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Exploring Language Attrition in Algeria: The Erosion of Modern Standard Arabic

Case Study: Master 2 Students at English Department of Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for Master's Degree in Linguistics

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بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَالْحَمْدُ للهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِين وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ خَاتِمِ الْمُرْسَلِين

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يُحِبُّ إِذَا عَمِلَ أَحَدُكُمْ عَمَلاً أَنْ يُتْقِنَهُ»

حديث نبوي شريف

«Allah loves those who try to do their work in a perfect manner. »

Prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him.

Dedications

This modest work is dedicated to:

The sun, my mom.

The moon, my father.

My role model, my sister Imane and her sweet family.

My beloved siblings, Ikram and Sid Ahmed.

The apple of my eye, my little niece, Khadidja.

My dear cousin, Fatma.

My precious friends, Aicha, Belkis, Hadjer, and Nadjah.

and specially

To my Person H.K

I am extremely grateful for your unconditional love and support.

Sarah CHACHOUA.

Dedications

In memory of the souls that left with their smiles and left but a few,

…

To those who sink and beyond the seven skies they rise, I salute you,

…

To the loyal ones, to the patient ones, to the ones who persist until time ends,

…

To my tender Mum, to my gracious Dad, to my beloved family, and my dearest friends.

To my sweet Noor.

To Rania and Souleyman.

Khadidja CHAMI.

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Abstract

The present dual-focused study is drawn upon two main purposes. First, it investigates whether the phenomenon of second language attrition (L2 attrition) applies to the case of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) after Educated Arabs finish their general instruction. Second, it questions whether the use of the intermediate level of Arabic, labeled as 'Educated Spoken Arabic' (ESA), is a direct factor or an outcome of MSA attrition. In this respect, the study takes Educated Algerians as a sample; particularly, Master 2 students at the English department of Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. The investigation was carried out based on the relevant literature and data obtained through both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The findings revealed that the subjects' MSA skills did get negatively affected after the end of their general instruction. This is mainly due to getting more immersed in learning English, lacking frequent use of MSA, and having a more positive attitude and motivation (ATM) towards foreign languages. Furthermore, the subjects' use of ESA was found as a result of MSA attrition. In conclusion, the research reached that MSA does endure attrition as a second language in the verbal repertoire of Educated Algerians. Additionally, it outlines a set of recommendations and implications to help strengthen the status of MSA on both the individuals' and the global levels.

Key Words: Attitude and Motivation, Educated Algerians, Educated Spoken Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, Second Language Attrition

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List of Initialisms and Acronyms

ADA: Algerian Dialectal Arabic.

ANS: Arab Native Speakers.

ATM: Attitude and Motivation.

CA: Classical Arabic.

Ca: Colloquial Arabic.

CLI: Cross-Linguistic Influence.

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication.

DA: Dialectal Arabic.

Eng: English.

ESA: Educated Spoken Arabic.

FL: Foreign Language(s).

FSA: Formal Spoken Arabic.

HL: High Variety.

IELTS: International English Language Testing System.

L1: First language.

L1A: First Language Attrition.

L2: Second Language.

L2A: Second Language Attrition.

LV: Low Variety.

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic.

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language.

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Key to Phonemic Transcription

- **Arabic Language Consonants in Letters and Symbols.**

Letter	Name	Symbol
ا	ʔalif	/a/
ء	hamza	/ʔ/
ب	ba:ʔ	/b/
ت	ta:ʔ	/t/
ث	θa:ʔ	/θ/
ج	ǰi:m	/ǰ/
ح	ħa:ʔ	/ħ/
خ	xxaʔ	/x/
د	da:l	/d/
ذ	ða:l	/ð/
ر	ra:ʔ	/r/
ز	za:y	/z/
س	si:n	/s/
ش	ʃi:n	/ʃ/
ص	ṣa:d	/ṣ/
ض	ḍa:d	/ḍ/
ط	ṭa:ʔ	/ṭ/
ظ	ẓaaʔ	/ẓ/
ع	ʕayn	/ʕ/
غ	ɣayn	/ɣ/
ف	fa:ʔ	/f/

ق	qa:f	/q/
ك	ka:f	/k/
ل	la:m	/l/
م	miim	/m/
ن	nu:n	/n/
ه	haaʔ	/h/
و	waaw	w/
ي	yaaʔ	/y/
پ	/	/p/
ڤ	/	/g/

- **Arabic Language vowels in Letters and Symbols.**

Arabic Vowels	Vowel Sound in English
أ	/a/
آ	/a:/ or /æ/
إ	/i/
إي	/i:/
أُ	/u/
أُو	/u:/
يُّ	/ʊ/
يو	/ʊ:/

General Introduction

Subject:

The Reality of Language Attrition in Algeria:
The Erosion of Modern Standard Arabic

General Introduction

I.   Contextualizing the Study

The need to learning and embracing the Arabic language has never been justified as it is today. At present, Arabic is ranked as the fifth most spoken language in the world, with over 420 million speakers. It is the official language in the currently prospering Middle East and North Africa, and it is widely recognized for being one of the richest and most ancient languages. For possessing these features and more, Arabic today is attracting new learners from all around the globe. Subsequently, programs of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) have witnessed an increasing growth that cannot be overlooked. Nevertheless, due to the versatility Arabic shows at the level of its numerous dialects, TAFL programs, teachers, and learners face many obstacles to having efficient results and applications.

Studies and investigations ran about Arabic have suggested many classifications to its wide range of varieties. The most comprehensive classification would probably be that Arabic varieties, today, fall under three main broad ones: Classical, Modern, and Colloquial.

- **Classical Arabic (CA):** it was known as the standard set of the language for years. It was used between the 7th and the 9th centuries in the early Islamic literature, and it usually represents the fixed language of the Qur'an.

- **Modern Standard Arabic (MSA):**It was derived from Classical Arabic in the late 19ᵗʰ century for the following aims:

  a) Guarding the Arabic language integrity and preserve it from foreign impacts;

  b) Adjusting the language to the modern requirements (expressing modern political ideas and technological terms);

  c) Achieving unity of the Arab world under one language as it is the official language in all Arab world countries.

- ❖ **Colloquial/ Dialectal Arabic (Ca/ DA):** It is the Arabs mother tongue. It is massively varied throughout the whole Arabic dialect continuum where each country has its distinct dialects that differ from one geographical region to another.

Of all the Arabic varieties that can be taught and learnt, TAFL programs are mainly concerned with teaching the new standard set of this language, 'Modern Standard Arabic' (MSA). In the Arab world, MSA is labeled as 'the literary Arabic'. It is the high variety that Arab people use in religious contexts and for writing governmental institutions, official documents, books, and newspapers. Additionally, it is found in all different kinds of media (printed, audio, and audio-visual), and it is the only Arabic variety taught in schools; it is used for formal instruction in education. In parallel, for daily oral communication, Arabs use the low variety, Dialectal Arabic. This diaglossic situation creates a serious problem in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (Poramdi, 2016, p. 26). Learners of Arabic as a foreign language find it difficult to decipher all the Arabic's colloquial varieties because their knowledge is mainly restricted to MSA.

In the attempt to remedy this issue, it has been proposed that TAFL programs should switch to teaching Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA), a recent concept that refers to the variety spoken by the educated sample of Arabs. Pormadi (2016) argued that this variety intersects with written Arabic,

educated colloquial, and cuts across regional vernacular boundaries. Its features are closest to both MSA *(Fus'ha)* and DA *(Ammiyya)*. Furthermore, it can be used for reading and understanding formal literary Arabic, as well for everyday casual conversation (p. 26). Recently, programs teaching ESA are spreading in different universities: Georgetown University, the University of Michigan, and Brigham Young University. Moreover, books teaching spoken Arabic (ESA) rather than the literary one (MSA) are being published. For instance, the book entitled 'Formal Spoken Arabic' (FSA/ESA) is now in its second edition.

In light of all that is mentioned above, this study attempts to take a closer look at what really happens to MSA after educated Arabs (Algerians in this case) stop receiving formal instruction. Added to that, it investigates how knowledgeable is the educated sample about their use of ESA and that it is taking over MSA.

II. Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

MSA was mainly developed to unify Arabs under one language. It is an autonomous language that they turned-to to guarantee mutual intelligibility when their different dialects fail. Furthermore, it is a sign of well education, formality, and prestige. However, it has been struggling to maintain its status in the Arab world for a long time now.

When the Western world acknowledged the significance of Arabic and started to develop programs teaching its standard form, MSA, Arabs failed to maintain its use. They debased it to this more facilitated form known as ESA.

Another intriguing thing about MSA is that since it is a formally instructed language, some recent studies suggested that it is registered in the verbal repertoires of Arab Native Speakers (ANS) as a second language (L2). Said differently, in a matter of cognition, ANS register their dialects as their

mother tongues and respond to the standard set of the language as other speakers respond to a second language, as revealed in the study of "What is Unique in the Brain of an Arabic Speaker?"

In this respect, by taking the Algerian environment as a focus, this study attempts to shed light on the educated sample of Algerians and investigate what exactly happens to their MSA skills after the end of their formal/general instruction. Given that MSA is an instructed language in the Algerian society and that Arabs respond to it like a second one not as a first, this enquiry will explore whether Educated Algerians endure or experience attrition of MSA as a second language. It made more sense that we investigate the erosion of MSA following the methods of second language attrition which is defined by de Bot and Weltens (1993, p. 43) as when a decline of a second language skills occur whenever learners use this language to an insufficient degree, or, as suggested by Olshtain (1989, p. 151) the second language use is limited due to certain environmental changes where a specific language is becoming dominant.

Taking all these points into consideration, the study at hand would extend and involve three dimensions:

1- Investigating the phenomenon of second language attrition at the level of MSA.

2- Explore whether learning a foreign language contributes to Algerians' losing their MSA skills.

