



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND AFRICAN STUDIES
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POLITICS OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA:
THE CASE OF TUNISIA

Master's Thesis
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Dedication

I dedicate all the required information in this title ‘Politics of Language Policy in Contemporary Africa: Case of Tunisia’ has been written in accordance with the academic manners and ethical commitment. I would clarify that all the materials, sources, data, and all extra inputs have been benefited well throughout the writing procedure of this thesis. All matters contained in this thesis are my opinion and do not reflect the official view of Istanbul Ticaret University.

Oumayma Bettaher

Abstract

This study outlines the politics of language policies in Tunisia in relation to the issue of Tunisian identity. The Tunisian society is a multilingual one par excellence, since pre-colonialism and due to its strategic location, Tunisia witnessed several linguistic changes. The research focuses on policies implemented by policymakers, which can be divided into three main movements: Arabization, the preservation of French, and the promotion of English. Since Tunisia gained its independence in 1956, the strong presence and implementation of French language threatened the flow of the Arabization movement. With the appearance of globalization, policy makers tried to balance between the already existing languages with English due to its importance in today's world. This study argues that such policies, especially in the educational system, had a direct impact on post-colonial identity.

Keywords: Tunisia, *Language Policy*, *Arabization*, *Francophonie*, *Globalization*, *Post-colonial Identity*.

Özet

Bu çalışma, Tunus'taki dil politikalarını Tunus kimliğiyle ilişkili olarak ele almaktadır. Tunus toplumu çok dilli bir topluma iyi bir örnek teşkil etmektedir. Stratejik konumu nedeniyle Tunus sömürgecilik öncesinden beri, birçok dil değişimine şahit olmuştur. Araştırma, politika yapıcılar tarafından uygulanan ve Araplaştırma, Fransızcanın korunması ve İngilizcenin teşvik edilmesi olarak üç temel hareket etrafında değerlendirilebilecek politikalara odaklanmaktadır. 1956 yılında bağımsızlığını kazandığından beri, Tunus'ta Fransızcanın güçlü varlığı ve uygulanışı Araplaştırma hareketinin akışını tehdit etmiştir. Küreselleşmenin ortaya çıkışıyla birlikte, politika yapıcılar, hâlihazırda var olan dillerle günümüz dünyasında önemli bir yere sahip olan İngilizce arasında denge kurmaya çalıştılar. Bu çalışma, özellikle eğitim sistemindeki bu tür politikaların, sömürge sonrası kimliği üzerinde doğrudan etkisi olduğunu ileri sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Tunus, Dil Politikası, Araplaştırma, Frankofoni, Küreselleşme, Post-Kolonyal Kimlik.*

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Significance of the Research

Tunisia is a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country. Its linguistic makeup reflects its history, culture, and politics. Language policy in Tunisia has had a significant impact on the country's identity and growth over the years. Tunisia's linguistic heritage is rooted in the Arab-Islamic tradition and influenced by the history of colonialism. The country's approach to languages reflects the country's commitment to its Arab identity as well as cultural diversity. The country's language tapestry is a mix of Arabic language, French language, and the indigenous languages such as the Tunisian Arabic language and the Berber dialect. This complex combination of languages has played a vital role in the education, politics, and social life of the country. Tunisia's linguistic policies cover a broad spectrum of topics, such as language education and media, as well as governance. These policies aim to promote linguistic inclusiveness while also addressing the challenges of a multi-lingual society. The issue of language and language policies in multilingual societies usually reports a great deal of studies and investigations. Due to the colonial history of North African countries, studies have been focusing on the linguistic evolution of mainly Arabic and French in these regions.

This study aims to provide data on both the politics of language policy and social attitudes towards the languages concerned. Using theoretical frameworks in the analysis process helps in detecting a possible relationship between the two. While researchers (see Hicham Aouina, 2013, Sarah Lawson, Itesh Sachdev 2000, Robert Kirkpatrick 2017) presented language problems in a Tunisian setting, investigating the latter issue in relation to identity is rare to encounter. Language can be considered a key element in solving identity issues; however, it does not seem to be presented as a main contributor to the problem itself. Therefore, this research presents language policies launched by Tunisian leaders and

language policy as a theory. The combination of both discusses the outcomes of this process with consideration of the social aspect. While identity issues cannot be relatively solved, understanding the process of language policy planning can help in implementing future decisions.

Aims and Methodology

The competition between Arabic and French languages in the Tunisian context has raised many questions related to individual choices and later identifications. Arabization and Francophonie have a long history within Tunisian politics. This collision produced different attitudes but never had common ground. The goal of this research is to critically assess the influence of language policy and hence the mentioned movements on the identity issue of Tunisians. The main question is to what extent language policies contribute to Tunisian identity?

The study touches upon the codependency between Tunisians' attitudes and the status of languages. If there is a direct effect, can these attitudes change future language planning? Also from a sociolinguistic perspective, how far can we relate these attitudes with the actual daily use of a language? And lastly, did language movements/policies have direct effect on the identity of Tunisians?

The study focuses on the politics of language policy in Tunisia in the post-colonial period through analyzing major movements like Arabization and Francophonie, especially in education. Through looking at different findings from previous studies in the same field, this research links sociolinguistics with language policies in education. Therefore, the study uses official documents, political speeches, journals, books, articles, and statistics from field studies which aim to measure attitudes towards the three main languages used. Firstly, the language policies will be analyzed through presenting the official decisions made by leaders. The focus will be on the first two presidents of Tunisia (Habib Bourguiba and Zeine Abidine Ben Ali) since their long terms of office shaped Tunisian politics. Secondly, relevant studies (example Pennington 1992, Lawson & Sachdev 2000, Aouina 2013) will be investigated for more insights on the social aspect. In this part, the focus is on education, considering it an essential component in forming the individual's knowledge. Therefore, it can have an impact

on the identity formation process. Lastly, findings will be generated along with the theoretical framework to determine the relationship between language policy and identity in Tunisian society. This study presents both definitions of language policy and planning for further understanding of the issue. It would be challenging to mention all aspects of language policies and their effects. For that reason, the analytical part will focus on educational aspect and attitudes of Tunisians in academic setting. For further understanding, a general analysis was added to have a clearer idea on the linguistic situation within the Tunisian society.



CHAPTER ONE

1.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is fundamental when mentioning language policies and planning, in relation to Tunisian society, to encounter several sociolinguistic approaches. In fact, when we are looking into language planning as a political approach, we come across many varieties, one of which is language management theory. Management in this context tends to look at language as a system that can be observed and studied under a social scope. This chapter will present literature that focuses on the theoretical side of the matter. Theoretical analysis can help us understand the relationship between sociolinguistics and the politics of language policy.

1.1. The Relations Between Language Planning and Language Management

1.1.1. Theory of Language Policy and Language Planning

Language policy and planning is the model that highlights the most influential environments on language acquisition. Whether it is from” “below” (home religion, neighborhood) or “above” (levels of government)” (Spolsky, 2017), it is an activity done by these official bodies to implement or promote using a language. Yet this definition is different from Language Policy and Planning (LPP) studied by academics. The latter investigates all aspects contributing to the statues of language in different domains, and how these policies contribute to the reforming or modifying of these statues (Ricento, 2007).

There have been recent studies relating language policy theory to everyday life. Thomas Ricento (2013) critically assesses this theory in relation to the educational sector, arguing that language overlaps all aspects of social life. He insisted as well on the importance of language not only in communication but also as a fundamental aspect for group identity (region, family, country, community...etc.) (Ricento, 2013:5).

This part of the theory combines with this study in examining the policies’ (explicit and implicit) consequences on the statues of local languages versus the former imperial languages such as French and English. The power of these languages still dominates and undermines the policies of local or indigenous languages for many former colonies. An example of this can be viewed in the case of South Africa, where for nearly fifty years, Africans and whites

had been separated. This meant inferior quality education for the local people, which resulted in a negative attitude towards African languages being the medium of instruction which they still to this day consider inferior to English (Ricento, 2013: 4).

Although, politically, Tunisia may not share the same situation as South Africa, they both are multilingual societies where a foreign language is in a position of power. Tunisia can relate to this example in considering French a privileged tool that guaranteed more opportunities, better education, and even higher social status. Skin color may not be the reason for social segregation in Tunisian society. However, the domination of French language in the northern and coastal parts of the country (where the French settled during and after colonialism) gave the people living there higher status and easier access to education (Jemmali & Amara, 2015).

Another example that showed the continued domination of English language, especially in education, is India's case. According to Crystal (2003:163), less than one percent (one third of one percent) of the total Indian population speaks English as a first language. About 20% of the total population use it as a second language, which leaves the rest of the population with education based on local vernacular languages as a medium of instruction. At tertiary levels, the "prestigious science-based disciplines", as Ricento (2013:2) called them, are taught only in English, such as computer science, medicine, pharmacy, and engineering. In this case, Ramanathan (2005:35) concludes that the validation of the importance of English within education and society sends implicit messages that vernacular languages are overlooked and cannot hold a higher status than English. In both examples of India and South Africa, the status of English is linked to higher socioeconomic status and better life in general, starting from easier access to good-quality education.

Spolsky (2017:9) on the other hand, argues that it is rather challenging for educational institutions to provide instructions in their home language. This issue is a main concern when planning and implementing language policy as it depends on children's acquisition abilities. For a multilingual society, there is a "complexity of possible patterns" highlighted by Mackey (1970), which is a study that conducts the role of the varieties of languages and their use through different patterns. The two most captured categories were transitional programs and maintenance programs; while the first allows the initiation of a certain language while

gradually moving to another; the second is starting in one and moving to the second separately (Spolsky, 2017: 9-11). This approach is commonly used in multilingual countries like North African countries. French is introduced in primary levels to become later the initial language of most of the disciplines.

Nevertheless, Spolsky (2017:11) shares the same remarks as Ricento when arguing that including several languages within the educational system can give an opposite influence than intended. Whether in relation with quality education or group identities, including several languages with favoring international languages over the indigenous ones can change attitudes towards both. In the same argument, Ricento gives the example of South Africa when recognizing officially nine languages alongside English and Afrikaans. He criticizes it as ineffective because of the shortage of resources in all of these languages, which will affect the quality of education. These two studies show the gap in language policies in balancing between the existing languages in an effective way.

