were asked to select from the five Likert scale options using Google forms. The survey questionnaire was distributed via emails and social media. Altogether, 180 responses were collected and grouped into 3 categories (the English students' responses, the French students' responses, and the Arabic students' responses). All the answers were automatically stored in Google forms.

### 2.1.2.8. Limitations of the study

Like most research papers, the present study has a number of limitations. Firstly, due to COVID-19 outbreak, most research instruments, other than questionnaires, were almost impossible to apply. Questionnaires, as argued by Ackroyd and Hughes (1981), are inadequate to understand some forms of information like feelings and behaviors and to explain contradicting responses. Accordingly, face-to-face interviews would have served as a backup instrument to make up for the questionnaire's shortcomings.

Secondly, this inquiry did not open the questionnaire for demographic information as it was not interested in this variable; however, during the data discussion, it appeared that including gender would have better clarified whether the results of the study took different trends because of gender standpoints, that is, whether the fact that the majority of the sample was female had a bearing on the overall findings about the influence of foreign language learning on the students' cultural identity. Future research is advised to take into account the variable of gender to see whether there are gender-related differences concerning the influence of foreign language learning on the students' cultural identity.

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In sum, the first section of the second chapter was devoted to discuss the research methodology employed to inquire about the research issue at hand. Hence, it presents the research paradigm, illustrates the context and the population, describes the research tools and the procedures, and points out the research limitations.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY****Section Two: Data Analysis**

2.2.1. Data Analysis .....

2.2.1.1. English, French, and Arabic Language Students' Responses.....

- Clothing.....
- Gender Status.....
- Language.....

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

### Section Two: Data Analysis and Data Discussion

After explaining the research methodology in section one, this second section analyzes and discusses the data collected from the students' questionnaire (i.e., English, French, and Arabic language students' questionnaires). The first sub-section presents and analyses the students' responses to the questionnaire and the second sub-section discusses the data of the study in relation to the research questions and the review of the literature.

#### 2.2.1. Data Analysis

The questionnaire of the study (administered to English, French, and Arabic language university students) covers three sections, namely, clothing, gender status, and language; each section, in turn, includes 10 questions in the form of a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire responses of the three target groups are presented by means of quantitative measures. The English questionnaire version is the first to be described, followed by the French version, and finally completed by the Arabic version.

##### 2.2.1.1. English, French, and Arabic Language Students' Responses

The three target groups' responses are confronted and analyzed with regards to the three sub-sections of the questionnaire (i.e., clothing, gender status, and language).

- **Clothing**

The first sub-section analyses the students' responses concerning the ten questions of clothing.

- **Question n°1:** You like to express yourself through clothes. (E.g. shy people prefer to wear dark colours.)

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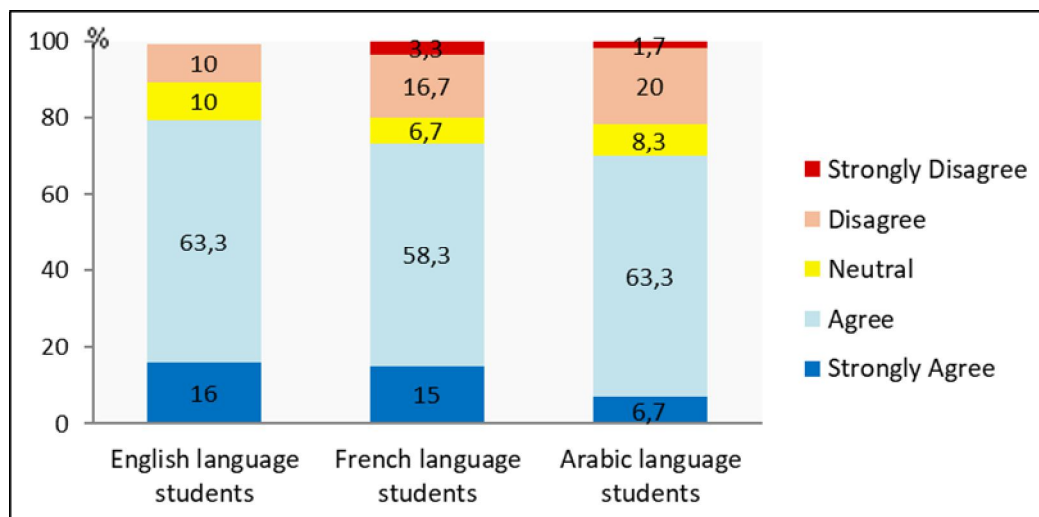


Figure 2.1. Clothing as a means of expression

In response to the first question, the majority of the students of English, French and Arabic (79.3%, 73.3%, and 70%, respectively) stated that they like expressing themselves through clothes. Thus, it can be assumed that the students of the three target groups use clothes a means of self expression.

➤ **Question n°2:** keeping up with the latest trends of Algeria.

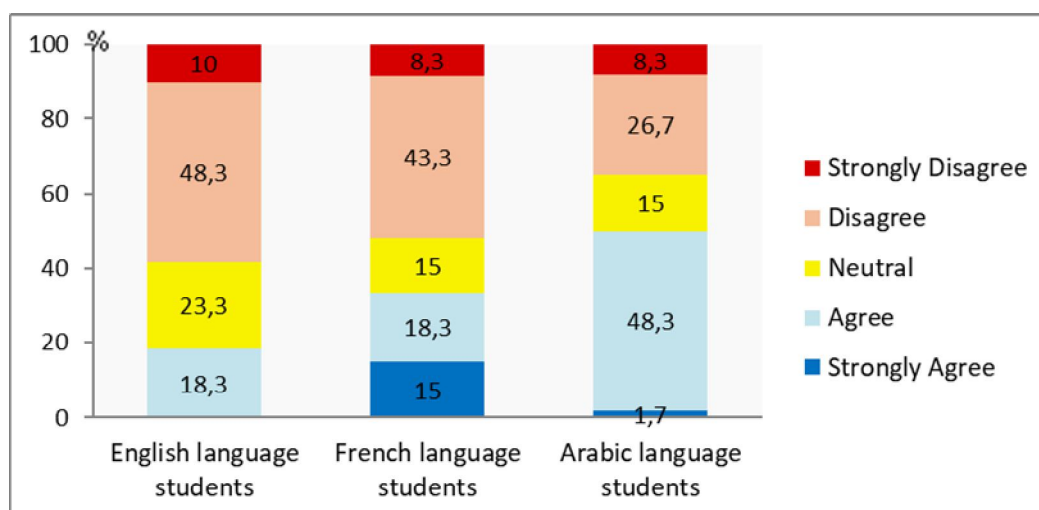
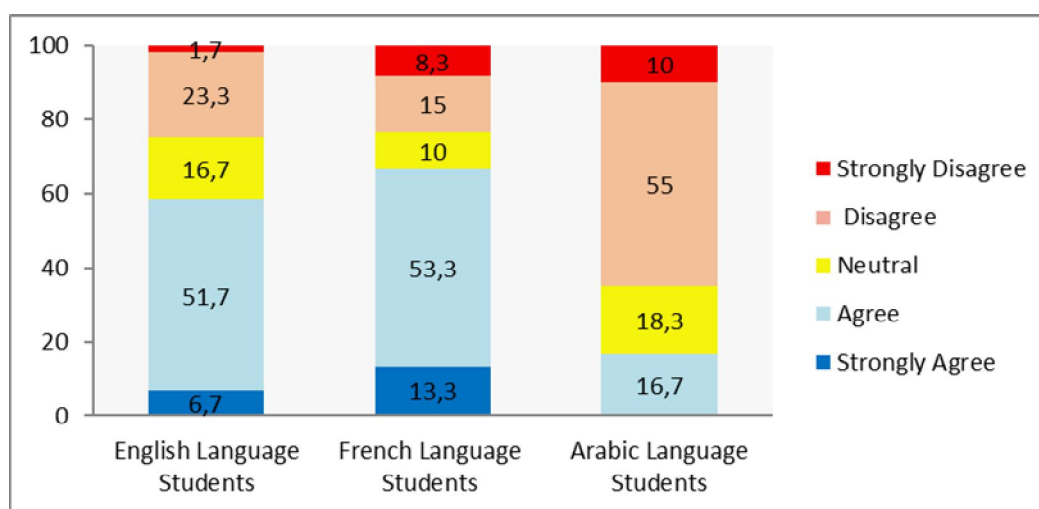


Figure 2.2. The students' commitment to the Algerian fashion

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Figure 2.2 demonstrates that the English and the French language students (58.3% and 51.6%, respectively) are uninterested in the Algerian fashion, while half of the students of Arabic responded that they take interest in Algeria's trends. On the whole, despite the slight difference in opinion between the three groups, the foreign language students in particular, have no big interest in Algeria's world of fashion.

- **Question n° 3:** You prefer to wear famous brands like Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Gucci etc.



*Figure 2.3. The students' opinion towards foreign brands*

Figure.2.3 indicates that more than half of the students of English and French languages (55%, 66.6%, respectively) prefer wearing worldwide famous brands, whereas the majority of the Arabic language students (65%) disagreed with the statement. Hence, foreign language learning seems to have influenced the students' way of dressing.

- **Question n° 4:** You try to keep up with Western/American/French fashion trends.



## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

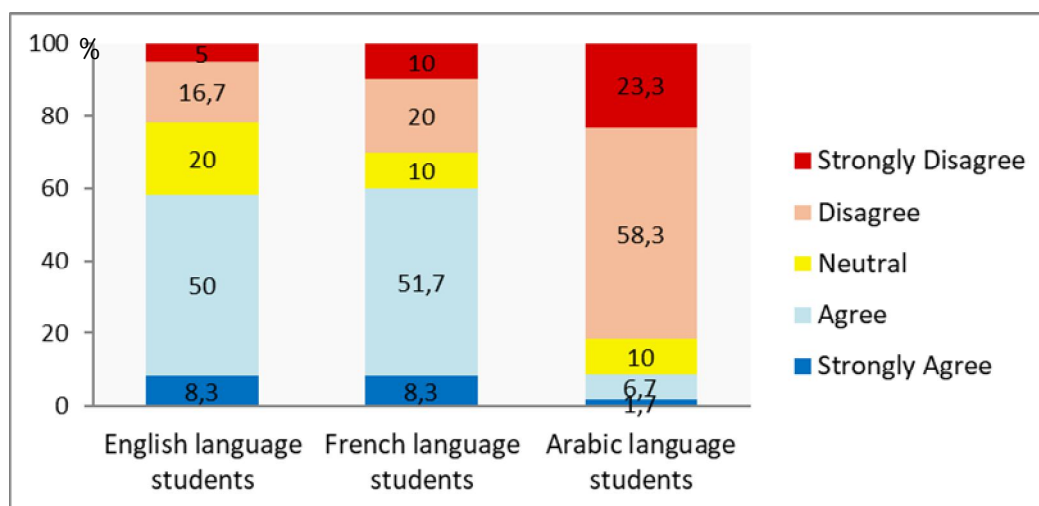


Figure 2.4. The students' commitment to Western fashion trends

As noted in Figure 2.4, more than half of the English (58.3%) and the French (60%) language students keep up with Western (American/ French) fashion trends, while a considerable number of the Arabic language participants (81.6%) disagreed with the statement. Hence, while the majority of the foreign language learners favor Westerners' fashion trends, most of the students of Arabic tend to uphold their country's fashion.

- **Question n°5:** You prefer to wear modern clothes (skirts, jeans, T-shirts, and suits) over traditional clothes (Caftan, Gandoura) in special occasions such as el Aid, weddings etc.