3- Examine Algerians' use of ESA and whether it can be taken as a cause or a consequence for the erosion of MSA.

Our educated sample population will consist of Master Two (M2) students of English language at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

In this regard, the following research has three main concerns:

a) **Psycholinguistic concern:**

   1- Do Educated Algerians experience erosion at the level of MSA skills after the end of their general instruction?

b) **Sociolinguistic concern:**

   2- What extra linguistic factors influence or cause attrition at the level of MSA in Educated Algerians' verbal repertoires? Can they be controlled?

c) **Linguistic concern:**

   3- Does learning foreign languages like English affect the skills of Educated Algerians in MSA?

   4- Is the use of an intermediate level of Arabic (ESA) a sign of MSA attrition or one of its causes?

III. Hypotheses

The fact that Educated Algerians are switching from MSA to use their own variety of ESA (Kerma, 2018, p.134) and getting more involved in learning foreign languages, make it more plausible that MSA is in danger of attrition.

Drawn upon the inquiries of this research, we have formulated the following set of hypotheses:

   1- After the end of their formal instruction, Educated Algerians start to lose their MSA skills due to the lack of its use in everyday life.

2- Attitude and motivation, language contact, and use are the usual suspects in MSA attrition. Yes, they can be controlled.

3- When Educated Algerians get involved in learning a foreign language, their skills in MSA get negatively affected.

4- The use of ESA by Educated Algerians can be taken as both a cause and a result of MSA attrition.

IV. Motive behind the Study

Despite going for the English language as a main specialty at university, we still consider the Arabic language as a crucial part of our cultural, Arabic, and Islamic identity. After getting involved in learning English, we could not help but notice that our skills in using MSA are decaying. The progress we made in developing English language skills was accompanied by an acknowledged decrease – at least to us – in MSA skills; it became hard to be productive when using it, especially for oral communication. We noticed that we mix MSA with our dialect and even use English terminology every here and there, which made us question whether there is a relationship between the two linguistic phenomena. In other words, we wonder if learning a foreign language (English in this case) has to do with this noticeable linguistic loss at the level of MSA, and whether it is a common experience among others, that is from one angle. From another, after reading about the intermediate level of Arabic that educated people use all over the Arab world (ESA), we thought of why Arabs are leaving MSA which is the standard form that unites them, make them understand each other, and guard their identity and are switching to this debased variety known as formal/educated spoken Arabic. So we wonder whether ESA a result and a proof that MSA is enduring attrition, or is it new Arabic varietythat now contributes to the attrition of MSA because Arabs find its use easier?

V. Aims and Objectives of the Study

The current study is built upon and directed to serve specific aims and objectives, which are as follows:

1- Clarifying the fuzziness of the term Arabic in the Algerian context by making people – students in particular – aware of all Arabic varieties in Algeria.

2- Describing the hierarchy of Arabic language (CA $\rightarrow$ MSA $\rightarrow$ ESA $\rightarrow$ DA) from a different angle, the attrition angle.

3- Spotting the light on the linguistic phenomenon threatening the existence of MSA.

4- Drawing a clear vision of how language contact influences the linguistic choice and linguistic performance of people.

5- Investigating the attrition of MSA and its rate to find ways to reverse it and make MSA easily accessed and used.

6-   Contributing to the already existing knowledge of language attrition field by investigating MSA attrition.

7-   Paving the way for further research in MSA attrition, its relationship with ESA, and which one is more efficient for TAFL programs.

V. Significance of the Study

Steve Kaufmann, well-known internet polyglot, said that the more languages we learn, the more difficult it can be to devote enough attention to these languages to maintain them (2018, para. 1). Over the last three decades, a significant number of researches have shed light on the gradual, non-pathological decline of a language, its portions, or some of its skills in individuals over time, making what is known today as the field of language attrition. This field was mainly concerned with the manifestation of attrition at the level of L1 in Immigrants. However, recently, this Study area has widened up its interest in the same phenomenon (language attrition) to include languages that are learned as second or as foreign ones (Jessner and Megens, n.d., para. 1).

Given the increasing need and the significance of Arabic language in the meantime, this study – as it takes the attrition of MSA as the central focus – makes a valuable contribution to the already existing literature by highlighting these points:

1- Algeria's diverse sociolinguistic situation and how it provides a perfect platform for investigating the conflict, and tension between the coexisting languages and varieties.
2- The importance of MSA and the extent of its use in the shades of both diglossia and code versatility in Algeria.
3- How the contact of languages in Algeria has a remarkable impact on Algerian's identity and the methods in which they use languages.

Overall, studying the attrition of MSA as a second language becomes all more significant, for it tackles its endangered existence from another angle, the attrition angle. Furthermore, it could help provide better ways for the design of MSA curricula and instruction.

VII. Research Methodology

❖ Sample Population:

- The sample chosen for the fulfilment of this study is M2 students at the department of English Language at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. Only forty (40) M2 students were randomly selected (Probability sampling) from both Linguistics and Didactics specialties.

- The objective behind choosing this sample at this particular level of study is based on the fact that they have finished their formal instruction in MSA four years ago (since they got their Baccalaureate degree and moved to university), at least. In other words, the direct contact they used to have with MSA either got less or completely absent. This means that their Knowledge of MSA is revaluated after four years (at least) from the end of their formal/ general instruction (primary to secondary school).

❖ Data Collection Methods and Procedures:

For investigating the validity of our hypotheses set, the design of this enquiry is entirely empirical and follows experimental processes. In this regard, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used for data gathering.

- **The quantitative method** is based on online questionnaire, which encompasses a set of both open and closed-ended questions. The main purpose of choosing this tool for data collection is:

  1- Examine the impact of the variables we set on the sample;

  2- Evaluate the answers, and discuss the findings of each variable from the results we gain.

The used questionnaire tries to tackle different elements (linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic) that might be included in the erosion process of MSA or might impact it. For

example, it targets the participants' attitude and motivation towards MSA and English, their

contact with both languages, and their use.

- **The qualitative method** is achieved through an online interview. This tool aims at testing

  participants speaking skills of MSA by making them answer a cluster of questions using the

  language. Then the speech data will be used to analyze and examine their use of MSA and ESA.

VIII. Data Analysis Procedures

After the end of the data collection process, the following phase is analyzing the data using
'Excel 2016 software' in order to extract the exact percentages and statistics need for the interpretation
and discussion of the findings.

IX. Organization of the Work

The research at hand is divided into three chapters, where each one meets the standards of the
previously determined objectives.

- **Chapter one:** this chapter is merely theoretical incorporating a comprehensive overview of the

  existing literature about second language attrition phenomenon and the group of variables included

  in the study. It is divided into three sections:

  a) **Section one:** includes an introduction to the whole area of language attrition, then it

     sheds light on the second language attrition subfield with some of the main distinctions

     and related terminology.

  b) **Section two:** deals with the customary variables that influence the attrition of an L2, and

     points out the linguistic skills and elements subjected to erosion.

  c) **Section three:** displays a theoretical background about L2 attrition by explaining its

     main theories and some studies that support or reject them.

- **Chapter two:** is more about our target language and context. It is concerned with a sociolinguistic perspective to MSA in the Algerian context. This chapter is, in turn, branched into three sections:

  a) **Section one:** it presents some of the critical points in the history of Arabic in Algeria by pointing out the diversity of the Algerian speech and the contact of MSA with other varieties.

  b) **Section two:** it is concerned with the Arabization process in Algeria, its ideologies, the people's attitudes towards it, in addition to the impact of English and globalization on its efficiency. Also, this section will shed light on the emergence of ESA in Algeria and how educated people are switching to using it instead of MSA.

  c) **Section three:** it is devoted to present some points that postulate the decline of MSA, and how Arabs perceive it as a second language rather than a first one.

- **Chapter three:** this chapter is devoted for the practical side of the study, which sectioned into two:

  a) **Section one:** is devoted for the description of the methodology used for the fulfilment of this study.

  b) **Section two:** it includes the data collection process, its findings, and the discussion of the results.

  c) **Section two:** it reveals the studies limitations, its implications, in addition to some suggestions and recommendations for further studies.

Chapter One

Review of the Related Literature

"I believe in the fundamental interconnectedness of all things."

Douglas Adams, Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency

1.1.   Introduction

The versatility of the world's languages is meant for people to express the richness of their being. When a certain language is lost, its people's sense of identity and belonging, that uproots to the entire community, gets undermined. They might get subsumed by another dominant language and culture, but they would lose their heritage along the way. The following chapter is devoted to shedding light on a recently known phenomenon that threatens the existence of languages at both individuals' and societal levels, language attrition. It will provide a comprehensive overview of attrition, its development and main distinctions. Moreover, it will delve into second language attrition, which is the primary focus of this study, and introduce the main aspects related to it, including its factors, areas of influence, and prominent theories.

Section One: Introducing Second Language Attrition.

1.1.1. Introduction to Language Attrition

Lyle Campbell, director of the university's center for American Indian languages, stated that "The wisdom of humanity is coded in language. Once a language dies, the knowledge dies with it" (as cited in Wallace, 2009, para. 7).

Approximately, it is estimated by the association of **Ethnologue** that there are around 7.111 languages spoken in the world, today. This number is constantly in flux because new updates appear on a daily basis about the world's living languages. Furthermore, these languages, themselves, are in flux. They are dynamically living and spoken inside speech communities that are shaped by our rapidly changing and globalized world.

- **Map 1.1.1. The Current Living Languages in the World.**

(cited in https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/how-many-languages?fbclid=IwAR31x2G1DyKRCiHUhOVaM9M6puS8OM276T_nLo7QIaTiio3rGQlo51fXl1M.)

This fact results in a really fragile time for languages where 40% of languages are labeled as endangered ones, with a ratio of less than 1.000 speakers left. So, at the meantime, only 23 languagesare accounted for more than half of the world's population ("How Many Languages?," para. 1).