The two examples of India and South Africa may be living proof of language policies and attitudes towards vernacular languages and their statuses. Tunisia, on the other hand, fits under this theory through the status and use of French language. The similarities in the hegemony of both French and English in Indian and South African societies show a lack of effective policies in managing languages and their positions. Although Arabic is Tunisia's first language, it is still fighting its way through tertiary levels, which until this day is not successful.

As much as this policy affects different aspects, the political, economic, and the social aspect is the most challenging and varied one to analyze. Especially in this globalization era, the social aspect is the most sensitive part to touch upon. To understand effective policies, the study should depend more on social experiments and observations (Shohamy, 2006: 9). It is challenging to measure the results from a social perspective as it is dynamic and not so much literature covers this part.

Another approach studied by academics under this theory of language policy and planning is "language as a resource" where basically this resource is used in favor of state. Language

in this context is misused and considered a tool. Ricento (2013:3) presents the idea of “the commodification of language” being a fit into “the neoliberal/rational choice political paradigm”. This encourages using the dominant language in education for the reason that it supports the state’s economy and brings back collective benefits socially and politically.

1.1.2. Language Management Theory

This theory is derived from language policy and planning and is considered one approach into this domain. It was first introduced in the sociolinguistic field by V. Neustupný and Björn H. Jernudd in 1987 who were influenced by Joshua Fishman’s studies on language planning. They both studied this concept on the macro level (organized management) and the micro-level (simple management). Nekvapil (2016:11-14) points out that Language Management Theory has been the center of Richard B. Baldauf’s attention. He approached it on many levels and studied nearly all the possible aspects of management (variety, situation, function, setting, participants, content, frame, and channel) (Nekvapil, 2016: 16-17). Language policy and planning are broad and can be studied not only in the domain of sociolinguistics but also politically and economically. Baldauf highlighted four basic approaches: a classical, a language management, a domain, and a critical approach (Nekvapil, 2016:13)

This study focuses on the language management approach as it narrows down the concept of language policy and planning to a more specific act. Fishman (1971) looks at Language Management Theory under two categories, the generating of utterance (communicative acts) and utterance management (management of communicative acts). Agents perform these acts. Relating it to this research, we can divide these agents into policy-related agents and social-related agents. Institutions, where management can be in the form of official decisions, represent the first agent. The ministry of education in this context can be an accurate example of organized management (Nekvapil, 2016). In the context of this study, Tunisian leaders and the Tunisian Ministry of Education represent this type of management, especially after independence in 1956. This management is what determines the status of foreign and already existing languages in the educational system. However, unlike classical language planning, which focuses just on institutional decisions, Language Management Theory is used to determine language shifts in particular interactions.

The second agent, simple or discourse-based management (Nekvapil, 2016:16) is the act created by the individual in different daily situations. It is more related to linguistic behavior, where the speaker chooses how to manage their speech. In a multilingual society like Tunisia, this management is common, especially when communicating with tourists and even locals from different parts of the country. The different dialects can sometimes cause confusion and speakers need to use a common word or even sometimes they switch to French when they do not find the correct term in Arabic. Also, Tunisians use a lot of simple management when dealing with Arabs since the different Arabic dialects have many borrowing words from many languages. It is hard for some Arabic speakers to understand the mixed dialects of North Africans, especially that they have many French, Berber, and Spanish (in the case of Moroccan Arabic) words. Hence simple management phases can take several directions according to the speaker's linguistic behavior. First, it starts with *noting* some things about their interlocuter's utterance (see Marriott and Nekvapil, 2012), when identifying the speech problems, the speaker then moves to the next step, which is evaluating the phenomenon. According to Neustupný (2003:131) this can go in two directions; the first is when this phenomenon evaluates negatively, and it is called *inadequacy*; that is, the interlocutors have no solution to overcome it. In Language Management Theory, this is identified as a problem. The second direction is when it evaluates positively, and it is called *gratification*. In this part of the Language Management Theory process, it is up to the speaker again to go further, as often it can stop here or to continue to an adjustment design phase (Nekvapil, 2016). In this case, the speaker chooses to re-word their utterances as an example of adjustment. This can be considered a simplified version of what scholars like Nekvapil, (2012) and Kopecký, (2014) had described the phenomenon, as it can continue into a more complicated process especially when including more than two speakers or/and in different situations. As mentioned above, simple management depends not just on the individual's choice at that moment but also on the settings, dialect variety, situation, participants etc. (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003; Neustupný, 2004).

The theory meets with this research in finding the relationship between the political aspect and social (individual) aspect of language policies. Nekvapil (2016:12) argues that organized management (which presents governmental/ institutional decisions for us) is based on the

outcomes of simple management. Hence, theoretically, the first should be based on problems that occur in discourse and do not consider it solved unless the solutions are directly implemented within the discourse. Language Management Theory uses content analysis of various documents, discourse analysis, and linguistic landscape analysis, especially when investigating organized management. Since this thesis proves both types of management to be inter-dependent, the same analysis process can be followed.

1.2. Social Identity Theory

Social identity approach focuses on the way social aspect influences intergroup relations. It was first developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s along with their colleagues (Huddy, 2001: 128). The theory suggests that individuals derive a sense of self from their social association in a way that belonging to a certain community can influence their social and political identities. It also presents the terms “ingroup” and “outgroup”. The first refers to the group in which the individual places themselves and feels a sense of belonging and the second referring to the opposite group or groups that most of the times exist within the same society. The outgroup usually has differences compared to the ingroup, whether in language (or dialects), ethnicity, culture, region...etc. The distinction between the two groups plays a major role in influencing how individuals interact and perceive members from other groups (Huddy, 2001:145).

Furthermore, Social Identity Theory can be used in analyzing attitudes towards languages, especially when investigating interactions in different languages. The distinction mentioned earlier can be seen within the Tunisian society in using Arabic and French together (code switching). Certain behaviors can be the result of identifying ingroups or outgroup members. Hicham Aouina (2013) supports this argument by using social identity theory in his analysis of collective linguistic behaviors. He argues that the ingroup in a Tunisian context are the category of people that are fluent in French and use it daily. While the outgroup is those who stick with Arabic more and use little to no French (Aouina, 2013: 111). Therefore, in his survey, when asking about language preferences, his aim was not only to know the choice of the majority but also to determine with which category the respondents place themselves and to know their sense of who they are (Aouina, 2013:11).

A study by Matthew J. Hornsey (2008) suggests that the approach of social identity influences individual behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. Nevertheless, there is a codependency relationship between individuals belonging to a certain group and that group's norms. Although these norms shape individuals, they are actively discussed, challenged, and reformed by individuals. Hence, Hornsey concludes that social identity can both influence and be influenced by individual behavior (Hornsey, 2008:209).

1.3. Summary

The theoretical framework simplifies the downscaling of these policies into Tunisian society. Both language policy and planning and language management can help explain the process of language policies in Tunisia, primarily created and managed by the leaders, and secondarily by society itself. Social Identity Theory can be relevant when observing the identity situation among different generations in relation to attitudes towards Arabic, French, and English. Language management highlights the major factors contributing to identity issues. The importance of these three theories lies in the distinction between the official languages and the local; they are primarily used to study the political side and the way it frames social and individual attitudes towards language. By understanding the essence of such policies and their effect, policymakers, educators, and researchers can make decisions that impact language use, preservation, and development within the Tunisian society.

CHAPTER TWO

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Tunisia's political situation is rather critical, especially after the "Arab spring"¹ in 2011, which started exactly on December the 17th, 2010, following the suicide of Mohamed Bouazizi, a street vendor who had no official authorization to sell fruit and vegetable on the side way of Sidi Bouzid governance. This led the agents of the municipality to take over his goods. One female agent physically attacked Bouazizi after he protested, which led to more anger and calls for justice from his side. Due to this physical and psychological abuse, Bouazizi set himself on fire, starting the first revolution in Arab world. Thousands of angry Tunisians protested on the streets of twenty-four governances to end the oppressive regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali² (Sghaier 2012:20).

Before that event, the global economic crisis at that time played a major role in the deterioration of the Tunisian economy. In 2010, inflation was raging between 25 and 30 percent in the North African region due to the oil crisis in 2009. Unlike Libya and Algeria, which depend on oil and gas exports, Tunisia's main income was based on manufacturing and tourism, the same as in Morocco and Egypt. Therefore, the privatization of public sectors was a huge downfall for the country. It continued to affect the unemployment rate, especially among youth, which reached 29% in 2010, according to reports made by the World Bank³. The authoritarian regime of Ben Ali deprived Tunisians of their fundamental political rights and tied their freedom of expression to the abuse of power by Ben Ali's extended family. These economic and social inequalities led to the first uprising in the MENA region (QadirMushtaq & Afzal, 2017).

The government ever since has been facing many challenges in maintaining a sustainable economy while transitioning to a democratic regime. The revolution allowed Tunisians to

¹ The phrase was first used to describe the Arab uprisings by Marc Lynch, an American political scientist, in the academic journal of "Foreign Policy".

² The second president of Tunisia that came into power in November 1987 after a constitutional coup d'état that ended his predecessor's regime.

³ World Bank, World Development Indicators and ILO, Statistical update on Arab states and territories and North African countries, May 2011.

practice their political rights freely and to choose who represents them for the first time. The Tunisian society is famous among the MENA region for being open and more Westernized compared to the whole region. It gets praise as much as critics, especially about women's rights and being so attached to the colonial heritage, whether the French culture, language, or lifestyle, most Tunisians consider it to be part of their identity and history (Timoumi, 2022:15). While most of the Arab leaders like to call it Westernization, Tunisian leaders like Habib Bourguiba (A. Micaud, et al.1965) view it more as a necessary modernization process aiming for social and political development.

In this chapter the discussion will be rooted through presenting firstly the main historical events in the Tunisian politics, secondly the emerging reforms in education directly related to the languages of instructions, and lastly the way policymakers view these reforms and its importance in the educational system and society.