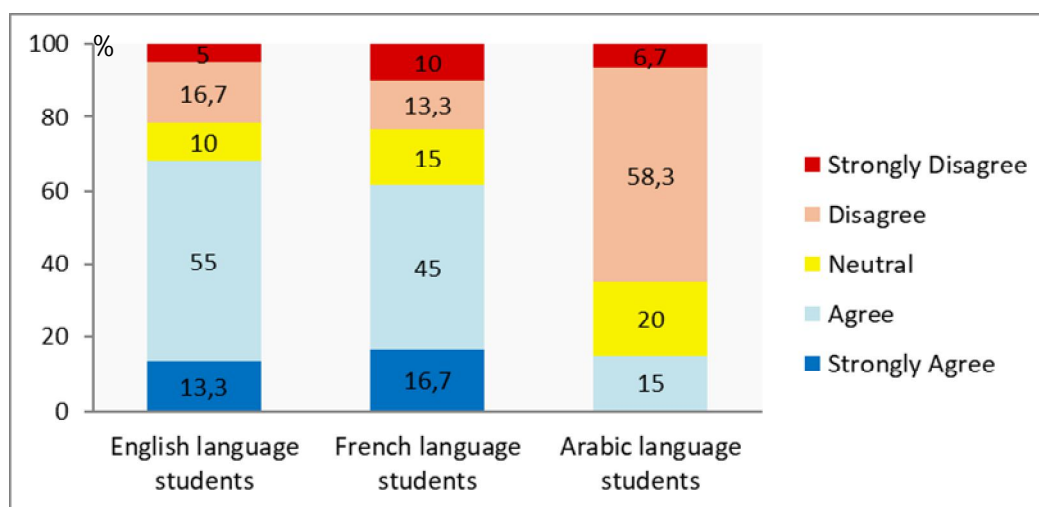
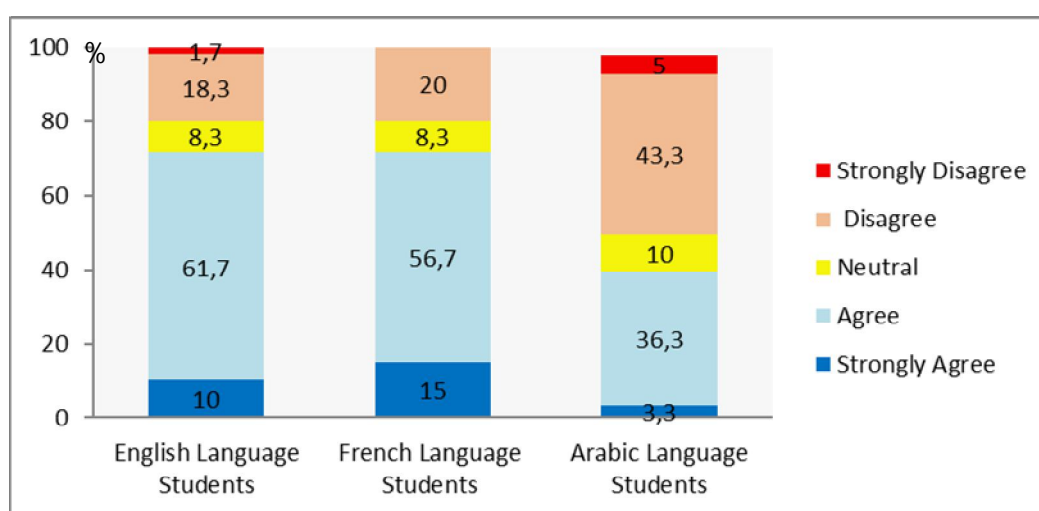


Figure 2.5. The students' attachment to their native culture concerning clothes

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Question 5 is meant to explore the participants' attachment to their native culture with regards to clothes. As the results indicate, most of the Arabic language students (65%) prefer wearing traditional clothes in sacred occasions, whereas the majority of the students of English and French (68.3% and 61.7%, respectively) favor modern clothes. Therefore, unlike the foreign language students, the Arabic language learners are more attached to their cultural norms of clothing.

➤ **Question n° 6:** You spend a lot of time preparing yourself before going out.



*Figure 2.6. The students' concern of their appearance and style*

Surprisingly in question 6, 71.7% of both the English and the French language students equally agreed about spending much time in preparing themselves before going out, while less than half of the Arabic language students (41,6 3%) agreed with the statement. Hence, the foreign language students are presumed to care more about their appearance and style.

➤ **Question n° 7:** You dress the way you like regardless of the opinion of society.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

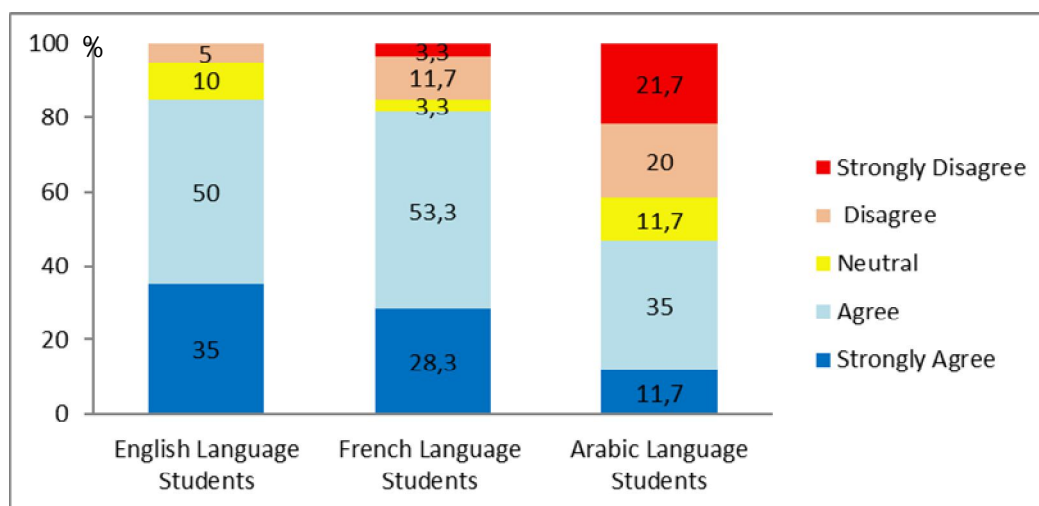


Figure 2.7. The students' concern for social norms in relation to their dressing style

In response to question 7, nearly all of the English and the French language students (85% and 81.6%, respectively) stated that they wear what they like regardless of the opinion of society; contrastingly, only 46.7% of the Arabic language students agreed with the statement, and 41.7% of them disagreed. That being the case, the foreign language participants, then, are careless about the voices of society with regards to clothing, whereas the Arabic language students are of divisive opinions concerning the matter.

- **Question n°8:** Clothes are not a religious symbol. (E.g. a girl can be religious despite not wearing a veil.)

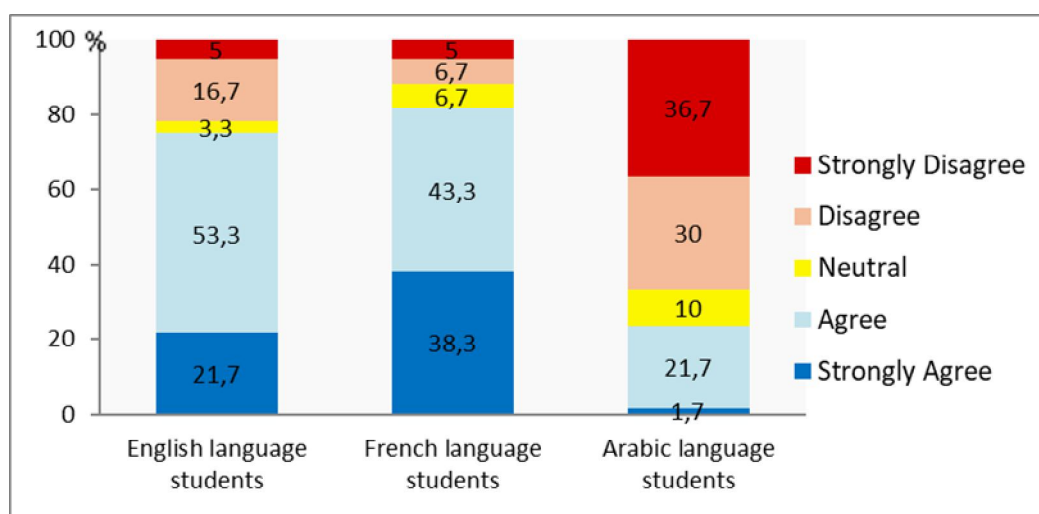
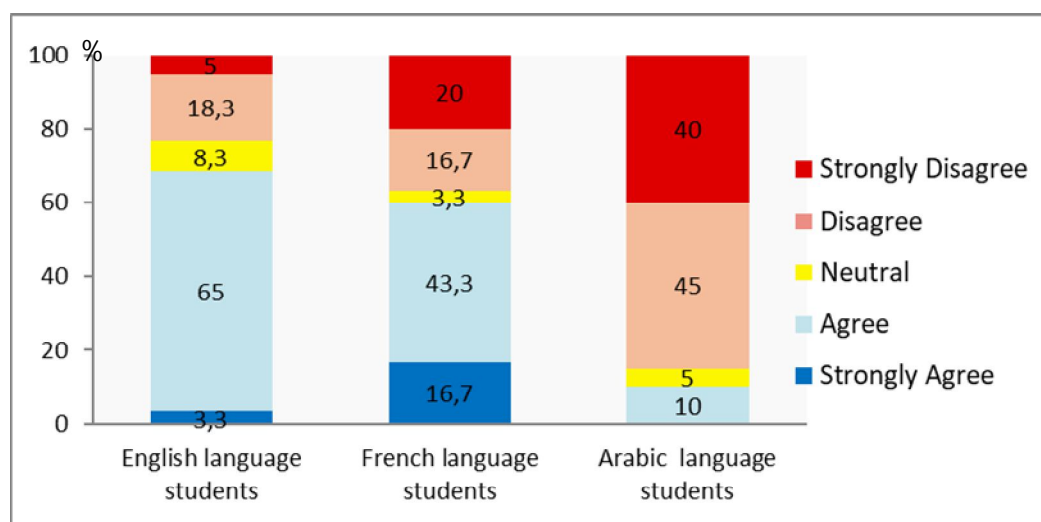


Figure 2.8. The students' perception of clothing with respect to religion

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

As Figure 2.8 illustrates, a large number of the English (75%) and the French (81.6%) language informants agreed that clothes should not be a religious symbol, while a great part of the Arabic language participants (66.7%) disagreed with this statement. On the whole, the foreign language students believe that one's clothing style should not be seen through the lens of neither society nor religion, whereas the Arabic language students regard clothes as the reflection of one's religiosity.

- **Question n°9:** You follow Westerner / American/French fashionists and influencers on social media.



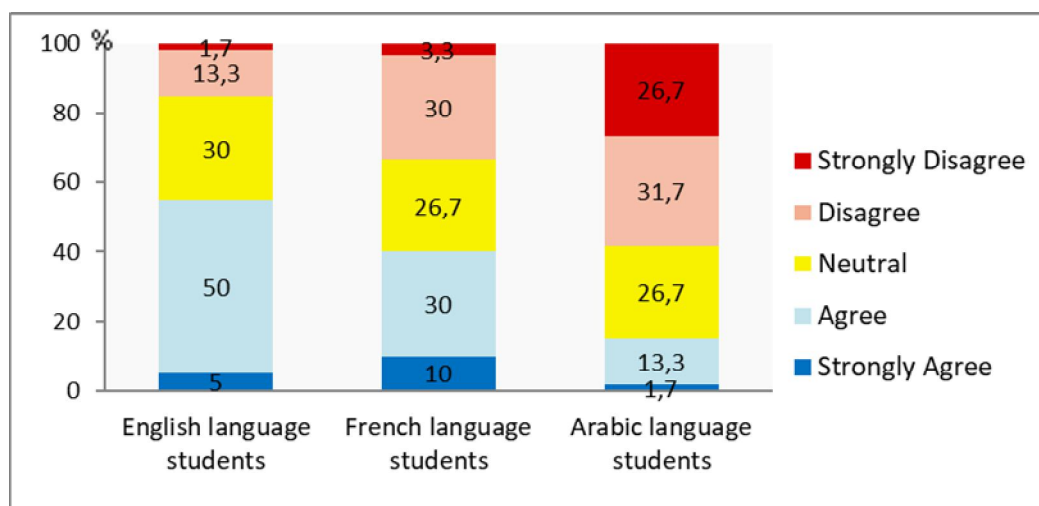
*Figure 2.9. The students' track of Western fashion via social media*

As concerns question 9, the participants were asked whether they follow Westerner (American/French) fashionists and influencers on social media. Again, the most rated options among the foreign language students are those of 'strongly agree/agree' (i.e., the students of 68.3% for the students of English and 60% for the students of French). In what concerns the students of Arabic, nearly all of them (85%) disagreed with the statement. On the basis of

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

these findings, it can be speculated that the foreign language learners seek inspiration about dressing through following foreign fashionists' social media accounts.

➤ **Question n° 10:** The Algerian youth should be more open to fashion and latest trends.



*Figure 2.10. The students' openness to fashion*

As it can be drawn from Figure 2.10, the students of French are of relatively divisive opinions on whether the Algerian youth should be more open to fashion (40% agreed, 33.3% disagreed, and 26.7% undecided). However, more than half of the English language students supported the statement, while a similar number of the Arabic language participants opposed it. Hence, among all the groups, it seems that the English language students are more open up fashion.