The following figure displays the ratio of the endangered languages besides the stable and institutional languages:
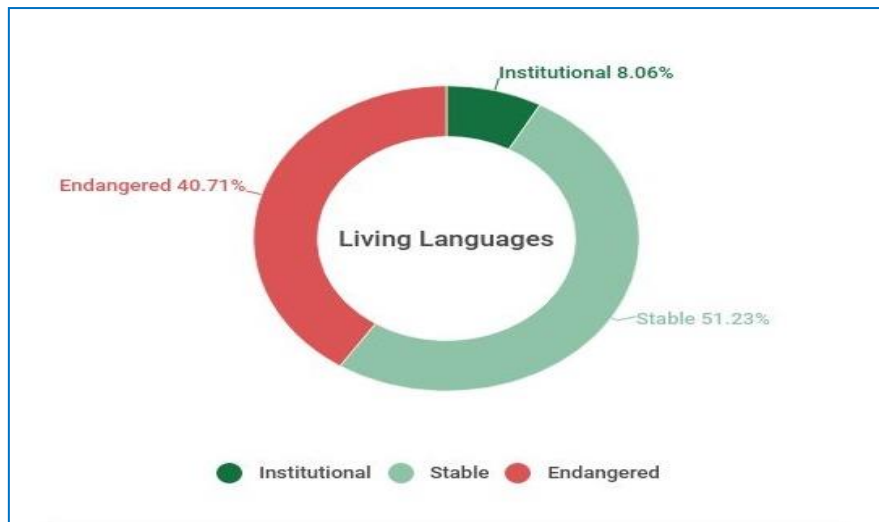
- **Figure 1.1.1. Endangered Languages vs. Stable and Institutional languages.**

(**cited in** https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/how-many-languages-endangered?fbclid=IwAR26TgXU4gww5T5EFqRzLjFA2txvpzcEOLdzmou54_SbFpXunt7OeFlaT4I

The figure below demonstrates the twenty most spoken languages in the world and the number of their speakers, currently.
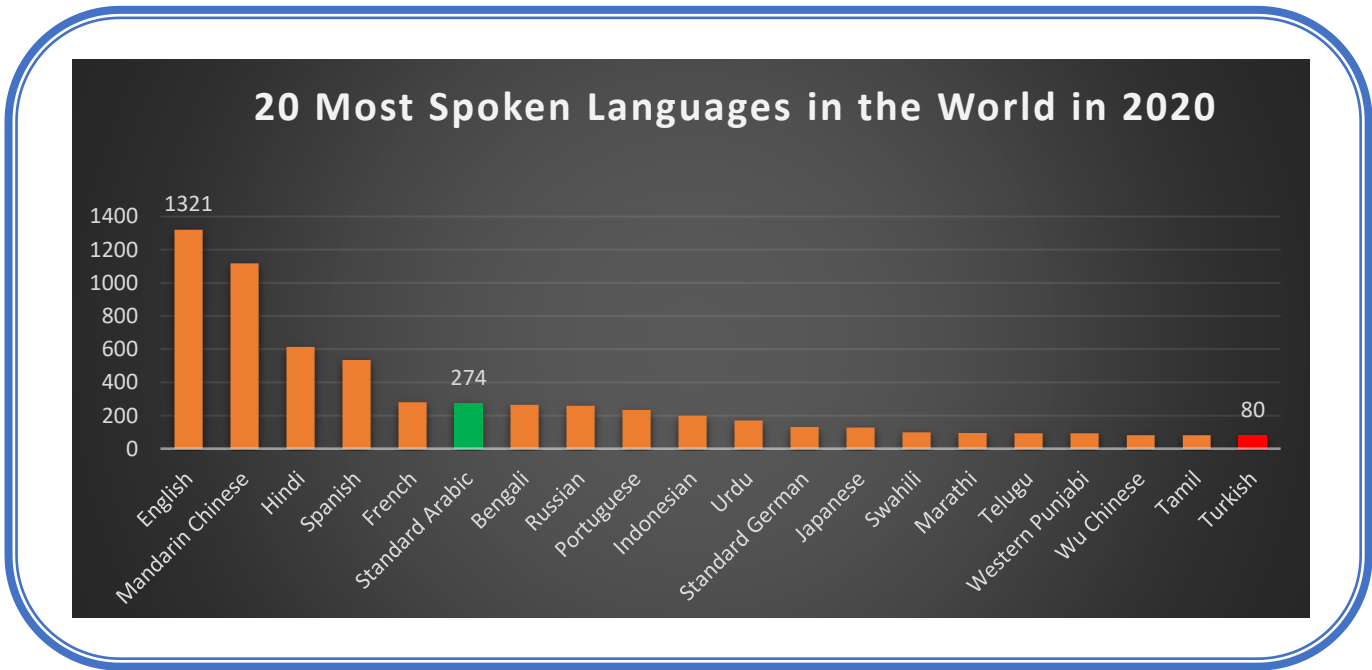
- **Figure 1.1.2.The 20 Most Spoken Languages in the World.**
(Cited in: ethnologue.com)

This only comes to reinforce the widely spread agreement on that the phenomenon of language loss is increasing at an unprecedented rate. Many of the recent studies have estimated that at least 50% of the world's languages are losing their vitality and that by the end of this century, 90% of the world's languages will completely vanish and get replaced by more used national or global languages (Grenoble, 2006, p. 137).

- **Map 1.1.2. The Most Endangered Languages in the World.**
(by Ethnologue by SIL International)

(cited in https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/how-many-languages-endangered?fbclid=IwAR1pe3K9rjq6Cq8rFdMry7qaQOdCFSPyFy3B_5mOygie_vHWlj68oOMNZzM).

This situation is generally defined and related to a set of intersected concepts: language endangerment, language death, and language attrition which are all different sides and angles to the same box, language loss

First, Language endangerment is defined by Grenoble (2016), as a term broadly used for languages which are threatened with total and complete loss, a language is considered lost when it has no speakers (p. 137). Second, Sarah G Thomason defined language death in her book "Language Contact" as when a language use is ceased for any purposes of regular spoken communication within a speech community (2001, p. 224). The final concept that is strongly related to and involved within the scope of language loss is the one of 'language attrition'. The latter, generally refers to the process by which individuals' knowledge of a previously acquired language is gradually lost or decreased.

As a final note about these concepts, it is worth mentioning that both language death and language attrition are used to refer to language endangerment, but 'death' is often avoided out of being considerate to the people whose language has vanished.

Grenoble (2006) concludes:

> *Language endangerment is sometimes called language attrition or language death, but 'death' is avoided out of sensitivity to the population whose language has been lost. Language attrition and moribundity – when children cease learning a language – are now taking place with exceptionally rapid speed. Hundreds of languages are currently endangered and there are few parts of the world where some form of language decline is not occurring. While language attrition is not in and of itself a new phenomenon, the rate of decline in linguistic diversity appears to be unique to this era.* (p. 137)

So, language attrition, language endangerment, and language death are all deemed to be hyponyms of the umbrella term 'language loss', which denotes the deterioration of linguistic skills in both societies and individuals. However, language attrition is depicted as a highly frequent phenomenon that leads to language loss/death, as Thomason (2001) claimed: "As far as we can tell

from the still small number of detailed case studies, this category is by far the most common linguistic route to language death, and it is the one that Sasse's model envisions." (p. 227). This fact paved the way for the attrition of languages to emerge and stand as an independent field of study and to have its fair share of researches and recorded data.

The pioneering stone to study language attrition – or loss was put in 1980 when the first conference about the matter was held at the University of Pennsylvania under the title "The Loss of Language Skills". This conference presented language attrition as a worthwhile broad topic encompassing many cases and caused by numerous factors. Also, it was stressed that the phenomenon of attrition that everyone seemed to be aware of in a way but very few researchers had actually looked into, requires empirical and systematic investigation methods. Since then, an acknowledged body of research was carried out in the field, and it has witnessed several developments and considerable contributions. The earliest and most acknowledged works in attrition research are without a doubt, first, the proceedings of the aforementioned 1980 conference in Philadelphia (Lambert &Freed, 1982) was a benchmark publication that did not lose none of its importance or relevance to the current research even after two decades later. Second, came the proceedings of an international conference in the Netherlands in 1986 (Weltens, Debot& Vans Els, 1986). With more publications and contributions, over time, as a field of study, language attrition found its way through to become a vibrant field of applied linguistics.

Most language attrition research was approached by scientists from different subfields (theoretical linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and cognitive psychology). Their main focus was on probing the attrition phenomenon in its manifold manifestations, while searching for what possible general criteria affect and control the involved processes. What is meant by manifold manifestations is the wide and the versatile situational settings where attrition may take place.

Some of these situations that might be encountered are:

a) People who happen to lose their native languages (L1) as they immigrate and get more involved in acquiring a second language (L2);

b) Foreign second language learners who start to lose their foreign language skills as they stop receiving formal instruction;

c) People whose dialect gradually shifts towards a more standard set of the language.

Weltens and Cohen (1989) made it clear that it is never implied that these situations – and others that one many come across – are identical. Instead, approaching these problems jointly and gathering them under a broad definition has some justification and they put forth:

> *One common objective is the identification of factors influencing the attrition process, such as psychological factors (e.g., general characteristics of memory; intelligence), socio-psychological factors (e.g., attitudes and motivation), and linguistic factors (e.g., the relationship or distance between the language systems involved).* (p. 128)

Although language attrition was primarily accounted as a matter of language acquisition and bilingualism, it has also been regarded as a sub-branch of language contact, language change, and language death. This categorization is reflected in the early collections on the topic that dealt with studies of both attrition settings and intergenerational change in endangered/minority languages or language contact situations as a general concern. Thomason (2001) argued that "[…] attrition is of course contact-induced change: any given change in attrition would be less likely to happen outside a particular contact situation." (p. 228)

What is meant by contact-induced change is any type of linguistic change that is less likely to happen outside a particular contact situation and is due to language contact in one way or another. In the case of language attrition, Thomason infers that this phenomenon is the kind of linguistic change that wouldn't occur if it was not for a contact situation that makes speakers shift away from particular languages (L1, L2, or FL) to another dominant language (language shift). Furthermore, the changes happening to a certain language out of attrition are not resulted from direct or indirect influence from the dominant language; they do not make the receiving language similar to the dominant source-language, and they are, subsequently, not interference features. Accordingly, language attrition as a contact-induced change does not happen outside a language shift situation where speakers shift from their soon-to-be a declined language or, in the worst-case scenario, a lost language to a more dominant one. So, the relationship existing between language attrition and language shift is an inevitable one.

