

# Multilingualism and Identity in Algerian University Classrooms: A Theoretical Review of Language Use Intercultural Competence

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## Abstract

*Within Algeria's plural higher education system, university classrooms are mini-scale models of large-scale identity, political, and sociocultural processes. They are anything but passive spaces for knowledge transmission but spaces where Arabic, Tamazight, French, and increasingly English cross, clash, and coexist, articulating old histories of colonialism, Arabization policies, and globalization. To this purpose, multilingual practice is found to lie at the centre of how teachers and students negotiate identity, access symbolic capital, and move between visions of global and national belonging in conflict. This article employs a descriptive-analytical methodology to synthesize existing literature on patterns of multilingualism, identity negotiation, language policy, and intercultural competence within Algerian university contexts. Based on theoretical frameworks such as Norton's (2000) investment theory of identity and Byram's (1997) intercultural communicative competence framework, the research questions and examines how multilingual practices are being made, contested, and negotiated simultaneously by learners and teachers. Defining themes such as pedagogic strategies, policy tensions, symbolic and functional functions of language, and requirements for curriculum reform are codified through investigation. The review also mentions a taken-for-granted gap between theoretical monolingual or bilingual policy and practical classroom multilingual practice, where hybridity, flexible repertoires, and code-switching orchestrate daily interaction. The pedagogic consequence of these findings is significant for the pedagogy of translation and intercultural education and requires an inclusive language policy, teacher training modules in pedagogy of multilingualism, and culture-full, rich curricula. Last but not least, the paper argues that it is in seizing the pedagogical value of multilingualism as capital rather than deficit that more socially aware, cosmopolitan, and inclusive Algerian higher education can be constructed.*

**Keywords:** Algerian Universities, Identity, Intercultural Competence, Multilingualism, Translation Education.

Received: 28/04/2025 ; Accepted: 27/11/2025, Published: 2026-02-05

## Introduction

Algeria's sociolinguistic structure is built on an elaborate historical, political, and cultural project. Algerian colonialism, Arabization business, and augmented globalization integration have produced a multilingual framework of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), Algerian Arabic (Derja), Tamazight, French, and rising English. Each language has a specific symbolic and functional niche, reenacting all-too-hamilical ideological battles of tradition and modernity, national identity and colonial legacy, and local citizenships and global integration.

This linguistic diversity is experienced nowhere more intensely than in Algerian universities, whose campus culture reflects society. Multilingualism here is not only a tool of

pedagogy but also a tool of identity negotiation, power allocation, and cultural affiliation. Official language policy, as much as it leans towards Arabic, has little play in the realities of higher education language use practice, which is characterized by fluidity, hybridity, and deep-seated code-switching. Students and teachers are forced to work their way across multilingual linguistic repertoires that undermine institutional norms and reproduce class talk. Multilingual practice goes hand in hand with concerns over ideology, inclusion, and symbolic capital.

Empirical research on language use and identity in Algerian universities has started to address all types of language use and identity concerns (e.g., Belmihoub, 2018; Rouabah, 2022), but available literature ranges along disciplinary boundaries. Besides, comparatively lesser energy has been spent on investigating the influence of classroom multilingualism on the discipline of translation studies as well as on the learning of

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intercultural competence. The aim of this research is to address that gap by synthesizing the literature descriptively-analytically as well as situating classroom multilingualism in broader sociocultural and theoretical discourses.

### *Research Problem*

In the multilingual borders of nations such as Algeria, the university classroom is not merely a site of pedagogical instruction but one of negotiation of identity. Contrary to the government policies that privilege Arabic and French, what takes place in the classroom is a more dynamic and complex language environment brokered by sociopolitical histories and transnational forces. These multilingual performances raise pressing questions about the forms in which language use constitutes and represents identities and how these processes affect pedagogy, particularly in translation and intercultural education.

Whereas there are a few empirical studies that have examined language use in Algerian educational environments, no comprehensive work exists that collects theoretical evidence and everyday multilingual practice at the university context. This void is of the highest priority to comprehend how language brokers identity and learning in Algeria's multilingual landscape.

### *Scope of the Research*

The scope of this study is confined to a review of current scholarly literature regarding multilingual pedagogy in Algerian universities, language use, and identity formation. It does not have original empirical data but a theoretically informed collection of scholarly texts on sociolinguistics, education, translation, and intercultural communication. Its territorial scope is Algeria, whereas its conceptual scope is on university multilingualism, its effect on identity and on teaching practice.

### *Research Purpose*

The primary aim of this research is to identify how Algerian university classroom multilingual practices are represented in academic literature and examine their consequences regarding identity construction, translation pedagogy, and intercultural competence. By this synthesis, the research seeks to enhance our knowledge of the sociocultural and ideological forces underpinning multilingualism in higher education.