In sum, the responses to Likert scale questions point out that the foreign language students (English and French) pay more attention to their appearance and care less about the opinion of society. But more importantly, the results reveal the students' inclination towards modern dressing styles and Western fashionable brands regardless of societal judgments and religious standpoints. The students of Arabic, on the other hand, have their own understanding of fashion. That is, despite that they like expressing themselves through

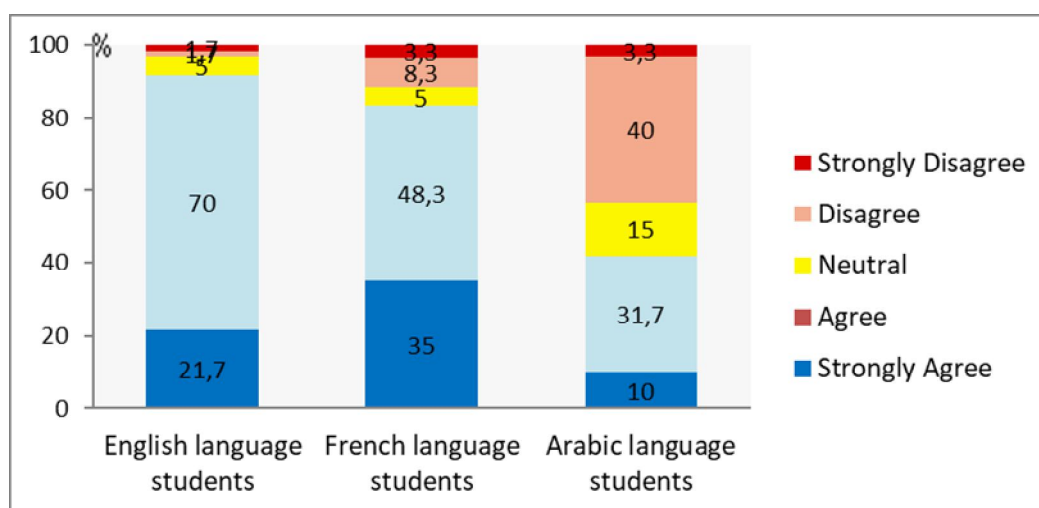
## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

clothes, the majority of them strongly reject the foreign influence on clothing style. Hence, it can be inferred that the students of both English and French appear to be under the influence of foreign clothing styles and cultural views.

- **Gender Status**

The second sub-section presents the students' responses to the questions of gender status.

➤ **Question n° 11:** Men and women should be treated equally by society.

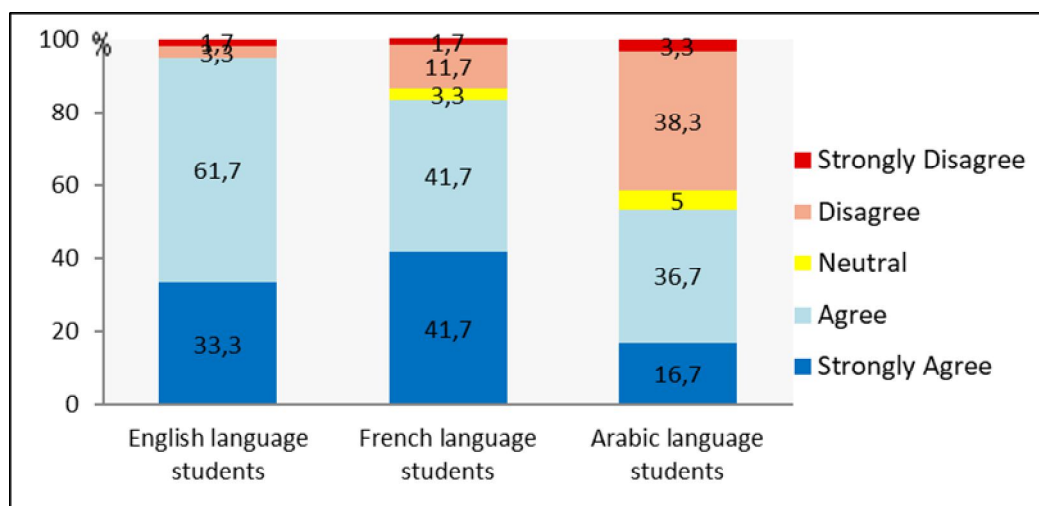


*Figure 2.11. Gender equality in society*

Figure 2.11 illustrates that the vast majority of the foreign language participants (English 91.7% and French 83.3%) believe that men and women should be treated equally by society. In contrast, the students of Arabic have opposite views. That is, 43.3% of the sampled population opted for 'disagree', while 41.7% of them chose 'agree'. Therefore, whereas the Arabic language students are undecided about the statement, the majority of the foreign language students' sampled population calls for more social equality of gender.

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- **Question n°12:** Being a good worker is related to the person's qualifications and not to his gender. (I.e., despite men's and women's mental and physical differences, they can do same tasks with the same level of efficiency).

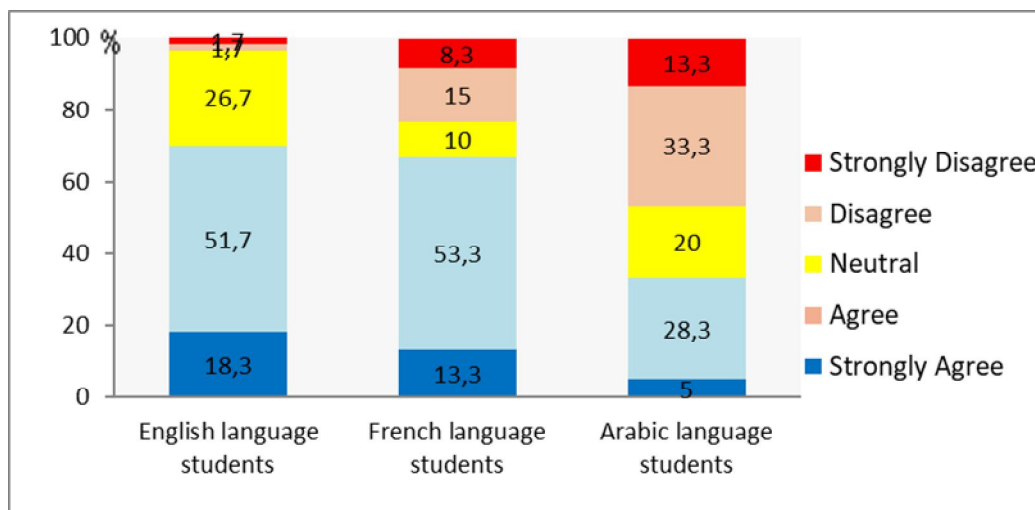


*Figure 2.12. Gender and employment*

In response to question 12, the great majority of the foreign language participants (English 95% and French 83.4 %) responded that being a good worker is related to a person's qualifications and not to his/her gender. In contrast, over half of the students of Arabic (53.4%) agreed with the statement, while 41.6% of them disagreed. All those who disagreed among the Arabic language students can be assumed to be prejudiced against women's occupation of certain professions, however, the large number of the samples believes that gender does not hinder or determine how good a person might be for any particular task.

- **Question n°13:** Women should establish a career before constructing a family.

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*Figure 2.13. Women's priority concerning work and family*

As observed in Figure 2.13, the majority of the English (70%) and the French (61.6%) language learners supported that women should establish a career before constructing a family, whereas a significant number of Arabic language students disagreed with the statement. In general, the foreign language students believe that having a career should be a woman's priority, while the Arabic language sample is undecided about what women should choose first. Nevertheless, it is important to note that females outnumber males in this study; hence, this fact might have affected the result of this question.

- **Question n°14:** Men and women should be both responsible for the honor and the stability of their families.



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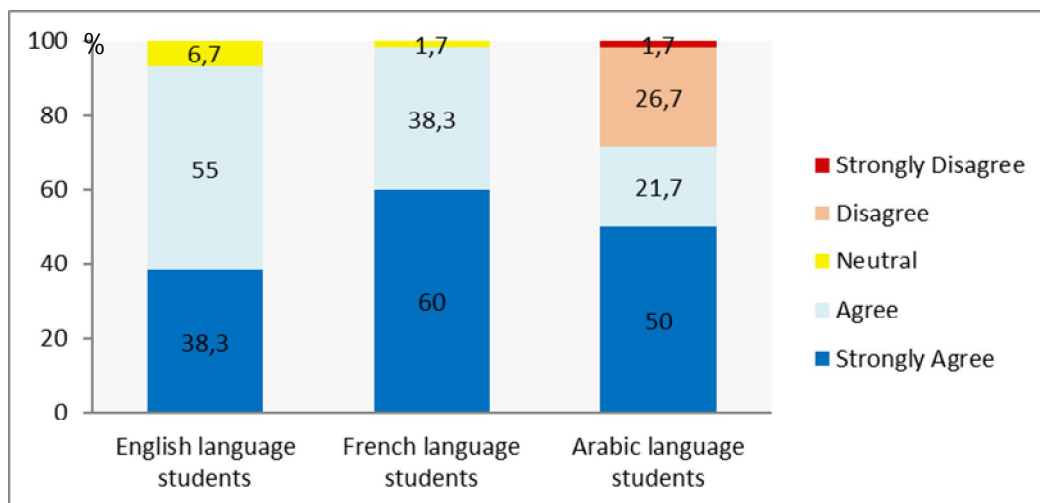


Figure 2.14. Genders' role in family

Figure 2.14 demonstrates that the large number of participants in the three groups (English 93.3%, French 98.3%, Arabic 71.7%) agreed that men and women should be both responsible for the honour and the stability of their families. But in the main, despite the large similarity in the groups' results, the role of both genders for maintaining the honour and the stability of family is largely supported by the foreign language learners since none of them chose to disagree.

➤ **Question n°15:** Women should share financial responsibilities with men.

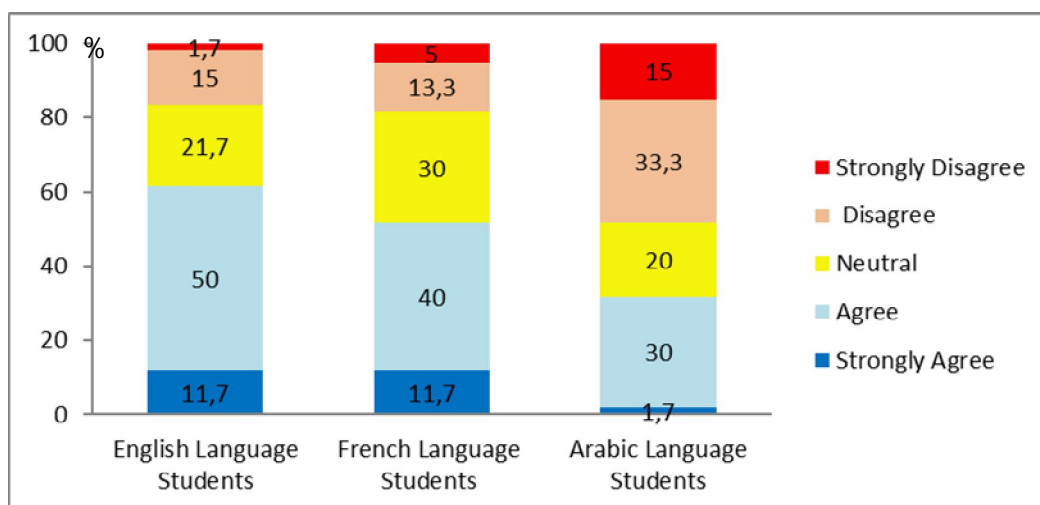
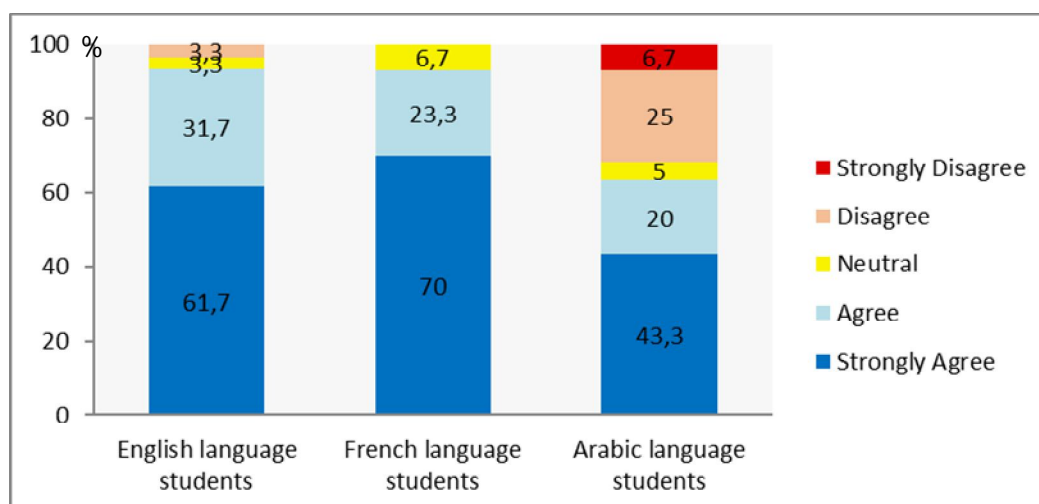


Figure 2.15. Genders' financial responsibilities

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Figure 2.15 shows that more than half of the English language informants (61.7%) believe that women should share financial responsibilities with men, and only half of the students of French (51.6%) share a similar view. In contrast, over half of the Arabic language informants (48.3%) disagreed with the statement, while only 31.7% of them agreed. On the whole, the results reveal that female students of foreign languages prefer to be engaged in all levels of family's responsibilities. However, although the students of Arabic consider both genders to be responsible for the honor and the stability of their families in question 14, the biggest number of them believes that women are not responsible for financial support.

➤ **Question n°16:** Women, too, should ask for divorce in infidelity cases.