Park (2018) states:

> *[…] language attrition was regarded as part of the long established sociolinguistic practice of research on language contact, language shift, and language death. Language shift involves a gradual decline in the use of and competence in a language over generations, which in the most extreme cases can result in language death within a community. The broader traditional scope of language attrition in earlier literature is reflected by the fact that collections on the topic of language attrition published before the 1980s included studies pertaining primarily to intergenerational change (change between generations) in minority languages, along with studies of aphasia.* (p. 2)

In its simplest definition, traditionally, language attrition study is defined as language 'loss' in bilingual individuals (Schmid and Kopke, n.d., para. 1). Schmid stated in her book "Language Attrition" that this phenomenon takes place in a setting where a language is only used rarely. It refers to the total or partial forgetting of that language by healthy speakers (2011, p. 3-4). Furthermore, she argued that attrition is a diverse process which may affect virtually any part of the language (p. 17).

In other words, Seliger defines language attrition as a permanent or temporary loss of language ability which can affect a speakers' performance or it can result in his inability to make grammatical judgments that are consistent with those of native monolingual speakers. These speakers are of the same age and at the same stage of langue development. (as cited in Franceschina, n.d., para. 1). This definition involves and captures other variables that might be involved in the attrition process which are: the time (permanent/ temporary), the age of speakers, and their attained proficiency (the stage of language development).

All provided definitions of attrition agree on one fact: that it is the gradual loss or reduction of a speaker's skills and linguistic knowledge of a first or a second language or a portion of that language. Nevertheless, the definition that captures the meaning of the term 'attrition' as it is currently used in the field is the one of Kopke and Schmid. They stated that attrition is: "the non-pathological decrease in proficiency in a language that had previously been acquired by an individual" (as cited in Park, 2018, para.1). The use of the expression "non-pathological" denotes the fact that the proficiency decrease is not an illness result nor of a brain damage or deterioration, instead it is resulted from a change in the speaker's contact with the language(s) in question. This definition also makes it clear that the phenomenon of attrition is an individual's matter, rather than a matter of speech communities or groups.

The following figure summarizes the terminology used in reference to language loss:

Language loss:

By communities:
- **Language shift.**
- **Language death.**

By individuals:
- **Pathological: aphasia.**
  - **In healthy speakers: language attrition.**

- **Figure 1.1.3. The Terminology of Language Loss.**

  (cited in Schmid, 2011, p. 3)
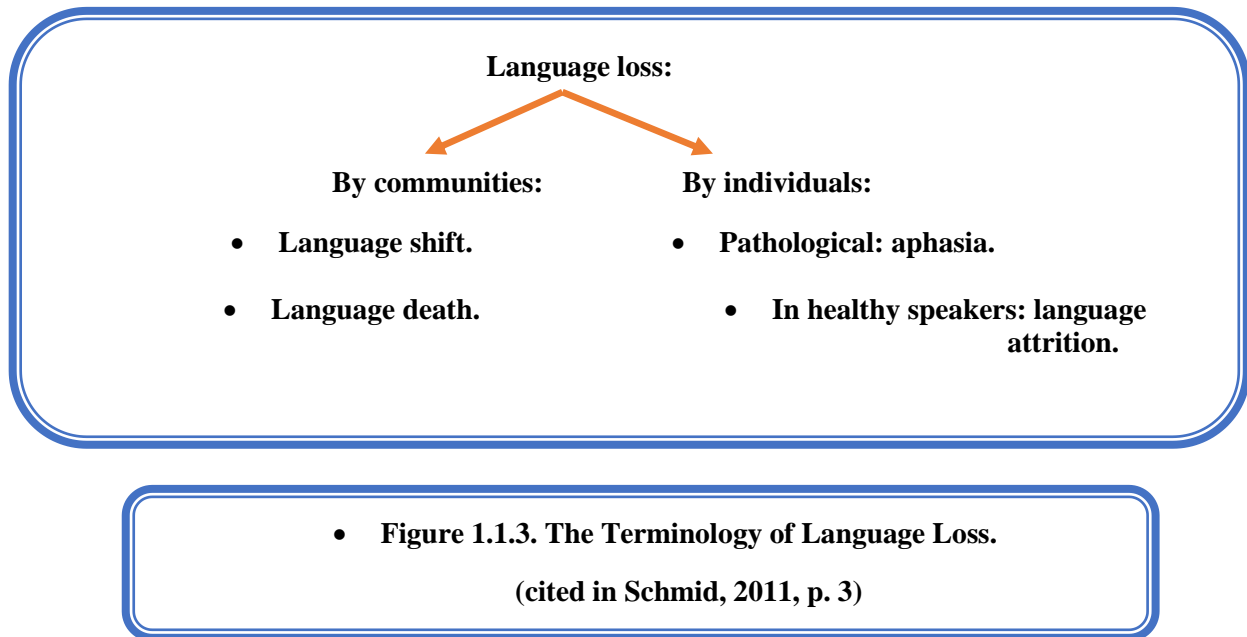
However, other researchers may contend and say that attrition happens on both the individuals' and the societal level, as illustrated from Freed's definition in her introductory article to "Lambert & Freed (1982)".She stated: "Broadly defined, language attrition may refer to the loss of any language or any portion of a language by an individual or a speech community." (as cited in Weltens, 1989. p.1)

The topic of language attrition, which is built upon the question of whether an individual can really forget an L1 or L2 once learned, and how and why this loss might be continuous, is an intriguing one. Some even argue that most people would inherently call themselves or defines themselves as 'attriters' – "I took French for four years in school, but I've forgotten it all". With all of that, questions about the nature of memory's mechanisms and the possibility of reactivating and retaining a forgotten language were put on the table. These questions are said to be the ones that initiated the interest in language attrition in the early 1980s. Richard D. Lambert, an organizer of the first conference about attrition (UPenn conference) described his interest in this phenomenon as both professional and personal. He could not help but to notice that his proficiency in a variety of foreign languages that he previously

acquired was decreasing through the course of decades after having achieved fluency in at least some of them. Reports about erosion and reduction in a first, second or foreign language seem to be common among researchers in language attrition field. Professionally, the interest in attrition is said to have begun with foreign language (FL) students who spent a substantial amount of time aiming at achieving fluency that got subsequently lost or decreased, namely the attrition of French as foreign language. (kopke, 2013, para. 3)

Lambert put forth:

> *To a considerable extent, the large amount of time spent learning an Indian language was wasted. And this problem was not limited to students of Indian languages, but was more widespread throughout the field of area studies. I had conducted two major national surveys of university-based language and area studies [...]. The survey showed that the problem of language skill loss was endemic to African, East European, Far East, Middle East, South Asian, and South East Asian studies as well.* (as cited in Kopke & Schmid, 2004, para. 4)

Lambert's observation, along with a scarcity of published literature about the matter, gave him a motive to organize a national conference to assess the already existing knowledge which may help in inaugurating an area for further research in the field ("The Loss of Language Skills" 1980).Thus, the study of language attrition was launched in a very conscious and a teleological way; certainly a rather non-conventional procedure for a research topic, but an effective one with no doubt. At that time, the study of attrition started branching out across different disciplines over several countries. For example, in America, the Language Skills Attrition Project (LSAP) was launched with the aim of compiling an archive about attrition tests and data of the least taught foreign languages back then: Chinese, Japanese and Arabic. However, what has been published was mostly insufficient due to the immense

methodological problems involved in developing an equivalent set of tests across these languages; there were no reports on how these tests were designed or on what the results of the pilot studies were (the only available reports are Lambert & Moore1984, 1986). Lambert (n.d.) described them as "not substantial enough to help much in the development of the new field of language skill attrition. Nor, unfortunately, were the students' competencies measured after a lapse of time as originally planned."(as cited in Kopke & Schmid, 2004). Concurrently, the UPenn conference had inspired interest I Europe, precisely, in The Netherlands. Thus, a number of European projects were set in motion.

Researches in the field of language attrition become mainly restricted to the natural loss of language rather than the pathological one. In this respect, some distinctions had to be made to make approaching and investigating the attrition cases more directed and more precise. The first distinction made was between intergenerational and intra-generational attrition. Intergenerational attrition is focused on the attrition within individual speakers, and intra-generational attrition concentrate on the attrition processes across different generations (Weltens, 1987, p. 24). The second distinction was laid by Van Els (1986) following De Bot and Weltens (1985). Types of attrition were divided in terms of what is lost and in which environment it is being lost. This typology results in four major categories/broad situation of attrition:

1- **Loss of L1 in an L1-environment:** language of the elderly; language death; dialect loss within the dialect community.

2- **Loss of L1 in an L2-environment:** native languages of migrants; dialect loss outside the dialect community.

3-**Loss of L2/FL in an L1 environment:** foreign languages learned at school

4- **Loss of L2/FL in an L2 environment:** second language loss by aging migrants.