### *Research Questions*

1. How is the multilingualism trend portrayed in Algerian university classrooms in literature?
2. What are the theoretical frameworks used in research on the language use/identity interface in Algerian multilingual university environments?
3. In how many ways can a descriptive-analytical summary of Algerian literature be applied in reflecting sociolinguistic tendencies within Algerian universities?
4. What are the pedagogy of translations and intercultural communications implications for Algeria?

### **Research Objectives**

1. To review and synthesize published literature on multilingual use of language in Algerian university communities.
2. To investigate the theoretical underpinnings connecting practice and identity formation.
3. To discuss how multilingualism in university education reflects broader sociocultural and ideological transformation.

4. To investigate the implications of these results for pedagogy in translation and intercultural communication in Algeria.

## Methodology

The study is descriptive-analytical, calling on theory and literature instead of producing new empirical findings. In contrast to obtaining new empirical findings, the study:

1. Makes and explains patterns of Algerian university classroom multilingual language use based on academic scholarship;
2. Explains such preferences in sociolinguistic, identity-oriented, and intercultural theoretical frameworks (e.g., Norton, 2000; Byram, 1997);
3. Evaluates implications for identity making, classroom interaction, teaching translation, and language policy;
4. Identifies areas for further research and outlines directions for research agendas in the Algerian higher education context.

Through the synthesis of a variety of strands of existing research, this study brings a fuller and richer corpus of knowledge regarding Algerian university multilingualism to bear on equitable language policy and pedagogy in an increasingly globalizing higher education environment.

### *Trends in Algerian University Classroom Multilingualism*

Understanding Algerian university classroom multilingualism dynamics offers valuable insights into the linguistic, educational, and sociocultural dynamics that propel the higher education system in Algeria. This part presents the ways in which literature is presently theorizing and describing trends in multilingual use of languages within these higher education institutions. The discussion is premised on studies of language attitudes, pedagogy, policy enactment, digital multilingualism, and language management by learners. By incorporating this work, the section calls to relevance pervasive themes of the prevailing positive attitudes towards multilingualism, opposition on grounds of alternative language ideologies, contribution of schooling reform, and functional accommodation of language practice. This examination seeks to site the research deficit in regard to how Algerian students and teachers respond to and think about multilingualism in the contexts of higher education.

Research always justifies positive multilingualism attitudes for Algerian university students. Belmihoub (2018) found that students feel a strong attachment towards utilizing Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), English, and French. Derja and Tamazight are not considered the language of instruction of choice, yet the speakers of Tamazight still place value on their mother tongue, suggesting a complex linguistic identity. The positive multilingual attitude towards national heritage suggests that students are willing to adopt a number of languages despite ideological and institutional differences.

Following all these emotions, Rouabah (2022) presents how policies in the state influence multilingual realities. Although Algeria has been striving to develop Tamazight alongside foreign languages, practice and policy are behind. French still prevails over scientific topics in university life, despite English gaining more popularity due to its use worldwide. The policies tend not to offer solutions to the sociolinguistic tensions created as a result of clashing languages. Rouabah views the clash between language use in the classroom and society as a whole, and this calls for more encompassing language planning.

The depth of multilingual education is also demonstrated by Mokadem Fatima (2016), who analyzes German as a Foreign Language courses. Multilingual text analysis is practiced here among heterogeneous linguistic and cultural codes by the learners. Discursive and stylistic competence is nurtured through this kind of approach, and metalinguistic consciousness is instigated. The study demonstrates how pedagogical

multilingualism develops students' language use in varying contexts, which strengthens their academic and professional capital.

Conversely, pedagogical tensions founded on institutional pressure are revealed by other research. Berrabah and Toubaida (2024), for example, condemn the hasty push toward English Medium Instruction (EMI) in the sciences. Although intellectually prized is English, inadequate preparation training and abrupt implementation severed effective bilingual education models. A gradualist solution backed by pedagogical conventions and linguistic realities is prescribed by authors to render teaching and learning more equitable and efficient.

Multilingual practices are institutionally mediated yet negotiated individually. Benaboura (2020) examines how multilingual students deliberately appropriate scientific know-how into their own in French. The research is not given in hard facts but concludes by requiring the ability to help learners navigate their repertoires of languages. Students' ability to call on multilingual resources to learn is evidence of the worth of linguistic flexibility in university education.

Second, the use of code-switching in English lessons displays blending pragmatic functions of language. According to Adder and Bagui (2020), teachers at Tlemcen University position Algerian Arabic as both pedagogical resource and potential hindrance. Although some attempt its use minimization, they acknowledge it for the purpose of clarifying issues, particularly where learners are not used to English. This reluctance is proof of the combative but practical position held by the local languages in multilingual pedagogy.

Digital spaces are also a platform where multilingual practices do not feel out of place. Ammour (2024) writes about Algerian EFL learners' language in digital spaces and sums up that they use language unconsciously and embrace face-to-face approaches. Social media is one such digital space of informal learning where English gains its omnipresence, and learners find it easy to mold their communicative competencies. These findings reveal how digital multilingualism makes up for formal education and nurtures language experimenting.