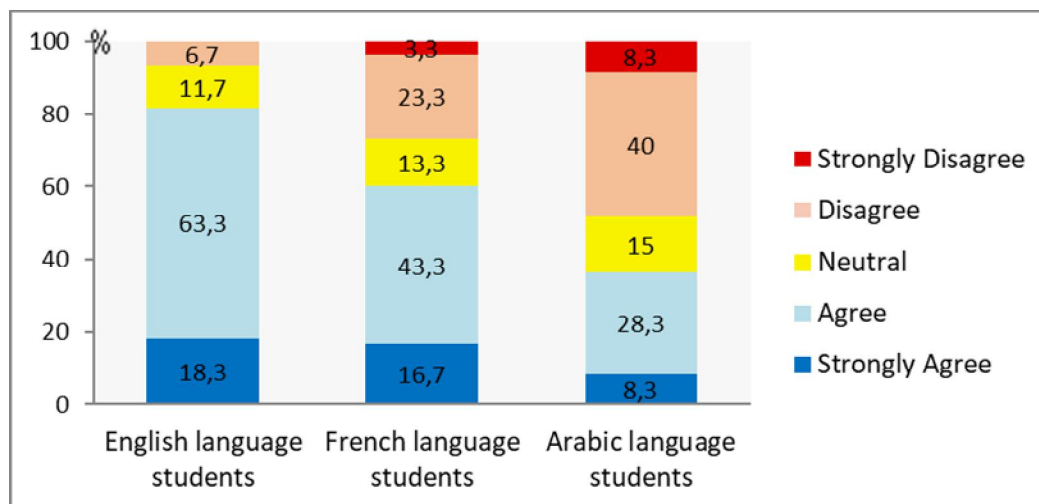


*Figure 2.16. Genders' reaction in offending situations*

In question 16, the results highlight that the English, French, and Arabic language students (93.4%, 93.3%, and 63.3%, respectively) responded that women should go for divorce in infidelity cases. Since the majority of the sampled population is females, this finding underlines that women nowadays are very sensitive towards such cases and for that, they are willing to defend anything that would offend their rights and values.

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- **Question n°17:** Women should be self-made and not dependent on men.



*Figure 2.17. Women's self-reliance*

As Figure 2.17 indicates, a considerable number of the surveyed students from English (81.6%) and French (60%) specialties stated that women should be self-made and not dependent on men, whereas only a relatively small number of the Arabic language students (36.6%) agreed with this view. Thus, unlike the foreign language students, the large part of the Arabic language population believes that women should not be fully independent from men.

- **Question n°18:** Arabic women can make great presidents.

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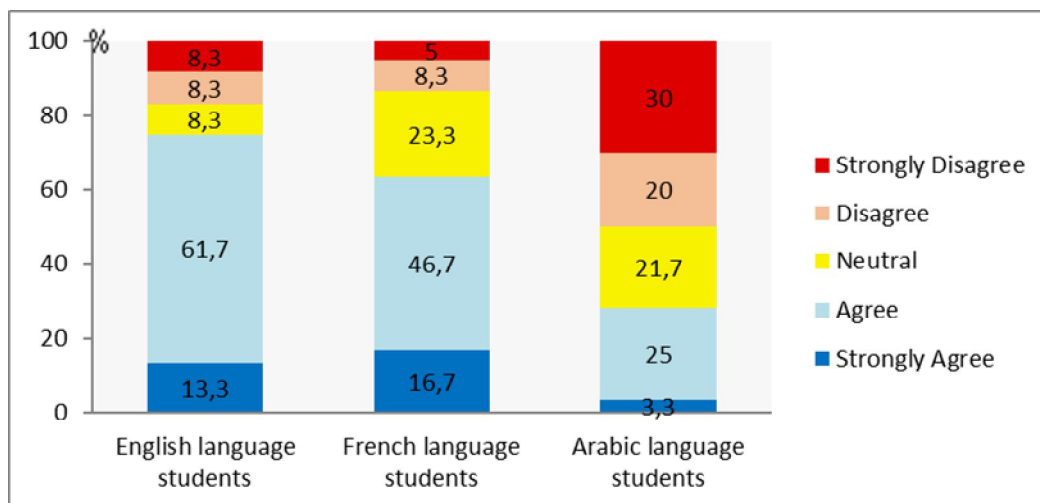


Figure 2.18. Students' perception of women's position in politics

In response to question 18, most of the foreign language students (English 65%, and French 63.4%) agreed that Arabic women can make great presidents. Half of the students of Arabic (50%), however, opposed the statement, and only 28.3% of them agreed. Hence, despite that women in the Islamic world are not granted many opportunities to presidency, the students of foreign languages support women's right to be engaged in presidential matters.

**Question n°19:** Women can travel without men's company.

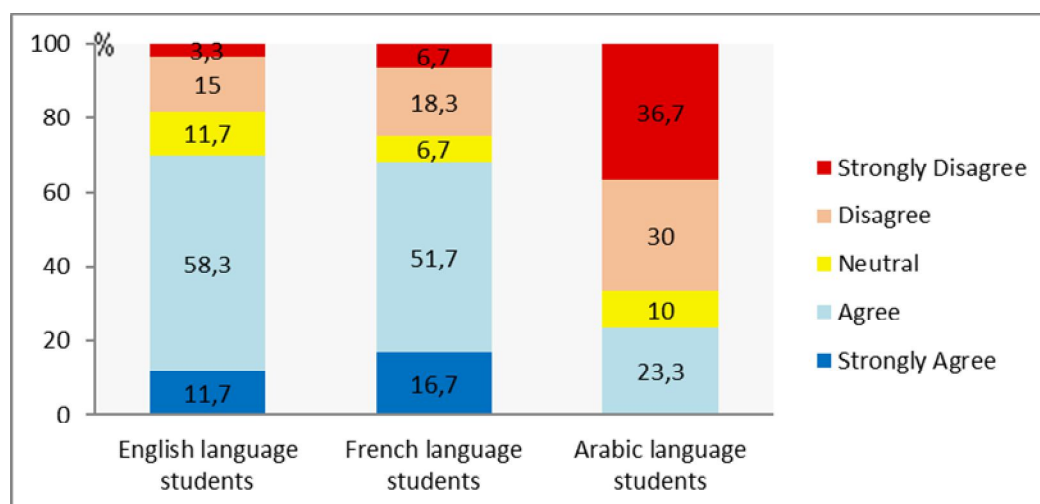
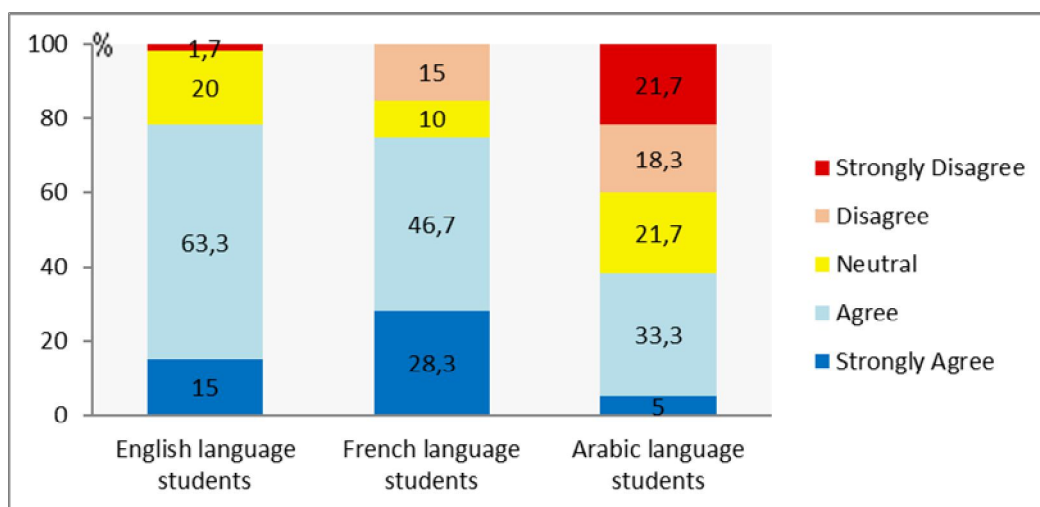


Figure 2.19. Women's right to individual social mobility

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With regards to question 19, the majority of the students of English (70%) and French (68.4%) agreed that women can travel alone without men's company, while the large number of the Arabic students-participants (66.7%) strongly disagreed with the statement. This result backs up the students' answer to question 17 where the majority of the foreign language students' supported women-independency from men, whereas the students of Arabic opposed it. This opposition is due to the religious standpoints of Algeria's society as being an Islamic country. That is, women in the Islamic world are not independent from men. In fact, they are not allowed to travel alone without a male's company. Therefore, the results to this statement reveal the influence of foreign beliefs on the students of foreign languages.

**Question n°20:** You wish men and women had the same rights in our country (Algeria).



*Figure 2.20. Students' aspiration to gender equality of rights*

The results to the last question, with regards to gender, are in unison with the findings of the eleventh question, which says that the majority of the foreign language students' sampled population calls for more social equality of gender. The students of English (78.3%) and French (75%) languages, again, wish for men and women to have the same rights in

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Algeria. On another note, the students of Arabic are of conflicting opinions regarding the statement (that is, 40% disagreed, 38.3% agreed, and 21.7% undecided). Thus, while the foreign language students aspire for equally gender opportunities and rights, the Arabic language participants have controversial opinions concerning gender equality.

In brief, both the English and the French languages students seem to advocate gender equality and women-independency. Giving that most of the participants are females, the results of this sub-section reflect women's eager for social equality as they agreed to all the statements. However, gender from the Arabic students' points of view entail that men and women are granted dissimilar responsibilities and roles in society. Therefore, despite the limited freedom that women are granted in the Islamic world, the experience of foreign language learning influenced the English and the French language students' views concerning gender status.

- **Language**

The final sub-section displays the responses of the three target groups with respect to the questions of language.

- **Question n°21:** By learning English/ French/Arabic you have acquired new beliefs and ideas. (E.g. being exposed to a different culture made me more open-minded.)

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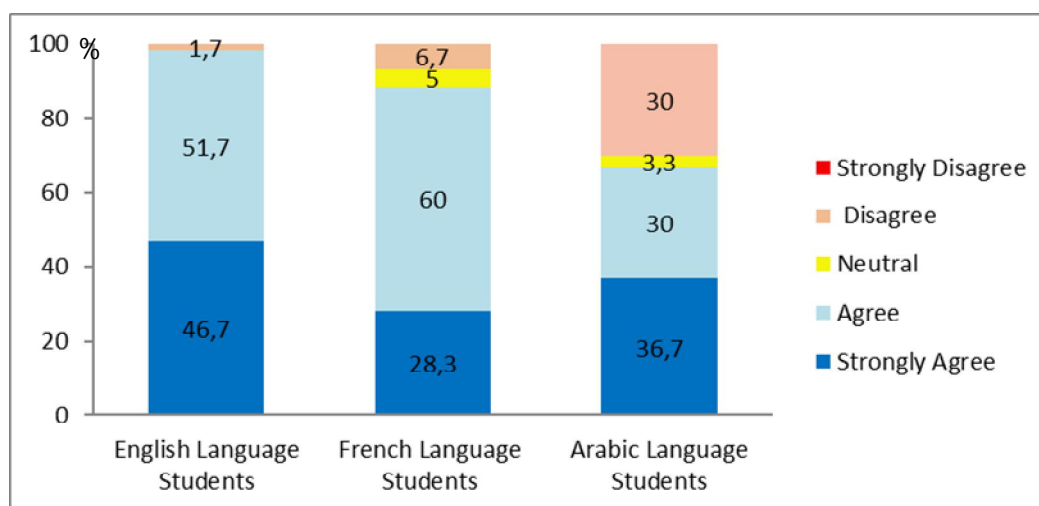


Figure 2.21. The students' acquisition of new beliefs and ideas

As seen in Figure 2.21, the majority of the English, the French, and the Arabic language students (98.4%, 88.3%, and 66.7%, respectively) agreed about acquiring new beliefs and ideas throughout the experience of language learning.

- **Question n°22:** Learning English/ French/ Arabic makes you feel more educated and cultured.

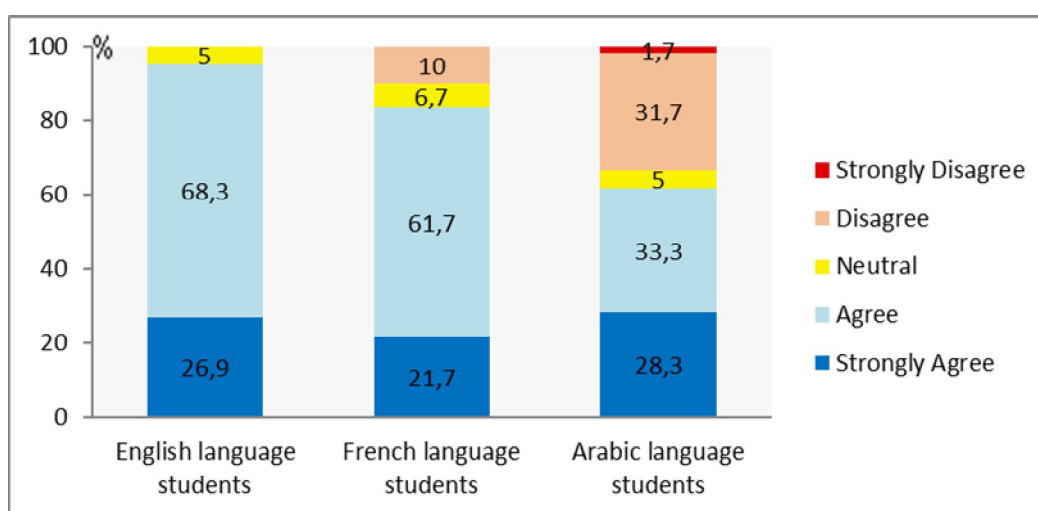


Figure 2.22. The students' attitudes towards the influence of their language of specialty on their cultural and educational backgrounds

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Again, in response to question 22, the biggest number of the sampled population (English 95%, French 83.4%, Arabic 61.6%) responded that learning their language of speciality makes them feel as more educated and cultured. The three groups' participants, then, have a positive attitude towards their language of specialty, especially on the part of foreign language learners.