The following figure displays the above mentioned types of language attrition:

- **Figure 1.1.4. The Typology of Attrition Research.**

  (cited in Weltens, 1988, p. 2)
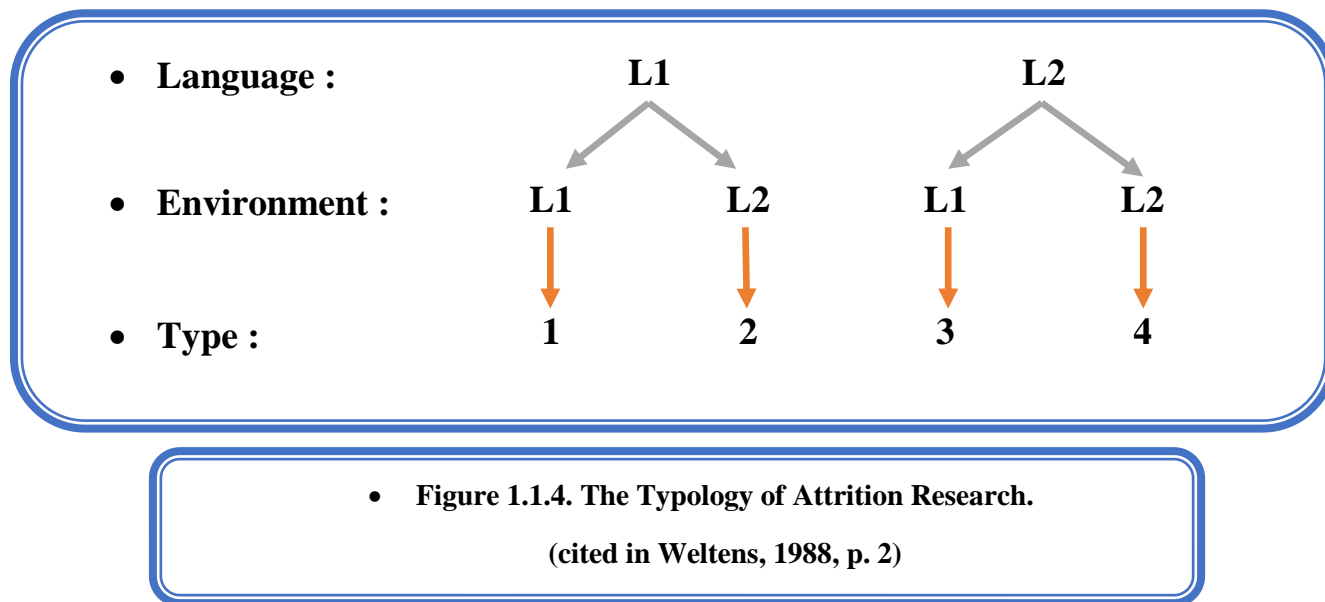
Since the beginning of research on the attrition of languages in 1980, most of the studies have focused on the loss of first language(s) in migrants (loss of L1 in an L2 environment). However, in the recent years, attrition studies have witnessed a renewed interest in languages that have been learned second or foreign language(s) (L2/FL attrition). Compared to the field of L1 attrition, second language attrition is still a relatively young field. This study aims to take the dimensions set in second language attrition field to investigate the loss and the decline of Modern Standard Arabic as a second language after the end formal instruction.

1.1.2. Second Language Attrition

The field of second/foreign language attrition is concerned with the attrition of languages acquired/ learned later in life. Surprisingly, this field has received little attention compared to the one of L1 attrition. The appeal that L1 attrition possesses is, undoubtedly, due to the emotional load and negative impact within something as intimately ingrained in a person as his/ her mother tongue. Nevertheless,

L2/FL attrition, too, might affect a large number of people on both personal and emotional levels. More and more people are spending substantial time and effort in learning and acquiring new languages, let alone the economic impact it could have on the whole industry of FL teaching and learning.

Kopke & Schmid (2004) put forth:

> *Interest in language attrition was initially fuelled mainly by its possible relevance to SLA, language teaching programs and policies, and the search for ways of transforming knowledge of a school/university acquired foreign language, which was perceived/ assumed to be rather short-lived, into a more permanent skill. It was hoped that in this way the efforts of language teachers, language learning policy-makers as well as language students could be made more worthwhile.*

1.1.2.1. Historical Background

The interest in second language attrition phenomenon can be tracked to 1929, to Cole's foundational article on "The effect of summer vacation on students' knowledge of French. Later on, many studies were launched because of this paper, all considering the impact of summer recess to test the attrition of different foreign languages. For instance, studies that tested: the attrition of Latin by American high school students (Kennedy, 1932), German attrition by American university students (Scherer, 1957), and others. However, despite the contributions marking the path to further researches and noting methodological considerations, the progress in the field of L2 attrition has been obstructed. That was mainly due to the lack of sufficient data since the onset of L2 attrition as a linguistic subfield. Olshtain (1989) stated that studies on attrition still "tend to be limited by the lack of availability of large enough samples of cases similar in nature."(as cited in Smith, 2007, p. 2). This argument infers that with the lack of such data, there will be no comparison and validation of previous works in the

field; thus, no progress will be made in L2 attrition studies.

The fact that the L2 attrition field was confronted by limitation in the data pushed it to a point where the whole phenomenon was being questioned. Nakuma (2006) rejected the characterization of L2 attrition as an observable phenomenon. Furthermore, he claimed that its existence could only be proven by measuring and identifying the attriters' linguistic products through longitudinal research. In case such type of research is feasible, researchers of attrition should be able to spot the linguistic items subjected to loss accurately. Later, they have to show that these items have subsequently been lost and overcome the challenge of tracking 'that which exists no more' (p. 21). In opposition to all those difficulties, it cannot be said that nothing has come from research on L2 attrition and that the field did witness some progress.

Some would argue that the little progress made in this field is not best explained by suggesting that L2 attrition cannot be considered a phenomenon after all or that the data does not reveal enough to take it as one. Instead, they propose that the field is still relatively young due to the lack of the right kind of data being accessed by enough researchers. In this context, Smith (2007) concludes:

> *In analyzing these facts, it is my opinion that the reason for so little progress is not best explained by suggesting that L2A may not be a phenomenon after all, that the data cannot reveal enough for us to take it as a phenomenon, rather, I feel that the field stands where it does primarily because of a lack of the right kind of data being accessible to enough researchers.* (p. 4)

Others, like Schmid & Kopke, say that the L2/FL attrition field remains understudied - despite the versatility in situations and populations covered – due to the challenges and obstacles that any research in the area has to face (2019, p. 333).

1.1.2.2. Definition of Second Language Attrition

When the decline of linguistic skills in healthy individuals first attracted the attention of modern linguists and researchers, a lot of terms were used to refer to the same phenomenon, notably: language loss, language shift, language attrition, and others. However, the progress made in this area of study made it evident that the confusion resulted from the versatility in the related terminology needs to be omitted. Subsequently, 'language loss' was deemed as an umbrella term covering any type of decline or loss at the level of linguistic skills (pathological/ non-pathological). The other terms were accounted as hyponyms for this cover term, each referring to a different type of linguistic waste with its internal divisions and distinctions. In language attrition, the primary division was the one made between first language attrition (L1A) which is concerned with the erosion of one's native/ mother language and second/ foreign language (L2A or FLA) that sheds light on forgetting and losing languages that are acquired or learned later in life.

When it comes to L2/ FL attrition, many foreign language learners seem to experience forgetting this language once they cease using it or studying it. Regardless of whether that language is naturally acquired (by travelling abroad, for example), or formally learned (in school/university). Schopper-Grabe (1998, p. 231), a German researcher, once noted that "Almost everybody who has learned a foreign language shares the experience of forgetting the acquired language skills once the period of formal instruction is over.". The term foreign language attrition, according to Lambert and Freed

(1982) was used to describe the deterioration of skills at the level of a foreign language by speakers who ceased using it.

In its simplest definition, L2/FL attrition is defined as when an individual begins to lose or forget a second language that he/ she acquired later in life (usually a foreign language) due to non-pathological conditions.

Gardner, Lalonde, and MacPherson (1989) revealed:

> *The term "second language attrition" refers to the loss of proficiency in a second language due to the lack of use over time. This phenomenon seems to be quite common; many individuals report that, having spent a number of years learning a second language, they find after a period of disuse that they have forgotten much of what they knew.* (p. 519)

In this definition, it is emphasized that there is plenty of anecdotal evidence about the L2 attrition, and how it is, indeed, a collective phenomenon.

In other words, Smith (2007) referred to the loss/attrition of L2 as when a speaker achieves a certain degree of proficiency in a given second language. Then, after spending time outside the learning environment, the speaker manifests a reduction in his proficiency in that L2. Smith provides an example of actual attrition of a Spanish as a second language, where data was extracted from the same subject using the same instruments by running two tests;

❖ **Test A:** was run right after the subject returned from 16 months stay in Latin America.

❖ **Test B:** was run after ten years from taking 'test A' where the subject had very little to a total absent interaction with Spanish.

The example is as follows: (English gloss is provided in italics)

- ❖ **Test A:**

- **Spanish:** "Juan Perez era medico. Vivía en la avenida América. Él era casado y tenía cinco hijos. Un día él despertó a las seis de la mañana.*"*

- **English** *"Juan Perez was a doctor. He lived on America Avenue. He was married and had five children. One day he woke up at six in the morning."*

- ❖ **Test B:**

- **Spanish :** " Juan Pérez era un médico. Élvivió en la calle de América. Había casado y tenía cinco hijos. Una mañana abrió los ojos a las seis de la mañana. *"*

- **English:** *"Juan Perez was one doctor. He spent his life on the Street of America. He had given in marriage and had five children. One morning he opened his eyes at six in the morning."*

- ❖ **Attrition features in the second test includes:**

- ✓ **(Juan Pérez era un médico)** The use of the indefinite article 'un' is unnecessary.

- ✓ **(Élvivió)** The conjugation of **vivir** (to live) here is in perfective aspect (the preterite tense), indicating a completed action. The imperfect would have been more suitable.