Although much of the literature is concerned with comparatively recent pedagogic and policy innovation, there is some background. Ennaji (1991) looks at the general context of multilingualism in the Maghreb world, including sociocultural impacts and regional variation. Although the article does not so much outline classroom-level practice in Algeria, it situates current multilingual dynamics against a centuries-long history of language contact, colonization, and policy transformation.

Sociolinguistic tensions are also embedded in the conflict of functional imperatives and symbolic language building. Algerian sociolinguistic environments are marked with uncertainty regarding linguistic heritage and modernity, where students are navigating language choices which are pragmatic and political in nature. Whether through code-switching, transadaptation via new media, or strategic appropriation, students are continually figuring out their multilingual selves in constrained institutional spaces.

Typically, Algerian university classrooms have been defined as multilingual dynamic classrooms with features such as positive student disposition, design contradictions, pedagogical experimentation, and digital augmentation. The reviewed studies highlight the imperative for sophisticated, contextualized multilingual education policy and practice. While a great deal has already been done in the development of an understanding of the value of multilingualism, there is still much that needs to be investigated regarding how these resources can further be embedded in higher education to foster equity, inclusion, and academic achievement. These results will inform the latter half of the book, which will critically examine the constitution and formation of multilingual practice through identity and ideology in Algerian universities.

#### *Theoretical Accounts of Language Use and Identity in Multilingual Educational Contexts*

This sub-section deals with the theoretical accounts employed to examine the sophisticated interplay between language use and identity in multilingual educational contexts. Building on the broad narrative of

linguistic influence on identity construction, the review maps out the key conceptual strands shaping the current research and implications for multilingual teachers and students. It classifies the literature into master paradigms—postmodernist, sociocultural, poststructuralist, and multi-theoretical—mapped in relation to their points of intersection and divergence. The review also takes into account the mechanisms by which power, ideology, and discourse act upon identity negotiation. In its account of how authors theorize the dynamic between language practice and the constitution of identity, the section strengthens the conceptual basis for the current study and identifies abiding theoretical gaps. It works to foreground the need for integrative, context-sensitive models that encapsulate the dynamic, situational, and power-laden nature of identity in multilingual settings.

Postmodernist models, as by Gu and Tong (2021), emphasize the dynamic, fragmented, and hybrid nature of identity in multilingual learning environments. These models argue that identity is never static but is reconstituted in ongoing linguistic and cultural transactions. Their work, within post-1997 Hong Kong, draws attention to how students appropriate cultural memory and subjective experience in order to create new identities, often against dominant discourses. This theoretical approach refigures language from that of a tool for communication into a medium of identity formation, resonating with the overall paradigm shift indicated by Sarah (2018). By highlighting hybridity and multiplicity, postmodernist traditions provide an interesting vantage point to account for how speakers adapt to complex sociolinguistic territories. It allows for an intersection between ideology and power and language use, which subsequent frameworks extend on.

Drawing on postmodernist theory, sociocultural and poststructuralist traditions locate identity as located within society and discursively constructed. Morita (2012) argues that identity construction occurs between discourse communities whose students' participation informs and is informed by positionalities. Such models resist essentialist understandings of identity and instead highlight the way classroom interactions are steeped in power dynamics, cultural norms, and historical contingencies. Similarly, Roy (2006) highlights the existence of sociohistorical and sociopolitical contexts to negotiate identities. In such a view, identity is not so much a product of individual agency but of performance directed by discourses and institutional orders in society. Such theories prove helpful in analyzing the effects of language ideologies and power dynamics in education, especially in the context of marginalized groups.

Another recurring theme in the literature is that of language ideologies as a mediator in creating identity. Sung (2021) narrative case study of a Filipina university student at a multilingual Hong Kong university reveals how language ideologies—more specifically, those of ethnicity, English-speaking competence, and colonial linguistic hierarchies—affect identity negotiation within and between institutional sites. Her report illustrates how students perform or resist prevailing ideologies, illustrating how identity work is strategic and bounded. Sarah (2018) confirms this statement by quoting a scholarly transition to viewing language within the context of a sociocultural and ideological paradigm. What these perspectives emphasize is the need to analyze the institutional and cultural processes whereby language works both as an instrument of inclusion and exclusion.

Language socialization theories and communities of practice provide further depth by viewing identity as emerging from habitual engagement in social practices. Morita (2012) encapsulates this perspective, pointing out that learners are socialized into academic discourses that condition their linguistic repertoires and self-concepts. This is in accordance with Lave and Wenger's situated learning, where identity evolves as learners move from peripheral to full membership in a community. These models are crucial for understanding identity development as a longitudinal, context-dependent phenomenon. They also highlight the fundamental ability of multilingual learning spaces to establish new forms of proficiency and belonging.