2.1. The Bourguibist Regime

The modernization process started with the first president of the country, Habib Bourguiba (1956-1987) since independence. Tunisia is a country that lacks sufficient natural resources that was a reason for Bourguiba and the leaders that followed him to focus on human capital. He invested the most in the education and health care sectors, making them public and almost free of charge for all citizens.⁴ Also, Bourguiba had the biggest role in “liberalizing” women, as most Tunisians believe today. He was the first president in the MENA region that gave women their full civil and political rights. Tunisia, by far is the only Arab country that has a law forbidding polygamy. Bourguiba was focusing not only on the political side of modernization, but most importantly, on the social side. Women's presence in practically most sectors played an important role in this process. Bourguiba linked modernization and development to Westernization. During his term, he tried to make Tunisia, as the French call it, “the little France”. Starting from unveiling women from their safsari⁵, which was for so long a part of Muslim identity and national identity to banning the hijab later in schools and

⁴ For more information on Habib Bourguiba see “The Tragedy of Longevity” by Derek Hopwood, “Our history” by Habib Bourguiba Jr.

⁵ The safsari is a traditional garment, wrapped around the head and most of the body.

universities. Bourguiba considered the veil to be a sign of backwardness only slowing down the process of modernity (Ghumkhor, 2012).

Bourguiba emerged from the nationalist movement period, which later formed the Neo-Destour (new constitution) party. Along with the nationalist elite, both considered women's appearance to be one of the first issues to address. They may resist French hegemony when it came to political and economic dominance, but their acceptance and "mimic" of French social norms has been a subject of criticism among many scholars and fellow leaders. In that same period, Bourguiba shared this attitude with the other leaders of the region. Qasim Amin of Egypt also viewed that the only way to modernize Egyptian society was to focus on the "positive side" of colonialism and not to deny the great Western civilization (Zubaida 1988).

Bourguiba was criticized by many intellectuals, like Albert Memmi (Tunisian academic), to be ignorant of their own history and traditions. According to Memmi (1974: 159)

"The history that is taught to him is not his own. He knows who Colbert or Cromwell was, but he learns nothing about Khaznadar; he knows about Joan of Arc, but not about El Kahena. Everything seems to have taken place outside of his country. He and his land are nonentities which exist only in reference to the Gauls, the Franks or the Marne. In other words, in reference to what is not."

Memmi pointed out that different approaches were used to colonize the Tunisia's mind by Western powers (in this case mainly France) starting with the ruling elite who were educated with French system; a Western mindset was adopted, and a new Tunisian identity was in the making. This had paved the way for French to be not only a foreign language used in education but also a tool of communication. Since language is used to express one's cultural beliefs, opinions, and thoughts, it has a great influence on how individuals can identify themselves (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004: 371). Identity may be a complicated phenomenon based on several components like culture, region, and ethnicities; however, language is directly

related to all of them and can influence the way Tunisians view themselves and others based on their linguistic abilities.

French authorities identified Islam and its social features as something to be reduced since according to them, it was holding back Tunisian society and slowing down the modernization process. In order to keep up with Western societies, focus was shifted to “appearing” more modern and civilized; religious schools were closed, and sharia law was removed; more control was shifted to women’s attire and status. Bourguiba considered religion to be a more spiritual and individual practice. He made it clear that it is not a collective practice that should be followed and that allowing it to be part of society will just contribute to the backwardness of the Tunisian mind (Hladchenko et al., 2021). Such practices helped in restructuring society; although democracy was one of the modernization pillars; in this case, it was not an option. While the process of political decolonization was ongoing, cultural colonialism was just getting started. Cotton (2006) mentioned the importance of education in this period; Franco-Arab schools were built, and targeting the elite, these educational institutions promoted modernity and introduced the concept of democracy to the wealthy Tunisian youth, feeding their minds by Westernized ideas and historical frames. Generations of leaders were the product of these institutions, which implanted the idea of modernizing even religion. These reforms shaped post-colonial identity, which continued to be built after Bourguiba.

2.2. Ben Ali’s Tunisia

During Zine El Abidine Ben Ali’s ruling period (1987 - 2011), the second president of Tunisia, the country witnessed several changes economically and politically towards the same direction of modern Tunisia. Ben Ali first came to power in November 1987, followed by a constitutional coup d’état to end the Bourguibist regime (Wolf, 2023:4). Ben Ali justified his decision to take over the presidency by the inability of Bourguiba to lead any longer. Doctors had testified that Bourguiba is no longer physically able to practice his usual activities, let alone lead a whole country in a critical period. With the Gulf War (1990-1991) and several economic challenges that were around the corner, Ben Ali considered it the best time to step in, promising to follow his predecessor's steps with further progress into democracy (Murphy, 1997).

Although many similarities have been spotted with his predecessor's regime, as both were dependent on three components: president, party, and state bureaucracy, Ben Ali focused his policies on economic reform and promised to follow it by political reform. Ben Ali's major achievements in liberalizing the economy were noticed in two terms of his five-year leadership: control of inflation, diversification of exports and productions, liberalization of imports, and attraction of foreign and private investments. These milestones led to economic growth at that time at a faster rate than the population (Alexander, 2010:70). In 1995, Tunisia was categorized by the American Heritage Foundation under countries with "wholly liberalized economies" and was constantly considered an example of successful adjustment by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 1996, Tunisia ranked 69th in the world on the UN's Human Development Index and 37th on the Economic Freedom Index,⁶ which was higher than its current rank of 2022 and that of its neighboring countries like Morocco and Algeria. The overall economy under Ben Ali's leadership was doing better than his predecessor despite external factors like the Gulf War and the delicate situation the MENA region was facing.

However, the other face of this economic growth was not aligned with the people's well-being; unemployment remained a social and economic struggle, and about six per cent of the total population considered under the poverty line lived on low incomes (Alexander 2010:106). Along with the privatization that was spreading in every sector, those who had higher incomes were encouraged to make even more profit and take advantage of consumerism. Investments were heading towards new sectors instead of agriculture and textile that would need the existing labor. Interest was shown in tourism and energy, followed by sectors like white goods and electronics. Such projects would need training programs and the presence of expertise that locals lacked at that time.

Ben Ali also promised a political reform that targeted multi-party politics instead of president-for-life rule. He began by re-establishing the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD)⁷,

⁶ United Nations. (n.d.). Human Development Index. Human Development Reports. <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

⁷ Previously the Neo Destour Party was established in 1920 and has a history with supporting the Bourguibist regime. In 1963, it was declared as the only legally permitted party in Tunisia to become in 1964 the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD).

starting with the name. It officially became *Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique* (RCD) leaving behind the history of the party that was ongoing since 1920. The RCD drastically changed its policies and even recruited huge numbers of those who were influenced by the reform policies. In May 1988, a new law allowed several political parties to be allowed. The most recognized party that became an opposition was the *Movement de la Tendance Islamiste* (MTI) or what will be known after the 2011 revolution by “Al Nahda”. Following this event, the progress of this political reform was barely noticed; minor political parties, along with MTI, were demanding further electoral reforms for a chance to secure more seats in the national assembly. By that time, the MTI was banned for forming a great threat to the dominating party, while the latter occupied most of the seats. The RCD kept functioning as a single party while the others competed on a lower level, which allowed its members to continue their activities and gave them not only political privilege but also higher social status. Ben Ali’s attitude towards the opposition, especially Al Nahda, has been mirrored in society until this day. He promoted this party as a terrorist project, insisting that they aimed to gain power for absolute personal reasons. On this matter, Ben Ali pointed out that the process of democratization should be fed gradually instead of allowing parties and individuals to practice their political rights while they lack political consciousness (Alexander, 2010:110).

This began an oppressive regime; arbitrary detentions began to frighten people back home and abroad. Soon, MTI members and any potential competitors were banned from entering their own country, like Rached al-Ghannouchi and Monsef al-Marzouki. The new regime carried Bourguiba’s legacy in social policies and kept the features of modern society, preventing any Islamic customs, although Ben Ali was not against Islam as a religion. He considered using it in politics as threatening to the stability of the political process (Murphy 1997:121).

Ben Ali strengthened ties with Arab and neighboring countries and insisted on the importance of regional relations. However, as Hawkins stated, these relations were secondary compared to his interest in securing ‘Euro-Mediterranean’ spot (Hawkins, 2010:238), which distanced the country from their Arabic associations. Being open to the West and maintaining

trade relations with Europe was the focus of Ben Ali's regime, while international pressure for change put the state in a vulnerable position.

Ben Ali's regime promised both economic and political reform. While his regime may have succeeded in liberalizing economic institutions, political reforms went from democratic attempts to oppression. Political stability was needed in his first term to secure the state's position regionally and internationally; however, the arbitrary practices and abuse of power by him and his extended family weakened his position internally and externally and exposed the regime's lack of legitimacy. All that was needed was a flame to awaken the first revolution of the Arab Spring against Ben Ali's regime to put his term to an end on 14 January 2011.

Unable to control public opinion, thousands of people marched into the capital's streets and the other 23rd governorates demanding the end of Ben Ali's regime after the self-immolation of Bouazizi, a food vendor abused by the police. The neighboring countries and the rest of the world supported the resilience and valued the courage of Tunisians. Ben Ali had no choice but to support the public.

More than a decade later, what happened in Tunisia in 2011 is considered the only successful revolution in the MENA region (Khaddar, 2022:170). The democracy process is still an example inspiring many countries despite the toughness of the transitional period on the ruling elite and the people. The adopted policies and change of ideas throughout the years impacted Tunisian society. Surviving oppressive regimes and slowly gaining fundamental rights without having a historical reference to build upon have been a challenge for Tunisians. Until today, certain concepts and ideologies (politically and socially) are still adopted, contributing to the formation of a national identity. The data collected throughout this research suggests the appearance of identity in the post-colonial era where elites did not take proper measures to protect Tunisian costumes against new emerging thoughts and behaviors with the French culture.