- ✓ **(en la calle de América)** The use of the preposition 'de' is uncustomary in the noun phrase **'la calle de América.'**

- ✓ **(Habíacasado)** The choice of the verb **'haber'** (to have done) is inappropriate, especially since it is non-reflexive. The appropriate verb to use would have been **estar** (to be)

- ✓ **(Unamañanaabrió los ojos a lasseis de la mañana)** Here the phrase 'abrió los ojos' is a circumlocution for the verb **'despertarse'** (to wake up.) The speaker also used the word **'mañana'** redundantly. **(Adopted from: Smith, 2007, pp. 1-2)**

1.1.2.3. L2 Attrition vs. FL Attrition

Traditionally, no clear difference has been made between L2 and FL attrition; however, some crucial distinctions separate the attrition of a naturalistically acquired language from languages learned by instruction, as stated by Schmid and Mehotcheva "[…] but we shall argue that there are substantial differences between languages that are learned by instruction through explicit processes, where the learner focuses on the input, on rules and so on, and naturalistically acquired L2s." (2012, p. 103).

So, it can be said that the term 'L2 attrition' is used to point out the loss of a second language within bilingual speakers or 'returnees' who shift back to their L1s and start relying on them more. On the other hand, 'FL attrition' is more about instructed foreign languages or those languages that speakers pick up/ acquire naturally. Nevertheless, both terms are usually used to refer to the same phenomenon.

In this respect, the following enquiry will only use the term of 'L2 attrition' to investigate the erosion of Modern Standard Arabic within Educated Algerian speakers. As is going to be further discussed (see Chapter Two), MSA is not a foreign language, but cognitively speaking, it stored as a second language in the brain of NAS, so 'L2 attrition' would be more convenient to this case.

1.1.2.4. Related Terminology

Along the course of its development, the area of language attrition managed to propose several aspects to simplify and frame the whole study of attrition and the methods to investigate it.

While both L1 and L2 attrition have shared aspects, there are some more related and involved in studying second language attrition. These aspects are as follows:

1.1.2.4.1. The Incubation Period

Gardner (1982) argued that it is best to frame the second language attrition phenomenon within a primary model. This model is identified by a timeline that consists of three crucial points;

- **Point 1:** when second language learning begins.

- **Point 2:** when language instruction terminates.

- **Point 3:** when an assessment is made of language competence.

The time amount elapsed between points 1 and 2 is referred to as the 'acquisition period', and the one between points 2 and 3 is known as the 'incubation period' (as cited in Gardener, Lalonde, and Macpherson, 1985, p. 520). The incubation period is defined as the length of attrition. It begins from the moment where an individual ceases the active contact with and use of L2/FL and it ends when the proficiency of that language is revaluated. (Mehothceva & Kopke, 2019, p. 332).

The importance of highlighting the incubation period in the process of investigating language erosion lies in the fact that this loss should be tackled respecting:

- The length of the acquisition process;

- The quality of the acquisition process and to what extent is it efficient;

- The duration of the incubation period and its content.

The following figure demonstrates Gardner's timeline to the process of L2 attrition:

Time 1   Time 2   Time 3

Beginning of second language learning.   Ending of second language learning   Assessing/ evaluating second language competence

Acquisition period   **Incubation period**

- **Figure 1.1.5. Gadner's Time Frame for Explaining Second Language Attrition.**
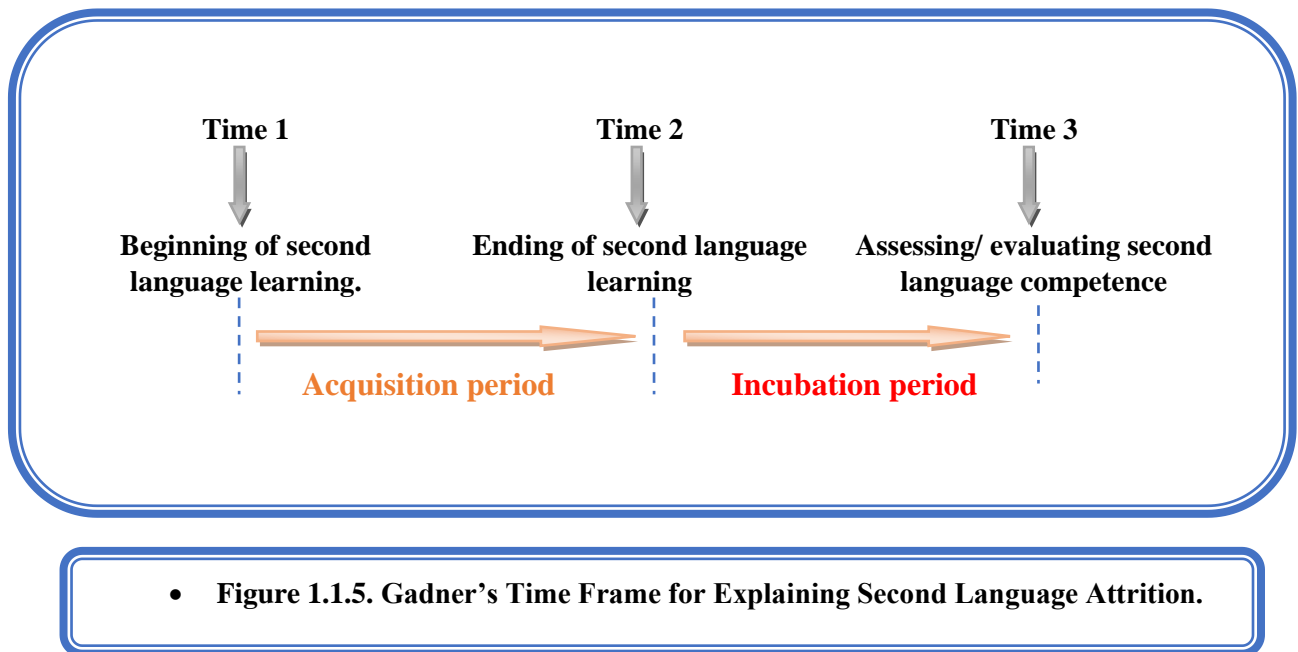
When the area of second language attrition started to gain more attention, it became necessary to create the incubation period concept to represent the latent period involved in the attrition process. Nevertheless, early studies faced several obstacles with examine and precisely determining the elements involved in the incubation phase.

Gardner (1982) cited:

> *Relatively few studies have investigated second language attrition. Lambert and Freed (1982) report nine non-experimental studies examining this problem, and Oxford (1982) discusses a dozen such studies in her review. Of these, none examined the potential mediational role of attitudes and motivation during the incubation period.* (as cited in Gardner et al. 1985, p. 520)

In a nutshell, determining the incubation period's duration and identifying the elements it may have encompassed is of significant importance in L2 attrition research.

1.1.2.4.2. The Onset Proficiency

Another term, strongly related to the research on L2 attrition, is the one of 'the onset proficiency'. Researchers specified this concept to the level of proficiency achieved right before language decline begins, marking the incubation period starting point. Schmid and Mehotcheva (2012) argued that sample populations used in L2 attrition research, sharing the same variables: length of exposure, hours of instruction, age, and others, do not necessarily have the same levels of competence/ proficiency. The higher speakers' proficiency is, the easier it is for them to retain and retrieve the declined L2/ FL. Bahrick (1984a, 1984b) found that individuals with different training levels have equal amounts of knowledge-loss in the first years of attrition. Furthermore, though equally affected in some absolute terms, speakers of higher competency levels are left with a larger proportion of knowledge. Bahrickreferred to this significant part of linguistic knowledge by the term 'permastore content' which stands for the linguistic content that is most reluctant to loss (as cited in Schmid & Mehotcheva, 2012, p. 14)

The attained/ onset proficiency was used as a credible indicator to measure and predict both the amounts of attrition and retrieval of a language in many studies: de Bot and Clyne (1989) on the attrition and retention of Dutch and English in Dutch immigrants in Australia; Gardner, Lalonde, and MacPherson (1985) on the attrition of school acquired French during the summer vacation; Harley (1993) on the retention of school acquired French by adult Canadians; Mehotcheva (2010) on the attrition retention of Spanish as an FL by Dutch and German university students; Nagasawa (1999) on the attrition and retention of Japanese in graduate students; and Weltens (1988) on the retention of French by Dutch high-school students. (as cited in Schmid &Mehotcheva, 2012, p. 14)

1.1.2.4.3. Returnees

Many of the research carried out in the area of L2 attrition shed light on 'returnees' and on what kind of loss they might endure. This term merely stands for adults or children who have spent time in an L2 environment and have returned to their country of origin. Subsequently, these returnees start to rely more on their language of origin (L1) while their contact with the L2 decreases or becomes totally absent. Researchers did not give any specifications to the length or the minimum duration of acquiring the L2 to be accounted-for as a returnee. (as cited in Mehotcheva & Kopke, 2012, p. 332)

It is worth noting that this term is mostly used in studies that take naturalistically picked up second languages as a focus, instead of instructed languages. This study will indulge in investigating the attrition of MSA as an instructed second language.

1.1.2.4.4. The Baseline

Mehotcheva and Kopke (2019) reveal another essential distinction between L1 and L2 attrition, which is 'the baseline' to prove and set up the attrition. In the studies of L1 attrition, immigrant attriters are usually compared to a similar population of native speakers (population in the country of origin). However, when it concerns L2 attrition studies, researchers have to work with people of various L2 proficiency levels. This case makes it extremely challenging to establish an accurate baseline and detect attrition rather than incomplete acquisition of particular linguistic elements. (p. 332)

Establishing a valid baseline via using proper methodology is concerned as one of the main methodological issues and constraints in L2/FL attrition research.