Most literature focuses on student identity, but researchers such as Varghese et al. (2005) take analysis up a notch to language teacher identity. They use three theories—social identity theory, situated learning theory, and image-text theory—to examine how teachers negotiate their identities between education and cultural contexts. This multi-theoretical approach insists that one framework of its own cannot fully account for the richness of identity construction. Similarly, Fisher et al. (2018) also invoke the use of multiple

approaches in envisioning participative multilingual identity in classrooms. These pieces invoke theoretical pluralism to note that language, identity, and pedagogy come together in complicated ways.

Norton's "investment" (as cited in Sarah, 2018) has made an important contribution in explicating the relationship between language use and identity. Investment theory describes that the decisions of students to invest in language learning are entangled with their aspirational identities and symbolic and material capitals they desire. That understanding moves the focus away from individual motivation and to structural conditions which enable or discourage learning. It also reveals how language learning is irrevocably entangled with issues of legitimacy, access, and representation. Investment theory thus provides a necessary connection between macro-level social life and micro-level identity conflicts, building a fuller picture of multilingual learning lives.

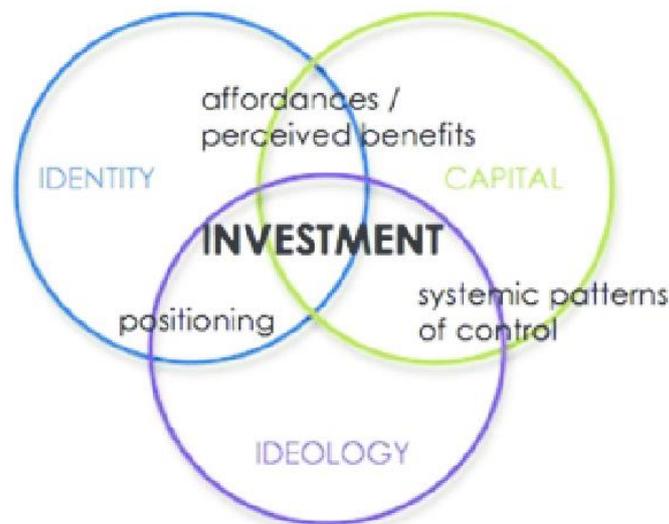


Figure 1: Darwin & Norton's (2015) Model of Investment (adapted from Darwin & Norton, 2015, p. 42)

Darvin and Norton (2015) subsequently built upon this theoretical model with a model graphically displaying the dynamic and intersecting forces that shape learners' investment in language learning. Their framework shows how identity, capital, and ideology come together to shape how learners interact with language in particular social and historical contexts. Identity explains how students see and wish to be seen by others; capital explains what symbolic and material possessions (e.g., linguistic competence, cultural knowledge, social connections) students possess or wish to possess; and ideology explains the broader discourses and relations of power in society that set up what types of knowledge and communication are regarded as legitimate by the dominant group. Positioned at the intersection of these three axes, investment is not figured as an inherent property but as a process that is fluid and one in which asymmetrical access to resources and recognition determine it. This model considers the complex realities of multilingual students like those in Algeria, where colonial pasts, shifting language policies, and global influences all shape classroom practice. It therefore provides a strong analytical framework for understanding how language learners negotiate identity, traverse power, and gain access to higher education.

Fisher et al. (2018) conceptualize the classroom as a place where learners engage in dynamic negotiations and enactures of multilingual identities. Their proposed multi-theoretical account locates learners not as passive consumers but as actors engaged in reflective identity work. This aligns with participatory pedagogies that facilitate inquiry into linguistic repertoires and critical reading of dominant discourses. The classroom, therefore, is a site of transformation where language practices can reinscribe or subvert extant power relations. This view is an extension of earlier sociocultural views with further pedagogical insights for how teachers can construct inclusive, identity-affirming classrooms. Yazan and Percy (2016) extend

identity theories by adding emotional dimensions, looking at how ESOL teacher candidates' feelings intersect with identity construction.

Emotions are not merely interior psychological states but responses to structural constraint, cultural dissonance, and ideological pressure in multilingual contexts. Their work demonstrates the way affective responses such as anxiety, pride, or alienation are intrinsically tied to identity pathways and language use. The emotional approach acts to enhance theoretical explanation through the spotlighting of bodily and experiential dimensions of identity constitution that may be overlooked in purely discursive or structural accounts. Sarah (2018) and Roy (2006) both emphasize the salience of ideology in discursively constructing identity.

These theorists argue that identity is not only created through interaction, but also shaped by broader ideological regimes that define what counts as acceptable use of language. In multilingual schools, these regimes are given expression in curriculum policy, language orderings, and institutional norms. By locating identity in ideological structures, these models deconstruct the neutrality of education space and promote more critical language education. They also challenge researchers to ask how institutional discourses reinforce or transform normative identity models. Throughout this section, the theoretical area of multilingual educational settings of language use and identity has emerged as shifting from static and essentialist models to dynamic, socially situated, and ideologically sensitive models.