2.3. Social Structure in the Post-Revolution Period

According to sociologist Baccar Gherib (2021), Tunisian society belongs to the middle classes (over 80% of the population in 2010) which makes it almost a classless society, that,

at least, is what Ben Ali's regime wanted to promote. Not until the 2011 revolution, society started to reveal its true structure; the poverty rate was increasing as the national economy was at stake (Matta, Appleton, & Bleaney, 2019).

The new emerging class of Islamist bourgeoisie found their way into the Tunisian social structure. The capital was considered a miniature of the whole society; Grand Tunis is divided into areas, each representing a certain social group. For example, on one hand, there is La Marsa, which is known to be the residence of elites and intellectuals within the capital Tunis, a calm place by the sea with clean and organized streets, French supermarket chains, and slower relaxed lifestyle than that of the heart of the capital. On the other hand, neighborhoods like Al-Tadhamon are known for being dangerous for strangers, a poor neighborhood that is famous by its criminal rates, and at some point, even the police were avoiding entering that area. People there use mostly Tunisian dialect with little to no French.

One can differentiate Tunisians from those areas by several determinants. Language habits are one of them. Code switching is basically common among all Tunisians, however, the coastal suburbs like La Marsa use 70% French and just 30% Tunisian dialect (Barone, 2019:95).

The cultural features of Tunisian society are a mix between Islamic heritage and secularism in public life. The structure is complicated, and hard to trace. In several social studies, like Pierre Bourdieu (1984), lifestyle analysis is used for further understanding of social differences and inequality. Bourdieu considers it to be precise, reflecting class belonging through certain habits coming from economic and cultural capital. What forms social classes in Tunisia is mainly incomes, assets, families, location, and accents. It is easy for Tunisians to identify one another based only on their accents, even if they are from the same city. These language habits can both be acquired from family and later on school, which determines the daily speech and linguistic behaviors of the individual.

2.4. Language policies and Modernization in Education

Modernizing the educational system started with Paul Cambon, the resident minister back when Tunisia first became a protectorate, through introducing a bilingual and bicultural system. Cambon created an organization known as “Alliance Française” (French Alliance), this organization was responsible for promoting French education not only in Tunisia but worldwide. French authorities were careful in approaching natives, and they used the policy of moderation for the sake of balancing and implementing their well-studied strategies. They kept kouttabs⁸ and insisted on the need to understand and invest in Islamic culture and language. In Tunis, the number went from 50 schools in 1877 to 113 in 1890 and to a total of 971 in 1891 countrywide (Degorge, 2002:581). Equally, the establishment of French educational institutions started with the Lycée Carnot which was founded in 1881 by Mgr. Lavigerie⁹. Such schools adapted French system but also provided Arabic studies classes and modernized Islamic studies.

The rich Tunisian families ended up signing their children up in French schools, choosing quality education over traditional one. They later formed the elite group that would lead the country, with their rich bilingual background and modern education. This group was considered privileged for being able to be knowledgeable to fund later the nationalist movement in Tunisia.

In the early 20th century, French government was aiming to provide access to education to most Tunisian children; their goal was to spread French education system as much as possible to guarantee implementing French culture. The strategies consisted of extending education within as many areas as possible. The French administration tried to reach Berbers in a movement of acculturation but only in French language. Establishing French Lycees was among the primary strategies, which were patterned with the educational system in France. These institutions followed a curriculum approved by the French government and were staffed by French teachers. The main language was French, and even in Franco-Arab schools, Arabic was gradually phased out in favor of French starting from the 4th grade in primary

⁸ Type of elementary schools that teach Islamic studies and Quran.

⁹ Charles Allemand-Lavigerie was a Cardinal in the Catholic Church and is held to be largely responsible for the church's influence in North Africa. He established many schools in the Maghreb.

schools until universities except for Arabic literature and Islamic studies (Degorge, 2002: 4). Despite the efficiency of these policies in attracting Tunisians and encouraging them to enroll their children in schools, only 7% of the students in primary schools made it to secondary and higher education in 1953 (Degorge, 2002: 584).

Estimated school attendance, 1953–57 ^a	
Year	Estimated attendance
1953–1954	227,000
1954–1955	245,000
1955–1956	265,000
1956–1957	285,000

^a Department of Public Education, *Tunisia* 54, 48.

Figure 1. Estimated school attendance between the years 1953 and 1957.

Source: (Degorge, 2002:584)

According to the Department of Public Education (Figure 1), the number of attendances slightly increased throughout the 4-year-plan of 1953-1957. This proves that even though the strategies made at that time were not fully accomplished, France still managed to provide access to Tunisian children during protectorate years, elevating it to the percentage of that in France (around 8% in 1953).

Cambon and his administration may have a major part in modernization regarding education and benefit from it, however, many Tunisians took the chance of receiving free advanced education and helped in building a solid educational background not only for them but for the following generations. This legacy was continued by the first president, Bourguiba, who

built upon this educational heritage and focused on providing free public education and increasing female attendance in schools.

Policymakers on language policy

The trace of both Bourguiba and Ben Ali's regimes remains undeniable, being the first two presidents of the country, each one had his momentum of reforming policies. The two regimes may be completely different, yet they both set common language policies, especially in education, to promote further the process of Arabization and balance between the colonial language heritage and other foreign languages, especially English.

After independence in 1956, policy makers started reforming language's position in education. There were already merging strategies allowing French to be present officially as the language of sciences and technology and the preferred language of the Tunisian elite. However, as a form of resistance, several decisions were presented in education supported by the then-president Bourguiba, who declared in 1958 that Arabic would be the main language in which all subjects would be taught.

“Education in the secondary schools will be oriented towards Arabization and the use of Arabic so that it can serve to teach all the subjects, unless necessity and circumstances force us, for a limited period, to use French to take advantage of the possibilities that are available to us until teacher training schools provide us with the necessary staff who will ensure the teaching of all subjects in Arabic”. (L’Action, 1958: 1)

This speech was during the beginning of education reform. Bourguiba was encouraging the concept of free education and promoting Arabization was a strategic way to make people want to attend schools. He focused, in his speech (L’Action, 1958: 1), on how the people will be “taking advantage” of French and will use it only when necessary. This strategy was not only ideological, as he started implementing some official decisions in education (see Figure 2 below) that secured a good position of Arabic language, especially in primary levels.

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Decisions/declarations</i>
25 June 1958	First reform of the educational system • Closing of the Qur'anic schools and laicization of education • Arabisation of 1st and 2nd years of elementary school (i.e. all subjects taught in Arabic), French also dropped as subject of instruction • Creation of Section A, a high school track in which all subjects were taught in Arabic (abandoned in 1964)
September 1969	Reintroduction of French as a subject in 1st and 2nd years
March 1970	Mzali, Minister of National Education, declares the government is considering dropping French in 1st year
October 1971	French dropped in 1st year
October 1976	• French dropped in 2nd year • Arabisation of history and geography in secondary school • Arabisation of philosophy in final year of secondary school (13th year)
October 1977	• Arabisation of 3rd year of elementary school • Mzali declares he is in favor of maintaining French as a subject in years 4–6
September 1979	• Arabisation of 4th year • French maintained as a subject, taught 3 hours/ week
September 1980	Arabisation of 5th grade, French maintained as in 4th year
September 1981	• Arabisation of 6th (final) year of elementary school, French maintained as in 4th and 5th years • Arabisation of 1st year of secondary school (7th year), French maintained as a subject, taught 5 hours/week • French also maintained as medium of instruction of mathematics and science subjects
September 1982	Arabisation of 8th and 9th years, French maintained as in 7th year
September 1983	• Establishing the English-medium Ariana Pilot High School (cf. Table 6) • Establishing the French-medium Tunis Pilot High School
June 1986	Then President Bourguiba declares that poor achievement in mathematics in elementary and secondary school is due to lack of proficiency in French
September 1986	• Reintroduction of French as a subject in 2nd and 3rd years of elementary school, taught 5 hours/week • Increase in French instruction from 3 to 5 hours/ week in years 4–6
September 1988	French dropped from 2nd year
September 1989	• French reintroduced in 2nd year • Creation of 5 pilot secondary schools in Tunis, Ariana, Sfax, Le Kef and Gafsa where French is the medium of instruction of mathematics, science and technology
September 1993	French dropped from 2nd year
September 1997	• Arabisation of mathematics, sciences and technical education in years 7–9 • Pilot schools no longer accept students from 7th year, but from 10th.

Figure 2. Decisions concerning Arabization in Tunisian schools.

Source: (Daoud, 2001:26)

As shown in Figure 2, the official decisions were not linear. Former prime minister Mohamed Mzali supported President Bourguiba's call for Arabization at most levels. Yet those decisions were not consistent. The first reform related to Arabic language, dated 25th of June 1958, began with closing Quranic schools, which were mainly attended by preschoolers. In the beginning, the Arabization process included just the first two years of elementary school while maintaining Arabic language in some subjects like history and geography in secondary school and philosophy in the final year of high school. However, these official changes started to reach other levels. According to Table 1, between the years 1958 and 1982, all the levels in elementary school (6 levels) and middle school (3 levels) were Arabized with the preservation of French in the scientific subject, which did not last. In 1997, mathematics, science, and technical education were officially taught in Arabic. Although this process kept moving forward in both presidents' (Bourguiba and Ben Ali's) terms, the closing of Quranic schools at the start of the reform program suggests that Bourguiba wanted to disassociate the language from the religion. This is discussed in the literature (see Clement Henry 2007, Hladchenko Et al. 2021) to be a form of rejection of the Islamist opposition or any strategies that may lead to its formation, including early Islamic education.

The inconsistency is noticed more in decisions related to French language. In the beginning of education reform, French was dropped in the 1st and 2nd years of elementary school with Arabization of these levels. It was reintroduced in 1969 at the same levels, but only as a subject and not a medium of instruction, to be totally removed from 1st grade two years later. In 1976, it was also removed from the 2nd grade to remain a subject taught at the rest of the elementary school levels (4-6) with a limited number of hours. In 1986, just one year before coup d'état led by the second President Ben Ali, Bourguiba stated that the poor grades in science and mathematics are due to the lack of proficiency in French therefore he increased the number of hours for this language and introduced it as a subject again in the first two grades (Daoud, 2001). This shows both the hegemony of the French language in spite of the continuous trials of minimizing the need for using it and the lack of efficient, well-studied decisions. Although the same problems continued to encounter education systems regarding languages, these official policies are still in use until today, which allow us to analyze their

impact not only on individuals' academic backgrounds but also on their linguistic acquisition and abilities.