- **Question n°23:** The way you used to write personal messages (chat, S.M.S, comments) has changed after being exposed to your language of specialty (English/ French/ Arabic).

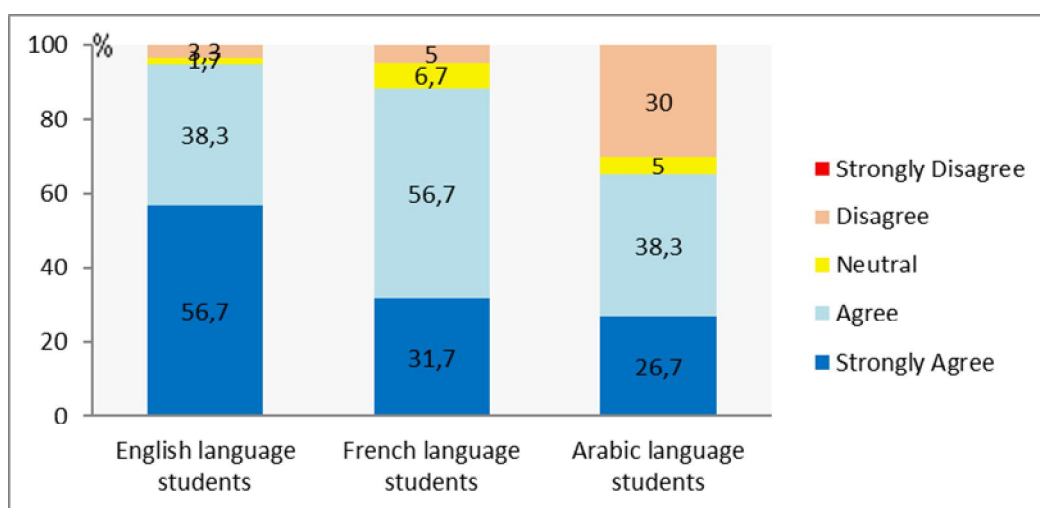


Figure 2.23. The influence of language learning on the student' personal writings

Once more, in question 23, the vast majority of participants in each group (English 94%, French 88.4%, and Arabic 65%) agreed that the means they used to write their personal messages has changed after being exposed to their language of specialty. Nevertheless, it is worthy to note that the process of language learning has influenced the foreign language students' personal writings more than the Arabic language students.

- **Question n°24:** You can express your feelings and ideas better using your language of specialty than your mother tongue.



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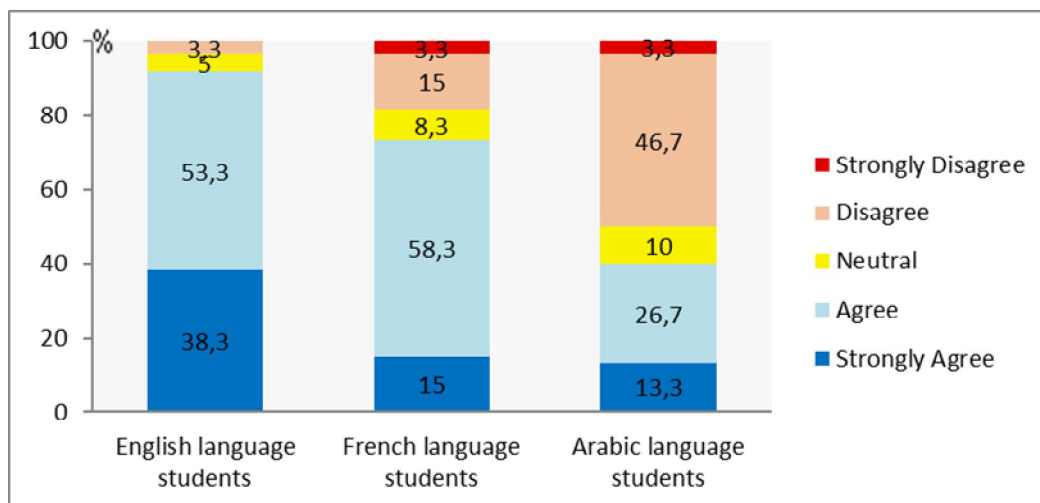
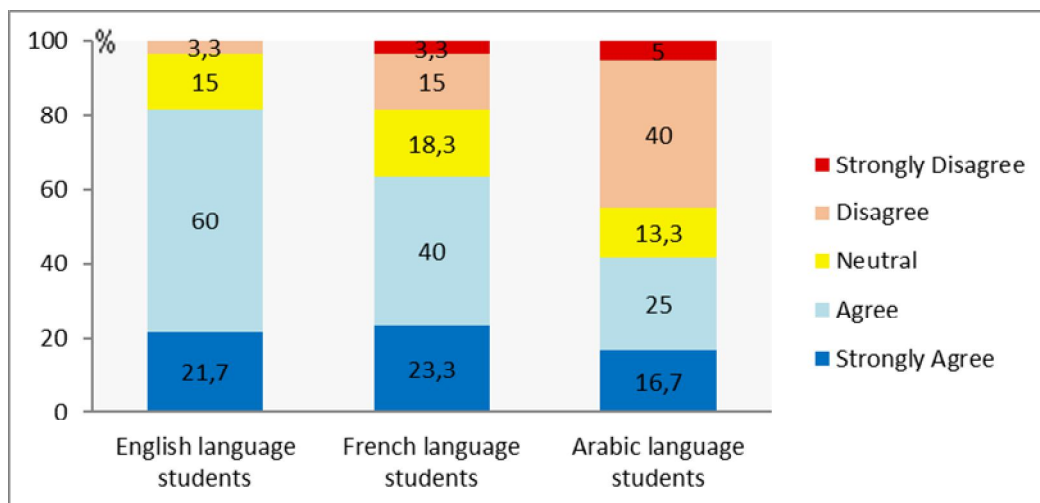


Figure 2.24. The influence of language learning on the students' self-expression

As Figure 2.24 illustrates, most of the English (91.6%) and the French (73.3%) languages students stated that their language speciality allows them to express their feelings and ideas better than their mother tongue, while half of the Arabic language respondents disagreed with the statement. By and large, it seems that the students of Arabic are less comfortable with using their Modern Standard Arabic in comparison to the foreign language students. This may be justified by the infrequent use of Modern Standard Arabic outside the educational realm, or due to the complex linguistic situation of Algeria, namely, diglossia.

- **Question n°25:** People who study English/French/Arabic understand you better than those who do not.

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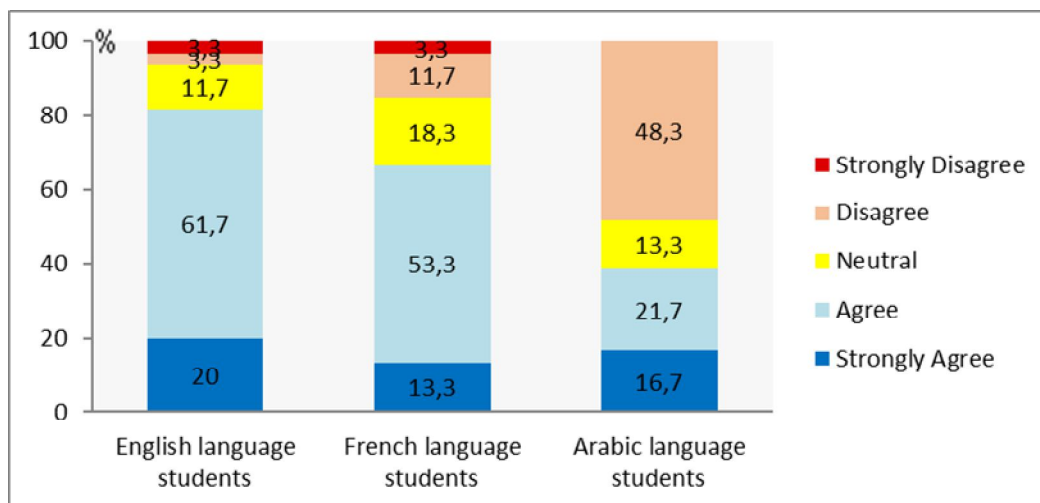


*Figure 2.25. The influence of language learning on the students' bonds with others*

In Figure 2.25, a considerable number of the English (81.7%) and the French (63.6) language participants admitted that people of their specialty understand them better than others, whereas only 41.6% of the of the Arabic language informants agreed with the statement. Therefore, it appears that solely the foreign language students have developed special feelings towards people who are studying in the same field. This result reveals that the process of foreign language learning influences the social relationship of the students as well.

**Question n°26:** You feel prestigious when you code switch between your mother tongue and English/ French/ Arabic in casual settings

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*Figure 2.26. Students' attitudes towards using their language of specialty in casual settings*

With respect to question 26, the vast majority of the English and the French language students (81.7% and 66.6%, respectively) acknowledged that they feel prestigious when they code switch between their mother tongue and their language of speciality in casual settings. Unlike these findings, the majority of the students of Arabic (48.3%) opposed the statement and only 38.3% of them agreed. Hence, apart from the students of Arabic, the foreign language students have developed a positive attitude towards the target language. This is probably because English is often regarded as the global language of prestige and power, while French is often considered as the language of civilization and science in Algeria.

- **Question n°27:** You often use English/ French/ Arabic with your friends to talk about private matters.

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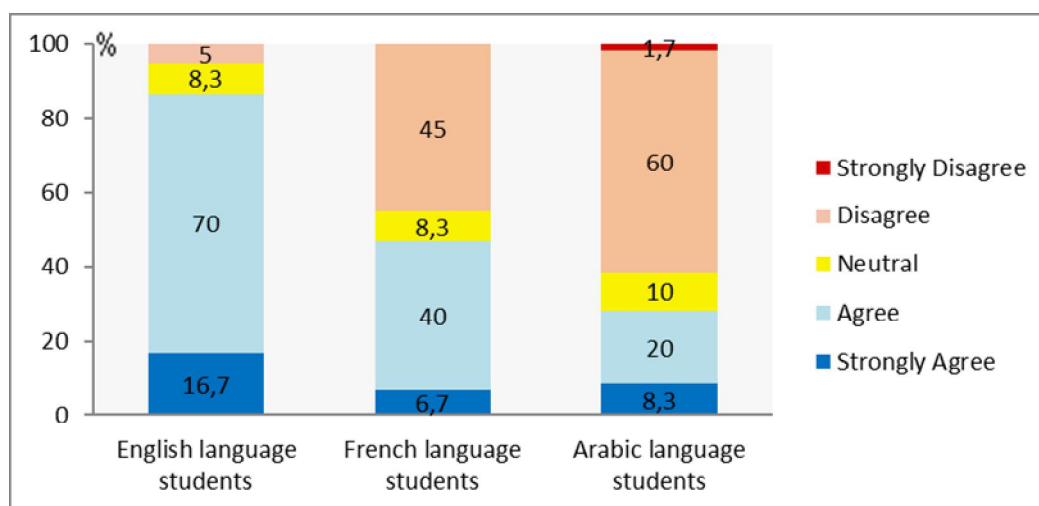


Figure 2.27. The students' tendency to using their language of specialty in private topics

Figure 2.27 demonstrates that the vast majority of the English language informants (86.7%) agreed about using their language of speciality for talking about private matters with friends. The answers of the French language students, however, demonstrate divisive opinions; almost half of the participants chose 'agree', while 45% of them opted for 'disagree'. In contrast to the foreign language students' results, the majority of the students of Arabic (61.7%) disagreed with the statement. In overall, unlike the students of French and Arabic, the students of English favour the use of their language of speciality even for very personal matters.

**Question n°28:** Your language of specialty affects the way you speak in casual settings. (E.g. you use the new terms you learn in casual speech whenever is possible.)