By integrating postmodernist, sociocultural, poststructuralist, and multi-theoretical frameworks, researchers have highlighted the fluid, contextual, and power-charged processes of identity construction. The literature reviewed highlights the importance not only of examining the discursive and institutional facets of language use but also the learners' and teachers' affective and participatory experience. The conceptual breakthroughs notwithstanding, there still exists an evident gap in integrating these frameworks into comprehensive models that are flexible in a range of different cultural and pedagogic contexts. This theoretical discussion establishes the setting critical phase for this present research by confirming a multi-faceted understanding of identity negotiation directly involving the methodological approaches to be provided in the next section.

#### *Descriptive-Analytical Remarks on Sociolinguistic Influences in Algerian Higher Education*

Algerian higher education is not understandable without appreciating the weight of the colonial past and its enduring impact on language policy. From the outset, the Arabisation process, implemented post-independence, sought to restore linguistic identity via the propagation of Modern Standard Arabic. But in doing so, this policy has a tendency to overlook the multilingual nature of Algerian society, particularly the centrality of Tamazight and the ongoing salience of French. Le Roux (2017) argues that such a monolingual emphasis has excluded more extensive education participation, limiting exposure to foreign discourse. Rather than encouraging unity, Arabisation has at times reinforced linguistic exclusion, particularly in excluding the rich linguistic diversity of Algeria's cultural topography.

Recent literature suggests that decolonizing language use in universities is more than making symbolic shifts in policy. Sebihi and Schoelen (2020) note that linguistic coexistence, when undertaken with a critical orientation, can offer a more holistic method for educational transformation. They emphasize that foregoing colonial languages such as French without questioning deeper structural injustices involved in language use does not count as decolonization. Instead, linguistic hybridity—a combination of languages rather than their exclusion—could be a more flexible model that captures authentic communicative practice in Algerian schools and society in general.

These criticisms ring with broad generalizations regarding shifting sociolinguistic trends in Algeria. Abbassia (2021) presents a descriptive overview of language change, noting the complex interaction between standard and non-standard varieties. Young people in particular see new monolingual tendencies, a paradox in what was previously a multilingual country. French retains respectability in scholarly and scientific circles but is generally divorced by young speakers, who use localized vernaculars that are more representative of their identities. This adaptability means that language ideologies are in flux and that any effective language policy must acknowledge this shift in generation. Supporting this, a JSLCS study of interlingual interference with

Algerian learners' English writing (Bouakaz, 2025) evidences how the inheritance of French persists to affect accuracy and literary preferences even when the new generations claim to disengage from it in everyday life. Such findings offer the surreptitious tenacity of colonial linguistic remains.

Ammour (2024) emphasizes how the linguistic background affects scholarship behavior in online environments, offering fresh insight into the cognitive and cultural nature of reading in EFL contexts. Arabic speakers favor the cognitive properties of digital text, whereas Berber speakers relate digital reading to oral cultures and cultural continuity. Such variation makes public not only different pedagogical allegiances but more basic sociolinguistic alignments that shape how students engage with content. It enacts the wisdom of constructing teaching strategies responsive to students' cultural-linguistic environments and not imposing homogenized criteria.

The methodological scope is shifting, too. Lahmer (2023) notices an increasing reliance on mixed-methods research within applied linguistics, an indicator of a promising awareness among Algerian scholars towards the richness of multilayered realities of language use. Such methods allow for richer studies that can accommodate both the quantitative tracing of language trends and the qualitative content of everyday experience. The employment of such methodologies suggests an adult research culture, one which is in step with the sophistication of sociolinguistic issues it is attempting to resolve.

It should be observed that structural and pedagogical concerns are still present. Makhoulf (2023) talks about the implementation of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) in Algerian higher education as a possible way of enhancing subject knowledge as well as language learning. While the model holds potential for improved employability and language proficiency, the system itself is in the way of its success in the form of a lack of teacher training and integration into curricula. It demonstrates a familiar pattern in Algerian education: wonderful ideas falter at the point of implementation due to a lack of required infrastructural and human resources.

Representation of languages in the media and in public discourse is another point to think about. Hassa (2021) criticizes Chachou's work to observe the invisibility of certain languages, like Algerian Arabic and Tamazight, within official media sources, despite them holding a monopoly over informal and oral usage. This disconnect testifies to an invisible hierarchy that still supports colonial or 'standard' languages and drives vernaculars to the margin. By rejecting slanderous labels and supporting the cultural legitimacy of the languages, scholars like Chachou attempt to redefine popular opinion and consequently educational norms.

The previous depth of the Arabisation policy is controversial. Mostari (2004) condemns both the ideological justifications and the actual outcomes of the policy. While Arabisation was presented as a cultural recovery policy, its limited application—above all in higher education where French persists—has generated disparities and confusion. The failure to provide sufficient resources, training, and institution-building assistance has rendered the policy symbolic rather than revolutionary. Besides, Mostari describes how Arabisation and Islamisation, although tendentiously equated in common usage, follow divergent roads, of which the former is less religious ideology and more politics of language.