In education, Arabization was in a position of power compared to French, despite the desire of making French officially the medium of instruction. The process of Arabization in public schools has been gradual, and regarding planning, it was successful. However, the preservation of French as the medium of instruction in the pilot schools (middle and high schools that welcomed academically superior students through national exams passed in 6th and 9th grades) raises questions behind the real importance of Arabic in education and the seriousness of these policies. Giving the “elite” among students the privilege to resume their education in French is an admission of the dominance of this language and its importance in seeking better future opportunities and quality education. Also, keeping French as a subject of mathematics and science is another supporting argument of the statement mentioned. These policies, whether explicit or implicit, created a form of segregation in education that in its turn reflected the situation of Tunisian society. Such policies secured French's position even more.

The Arabization process did not seem to serve the Tunisian elite as well, who were attached to French culture, considering the language a part of the Tunisian identity and not a foreign language anymore. Consequently, they pushed their children into pilot schools, which were shortly known to hold elite students, giving them privileges like better quality education, access to more materials, and being instructed by highly qualified teachers. This created early competitions among pupils, which had a profound impact on their psychological state and academic performance. From that point onwards, French is still looked to as the language of excellence, and such policies helped put a social pressure not only in the context of education but nearly in every aspect of everyday life like a form of modernity and openness, as Daoud (1991: 13) put it.

Ben Ali supported his predecessor's decisions of promoting Arabic and acting upon the policies he left, although the goals set were not achieved by the time Ben Ali took over the presidency. Ben Ali showed his willingness to preserve Arabic language, which he called “a mother tongue and a main component of [Tunisian] national identity” (Ben Ali, July 17,

1996). Three years after, he insisted further on his efforts towards this language, stating: “As regards our identity, we have consistently endeavored to preserve its attributes, most particularly our Arabic language” (Quoted in Daoud, 2011: 17).

Ben Ali was aware of the impact of the language on Tunisian identity, especially on teenagers who were still processing the true meaning of identity. One of his projects to strengthen their sense of belonging and pride, was designing a dictionary to improve and revive terms used in the language. The reason was to help in preserving Arabic against globalization, which was merging into Tunisian society led by English language as the world’s first language:

“To anchor the national identity in our young generations, enrich their training and strengthen their sense of pride vis-à-vis their country’s culture, glories, and great figures in all areas of civilization, knowledge, arts, language and letters, we give instructions to the Ministry of Education and Training, jointly with the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Technology and the Ministry of Culture and Heritage Preservation for designing an Arabic dictionary that is easy to consult and in tune with contemporary times and also for developing a Tunisian encyclopedia that makes known our country’s great figures, cities and sites. The preparation of these two works is to be entrusted to an elite of specialists.” (Ben Ali, July 15th, 2010)

Before that, related to academic field, Ben Ali’s most important decision regarding this language was Arabizing scientific subjects to which is no longer just related to just teaching Religion or humanities.

“Faithful to our Arab belonging and our national language..., one of the objectives of our educational reform is to extend using the Arab language from teaching the literary and human sciences subjects only to teaching scientific subjects.” (Ben Ali, July 18th, 1992)

This decision was oriented more towards preserving the national identity. It was a strategy proving that Arabic can also be used in sciences and technologies until level 9 in middle schools.

The period following 2011 shifted attitudes towards languages due to the focus of the Islamists opposition, represented by Ennahda, on highlighting the Arabic-Islamic identity. The party supported Arabization and its influence was remarkable due to the popularity of Islamists after the revolution (Kashina, 2020). Rached Ghannouchi, the leader of Ennahda, criticizes Tunisians for being Franco-Arabs. They, therefore, encouraged the reconnection to the Arabic language and passing on that sense of belonging to younger generations. They praised Ennahda for having such a strong say in the Arabic language influence in Tunisian society. In one of their speeches, stated that Arabic has now more than three times the number of French-printed newspapers in Tunisia (Kashina, 2020:114).

Modernists on the other hand, saw this period of post-revolutionary freedom as a chance to infuse Western freedom and to adopt their values. Also, they considered it to be the perfect time to be exposed to the wider European community and take the chance of being the first democratic country in the Middle East and North Africa region (Kashina, 2018).

The Arabization process had a positive impact on the public, especially in preserving their heritage and Arabic-Islamic identity, however in the education system, those strategies were not as effective as it was expected. This language planning was not well-studied. Daoud (2011:18) expressed his concern of such policies in nurturing students with “conservative, traditionalist, less westernized mindset”.

2.5. Summary

Language policies since Bourguiba have been uncertain, experimental, and often random. The official decisions related to languages in education have been inconsistent, although Tunisian presidents showed their persistence in preserving Arabic language and the process was smoother on paper than that of French. Nonetheless, policies related to French seem more efficient and there is a clear gap between Arabizing most of the subjects in early education levels and frenchifying them later in more advanced levels. The poor planning and lack of solid grounds raise several questions on the hegemony of French first and later English and whether these attempts were unsuccessful because of the insufficient competencies planning these strategies or because of the powerful language policies on a more global scale.

This chapter navigates towards the most remarkable policies showing the position of Arabic and French. While both Bourguiba and Ben Ali tried to balance between these two languages, no official status was given to Tunisian Arabic or even considered while creating these official decisions. The gap between speaking a variety of Arabic and being taught standard Arabic can be obvious when assessing the borrowed words, which will be discussed in the next chapters. However, the paradoxical position of both leaders on French language questions questions the seriousness of the Arabization movement in the educational and political reforms.



CHAPTER THREE

3. ATTITUDES TOWARDS LANGUAGES IN RELATION WITH IDENTITY

Unlike Algeria and Morocco, Tunisian society does not have more than one indigenous language. Morocco, for example, has four main varieties of Berber language, which is the mother tongue of about 33% of the population. Algeria, on the other hand, has a percentage of 25% Berber speakers. Compared to these two neighboring countries, Tunisia has only 1% of its population who use Berber in their daily practices. However, Tunisian dialect has borrowed a lot of words from Berber language and expressions which are still in use until today.

Language in Tunisian society is one of the most important aspects of stratification. Gallagher (1967:12-13) divided social classes into three categories. “Bureaucratic-intellectual elite” forms the highest level. This group uses mostly French with excellent pronunciation. Thanks to their academic backgrounds and family status, they consider themselves closer culturally to French society rather than Middle Eastern society. The intermediate level constitutes of new urban middle and lower classes who use French when necessary. Gallagher describes that as “inelegant” for using Tunisian Arabic daily (Gallagher, 1964, as cited in Paul Stevens, 1980: 39). The lower level is composed of what remains of traditional society, the urban proletariat, and the peasantry. This group uses exclusively Tunisian Arabic, although the younger generation acquired French knowledge through school.

Tunisians’ attitude towards French ironically changed after independence to contribute to the growth of French culture. Since it was not in a position of power on the surface, the colonists’ language was viewed as the window to modernization. While Arabic represents traditional values and authenticity, French was the one leading to progress. This attitude mainly comes from intellectuals. The decolonization process was followed by social resistance to French by certain groups, especially students who understood and studied French but refused to use it in conversations as was mentioned by Paul Stevens. However, French remained a prestigious language until today. Those who wish to actively participate in society must be fluent with a solid background knowledge of the language. It has a great deal to do with social hierarchy, especially within the upper middle class. It is observed as well that French is used

among women more than men; in public, most of them using standard metropolitan French¹⁰. In his study, Stevens reported that even some Tunisians claim to have better service when they use French to order in restaurants or to check in hotels as much as it is used in situations where the speaker wants to express himself (Stevens, 1980: 50).

Tunisians' attitudes towards both Arabic and French can be categorized into two groups: one views that Arabic stand in the way of modernization, so they prefer French, and they try to maximize its usage; while the second group views this obsession with French in relation to the argument that modernization threatens the authenticity of the national culture. Both status of these languages will be tested to conclude the accuracy of the statement mentioned in most of the literature dealing with the linguistic situation in Tunisia.

Abdel Rahim Hamid Mugaddam, a professor of linguistics, states that "as language constitutes an integral part of society and individuals' identity, people's attitudes towards it must have strong effects on its status within a given community" (Mugaddam, 2005:1). In this context, a hypothesis can be considered of whether attitudes on a certain language in Tunisian society can modify its policies. Investigating behaviors within society in general and educational institutions can give a clear output to policy makers, especially in improving linguistic competence in education.

3.1. Code-switching

Code switching (CS) is a linguistic phenomenon used in bilingual or multilingual societies. It is the act of alternating between two or more languages within the same conversation. CS is used worldwide. Researchers (Gibbons, 1987; Eastman, 1992; Milroy, and Muysken, 1995, and Poplack, 1997) have been studying CS, words, borrowing, and loan words and arguing whether they are the same concept in bilingual societies or they can be differentiated and not reflecting same linguistic behaviors. While this is not the issue to be discussed in this chapter, it can help in understanding linguistic choice in association with Tunisian Arabic (TA) and the embedded effect of French (F), specially on the daily communicative level. TA is a very

¹⁰ Parisian accent that usually women in Tunisian society use. It is more prestigious due to its Guttural R pronounced in the back of the vocal tract.

receptive dialect; it borrows words from three main languages: Arabic, French, and Berber. These can be viewed as the basis of TA, despite having many loan words from other languages like Turkish, Italian, Spanish etc.

In the context of CS within the Tunisian society, to compare the insights and the percentage of CS use, Lawson & Sachdev (2000) presented a detailed study that occurred in two different settings: universities and the streets. In the university setting, they used matched-guise research¹¹ to determine attitudes in a formal environment. Results showed that attitudes towards CS when used by male and female speakers were not positive or desirable compared to the other languages in use (modern standard Arabic, French, and English). However, another interesting conclusion was drawn from this technique: Tunisian Arabic rated higher when used by male speakers, whereas for female speakers, French was more favorable. This can further support the previous argument, viewing French as a more prestigious language and having a direct relation, as mentioned previously, with social status.