1.1.2.4.4.1. The Baseline Problem

The significance of creating an accurate baseline of the attriters' linguistic competence and knowledge before attrition begins was renowned at the earliest stages of establishing the attrition study. In this respect, Anderson (1982, p. 85) clarified "we need to know how normal LCs [linguistically competent users, not necessarily native speakers] use that feature" in the first place, so it makes sense to claim that a particular linguistic feature has undergone attrition instead of not having been learned efficiently or acquired completely. (as cited in Mehotcheva & Kopke, 2019, p. 333)

Said differently, Mehotcheva and Kopke (2019) asserted that researchers of L2 attrition need to deal with previous experiences, so they evaluate speakers' knowledge of a given language at a past point in time. However, since it is not an option to go back in time, it creates complex methodological issues when estimating the L2/ FL attriters' proficiency before the incubation period is onset. (p. 333)

Another problem flagged up in creating a baseline/ reference group is associated with recruiting the right sample to create one. L2 attrition studies are highly dependent on participants whose linguistic experience of acquiring an L2 lies years or even decades ago.

Mehotcheva and Kopke (2019) showed:

> *[…] not only such participants are difficult to locate, it is also a challenge to match them regarding their linguistic experiences, methods of acquisition, (in particular since teaching styles and methods tend to change rapidly), time spent learning the language or being exposed to it.* (p.333)

In this vein, it is only reinforced how problematic it is to accurately assess the level of proficiency at the attrition period onset (incubation) -- something that can partially explain the scarcity of large-scale studies in the literature of L2 attrition studies.

1.1.2.4.4.2. Remedying the Baseline Problem

Since comparing L2/FL attriters to native speakers is not efficient for creating a valid baseline, it became necessary to develop some new alternatives and come up with solutions. As an attempt to remedy this issue, researchers have discussed some possible methods and procedures.

The ideal proposed solution was developing 'longitudinal designs' (LG) where researchers follow the same participants' track over different periods of time. This means that each individual's knowledge - before the start of incubation - will be taken as his own baseline. However, such designs come with many pitfalls; they need long periods of investigation, which are mostly hard to fund, and they have high rates of dropouts.

Schmid and Mehotcheva (2012) clarified:

> *There are, however, two serious problems for longitudinal approaches. The first concerns recruitment of a population which not only fits the criteria but will be available for re-testing over years if not decades […]; not to mention the practical difficulties involved with such a long-running project (of which funding is only one).* (p. 117)

As an alternative to longitudinal research, Weltens (1987, p. 27) 'suggested cross-sectional' designs where the reference group consists of:

- Identical - or at least highly comparable – individuals as those whose attrition data are used, and;

- Who are still in contact with and use the language.

In this respect, Schmid and Mehotcheva (2012) explained:

> *[…] the baseline group should consist of individuals who share the characteristics of the experimental or attriting group(s) but who are not (yet) undergoing attrition. In order to minimize the practical problems involved in a longitudinal study, but still be able to investigate true development over time.* (p. 117)

Another proposition to solving the baseline issue was Mehotcheva's (2010). She went with 'mixed designs' where she investigated attriters with varying erosion periods by testing them at two significant points of time.

Section Two: Factors and Areas of Second Language Attrition.

1.2.1. The Usual Suspects in L2 Attrition

The studies investigating the phenomenon of L2 loss and erosion have covered a versatile range of situations where an L2 is enduring attrition. In each situation, the sample under investigation usually manifests considerable variance with some speakers having higher rates of attrition than others. In this regard, researchers have distinguished some factors that might impact both language erosion and retrieval at the same time. Subsequently, two groups of indicators can be found: personal and external.

1.2.1.1. The Personal Suspects

a) Age at the onset of attrition

Age, in general, is said to be one of the core factors L1 attrition, while in L2 attrition it does not have that much of influence on the process, yet it is essential on several layers.

Age at the time of acquisition interferes with how that language is perceived and acquired. Moreover, age at the beginning of the incubation period (onset of attrition) seems to have a significant impact on the process of attrition. Studies conducted on children have regularly reported an acknowledged decrease in their proficiency, sometimes to the extent that the language appears to be entirely lost. While in the case of adults and teens, studies revealed that it is rare for them to have radical changes in their language competency.

Kopke and Schmid (2004) proposed that age at the onset of attrition is vital with a critical period for attrition around puberty (9 to 13 years of age). Thereby, it is essential to differentiate between the results of studies carried out with children and those with adults. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that up-to-date there is a scarcity of researches that match and compare these two populations.

b) Attained proficiency at the onset of attrition (pre-attrition proficiency)

This indicator, unlike the previous one, is highly relevant to research on L2 attrition, for the fact that comparable samples of L2 attriters tend to vary in their levels of proficiency in a way that is not applied similarly to L1 learners.

Mehotcheva and Mytara (2019) cited:

> *Attained proficiency sometimes also referred to as level of achievement (Schmid, 2006) or peak of attainment (Bardovi-Harlig & Stringer, 2010) is defined as the heist level of proficiency attained by a speaker before the onset of language attrition. Attained proficiency has consistently been highlighted as the most determining factor in language attrition/ retention, [...,] it is linked to almost all the other factors.* (p. 353)

It is claimed that when a speaker has a high level of proficiency, it is easier for him/her to retain and retrieve the language (Schmid & Mehotcheva, 2012, p. 113)

c) Attitude and Motivation (ATM)

A variable that could be bound with others in the process of L2 attrition is ATM. The latter has always stood out as an important factor in language erosion in terms of the role it plays in some of the critical periods of language acquisition/attrition (active contact with the language/ the incubation period). Furthermore, ATM can have a vital influence on:

➢ The length of exposure to the language.

➢ The length of residence in the target-language culture.

➢ The amount of language contact and use (during both acquisition and erosion).

➢ The attained proficiency.

To make more intricately intertwined, ATM involves another set of variables that extend to both individuals' and environmental levels:

- **Individuals' level (internal):** it includes:

  ➢ The speaker's attitude towards the language, its speakers and culture;

  ➢ The inner motivation for learning that language;

  ➢ The attitude towards the learning situation and its participants.

- **Environmental level (external):** it relates to**:**

  ➢ The prestige of the language in question.

  ➢ The context of acquisition and attrition.

Despite the difficulty encountered in establishing the impact of attitudinal variables, it has been found that that they are a central factor in language acquisition (SLA), attrition, and retention.

Schmid and Mehotcheva (2012) cited:

> *As noted by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) and Schmid (2006) and demonstrated by Nikitina and Furuoka (2005), attitudinal and motivational variables develop dynamically and are subject to change. Although they might truthfully reflect the current attitude and motivation of the participants, these may not be valid for the period when the language was studied and/or used, or for earlier attrition periods.* (p. 114)

The only studies that have shown the existing relationship between ATM and attrition are the ones that used self-evaluation reports to estimate the amount of language waste. However, such tools are not always valid since participants tend to exaggerate and report more massive linguistic loss than revealed in the linguistic tests (Weltens, 1989).

1.2.1.2. The External Suspects

a) Time since the Onset of Attrition

This factor stands for the incubation period in which a speaker quits using the target-language entirely, or uses it insufficiently. This period may encompass a lot of other variables that can affect the attrition process.

b) Language Contact and Use

To justify how language is maintained or lost, the contact between a speaker and a given language is the variable almost invoked consistently. It is logical to assume that the more a language is being used, the harder that it gets lost, and the easier that it gets retrieved. In this light, Paradis (2007, p. 125) defines attrition as a 'long-term lack of stimulation' (as cited in Mehotcheva & Mytara, 2019, p. 357). Moreover, it is claimed that both recency and frequency of use are crucial for language maintenance and accessibility. Nevertheless, investigations of attrition did not manage to provide any absolute evidence for the vitality of active contact in maintaining a declining language, especially when it is an L1. This issue is explained by how difficult it is to evaluate the impact of the contact with and use of language in isolation from other variables.

Schmid and Mehotcheva (2012, p. 115) argued:

> *Language use and contact depend to a certain extent on the speaker and their attitude and motivation [...] in the sense that it is up to the individual to seek out opportunities to use the language. Language contact, furthermore, is an extremely diverse factor, encompassing receptive as well as productive activities across a wide range of contexts.*

Another issue with the contact and use indicator is how can it be measured and quantified with a realistic and a valid method. Since it cannot be observed and assessed objectively, the only way to assess is through self-reflection (introspection).

1.2.1.3. Other Suspects

Some of the external factors that received little attention regarding attrition are:

- **The typological proximity between the two contact languages:** in case of L2 attrition, the L1 might play one of two potential roles:

  - ✓ **Facilitatory:** where the similarities between the two languages' systems make retrieval easier (positive transfer).

  - ✓ **Inhibitory:** where the resemblance between the two languages' systems cause confusion and mixing of the attriting language with the L1, the language of the context, or a newly acquired language (negative transfer).

  It is also possible that there are other types of typological proximity across different linguistic levels and systems.

- **Context:** in case of L2/FL attrition both contexts of where a language was acquired/learned and in which the attrition takes place are significant. Additionally, there is the impact of the immediate environment, society, and the general attitude towards the target language.

- **Length of residence/ exposure to the language:** referring to the length of the acquisition period and the time spent in the environment where the language is being learned/ acquired.