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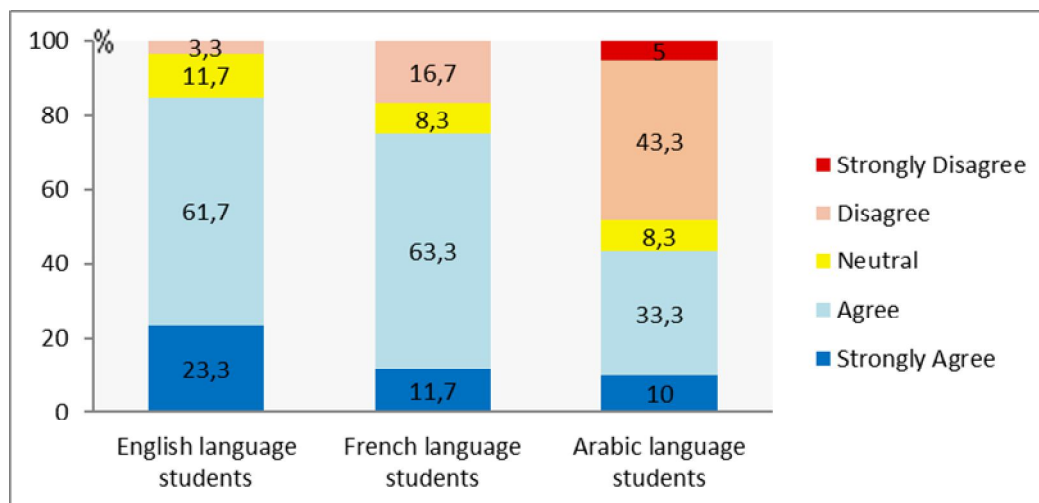
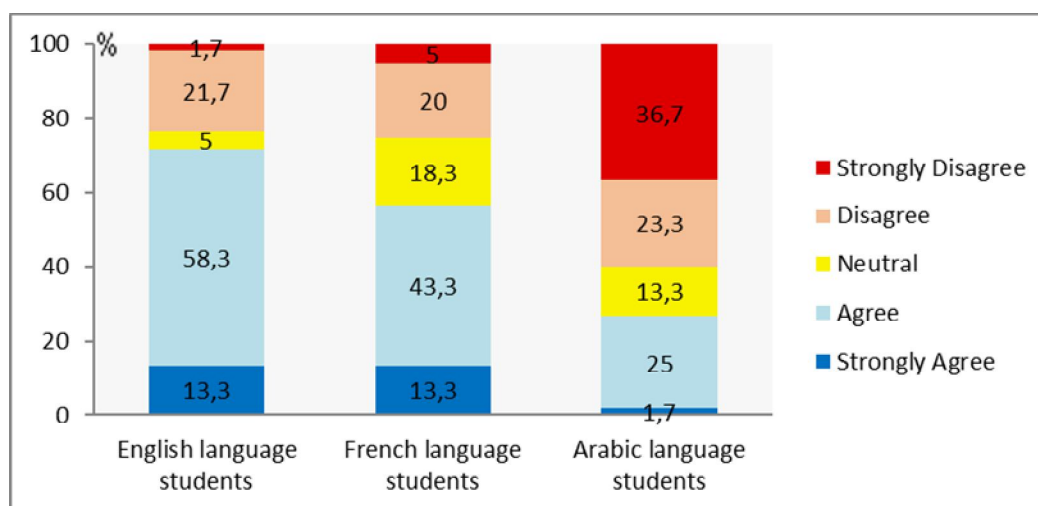


Figure 2.28. The students' commitment to their language of specialty in casual settings

As indicated in Figure 2.28, the foreign language students (English 86.7%, French 75%) stated that their language of speciality affects the way they speak in casual settings, whereas 48.3 % of the students of Arabic disagreed with the statement, and 43.3% of them agreed. Thus, according the foreign languages students' responses, English and French are not only used in academic settings, but also in various situations and casual settings; however, this is not the case for Modern Standard Arabic. As explained earlier, this is possibly due to the uncommon use of Arabic language outside the academic setting, or probably because of the diglossic situation of Algeria.

**Question n°29:** Tamazight/Berber should be introduced in schools as a cultural heritage of Algerians.

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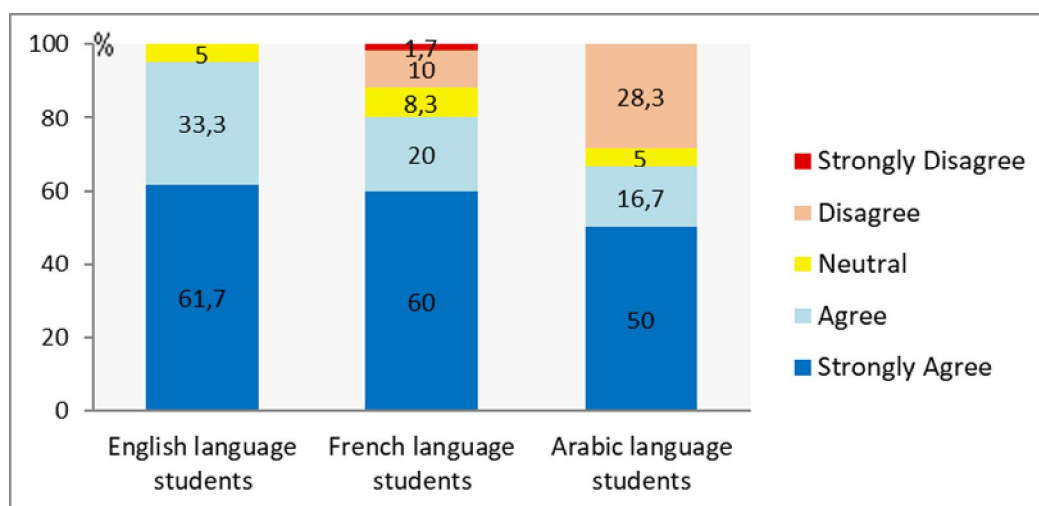


*Figure 2.29. The students' open-mindedness towards the other local language and culture*

Question 29 is meant to unveil the influence of foreign language learning on the open-mindedness of the students concerning language and culture. In point of fact, a large number of the English (71.6%) and the French (56.6%) languages participants is attained by those who agreed that Tamazight should be introduced in schools as a cultural heritage for Algerians. Unexpectedly, the majority of the Arabic language respondents (60%) opposed the statement, though all the participants of the three groups are Arabic-speaking students. In the light of this, it can be presumed that foreign languages students, notably those of English, tolerate other languages and cultures as they are willing to learn more about their own national language of Tamazight.

- **Question n°30:** The English/ French/ Arabic language should be used for instruction at higher education.

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*Figure 2.30. The students' views about the use of their language of specialty at higher education*

The last question of the questionnaire aims to shed light on the students' attachment to the language they are learning. Surprisingly, all of the three groups desired to use their language of specialty at higher education. However, the percentage of agreement differs from one group to another. As Figure 2.30 shows, the highest rate is reached by the students of English (95%), whereas the average rate is achieved by the students of French (80%), and the lowest rate is attained by the students of Arabic (66.7%). Thus, it can be held that the informants of the three fields of study are very positive and attached to their language of specialty, especially those of English language since none of them disagreed with the statement. This might be because English is the lingua franca of the world and French is still, to some extent, considered as a language of science.

In short, this final sub-section uncovers the influence of foreign language learning on the students' language use. In light of the results, the English and the French language participants prefer to use the target language in most statements. However, the Arabic language students do not frequently use modern standard Arabic outside its educational setting. Hence, it can be speculated that both the English and the French language students

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are significantly affected by the experience of foreign language learning in terms of language use.

Considering all the questionnaire's statements together, the findings obtained from the three sub-sections reveal that the English and the French language students' cultural identities are affected by the process of foreign language learning. This impact, in fact, is observed in the students' preference of clothing style, their perception of gender status, and their choice of language use. Additionally, such result is supported by their comparison to the students who study Arabic specialty. That is, the Arabic language students' cultural identities are not influenced by foreigners' views because their answers were nothing out of the unexpected.



**FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY****Section Three: Methods, Results, and Discussions**

2.3.1. Foreign Language and Arabic Language Students' Clothing Styles .....

2.3.2. Foreign Language and Arabic Language Students' Views of Gender Status .....

2.3.3. Foreign Language and Arabic Language Students' Preference of Language.....

2.3.4. Further Suggestions and Pedagogical Recommendations.....

General Conclusion.....

References

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Résumé

ملخص

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

### Section Three: Methods, Results, and Discussions

The current section discusses the findings analyzed in the previous section. Essentially, it answers the research questions and compares the results to the review of the literature. As a reminder, the study at hand seeks to answer the following research questions:

- Do Algerian foreign language (English and French) students and Arabic language students have different clothing styles?
- Do Algerian foreign language students and Arabic language students have controversial views concerning gender status?
- Do Algerian foreign language students favor the foreign language over their mother tongue compared to Arabic language students?

In the main, each research question is answered respectively in relation to the results obtained from the three sections of the questionnaire. .

#### 2.3.1. Foreign Language and Arabic Language Students' Clothing Styles

Foreign language students seem to be significantly affected by language learning compared to their Arabic counterparts in terms of clothing views and styles. In general, the results obtained from the questionnaire unveiled the foreign language students' preference for Western fashion and the students of Arabic preservation of the Algerian norms of clothing. For instance, it was found that the Arabic language learners prefer wearing traditional clothes, while the foreign language students favor modern clothes even in sacred occasions. This might be because the experience of English and French language learning has broadened the students' cultural outlook about dressing. In other words, the intersection of cultures in the experience of language learning has brought about an insidious change in the learners' clothing styles and views. In line with this, Hristova (2014) stated that people's experiences

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lead to constant changes in social norms and traditions and this generates new forms of how people dress.

In what concerns the Arabic language students, the reason why they are uncaring of western pressure is probably because of their eager to preserve their country's clothing symbolism as they deepened in Algeria's culture more than the students of foreign languages. Besides, their intolerance with foreigners' fashion is possibly due to their support of modesty in clothes. More to the point, Algeria as an Islamic country requires both men and women to dress conservatively in order to preserve modesty. Consequently, when the three groups were asked whether clothes should be a religious symbol, the foreign language learners' answers showed a mismatch with what the students of Arabic said. In the main, unlike the foreign language students, the students of Arabic consider the aspect of clothing as mirrored through religion. Correspondingly, in a research paper about Saudi traditional clothes, Ivypanda (2019) concluded that Arabic learners favor their traditional clothes over western styles because they maintain modesty as required by the Islamic principles.

Furthermore, the obtained results revealed that foreign language students seek inspiration from Western influencers' styles through social media. The target language, then, seems to ease the access for learners to westerners' world of fashion. Consequently, many students of foreign languages consider these western styles as more fashionable and modern; thus, the majority of them may abandon their Arabic fashion and base their style on foreign sources. Many scholars supported this view; for example, Akou (2007) stated that different foreign ideas of clothing were spread in the Islamic world by means of the internet. Likewise, Johnson (2009) argued that people often ignore their native culture to portray a modern image about themselves. On the whole, it can be held that the experience of foreign language learning has influenced the students of English and French views and styles of clothing.

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Moreover, it is worthy to note that all the questions with regards to clothing indicate that the foreign language students are affected by learning the target language, except in question 10 where the results showed that a considerable number of the participants, notably those of French, are careless about the Algerian youth openness to fashion. This might be because the students are interested in their self-image only and not about that of the others. On the other hand, the students of Arabic opposed all the questions which include the foreign culture. This signals a problem of integration with western societies on the part of the Arabic language students. However, a possible explanation for this failure of integration could be due to the language barrier and religion.

Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the English and the French languages students showed insignificant difference in clothing. This fact supports the study's hypothesis that usually foreign language learners (English and French) are affected by the target language and its culture. Therefore, it can be concluded that the foreign language students have different clothing styles and views from their Arabic counterparts.

### **2.3.2. Foreign Language and Arabic Language Students' Views of Gender Status**

The foreign language students' beliefs about gender vary greatly from those of the Arabic language students. For instance, the majority of foreign language learners expressed their desire for gender equality in different societal aspects such in employment, marriage, family, and social mobility. In contrast, the student of Arabic seemed to adhere to Algeria's prevailing views of gender status except in offended situations concerning marriage. This point highlights the Algerian students' awareness of their rights and justice. However, owing to the fact that Arabic and foreign language classes are dominated by a great number of females, the results underline foreign languages females' aspiration for more freedom and gender equality of rights. This result favorably correlates with the study of Mustafa (2017)

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which argued that Saudi women students of English are willing to challenge their traditional norms of gender to allow more freedom to their gender.

The students of Arabic, however, showed contradicted results regarding the questions of gender. For instance, in question 12, a considerable number of the Arabic language participants stated that both genders are equally qualified for any given occupation, but in question 18, half of them argued that women are not suited for presidential positions. That being so, the Arabic language students' views of gender status are still centered on the ideology of male's authority. El Awady (2017) supported this view by stating that the political sphere of Arabic countries is largely dominated by males and this justifies the rare engagement of women in politics.

Additionally, a significant difference between foreign language learners and those of Arabic lies in how they perceive women's individual mobility (Q9). For instance, the foreign language students advocated women's freedom of travelling alone without a legal male partner (*Mahram*). This outlook contradicts with the Islamic law which supports women's dependency on men in cases like travelling. Thus, the beliefs of foreign language learners concerning the status of gender are shaped by foreign cultural views. In fact, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2001) argued that many women learn English to escape their gender cultural norms; hence, learning a language like English, for instance, is seen as a means of emancipation from patriarchal societies (Kobayashi, 2002; Matsui, 1995). As regards the students of Arabic, their results match well with the Islamic gender principles, that is, the majority of them believe that women cannot travel without a male's company.