The second test was language diary research, defined by Pennington (1992) as a test where the researcher records speakers to notice their language choice over a given period. This test has been noticed to be more concrete than answering a survey that has general questions. The direct interactions with the participants made it easier to observe their language behaviors within different settings. The sampling was conducted on 28 Tunisian students of English during six days. The percentage of CS used between Tunisian Arabic and French reached up to 42%, unlike the first test that was more related to personal preferences. The analyzed data was divided into three variables to notice the language pattern: settings, topic, and interlocutor. Using “high” varieties (MSA, French, and English) reported a high rate within a public setting (in this case university, more specifically classroom) and no excessive use of CS and Tunisian Arabic, 36% and 23% respectively, whereas in private setting (home or with friends) both low varieties reported 46%, and 49%, which shows that CS functions as low variety in the Tunisian society as much as TA (Lawson & Sachdev, 2000:1352).

¹¹ Matched-guise technique (Lambert et al., 1960) used to generate participants attitudes towards languages or dialects after listening to different voices (guises) speaking different languages. Participants are usually not aware that the voice of person speaking is the same in all languages. That helps control variables such as voice quality.

The language diary test tracks language behaviors, which can be separated from language choice. Personal preferences can be more towards a certain language like English, yet the daily use of CS, as this study showed, concentrates more on TA and French. Results showed that CS is mostly used in non-formal situations with people whom one identifies. Using CS in this case in classrooms was only 10% versus English, which was 81%. That is normal since the test was on English students. However, the same participants recorded 77% of CS, with some 16% (TA) when talking with friends outside the class. In a more general setting, the same finding was registered. The percentage of CS in use with family and friends reached 42% among participants. This conclusion leads us back to the argument of French being part of the linguistic identity of Tunisians and not just a foreign language anymore.

The third test in this same study by Lawson & Sachdev (2000), suggests that outputs should be more generalized and in a freer setting where participants act more naturally. This test was conducted in the streets on random participants that did not belong to the same gender or age group. The street-field experimental research used in this test was based on Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) that was developed by Howard Giles (1987). This theory explains language use in a socio-psychological context, focusing on linguistic convergence and divergence. While convergence reflects social approval and identification, divergence is associated with disapproval and dis-identification. Although linguistic competence is related to communicative skills, some researchers (see Fishman, 1977; Giles, and Johnson, 1981; Sachdev and Bourhis, 1990b) argue that language is not a neutral mean of communication; it can be viewed as primary dimension of group identity, which in returns, controls intergroup boundaries.

This third test held a total of 711 individual Tunisian Arab pedestrians. Researchers asked for directions to the post office and recorded answers. Language recorded was either convergence (same language of the question asked) or divergence (not in the same language of the question). Results are summarized in the table below:

Language of questions asked:	Convergence %	Divergence %	CS %
TA	82	1	18
F	63	13	24

Figure 3: Convergence and Divergence rates

Source: Collected data from Lawson & Sachdev study (2000)

When conducting this test in Tunisian Arabic, the convergence rate was 82%, while when the questions were asked in French, the convergence rate scored 63% and that was considered normal since about 98% of Tunisians speak Tunisian Arabic. However, the divergence rate in the case of French can reflect the emphasis on the Arabic identity as well as the lack of linguistic competence. The tests in both Tunisia's Arabic and French showed a moderate CS rate.

At the beginning of this study, Lawson and Sachdev expected Tunisia to be a diglossic country where French and Arabic are used equally in everyday speech, whereas the findings showed that the Tunisian society is using CS not only between Tunisian Arabic and French but also MSA and English. The main findings of this study (Lawson & Sachdev, 2000:1355) suggest that when Tunisian Arabic with low percentage of CS is used more with Arabs (ingroup), it is more likely to show solidarity and pride of the Arabic. In some cases, where Code Switching to French was used, it was interpreted as a differentiation tactic since French reflects socio-educational competence and “covert prestige” (Trudgill, 1972), especially for women who tend to code-switch more than men. (Trudgill, 1972:188)

What interests us in these findings is the fact that attitudes are not reflected in actual linguistic behaviors. The first test showed us how language choice can be affected by what the authors call it “status-stressing environment” (Lawson & Sachdev, 2000:1357), that is more likely Tunisians in formal situations will choose to adopt only one language with little to no CS. Yet in an informal environment or spontaneous situation, like it was presented in second and third tests, linguistic behaviors and habits will come to the surface regardless of the personal

preference of the speaker. Such behaviors are primarily built by the educational system, which leads us back to how profound language policies can be.

3.2. Languages preferences in Formal Setting

Direct feedback can help us measure the effectiveness and influence of these policies. In a detailed study by Hichem Aouina (2013) on language policy in relation to globalization, questionnaires were conducted to measure Tunisian attitudes towards languages. The sampling included students and teachers, mainly followed by a second general questionnaire targeting public opinion. Within the educational setting, students and teachers were asked about their perspectives on the main three languages used in Tunisia: Arabic, French, and English. In his research, Aouina (2013) focused on English being the language of globalization in association with the sense of identity (Aouina, 2013:110).

Graddol (1997) argued that “the close relationship that has previously existed between languages, territory and cultural identity is being challenged by globalizing forces.” This phenomenon is to be taken into consideration when analyzing Aouina’s data and investigating the policies’ outcome (Graddol, 1997, as cited in Aouina, 2013:111)

While identity in Tunisia is still an issue, language does not often come up as a main contributor in the matter as much as ethnicity and regional association. It is often seen as part of our culture and educational system. When looking more into identity, these issues are not raised enough. Mainly these three languages, Arabic, French, and English, are imbedded into society in a way that most people are convinced that all three are part of Tunisian identity. However, the issue here is not taking them as they are now; if French was once a foreign language and now it is one of the national “assets” like named by the former President Ben Ali, the status of any other foreign language can further threaten the position of the existing languages (Rahal, 2021:172).

The surveys conducted by Aouina (2013) were after the two first presidents’ terms. Arabization movement supported by them can have a strong impact on the way teachers and especially students view languages. The following examples were among the response categories asked:

“Arabic is the most important language in Tunisia,”

“French is my preferred foreign language,”

“For Tunisians, English is more useful than French”.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze data and to differentiate between the age groups and their personal preferences. Aouina (2013) notes that the answers can be viewed as random choices of how the respondents think they use the language instead of how they actually use it (Aouina, 2013:127).

Figure 4 (see figure below) represents the results from Aouina’s survey (2013) that generated answers related to Arabic in relation to identity. Around 4% of participants do not consider Arabic language to be part of their identity. Reasons can differ when it comes to personal experiences, however the primary reason can be the question itself. Aouina did not specify which Arabic he associated with identity therefore it can be misleading as many Tunisians due to CS and word-borrowing do not consider the Tunisian Dialect to be 100% Arabic (Aouina, 2013:114-116).

Among the 4% of both teachers and students, some believe that French is an important component not just linguistically speaking but culturally as well. This leads us back to the conclusion of TA being more associated with Tunisian identity. The same idea can explain why 6.8% of students were uncertain; if we consider TA an independent language, it can be argued in future studies to be a diglossic one.

Although identity can be hard to measure or disclose in a society that has a rich and diverse ethnical background, as mentioned in the previous chapter, we can see the impact of language on Tunisians’ preferences. Looking at policies before the Arab Spring and because most of them did not notice drastic change, we can consider them successful in preserving the national identity (93.9% among teachers, 88.9% among students agreed).

		ID		Total
		Teachers	Students	
Arabic and Identity	Agree	93.9%	88.9%	90.7%
	Uncertain	2.0%	6.8%	5.2%
	Disagree	4%	4.2%	4.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 4: Arabic and Identity Relation

Source: (Aouina, 2013:113)

Another response category about the Arabic importance in Tunisia generated similar answers, although this time it was intentional to ask it in a more general way. Aouina (2013) wanted to measure the importance of Arabic for the two different generations without putting this language in a specific context, leaving the space for individual interpretations (see Figure 5). Results showed that 85.4 % agreed on the importance of Arabic language, which was not strange considering Arabic as the language of the religion, the main language of media and public institutions. These results can be viewed as the outcomes of the remaining legacy of the Arabization period led by Mohamed Mzali, the Minister of Education in 1970, in Bourguiba's term (Daoud, 2001: 25). Arabic is the first language introduced in primary schools; it is the medium of instruction of nine years of basic education (Aouina, 2013: 116)

		ID		Total
		Teachers	Students	
Arabic Importance in Tunisia	Agree	90.8%	82.6%	85.4%
	uncertain	3.1%	5.3%	4.5%
	Disagree	6.1%	12.1%	10.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 5: Arabic importance in Tunisia

Source: (Aouina, 2013:116)

Students were instructed by Arabic in basically all subjects including math, science, and physics, only to be switched to French in advanced levels (high school classes), which decreases the importance of Arabic language. This could be the perspective of participants who disagreed or were uncertain, since identifying with the Arabic language gave a high result. Findings showed that they considered the latter language to be associated more with religion, culture, and history. Whereas when it comes to the academic setting, both students and teachers (a total of 10% of the respondents) disagreed and did not find Arabic very important. Another factor that shows us the impact of language policies is the different attitudes of teachers and of students. This generational difference can signify the decrease of the importance of Arabic throughout the years due to these policies primarily and globalization secondarily.

In the same study, Aouina (2013:117-122) generated attitudes towards the two foreign languages, English and French by asking participants to compare between the two on the scale of effectiveness. Two statements were presented in the questionnaire: “French is more useful than English” and “English is more useful than French”.

		ID		Total
		Teachers	Students	
French Is More Useful Than English	Agree	79%	39.5%	53.1%
	Uncertain	5.0%	10.9%	8.9%
	Disagree	16.0%	49.5%	38%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 6: Results about French's usefulness compared to English.

Source: (Aouina, 2013:122)

		ID		Total
		Teachers	Students	
English is More Useful than French	Agree	48.5%	55%	52.8%
	Uncertain	18.2%	17.8%	17.9%
	Disagree	33.3%	27.2%	29.3%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 7: Results about English's usefulness compared to French.