Seen as unstable and uneven, these studies give us a complicated picture of the Algerian system of universities as one of unstable negotiation, contradiction, and incremental adaptation. These studies refer back to simplistic binaries—Arab and French, local and global—and instead offer a field in motion, with identities, ideologies, and pedagogies mixed up in complex ways. The descriptive-analytical readings not just map the terrain, but also reveal the circumstances under which successful linguistic reform would take place.

In sum, this reviewed literature illuminates the ways in which Algeria's unique sociolinguistic tradition continues to inform higher education. It becomes evident that educational reform will need to be adaptable to the pluralist conditions of language practice, the dynamic transformations in identity across generations, and the pragmatic constraints of policy implementation. These results not only inform the conceptual underpinnings of the present study but also require a research agenda which is sensitive to the experienced

linguistic practices of teachers and students. With our move into the next section, these results will inform methodological choices aimed at capturing the complex realities of language-in-education in contemporary Algeria.

### *Implications for Translation Education and Intercultural Communication in Algeria*

Language instruction in Algeria is more and more confronted with the dilemma of transcending the strictly linguistic and instead dealing with the cultural dimension of communication. This is particularly the case in translation studies as well as in EFL teaching, where intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has been a neglected field of research in spite of overall recognition of its importance. Recent research points out the gap between theory and practice, noting that language classrooms are still dominated by concerns with grammar, pronunciation, and general content knowledge at the cost of those cultural competences required for effective communication in multicultural settings (Hamadouch & Aoumeur, 2024).

The necessity of an intercultural turn in Algerian language instruction is based on the multilingual and multicultural nature of the country itself. French and German language instructors, as Cheikh Saadia (2015) and Nouah Mohamed (2018) argued, face the constant burden of fostering intercultural sensitivity in environments where learners are usually ignorant about plural worldviews. Cultural diversity within such classrooms is not merely a setting; it is a living feature that demands teaching practices capable of coping with complexity and not simplifying it. Intercultural education in these contexts is not a matter of teaching 'other' cultures, though—but of creating students' abilities to negotiate, and think critically about cultural difference.

ILT, researchers suggest for EFL classrooms in Algeria, can be used as a corrective to this educational lacuna. Ghaffour and Chehri (2024) recommend embedding ILT in oral expression courses, where students naturally engage in conversation and culture exploration. Their findings show how ILT can yield critical consciousness, empathy, and flexibility—skills required for communication in a globalized world. But such approaches require intensive training for teachers and curriculum redesign to successfully implement. Without training, even well-intentioned teachers will not likely be able to incorporate intercultural objectives into classroom practice.

The issue is carried over to the pedagogy of translation, whereby the exclusion of cultural elements can undermine students' ability to convey meaning in a real and appropriate manner across languages. As per Douah and Boudjelal (2024), learners have a tendency to be highly interested in target cultures but are not guided or supported by classroom practice to foster that interest. What follows instead is a mismatch between learner interest and teaching practice. Translation, when not taught in a culturally conscious manner, risks devolving into a mechanical task rather than being an intensive intercultural mediation process.

Literature, for centuries a recognized cultural bridge, offers a compelling avenue to creating intercultural sensitivity. Nemouchi and Byram (2019) demonstrate the way in which literary works, when well integrated into EFL curricula, can encourage empathy, inspire reflection, and introduce students to diverse cultural perspectives: not just external but also internal to their own societies. Their work deepens and builds on Byram's ICC (Intercultural Communicative Competence) model, proposing that literary investigation not only enhances aesthetic enjoyment but promotes more fundamental intercultural understanding.

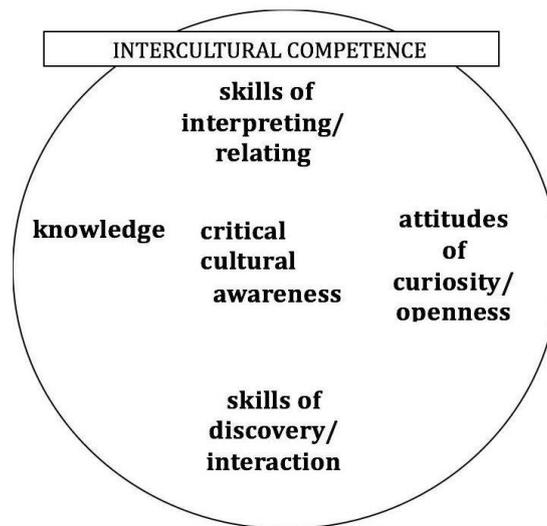


Figure 2: Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (adapted from Byram, 1997, p. 73)

Byram's model characterizes ICC as the intersection of two core competencies: communicative competence (linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse) and intercultural competence, which he characterizes in terms of five interlinking savoirs. They are:

1. Attitudes (*savoir être*) – being open, inquiring, and ready to suspend disbelief about cultural difference;
2. Knowledge (*savoirs*) – familiarity with social groups, ideological positions, practices, and products of cultures;
3. Relating and interpreting skills – ability to decipher and connect texts or events from another culture to one's own;
4. Skills for discovery and interaction – capability to acquire new cultural knowledge and apply it to real-time communication;
5. Critical cultural awareness – ability to critically examine cultural beliefs, practices, and products within one's own and other cultures.