In short, the results of the English and the French language students are again in harmony, yet in discordance with the findings of the Arabic language students concerning gender. The status of gender in an Arabian country like Algeria is mainly determined by

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religion and culture. For that, gender separation is vital for preserving the Islamic morals of society. Nevertheless, the foreign language learners seem to favor gender equality and women's engagement in all domains, while the students of Arabic believe in gender inequality and the suppression of certain women activities. In light of all the above findings, it can be said that the foreign language students' views of gender status are quite different from those of the Arabic language students.

### 2.3.3. Foreign Language and Arabic Language Students' Preference of Language

The results that have stemmed from the questionnaire indicate that foreign language students favor their language of specialty over their mother tongue in comparison to Arabic language students. The context of the present study suggests that students' attachment to a certain language can be subjected to the experience of language learning, and to the status of that language embedded in ongoing cultural and political movements (Bakhtin, 1987).

As concerns the status of languages in Algeria, English is regarded as the language of technology and social development, French is still considered as the language of the intellectual elite, while the status of Modern Standard Arabic is linked almost exclusively to its religious values and purposes (i.e., reading the Quran) (Kheir Eddine, 2013). However, it appears that the experience of language learning sometimes overshadows the status of a native language. For instance, the students of the three groups (English, French, and Arabic) stated that their language of specialty makes them feel as more educated and cultured. Additionally, they acknowledged the impact of these languages on their personal writing styles, notably on the part of foreign language learners.

In contrast to the students of Arabic, the foreign language students feel prestigious when they code switch between their mother tongue and their language of specialty in casual settings. This denotes that the learners' attitude is probably influenced by the status

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of the foreign languages in Algeria. Similarly, Fielding and Harbon (2013) came up with the same conclusion when they examined bilingual and bicultural identities in Australia. The study's findings revealed that the Australian learners feel more special and different from monolingual students.

Likewise, Sagsayan (2011) stated that she felt more capable and comfortable to express her feelings and ideas using the foreign language than her mother tongue (as cited in Ghamari & Khatib, 2011). This goes in line with the findings of the present study as most of the foreign language students agreed that their language specialty allows them to express their feelings and ideas better than their native language. A possible justification of this result can be due to the relationship between the world structure and the language structure (Shakir Hussein, 2013). In other words, each language has its own dimension for seeing and experiencing the world, hence, expressing oneself comes out smoothly when one's viewpoint corresponds with that of the target language. This statement is supported by many scholars such as Sapir (1929) and Whorf (1945).

Giving that the students of the three groups favor the use of their language of specialty for expressing themselves, one could expect that they also use it to discuss private matters in public. Surprisingly, only the students of English do so. The reason why the students of Arabic do not use their language of specialty when discussing private matters is probably related to their discomfort with using modern standard Arabic outside the educational realm because it is infrequent and unfamiliar to the wide public. On the other hand, the French language students' position suggests that some of them do not feel comfortable discussing private matters using the first mandatory foreign language of Algeria and this in order to preserve the privacy of their conversations.

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Despite that Tamazight is part of the Algerian cultural heritage, the idea of promoting it at higher education was opposed by the students of Arabic. This opposition, however, is also identical to Arabophones' position to officializing Tamazight (Djennane, 2016). As reported previously in the literature review, 'The Berber/Kabylian myth' is a French policy that aimed to split Algerians and fill them up with hatred towards each other (Turin, 1983). Assuming that the traces of this policy are transmitted on to the new generations, this possibly explains the Arabic students' negative attitude towards Tamazight. In contrast to this, it was found that the foreign language students have a positive attitude towards Tamazight. In fact, Compernelle's (2016) research concerning second/foreign language learning and tolerance confirmed that the process of foreign language learning contributes to a great open-mindedness and tolerance towards other different languages.

In brief, the overall findings obtained from the questionnaire are congruent with the study's hypothesis which states that foreign language learners (English and French) are more affected by the process of language learning and its cultural exposure. Hence, it can be inferred that foreign language students favour their language of speciality over their mother tongue in different situations and circumstances. Still, it is worth mentioning that the English language students are more attached and influenced by their language of specialty.

In light of all the above discussions, the overall findings of this research correspond with previous studies supporting the influence of foreign language learning on people's cultural identities (e.g. Rezaei & Bahrami, 2019; Seppälä, 2011; Talabari & khatib, 2019). More importantly, the obtained results revealed that the English language students are more influenced by the experience of language learning than the students of French; however, when comparing the findings to their Arabic counterparts, we come to confirm this research hypothesis and supporting the fact that foreign language learning has a remarkable influence on the students' cultural identities with regards to clothing, gender status, and language.



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### 2.3.4. Suggestions for Further Research and Pedagogical Recommendations

Despite that many studies have dealt with the impact of foreign language learning on the students' identities in general, very few of them have tackled the learners' cultural identities in particular. In fact, the topic of foreign language learning and its influence on the Algerian students' cultural identities has known very limited studies; therefore, researchers are recommended to do further investigations concerning the possible influence of a foreign language on the different levels of cultural identity.

Cultural identity is wide in scope; in fact, every society has a number of cultural characteristics and identifiers shared among its members. Thus, further researchers are suggested to inquire into other cultural identifiers. At this point, they may investigate history, nationality, sexuality, religious beliefs, and ethnicity in relation to foreign language learning. Nevertheless, it is a fact that one topic can be developed from different perspectives. Hence, the direction of approaching a topic is up for researchers to decide. For instance, they may stick to the three identifiers used in this study (i.e., clothing, gender status, and language) and dig deeper in what is exactly that influences the students, that is, other possible factors which fostered the influence of the foreign language,

In what concerns teaching and learning, the outcomes of this work highlighted the importance of addressing the target culture appropriately and understanding the students' cultural identities in learning a foreign language. For that, syllabus designers, educators, and decision makers should select the appropriate cultural aspects when designing foreign language programs and materials. For instance, they may schedule more training programs for teaching in which the students' cultural identities are not marginalized. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to learn more about their learners' identities in order to understand, alert, and guide the students through the process of language learning.

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As the process of foreign language learning involves the teaching of the target language and its culture, educators should carefully address the cultural issues integration to avert the phenomenon of acculturation. As a suggestion, they may tackle the differences between both cultures by making them topics for classroom discussions. Moreover, Byram's (1997a) model for teaching culture in a foreign language classroom is an adequate approach for teachers to follow. This model encourages students to understand themselves and the world around them. More importantly, it helps learners develop positive views of their native culture, and this will prevent their cultural identities from inclining to foreigners' beliefs and culture. On the whole, teachers must be cautious of the contact between the two cultures and the dynamic changes that might appear in the learners' identities to preserve their Algerian cultural identity.

**General Conclusion**

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### General Conclusion

In this interdependent world, foreign languages are considered as very important traits for success. Consequently, many students get involved in foreign languages ignoring the possible impact of a foreign language learning experience on their identity. The current research explored the impact of foreign language learning on the Algerian students' cultural identities through comparing the foreign language students (English and French) to those of the Arabic language in terms of their clothing styles, gender perception, and language preferences.

The present work consisted of two major parts; the first part covered the theoretical framework, whereas the second part dealt with the practical side of research. The theoretical framework is divided into two sections. The first section provided a general overview on the linguistic situation of Algeria including the official languages (Arabic and Tamazight) and the foreign ones (English and French). It further tackled the status of foreign languages in Algeria and the approaches for teaching them. Concerning the second section, it highlighted the concepts of culture, identity and their relationship with the foreign language context. Essentially, it dealt with the concept of cultural identity and its three identifiers (i.e., clothing, gender status, and language) and deepened into the essence of this research which discusses cultural identity and foreign language learning.

As regards the practical aspect of research, it comprised three sections. The first section outlined the methodology employed to investigate the research problems posed. For that, the study at hand followed a quantitative research paradigm through implementing a five-point Likert questionnaire duplicated in three different languages (in English, French, and Arabic). Correspondingly, it was administered online to 60 Master one students of English, French, and Arabic. This instrument was mainly implemented for unveiling the

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influence of foreign language learning on the Algerian students' cultural identities in relation to their clothing styles, their perception of gender status, and their preference of language. In the second section, however, the data were analyzed and presented by means of figures. Finally, the third section discussed the obtained results from section two with respect to the literature review and similar studies.

The findings show that the English and the French language students' cultural identities are affected by foreign views and beliefs compared to the students of Arabic. This influence was found in the students dress, gender perception, and language preferences (i.e., the mother tongue or the target language). Accordingly, the research hypothesis which suggests that the majority of students' cultural identities are influenced by foreign language learning is confirmed.

In overall, this research work revealed the potential influence of a foreign language on the learners' cultural identities. Hence, teachers in general and syllabus designers in particular must raise the Algerian students' cultural awareness about the differences and the similarities between the native culture and the target one. This cultural awareness will underline the positive and the negative aspects of the target culture as it will enlighten the students on the influence of a foreign language learning experience on their social behaviors and cultural beliefs.

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## Appendix

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## Appendix

### Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

The questionnaire at hand aims at investigating the impact of foreign language learning on the students' cultural identities. Your willingness to fill in this questionnaire will be of great help to carry out this study. Your identity will remain anonymous and your answers will be treated with complete confidentiality. This questionnaire tackles three themes. It starts with questions about clothing, then gender, and finally, language. So, please mark the option that best corresponds to your conviction. We would really appreciate your honest choices. Thank you in advance.

### Questionnaire aux Étudiants

Chers étudiants,

Le questionnaire mis à votre disposition vise à étudier l'effet de l'apprentissage des langues étrangères sur l'identité culturelle des étudiants. Votre remplissage du questionnaire sera une aide primordiale pour l'accomplissement de cette étude. Votre identité restera anonyme et vos réponses seront traitées en toute confidentialité. Ce questionnaire aborde trois thèmes. Le premier thème s'articule sur les vêtements, le deuxième aborde le sujet du sexe, et le dernier traite le thème de la langue. Donc, veuillez cocher l'option qui correspond le mieux à votre conviction. Nous apprécierions vraiment vos choix honnêtes. Merci d'avance.

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## استبانة موجهة للطلبة

أعزائي الطلبة،

تهدف هذه الاستبانة إلى التحقيق في آثار تعلم اللغات الأجنبية على الهوية الثقافية للطلبة. إن استعدادك لملاءمة هذه الاستبانة سيكون مفيدا جدا لإتمام هذه الدراسة. ستبقى هويتك مجهولة و سيتم التعامل مع إجاباتك بمنتهى السرية. تتناول الاستبانة ثلاثة محاور و هي الملابس و مكانة الجنسين (الرجال و النساء) و أخيرا اللغة. لذا يرجى تحديد الخيار الأفضل الذي يتوافق مع قناعاتك. نقدر اختياراتك الصادقة .

شكرا مقدما.

### I. Clothing: (Vêtements) (الملابس)

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Questions	Tout à fait d'accord	D'accord	Neutre	Pas d'accord	Pas du tout d'accord
الأسئلة	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	أعارض	أعارض بشدة
1- You like to express yourself through clothes. (E.g. shy people prefer to wear dark colors.)					
1- Vous aimez vous exprimer à travers votre style vestimentaire.					