Source: (Aouina, 2013:118)

It is noteworthy to mention that usefulness in this context did not specify a certain domain or subject; respondents got to define this term by what they see as most accurate.

Results represented by the two tables show how close the percentage of agreeing on both statements is. Almost half of the respondents (53.1% for F, 52.8% for E) view both languages as equally useful. Since the study was conducted in an academic setting, we can predict that usefulness was associated with academic life. For French, like mentioned above, being the language of science and technology in secondary school, it can be preferred over English for this specific reason. However, if we compare the status of both languages, we can notice that attitudes are changing if we take into consideration the history of French language within Tunisian society compared to the position of English, which is considered the newest language. This is viewed also through generational differences, once again. Teachers seem to agree that French is more important. Their percentage reached 79%, nearly double the percentage of students (39.5%).

The same difference was noticed in the second statement (“English is more important than French”) (see Figure 7) only this time students supported English over French. Although the results were pretty close, 33% of teachers disagreed, which leads us back to the previous conclusion. Students who see English as more important tend to associate it with their academic future. An interviewed teacher from the same study mentioned that their students are aware of the value of English, especially at advanced levels. Another French teacher mentioned that by the time students get introduced to English, they are already fed up with French, and since English is basically the language of media and popular movies and songs, teenagers show more interest in learning it (Aouina, 2013:182).

Drawing back to Lawson & Sachdev’s (2000) study on code-switching that showed the importance of French in daily interactions, we can argue the importance of a certain language is dependent on the age group, linguistic competence, and settings in which the language is needed. From a broader point of view, French can be accurately more useful or in use more than English, and since attitudes are changing towards both languages, it can be a strong determinate of future policies (Daoud, 2001: 22).

According to the findings of both studies, Aouina (2013) and Lawson & Sachdev’s (2000), the Tunisian society seems to be aware and differentiate between attitudes towards a certain language and its usefulness. Due to the history of French language, it was expected in the

study of Lawson and Sachdev (2000) to have negative attitudes, however in the study of Aouina, we can notice that French still has a strong presence even among the younger generation (27.2% disagreed on English being more useful). We cannot deny the linguistic change that society is noticing due to the introduction of English, however, that can be supported not only by language policies but also by external factors like social media mainly.

Aouina's study also measured language preferences in the same group, only this time the questions were about which language each one prefers. Although results can be similar regarding "useful" and "favourite", this test can be viewed as a subjective form of the previous one.

		ID		Total
		Teachers	Students	
English Is My Favourite Language	Agree	54.3%	61.8%	59.3%
	Uncertain	6.4%	8.4%	7.7%
	Disagree	39.4%	29.9%	33%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 8: English as a favorite language.

Source: (Aouina, 2013:128)

		ID		Total
		Teachers	Students	
French Is my Favourite Language	Agree	80.2%	69.1%	72.9%
	Uncertain	5.2%	2.1%	3.1%
	Disagree	14.6%	28.8%	24%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 9: French as a favorite language. Source: (Aouina, 2013:127)

Total results of both figures (8 and 9) showing the percentage of respondents agreeing on both statements is more than 100%; more than 59% picked English as their favorite language while more than 72% picked French. This means that some participants agreed on both statements at the same time and they prefer using both languages. When asking some students about the reasons behind their choices, Aouina (2013:127-130) reported that most of them had a hard time picking just one language while they enjoyed both. Those who disagreed, both teachers and students, said that their competences in the selected language were weak and that they could not favor a language they could not master. 39.4% of teachers disagreed on English being their favorite language, while 14.6% disagreed on French being their favorite language. These differences put emphasis on the older generation's attitude towards both languages and especially their attachment to French as being part of the linguistic background of Tunisians. On the other hand students showed closer results when disagreeing with both statements (28.8 % and 29.9%). This also reflects the closeness of attitudes towards both languages and the decline in the position of French throughout the years. Answers from students on their choices were similar to the reasons they see English is useful; they were interested in its importance in their future careers, along with helping them understand their favorite movies and songs (Aouina, 2013: 129)

Findings from this study can support the claim made by Battenburg (1997) in which he stated that “a gradual decline in use and preference of French is apparent in the Maghreb” (Battenburg, 1997: 282). This decline can either be the outcome of Arabization that weakened French's position, especially in the educational system, or the introduction of English as “a potential linguistic option” (Battenburg, 1997: 282).

Although the data collected overall shows a positive attitude towards English, especially considering it the language of science and technology, it also reflects the ungrounded policies towards those languages. French, on the other hand, got promoted at first as a tool used in science and technology and for being up to date with the world's fast-growing technology.

The percentages also show the generational gap regarding preferences. Although French have preserved its position against Arabic for years, it seems just a matter of years before policymakers give more attention to English in education and it may overcome the country's primary policies. Older generations seem to hold on French more. This refusal of change in spite of the acknowledgement of the dominance of English in today's science, reflects the other side of French being not only a colonizer's language but also a part of the post-colonial identity.

3.3. Language preferences on social media

Language choices can be measured also through social media usage as a fast and most common way to communicate. Social media, especially Facebook, can reflect in a way Tunisian society. All social classes are found on one common platform, so it is easier to have access to public opinion. Facebook was the number one platform used during the 2011 uprising, and it was an important tool that helped Tunisians broadcast what was happening to the rest of the world and without the main media censorship. Since that time, social media has become a space for Tunisians to practice freedom of speech. It is also the primary source of information and emotional support for most users.

Anna Kashina (2020), in a recent article, presented a case study on language preferences in social media in Tunisia. In this study, five open groups and chat rooms on Facebook were selected to determine language preferences in each one. The first group was Football fans' space where they shared the news on their national team along with opinions and debates after the football matches. The second group was under the name of "Real Tunisians". This group did not have any specific requirements regarding subjects discussed except for respecting public ethics. The third group was the official Facebook page of Attessia TV channel where news related to politics, economy, and social life were published, engaging

public opinion and debates about the political situation. The fourth group had a commercial bias; it is translated to English as “The First Forum of Professional Breeders of Ostriches in Tunisia”. And finally, the fifth group, “News of Secondary and Higher Education in Tunisia” was a professional space for education workers to discuss their activities and share teaching materials. The participants' number ranges from one thousand to six million, according to the popularity of the groups (Kashina, 2020: 112). The aim of this diversity while choosing the groups was to assess the use of language in different situations and most importantly, from Tunisians with different backgrounds and interests. The studied messages were classified into English, French, Arabizi (Tunisian Arabic written with Latin characters and digits, also known as Franco-Arabic), Tunisian dialect (TD) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Results showed that 60.5% of Tunisians using Facebook prefer Tunisian dialect, 21.1% prefer MSA, while French and English recorded 7% and 0.7% respectively. Arabizi, on the other hand, had 10.8%, which can be added to the percentage of participants preferring Tunisian dialect as it was same dialect but with different writing method (Kashina, 2020:112-114).

No matter what the group's interest and the subject of focus was, Tunisian dialect was in all cases chosen as primary dialect for domestic communication. Using Arabizi also gave a sense of freedom to the users because as a language it cannot be censored; the combination of characters and digits makes it impossible for automatic banning from Facebook's security and privacy terms. Using French was limited to certain categories, like in education or business-related groups. It reflects the social image and educational level of the users, since the addressed audience likely understands all assessed languages. Using English was just observed in common phrases like “Happy birthday”, “Good Luck” and “OK” according to Kashina (2020). These preferences do not directly reflect implemented language policies but they certainly represent some acquired linguistic practices.

3.4 Summary

The analysis of questionnaires seems to sum up society's linguistic choice. It is crucial for a multilingual society to stick with a specific language and identify with it. Given the long and influential history of both Arabic and French, neither of these two languages gained a primary position; instead, their product (Tunisian dialect) seems to be a better fit when associating it

to the Tunisian identity. While it is rather unrealistic to claim Tunisian dialect as an official language, the public perspective seems to differ in terms of language practices and preferences.

This chapter presents different studies and findings on the preferences of Tunisians. French is without doubt part of the Tunisian society while it was introduced in Tunisia as the colonizer's language. At first, these studies showed that attitudes towards it have changed. Even when it is not preferred in certain situations, using some words in everyday speech is remarkable. Therefore, personal preferences can be a general way to determine a certain attitude towards a language but it's not very accurate in determining the actual status.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. FINDINGS AND LIMITATIONS

4.1 Findings

Investigating the status of Arabic and French in Tunisia shifted the focus from official policies and their impact to the social aspect, focusing on the output of linguistic behavior. While policy makers, especially Bourguiba and Ben Ali, supported Arabization on paper, results of the different questionnaires showed the persistence of French language, which Bourdieu described as having higher “linguistic capital” (Bourdieu, 1982: 6).

Language policies in Tunisia have a major influence on the country's culture and social identity. The use of language policies has been instrumental in promoting a specific cultural and social identity within the country. For example, in the 1960s, the Arabization policy was implemented with the aim of promoting Arabic language and culture and dissolving the country's French colonial past. As a result, Arabic language and culture were used in all areas of life, such as education, media, and government. Similarly, the 1970s Francophonie policy was implemented to promote French language and culture and to maintain ties with the French colonial past. The policy also had a major impact on the cultural and social identity of the country, as it was used in education, media and in government. However, the failure of Arabization can be seen on two different levels, the first for not securing a more important position in the education system and the second for not being used in the daily life of Tunisians. Although the attempts to include Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) within the lifestyle of Tunisians were successful (Newspapers, Street signs, official documents... etc), it has in the way resulted in more use of Tunisian Arabic instead of MSA.