The model positions these savoirs in a communicative context and shows how this authentic ICC is attained when learners can linguistically and pragmatically express these intercultural components. Nemouchi and Byram (2019) speak to how literature contributes to ICC by fostering empathy (attitudes), offering cultural knowledge, creating interpretive competence, testing self-knowledge, and encouraging reflection—essentially working on all five savoirs. This makes Byram's model highly suitable for using literary texts in EFL curricula for the improvement of intercultural understanding.

In addition to arguing for curriculum reform, Chami (2024) provides a wide-ranging overview of EFL teaching in Algerian middle schools. Her research finds far-reaching gaps in the treatment of culture in textbooks, teacher training, and classroom discussion. She urges the incorporation of "big C" culture—art, history, literature—into "small c" aspects like daily behavior, values, and social norms. Her findings suggest that effective intercultural education will require that source and target cultures be both addressed, so that students can bridge the unfamiliar with the familiar through guided reflection and dialogical learning.

At the tertiary level, translation emerges as a strategic agent of cultural knowledge. Abadou (2024) explores the possibility of translation exercises in cementing students' understanding of cultural nuances, maintaining linguistic sameness in conjunction with cultural understanding. This perspective denies simplistic conceptions of translation as such linguistic exchange and attests to its pedagogical value in forging global

competence. Teachers who embrace translation as a cultural, rather than lexical, move help their students acquire the intercultural consciousness essential to their professional and academic success.

But effective translation training must be supported by institution and be part of educational overall aims. Hamadouch and Aoumeur (2024) reveal that although teachers are aware of ICC, there are many of them who lack resources, training, or evaluation tools to address it in a systematic way. Administrative issues typically concern quantifiable linguistic indicators rather than intangible but no less valuable intercultural competences. This misalignment requires policy-level responses reorienting language education as inherently intercultural and reorienting assessment practices.

Teaching French and German in Algeria is also punctuated by special challenges related to the sociopolitical past and students' attitudes. Mohamed (2018) emphasizes that learning in German is typically hindered by extralinguistic factors such as social attitudes, absence of contact with the target community, and training of teachers. Boundary transcending is done by means of pedagogical creativity in the guise of real materials, access to cultural immersion, and reflexive teaching strategies that put learners at the center of intercultural communication.

Together, these findings suggest that the acquisition of intercultural competence by Algerian language and translation studies is neither a secondary goal but a main pedagogical imperative. Integrating ICC requires imagining classrooms as intercultural spaces for engagement where language is not just acquired, but practiced and negotiated. It requires investment in teacher preparation, curricularization of the content of culture, and a shift from focus on evaluative emphasis on correctness to emphasis on communicative and cultural appropriateness.

As Algeria continues toward its postcolonial identity in a more globalizing world, its universities and schools must prepare its students to work in linguistically and culturally diverse environments. Translation and language instruction infused with intercultural thought can be powerful sites of dialogue, understanding, and change. This concluding section certifies the necessity for a more comprehensive, culturally responsive model of education that recognizes the interdependent dynamic between language, identity, and the intercultural nature of contemporary communication.

## Discussion

Algerian university classrooms' multilingualism is a manifestation of the diversity of society and institutional orthodoxy disruption, as explicated in literature. As shown by Belmihoub (2018) and Rouabah (2022), students choose to complete their courses of study alternatively alternating the use of Arabic, French, and English, developing disciplinary requirements and communicative intentions as they change options of language. These flexible language habits constitute pragmatic multilingualism exactly against the institutional policy encouraging monolingual or two-language policy.

Through endeavors of EMI development, particularly in the scientific disciplines (Berrabah & Toubaida, 2024), practice all too often has gotten ahead of pedagogical preparedness and created inconsistency and disarray. Such tension reflects the difference between top-down language policy and bottom-up linguistic conditions. A consideration of these dynamics necessitates a look at the theory that demonstrates how language use intersects with identity. Norton's (2000) investment theory provides a fertile ground for the investigation of students' multilingual practices—not as pragmatic tactics, but as performances filled with hopes, affiliations, and striving to be noticed.

Consequently, Bourdieu's (1991) linguistic capital tracks the social value attributed to English and French in work and school environments. These findings suggest language is not value-free but located within power relations and individual biography. Feminist and poststructuralist scholars such as Morita (2012) and Gu and Tong (2021) foreground contextuality and identity formation, and remind us that learners' choice of language is the product of and responds back to asymmetrical structures.