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<p>(Ex : les personnes timides préfèrent porter des couleurs sombres.)</p> <p>1- تفضل ارتداء الملابس التي تعبر عنك ( مثلا, يفضل الأشخاص الخجولون ارتداء الملابس الداكنة).</p>	
<p>2- You keep up with the latest trends of Algeria.</p> <p>2- Vous suivez les tendances de la mode Algérienne.</p> <p>2- تحاول دائما مواكبة آخر صيحات الموضة في الجزائر.</p>	
<p>3- You prefer to wear famous brands like <i>Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Gucci</i> etc.</p> <p>3- Vous préférez porter les vêtements de marques célèbres comme <i>Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Gucci</i> etc.</p> <p>3 - تفضل ارتداء الماركات العالمية الشهيرة مثل <i>Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Gucci</i> الخ...</p>	
<p>4- You try to keep up with western / American fashion trends.</p> <p>4- Vous essayez de suivre les tendances de la mode occidentale /Française.</p> <p>4 - تحاول مواكبة صيحات الموضة الغربية.</p>	
<p>5- You prefer to wear modern clothes (skirts, jeans, T-shirts, or suits) over traditional clothes (Caftan, Gandoura) in special occasions such as el Aid, weddings etc.</p> <p>5- Vous préférez porter des vêtements modernes (Jupes, jeans, T-shirts, ou</p>	

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<p>costumes) au lieu des vêtements traditionnels (Caftan, Gandoura) pendant les occasions comme El-Aïd, les mariages.</p> <p>5- تفضل ارتداء الملابس العصرية (تنورة, جينز, بدلة) على الملابس التقليدية (قفطان, قندورة) في المناسبات الخاصة مثل الأعياد و حفلات الزفاف و غيرها.</p>	
<p>6- You spend a lot of time preparing yourself before going out.</p> <p>6- Vous prenez assez de temps pour vous préparer avant de sortir.</p> <p>6- تقضي وقتا طويلا في تحضير نفسك قبل الخروج.</p>	
<p>7- You dress the way you like regardless of the opinion of society.</p> <p>7- Vous vous habillez comme vous le souhaitez indépendamment de l'opinion de la société.</p> <p>7- ترتدي ما يعجبك بغض النظر عن رأي المجتمع.</p>	
<p>8- Clothes are not a religious symbol. (E.g. a girl can be religious despite not wearing a veil).</p> <p>8- Les vêtements ne sont pas des symboles de la religion.</p> <p>Ex : Une fille peut être religieuse (musulmane) malgré qu'elle ne porte pas le voile.</p> <p>8- لا يجب اعتبار الملابس رمزا دينيا ( يمكن لفتاة أن تكون متدينة رغم عدم ارتدائها الحجاب).</p>	

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<p>9- You follow westerner / American fashionists and influencers on social media.</p> <p>9- Vous suivez des fashionistes et influenceurs occidentaux / français sur les réseaux sociaux.</p> <p>9- تتابع فاشينيستات و مؤثرين غربيين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.</p>	
<p>10- The Algerian youth should be more open to fashion and latest trends.</p> <p>10- La jeunesse algérienne devrait être plus ouverte à la mode et aux dernières tendances.</p> <p>10- يجب على الشباب الجزائري أن يكون أكثر انفتاحا على الموضة و آخر الصيحات.</p>	

### II. Gender: (Sexe) (مكانة الجنسين)

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Questions	Tout à fait d'accord	D'accord	Neutre	Pas d'accord	Pas du tout d'accord
الأسئلة	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	محايد	أعارض	أعارض بشدة

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<p>11- Men and women should be treated equally by society.</p> <p>11- L'homme et la femme doivent être traités d'une manière égale par la société.</p> <p>11- يجب على المجتمع أن يعامل الرجال و النساء على قدم المساواة.</p>	
<p>12- Being a good worker is related to the person's qualifications and not to his gender.</p> <p>(I.e., despite men's and women's mental and physical differences, they can do same tasks with the same level of efficiency.)</p> <p>12- Être un bon travailleur est lié aux qualifications de la personne et non son sexe.</p> <p>(C.-à-d. Malgré la différence mentale et physique entre les hommes et les femmes, ces dernières peuvent effectuer les mêmes tâches avec le même niveau d'efficacité.)</p> <p>12- أن تكون عاملاً كفؤاً مرتبطاً بالمؤهلات و ليس بجنس العامل.</p> <p>(بغض النظر عن الفروقات الجسدية و العقلية بين الرجل و المرأة كلاهما يمكن أن يؤديا نفس العمل بنفس الكفاءة.)</p>	
<p>13- Women should establish a career before constructing a family.</p>	

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<p>13- Les femmes devraient établir une carrière avant de fonder une famille.</p> <p>13- على المرأة أن تؤسس مهنة قبل تكوين أسرة.</p>	
<p>14- Men and women should be both responsible for the honor and the stability of their families.</p> <p>14- L'homme et la femme doivent être tous deux responsables pour maintenir l'honneur et la stabilisation de leur famille.</p> <p>14- كل من الرجل و المرأة مسؤول عن شرف و استقرار أسرهم.</p>	
<p>15- Women should share financial responsibilities with men.</p> <p>15- La femme doit partager les responsabilités financières avec l'homme.</p> <p>15- يجب على المرأة مشاركة الرجل ماديا (المشاركة) في الإنفاق).</p>	
<p>16- Women, too, should ask for divorce in infidelity cases.</p> <p>16- Les femmes, aussi, devraient demander le divorce dans des cas d'infidélité.</p> <p>16- على المرأة أيضا طلب الطلاق في حالات الخيانة الزوجية.</p>	
<p>17- Women should be self- made and not dependent on men.</p>	

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<p>17- Les femmes doivent être autonomes et indépendantes des hommes.</p> <p>17- يجب على النساء أن يكن عصاميات و أن لا يعتمدن على الرجال.</p>	
<p>18- Arabic women can make great presidents.</p> <p>18- Les femmes Arabes peuvent être de dignes présidents.</p> <p>18- يمكن للمرأة العربية أن تكون رئيسة عظيمة .</p>	
<p>19- Women can travel without men's company.</p> <p>19- Les femmes peuvent voyager sans la compagnie des hommes.</p> <p>19- يمكن للمرأة أن تسافر لوحدها .</p>	
<p>20- You wish men and women had the same rights in our country (Algeria).</p> <p>20- Vous souhaitez que les hommes et les femmes aient les mêmes droits dans notre les pays (Algérie).</p> <p>20- تتمنى أن يحض الرجال و النساء بنفس الحقوق في بلدنا (الجزائر).</p>	

### III. Language: (Langue) (اللغة)

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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<p>Questions</p> <p>الأسئلة</p>	<p>Tout à fait d'accord</p> <p>أوافق بشدة</p>	<p>D'accord</p> <p>أوافق</p>	<p>Neutre</p> <p>محايد</p>	<p>Pas d'accord</p> <p>أعارض</p>	<p>Pas du tout d'accord</p> <p>أعارض بشدة</p>
<p>21- By learning English, you have acquired new beliefs and ideas.</p> <p>(E.g. being exposed to a different culture made me more open-minded).</p> <p>21- En apprenant le Français, vous avez acquis de nouvelles croyances et idées.</p> <p>(Ex : le fait d'être exposé à des cultures différentes t'as rendu plus ouvert d'esprit.)</p> <p>21- تخصصك في الأدب العربي جعلك تكتسب معتقدات و أفكار جديدة.</p> <p>(مثلا أصبحت أكثر انفتاحا بعد التعرف لثقافات جديدة.)</p>					
<p>22- Learning English makes you feel more educated and cultured.</p> <p>22- En apprenant le Français, vous vous sentez plus instruit et plus cultivé.</p> <p>22- تخصصك في الأدب العربي جعلك تشعر</p>					

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<p>بأنك أكثر ثقافة و تعليما.</p>	
<p>23- The way you used to write personal messages (chat, S.M.S, comments) has changed after being exposed to your language of specialty (English).</p> <p>23- La façon dont vous écrivez vos messages personnels (chat, S.M.S, commentaires) a changé après avoir été exposée à votre langue de spécialité (Français).</p> <p>23- بعد تخصصك في الأدب العربي, تغيرت الطريقة التي كنت تكتب بها كتاباتك الشخصية (دردشة, رسائل نصية, تعليقات....)</p>	
<p>24- You can express your feelings and ideas better using your language of specialty than your mother tongue.</p> <p>24- Vous pouvez mieux exprimer vos sentiments et vos idées en utilisant votre langue de spécialité que votre langue maternelle.</p> <p>24- يمكنك أن تعبر عن مشاعرك و أفكارك باستخدام لغة تخصصك (الفصحى) أكثر من لغتك الأم (الدارجة).</p>	
<p>25- People who study English understand you better than those who don't.</p> <p>25- Les personnes qui étudient le</p>	



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<p>Français vous comprennent mieux que les autres.</p> <p>25- أصحاب تخصصك يفهمونك بطريقة أفضل من أصحاب التخصصات الأخرى.</p>	
<p>26- You feel prestigious when you code switch between your mother tongue and English in casual settings.</p> <p>26- Vous vous sentez prestigieux lorsque vous alternez entre votre langue maternelle et le Français dans un cadre informel.</p> <p>26- تشعر بالهيبية عندما تمزج الفصحى في المحادثات غير الرسمية.</p> <p>( كنفاش مع الأصدقاء, في المنزل... )</p>	
<p>27- You often use English with your friends to talk about private matters.</p> <p>27- Vous utilisez souvent le Français avec vos amis pour parler de sujets privés.</p> <p>27- غالبا ما تستعمل العربية الفصحى للتحدث مع أصدقائك في مسائل خاصة.</p>	
<p>28- Your language of specialty affects the way you speak in casual settings.</p> <p>(E.g. You use the new terms you learn in casual speech whenever is possible).</p> <p>28- Votre langue de spécialité influe sur la façon dont vous parlez</p>	

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<p>dans un cadre informel.</p> <p>(Ex : Vous utilisez les nouveaux termes que vous apprenez dans un discours informel à chaque fois que cela c'est possible).</p> <p>28- تؤثر لغة تخصصك على الطريقة التي تتحدث بها في المحادثات الغير رسمية. (مثلا تستخدم المصطلحات الجديدة التي تتعلمها في محادثات غير رسمية كلما أمكنك ذلك).</p>	
<p>29- Tamazight/Berber should be introduced in schools as a cultural heritage of Algerians.</p> <p>29- Tamazight/Berbère devrait être introduit dans les écoles en tant que patrimoine culturel des les algériens.</p> <p>29- يجب إدراج اللغة الأمازيغية في المدارس الجزائرية كتراث ثقافي للجزائريين.</p>	
<p>30- The English language should be used for instruction at higher education.</p> <p>30- La langue Française doit être utilisée comme outil d'enseignement dans l'enseignement supérieur.</p> <p>30- اللغة التي يجب استخدامها في التعليم العالي هي اللغة العربية.</p>	

# FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

## Résumé

L'étude d'une langue étrangère implique l'enseignement d'une langue et d'une culture différente. En conséquence, l'expérience de l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère peut influencer l'identité culturelle des étudiants. Le présent travail a étudié l'impact de l'apprentissage des langues étrangères sur l'identité culturelle des étudiants en langue Anglaise et Française par rapport à leurs homologues en langue Arabe en termes de vêtements, de sexe et de langue. L'hypothèse qui a été proposée suppose que l'identité culturelle des étudiants en langues étrangères (Anglais et Français) est influencée par l'apprentissage de ces langues. Afin d'examiner cette hypothèse, un questionnaire en ligne dupliqué en trois langues différentes (Anglais, Français et Arabe) a été administré à 60 étudiants de Master 1 dans trois domaines d'études différents à l'Université de Mohamed Saddik Ben Yahia, Jijel. Après avoir analysé et comparé les résultats du questionnaire, il a été constaté que les étudiants en Anglais et en Français sont presque également affectés par la langue cible et son exposition culturelle. En effet, les résultats ont révélé que; premièrement, les étudiants en langues étrangères ont des styles et des points de vue différents de ceux de leurs homologues en langue Arabe concernant les vêtements et la mode; deuxièmement, le statut de genre est perçu différemment entre les apprenants de langues étrangères et les apprenants de langue Arabe; troisièmement, les étudiants en langues étrangères préfèrent leur langue de spécialité à leur langue maternelle plus que les étudiants en Arabe. Par conséquent, les conclusions générales de cette étude mettent en évidence la nécessité pour les concepteurs de programmes d'études de prendre en compte l'aspect de l'identité culturelle des étudiants dans les programmes d'apprentissage et pour les enseignants de comprendre l'identité de leurs apprenants afin d'aborder la culture cible convenablement.

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**Mots clés :** Apprentissage des langues étrangères, identité culturelle, langue, statut de genre, vêtements

### ملخص

تتضمن دراسة لغة أجنبية تعليم لغة وثقافة مختلفة. نتيجة لذلك، يمكن أن تؤثر تجربة تعلم لغة أجنبية على الهوية الثقافية للطلاب. بحث هذا العمل في تأثير تعلم اللغة الأجنبية على الهوية الثقافية لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية والفرنسية مقارنة بنظرائهم من طلاب اللغة العربية من حيث اللباس، مكانة الجنسين واللغة. تنص الفرضية التي تم طرحها أن الهوية الثقافية لطلاب اللغات الأجنبية (الإنجليزية والفرنسية) تتأثر بتعلم هذه اللغات. من أجل دراسة هذه الفرضية، تم إجراء استبيان عبر الإنترنت بثلاث لغات مختلفة (الإنجليزية والفرنسية والعربية)، على 60 طالب ماستر 1 في ثلاث مجالات دراسية مختلفة بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى في جيجل. بعد تحليل نتائج الاستبيان ومقارنتها، تبين أن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية والفرنسية يتأثرون بشكل متساوٍ تقريبًا باللغة المستهدفة وثقافتها، و الأهم من ذلك ، كشفت النتائج أن؛ أولاً ، لدى طلاب اللغة الأجنبية أساليب وآراء مختلفة عن طلاب اللغة العربية فيما يتعلق بالملابس والأزياء ؛ ثانيًا ، يُنظر إلى مكانة الجنسين بشكل مختلف بين متعلمي اللغة الأجنبية ومتعلمي اللغة العربية؛ ثالثًا ، يفضل طلاب اللغة الأجنبية لغة تخصصهم على لغتهم الأم أكثر من طلاب اللغة العربية. ومن ثم، فإن النتائج الإجمالية لهذه الدراسة تؤكد على ضرورة أن يأخذ مصممو المناهج بعين الاعتبار جانب الهوية الثقافية للطلاب في برامج تعلم اللغة وأن يفهم المعلمون هويات طلابهم من أجل معالجة الثقافة المستهدفة وفقًا لذلك.

**الكلمات المفتاحية :** تعلم اللغة الأجنبية، الملابس، اللغة، مكانة الجنسين، الهوية الثقافية.

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