According to the findings stated in Chapter Three, including more than one language in education did change attitudes about both languages. This statement was suggested in the theory of language policy and planning by Spolsky (2017) presented in the first chapter. The changing decisions about Arabic and French in schools created a gap in academic performance and management of the language, along with adding issues to the identity matter. These decisions also confirmed the paradoxical perspectives of the leaders; while

Arabization policies were explicit, Francophonie policies were implicit and far more rooted. French, in this case, can confirm the concept of using language “as a resource” in favor of the state’s economy and political situation. While Bourguiba was clear about using it to achieve modernization as explained in Chapter Two, its actual use went beyond being the primary language of instruction. It is observed when analyzing attitudes towards both languages, that French gained a powerful social position throughout the years which only mirrors the hegemony of France's presence in Tunisia; nevertheless, France is no longer interested in the position of French in its ex-colonies, like mentioned in Daoud (2011:62). He mentions the emergence of English as a global language is slowly paving the way for policies related to strengthening English's positions in education, any other domains. France’s decision can either be viewed as finally letting go of the linguistic situation in Tunisia or as being confident about the already existing policies along with the long history of the language in Tunisia.

From a management perspective, leaders may succeed in establishing organized management (which consists of official decisions related to language status); however, findings show the clear gap between the latter type of management and discourse-based (simple) management which is created by individuals. Language Management Theory reveals the limitations of these decisions and confirms the attachment as well, to Tunisian Arabic. However, in the case of Tunisia, organized management does not depend on simple management as suggested by Nekvapil (2003); it is rather the opposite, according to the findings. Language management in this context did not fall under the full theoretical process. There was no follow-up to the outcomes of the official decisions, and most importantly, there was no drastic change in policies related to education since the same curriculum is still in use until today. This assessment confirms the failure of reforms in prioritizing Arabization. Also, it is noted that the issue of Arabic language diglossia is kept implicit. The studies conducted in relation to the linguistic issue agree on Tunisian Arabic being the most used in both formal and informal settings.

There is no measure of success of these policies except the linguistic abilities of Tunisians and their language choices, which on one hand acquired from schools but on the other hand

has several collective reasons that can affect linguistic behavior and shift attitudes towards used languages.

Identity on the other hand, cannot be restricted on language, backed up by the policies to strengthen the sense of association with the Arab roots. Ben Ali's policies proved that there is no direct relation between Arabization and Arabic-Islamic identity, especially in the education. The language and its history are important to the Tunisians; however, associating Modern standard Arabic with the Tunisian identity is not as relevant as it seemed. The study aimed at first to find a link between language policies and attitudes towards this language and while it may not be a direct equation, these policies shifted attitudes in favor of Tunisian Arabic.

Answering the main research question about the extent of the contribution of language policies to the Tunisian identity can be backed up by the investigation results in Chapter Three in relation to the theoretical framework. The indirect impact on attitudes of these policies was obvious in the formal setting and in more spontaneous settings (the streets and social media). Social Identity Theory may relate to this study on two levels. First, when analyzing preferences, although personal choices cannot be taken as a definite measure, it shows the collective attitude towards languages within the same generation. The majority of teachers in the study of Aouina preferred French over English while being aware of the importance of English in today's world. The scored percentage showed a sense of solidarity, especially when noticing the linguistic changes in favor of English. Their francophone linguistic background, along with the age factor made them more resistant to these changes than the younger generation (students). The two studied categories (students and teachers) scored a high percentage when associating Arabic with identity although in Aouina's statement used in the questionnaire (Arabic and identity). The challenge here was that the question did not mention whether it is Tunisian Arabic or MSA; therefore, results cannot be taken as a certain approval or refusal. Considering Tunisian Arabic, the product of MSA and French leaves no option but to categorize Tunisia's Arabic as an independent language. Although there is no official status for it until today, yet its strong dominance in every aspect of Tunisia's society cannot be ignored. This categorization can help in linking policies with

the sense of identity for Tunisians. Perspectives differ when determining which language is more associated with identity; however, this variety of Arabic seems to be the most relevant in this case. The choice of English for this generation (explained in Chapter Three) may seem obvious as an effect of globalization. Their choice, unlike the older generation, seems to be driven by the importance of English in the professional domain. No signs of identity-associated factors were spotted in people preferring English over French or Arabic. English is now being used everywhere, and its importance in worldwide communication, professional settings, and academic fields is becoming hard to avoid. Therefore, with the exposure to social media, the younger generation is now more aware of their professional and academic obligations. While it is most likely predicted that English will take over and outgrow French's position, this awareness and differentiation between the language's usefulness and language as a pillar of cultural identity, suggests that Arabic will not go through the same “thug war” with English.

Data showed that Arabic will most likely be continuously in use due to its religion-related position and being the top contributor in the formation of Tunisian Arabic. English is the international language paving its way into society through the younger generation who has been easily attracted to the language. However, the future of French is not very clear and its position is now threatened, especially that France does not have clear strategies to preserve it in Tunisia.

4.2 Limitations

While collecting data for this research, some limitations were spotted that may be resolved in future research in the same domain: Data on surveys and questionnaires used were mostly before the 2011 revolution; for this reason, the research focused on two main periods, Ben Ali and Bourguiba. The timing of such surveys can be a huge factor when trying to trace the effect of language policies. Most data were either before 2011 or shortly after, which can be a critical time to reach public opinion. Freedom of speech is still a new concept that needed practice at that time, so that was a factor to consider when including Aouina's data.

It is almost impossible to collect objective perspectives about languages as attitudes reflect personal preferences and choices on the one hand, while on the other hand, it is the only way

to determine and follow up reform policies, especially in education. This may affect, as mentioned in the previous factor, the accuracy of language use in Tunisian society.

The study did not include English policies as the main focus was on Arabization and Francophonie; however, available data collected seem to consider English in the same level of importance as the two main languages spoken in Tunisia.



CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was at first to measure the effectiveness of language policies and how they directly affect society's perspective on which language they identify with. Previous parts presented different studies of scholars who investigated the same issue of language policy in relation to attitudes towards languages. While attitudes and preferences cannot reflect actual daily use, it gave a clearer picture of the linguistic situation of Tunisian society. However, findings from various studies mentioned above show that identity issues are rather complicated and go beyond these policies. The results also showed generational gap regarding preferences, and although French preserved its position against Arabic for years, it seems just a matter of years before policymakers give more attention to English in education and it may overcome the country's primary policies. Older generations seem to hold onto French more. This refusal of change in spite of the acknowledgement of the dominance of English in today's science, reflects the other side of French being not only a colonizer's language but also a part of the post-colonial identity.

Code-switching(CS) and word borrowing created a common ground between Arabic and French, with Tunisia's Arabic being a receptive variety. Tunisians seem to accept and identify with it more than the two official languages. Tunisian Arabic is progressing throughout the years with the infusion of English words along with Arabic, French, and Berber. Despite its common use with a little difference in dialects per region, Tunisian Arabic still does not have an official status. However, it is obvious now that any future policies will not be possible to plan and execute without being influenced by public perceptions (Kashina, 2020).

A lack of clear strategies and effective follow-up is obviously affecting not only attitudes towards these languages but also future choices. The "Thug war" as Daoud (2001) described, transferred from Arabic-French war to French-English war. Efforts were made to secure the position of French, yet with globalization spreading worldwide, English is paving its own way and leaving policymakers no choice rather than designing a clear strategic plan for maximum use.

Language policy and planning in Tunisia involves decisions and actions to manage the country's linguistic diversity and promote multilingualism while maintaining social cohesion and effective communication. Several recommendations are made to shed light on possible solutions related to language policy that can be considered by policymakers.

Firstly, recognition and acknowledgement of linguistic diversity is important in the process of equality, which includes Arabic (both Modern Standard Arabic, and Tunisian Arabic), Berber languages such as Tamazight, and other minority languages.

Secondly although the constitution declares Standard Arabic as the official language of Tunisia and its contribution in Tunisia Arabic evolution, policy makers are not paying attention to the growing value of Tunisian Arabic. There should be a concerted effort to promote the use of Tunisian Arabic in everyday communication and informal settings. As the most widely spoken language among the population, encouraging its prevalence would enhance inclusivity and facilitate effective interaction among Tunisians.

Additionally, the learning and use of Tamazight and other minority languages should be actively encouraged. By doing so, Tunisia can celebrate its rich linguistic heritage and ensure that these languages continue to thrive as an integral part of the country's identity.

Education plays a pivotal role in this process. Integrating Tunisian Arabic and Tamazight into the education system as subjects of study would not only foster pride in linguistic heritage but also offer students an opportunity to connect with their cultural roots. Furthermore, providing quality education in both Arabic and Tunisian Arabic is crucial, recognizing the importance of bilingualism and ensuring that individuals are proficient in the languages necessary for effective communication and advancement.

Media and communication channels are powerful tools for reflecting linguistic diversity. Therefore, supporting the production of content in various languages, including TV shows, radio programs, and newspapers, is essential in representing the linguistic tapestry of the nation and promoting an inclusive environment.

Language rights and inclusion must be prioritized as well. Ensuring that speakers of different languages can access public services, justice, and information in their preferred language is

a cornerstone of a just and equitable society. This involves implementing policies that prevent linguistic discrimination and guarantee equal opportunities for all linguistic communities.

In tandem with these efforts, linguistic research and documentation are vital. Supporting research to document Tunisian Arabic, Berber languages, and other minority languages facilitates the creation of comprehensive language resources and dictionaries, preserving these languages for future generations. Establishing dedicated language institutes or centers can further contribute to the study and preservation of Tunisia's linguistic diversity.

Acknowledging the economic benefits of a multilingual society is essential for holistic development. Improved communication with international partners and tourists can enhance economic opportunities. Therefore, offering language training and support to professionals working in sectors where international interaction is essential should be considered.

To create a broader understanding of the importance of linguistic diversity, public awareness campaigns can be launched. These campaigns should emphasize the advantages of multilingualism and underscore the significance of preserving minority languages as integral components of Tunisia's cultural fabric.

The formulation of effective language policies necessitates collaboration and consultation with various stakeholders. Involving language communities, linguistic experts, educators, and representatives from different regions ensures that policies are well-informed, practical, and representative of the country's linguistic dynamics.

Finally, adopting a long-term perspective is crucial. Language policy and planning should be viewed as an ongoing process that requires adaptability and flexibility to meet the evolving linguistic needs and preferences of the population. By consistently evaluating and adjusting policies, Tunisia can ensure the continued celebration and sustenance of its linguistic diversity.

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