Pedagogy has yet to adopt the above notions completely at the classroom level, however. Language teaching—particularly in EFL, French, and German classes—continues to focus on grammar and test results at the cost of intercultural development. According to Ghaffour and Chehri (2024), Abed Hamadouch and Aoumeur (2024), and Cheikh (2015), few teachers receive proper training and are provided with adequate resources required to build intercultural communicative competence (ICC). This deficit is especially disquieting in the multilingual context of Algeria and the demands of a more globalizing higher education environment. Other scholars, however, propose alternatives, such as Nemouchi and Byram (2019) and Chami (2024), i.e., pedagogies centered on literature and critical reading to empathy, cultural reflexivity, and the key characteristics of ICC by Byram (1997).

Translation studies are another great illustration. Though translation is cultural transfer by default, it is not so handled within the classroom. Douah and Boudjelal's (2024) and Abadou's (2024) study recognizes that translation de-separates curricula linguistic correctness from cultural awareness, with no enriching moment of learning beyond boundaries. Bilingualism or cultural mediation training would not only heighten the students' linguistic awareness but also turn them into intercultural agents—a most desirable aim in translation studies and international education alike. In these contexts, one observation becomes increasingly clear: multilingual practices within Algerian universities are agentive, multifaceted, and culturally embedded. Yet they remain constrained by institutional resistances and pedagogic deficits. To bridge this deficit requires a re-imagining of language pedagogy—policy that realigns with practice, theory that converges with pedagogy, and language that reconnects with identity in a more integrated and human-oriented manner.

### Limitations of Research

This theoretical analysis is constricted by its dependence on second sources and the absence of empirical data. Although the synthesis presents an overall picture of multilingual practices and intercultural issues, it cannot capture actual in-classroom dynamics and articulation of teachers and students. Future empirical research needs to make use of ethnographic and discourse-analytic approaches in order to inquire how language use unfolds contextually.

### Recommendations

**Policy Reform:** Language-in-education policy needs to speak back to actual multilingual university lives rather than enforcings monolingual strait-jackets.

2. **Teachers Education:** Modules on intercultural communicative competence and multilingual pedagogy in teacher education courses are essential.

3. **Curriculum Planning:** Translation and language courses should include culturally-enriched texts, as well as cross-cultural contact provision.

4. **Creative Assessment:** Develop assessment instruments which test for intercultural competency alongside linguistic competency.

5. **Further Research:** Encourage mixed-method studies of students' and teachers' attitudes, classroom life, and institutional policy.

### Conclusion

Algerian university classes are not class lessons but miniatures of the country's linguistic, cultural, and political diversities. Consistent with this, in the following discussion, the above-mentioned literary synthesis seeks to demonstrate how, in these classes, multilingualism is not peripheral or incidental, but a matter of supreme importance to knowledge exchange, identity negotiation, and learner-teacher positioning in long sociopolitical hierarchies. Arabic, Tamazight, French, and English all have an asymmetrical symbolic capital,

and each symbolizes unique types of capital, membership, and ambition. Lived together among themselves, however, creates rich ground for cultivating intercultural competence and building pedagogies of inclusion.

However, given the cultural diversity of languages in Algeria, being wide ranging, pedagogic culture and policy are yet to deliver their full potential. Indeed, tensions between pedagogic difference and diversity of the learning context have increased through the imposition of monolingual or two-language modes, and these are also commonly disconnected from pedagogic realities. Further, successive researches have confirmed the disjuncture at the policy level between policy-level guidance and learners' and teachers' everyday multilingual experiences. The cost of this gap is vast: it is a matter of lost time, missed opportunities for pedagogical imagination, and stunted potential for social integration.

It is against this context that the hypotheses outlined below, Norton's investment hypothesis and Byram's intercultural communicative competence, are fertile ground for reinterpretation of teaching. They argue together that language is politicized; it is a site of struggle, potential, and symbolic negotiation. These positions call on teachers and policy-makers to conceptualize multilingualism as a space of power rather than pedagogic vulnerability that with enabling inclusive education policy and critical pedagogy can introduce greater equity and world-consciousness into education.

Foreign language acquisition and translation studies, for instance, can be heightened by a paradigm shift where intercultural sensibility is given more priority over language. Until school classrooms are not only opened up, but re-imagined as rooms that allow for critical engagement with language and culture introduced in the form of text, talk, or literature, they become transgressive spaces for learning where students are being situated not merely to translate between languages, but to negotiate cultural complexity of the world at hand.

Lastly, for its own future, Algeria needs to find a balance between its multilingual past and present-day educational and globalization imperatives. That is to turn policy on language-in-education around, re-imagine pre- and in-service teacher training, curriculum planning, and undertake research that takes into consideration the dynamic convergence of language, identity, and intercultural competence. But in the end, making multilingualism lived practice and pedagogic priority may be a factor contributing to more just, inclusive, and socially responsive higher education.

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