The following figure displays both the personal and external factors that influence the process of L2 attrition:
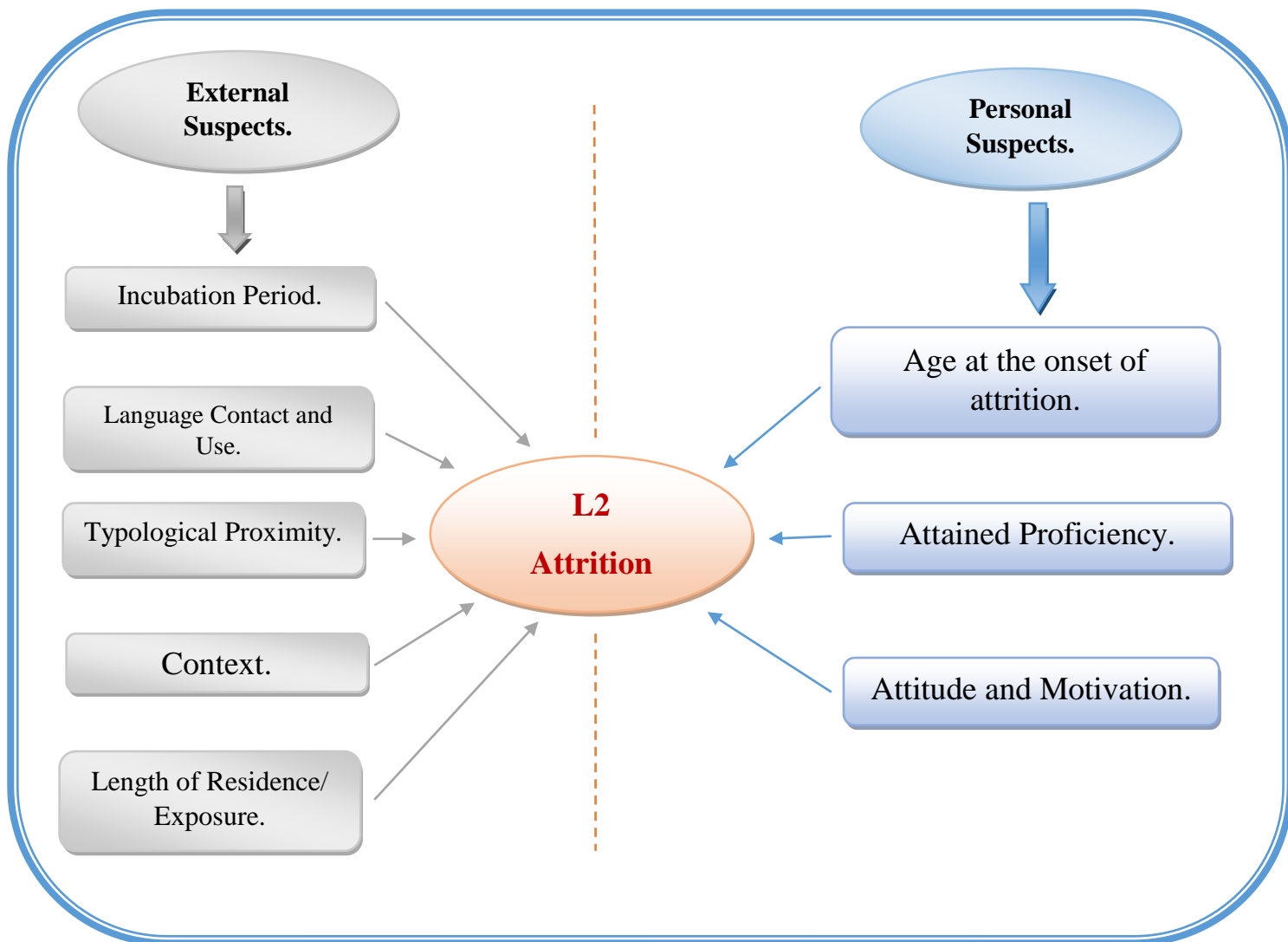
- **Figure 1.2.1. The Usual Suspects in Second Language Attrition.**

1.2.2. Selectivity of Second Language Attrition:

The overall objective of attrition investigations is to reveal how, why, and what is lost when a speaker forgets a language. More specifically, the purpose of L2/FL attrition is to discover why,

after an active learning process, the language competency endures changes, decreases, or even stops. In term of what is lost, it is said that the L2 attrition phenomenon has some selective properties. In other words, attrition of a second language is manifested on two different levels: linguistic level and language skills level.

1.2.2.1. The Selectivity of the Linguistic Components:

At the linguistic level, the selectivity of L2 attrition is analyzed at the intra-linguistic layer and the inter-linguistic layer.

1.2.2.1.1. Selectivity at the intra-linguistic layer

This layer is composed of other sub linguistic levels, namely: phonology, lexicon, morphology and syntax. Studies on L2 attrition did provide some evidence about the selectivity of this phenomenon at these sub levels, where some linguistic components are more subjected to loss and others are better maintained.

a) **Phonology:** Anderson (1982) proposed that:

1. **The phonological distinctions that exist in both languages of a learner (L1 and L2) are more reluctant to loss.** This means that if a given variant is only relevant to the L2 of the speaker, it will be lost easily. As an illustration of that, it is found that, after learning English as a second language, Chinese people easily lose the consonant [θ] simply because it does not exist in their L1.

2. **The phonological distinctions that carry higher functional load in an L2 are more resistant to loss than those of low functional load**. In other words, if learners of L2 managed to differentiate between the phonological aspects of the L2 properly, these aspects would not be easily lost. For example, in distinguishing between [n] and [ŋ], Chinese learners of English usually lose the [ŋ] because they always found it easier to pronounce it as a [n]. (as cited in Wei, 2014).

b) **Lexicon:** it is argued that lexis erosion is more frequent than that of phonology or syntax. To investigate and draw some rules for how L2 speakers lose and retain their lexis, researchers have divided their attention under two rubrics:

1. **Frequent lexicon vs. less frequent lexicon:** depending on the 'Markedness Theory' that developed out of Prague school, lexical attrition is more severe at the level of marked items which are non-basic, less natural and less frequent lexical elements. On the other hand, unmarked items that feature more basic, natural, and highly frequent elements are easily retained and difficult to lose.

2. **Receptive lexicon vs. productive lexicon:** under this rubric, Gonzo and Saltarelli (1983) conducted an experiment through which they managed to reveal the following:

   ➢ Via picture naming task, they discovered that the productive lexis is hardly retained by the participants.

   ➢ Via picture-word naming task, they found that the receptive lexis is easily accessed by the participants.

In this vein, de Bot and Weltens (1995) explain:

> *[…] the first task was a retrieval task in which the actual recall was required, but the second task was a recognition task in which only recognition was needed. And in the recognition task, the target item itself could be considered as a retrieval cue.* (as cited in Wei, 2014, p. 1605)

c) **Morphology:** similar to the case of phonology, morphological items that are of high textual frequency, acquired in the early stages, or are shared by both the L1 and L2 of the speaker are more reluctant to attrition. Morphological items in the contrasting situation are more subjected to loss.

d) **Syntax:** basic grammatical structures, with a frequent functionality are less vulnerable to loss in L2 attrition process.

1.2.2.1.2. Selectivity at the inter-linguistic layer

Empirical evidence has shown that the sub-levels of the intra-linguistic layer (phonology, lexicon, morphology) are unequally affected during the process of attrition, and this is what is meant by the selectivity at the inter-linguistic level. In other words, throughout the erosion of an L2, some linguistic levels are more subjected to attrition than others. The investigation of attrition's selectivity at the inter-linguistic basis has revealed different findings, varying according to the sample, the target language, the context, ect. Some researchers found that the L2 attrition first manifests as a difficulty in retrieving the lexis, some signs of attrition at the level morphology and syntax, while phonological aspects and receptive vocabulary remained vigorous (Tomiyama 1999). Others, like de Bot and Weltens (1995) found that after a significant time of French language disuse, Dutch learners displayed bigger portions of loss at the level of grammar than on phonology and lexicon (as cited in Wei, 2014, p. 1606).

The following table displays the selectivity of L2 attrition and summarizes its elements that are more vulnerable to loss:

Selectivity of L2 at Intra-Linguistics Components Level:		
Sub-level.	**Phonology.**	**Lexicon.**
Elements subjected to loss.	• Phonological distinctions that do not exist in both languages of the learner (L1 and L2). • Phonological distinctions with low functional load in L2.	• Marked Lexicon: less frequent, non-basic. • Productive Lexicon.
Sub-level.	**Morphology.**	**Syntax.**
Elements more subjected to loss.	• **Morphological items of low textual frequency.**	• **Grammatical structures with low functionality.**

• **Table 1.2.1. Selectivity of Second Language Attrition at Intra-Linguistic Level.**

The following table displays L2 selectivity at the inter-linguistic level and explains how some

Sub-levels are more susceptible to loss than others:

Selectivity of L2 at Inter-Linguistics Components Level:	
Sub levels more subjected to loss.	• There are no absolute results that reveal how some sub linguistic levels are more subjected to attrition. However, some studies suggest the following: ➢ **Severe attrition at the level of lexicon** ➢ **Few signs of attrition at the level of morphology and syntax.** ➢ **Phonological aspects and receptive vocabulary remained the same.** • Other studies found that: • **Grammar is more vulnerable to attrition than phonology and lexicon.**

- **Table 1.2.2. Selectivity of Second Language Attrition at Inter-Linguistic Level.**

1.2.2.2. The Selectivity of Language Skills:

Generally, language skills are divided into two categories:

- **Receptive skills:** listening and reading.

- **Productive skills:** speaking and writing.

Henson (1999) suggested that receptive skills are acquired before productive ones, and the reverse is the case in attrition. Said differently, productive skills are expected to be the first ones to be lost when attrition takes place (as cited in Wei, 2014, p. 1607). Some studies did provide evidence to support Hensson's suggestion. For example, Edward (1976) examined language retention in Canada, and the results were, after 12 months of incubation, he found 13 per cent of loss in speaking while 8 per cent was gained in reading. Welten's observation for Dutch learners of French (1987) showed that, instead of attriting, listening and reading even increased over time.

In a nutshell, for most L2 learners, it is frequent that when they come across a word (read it/ hear it), they can recognize it. In contrast, when they need to produce certain utterances while writing or speaking, they can barely retrieve it. That is explained by how productive and receptive language skills are impacted by attrition to different degrees.
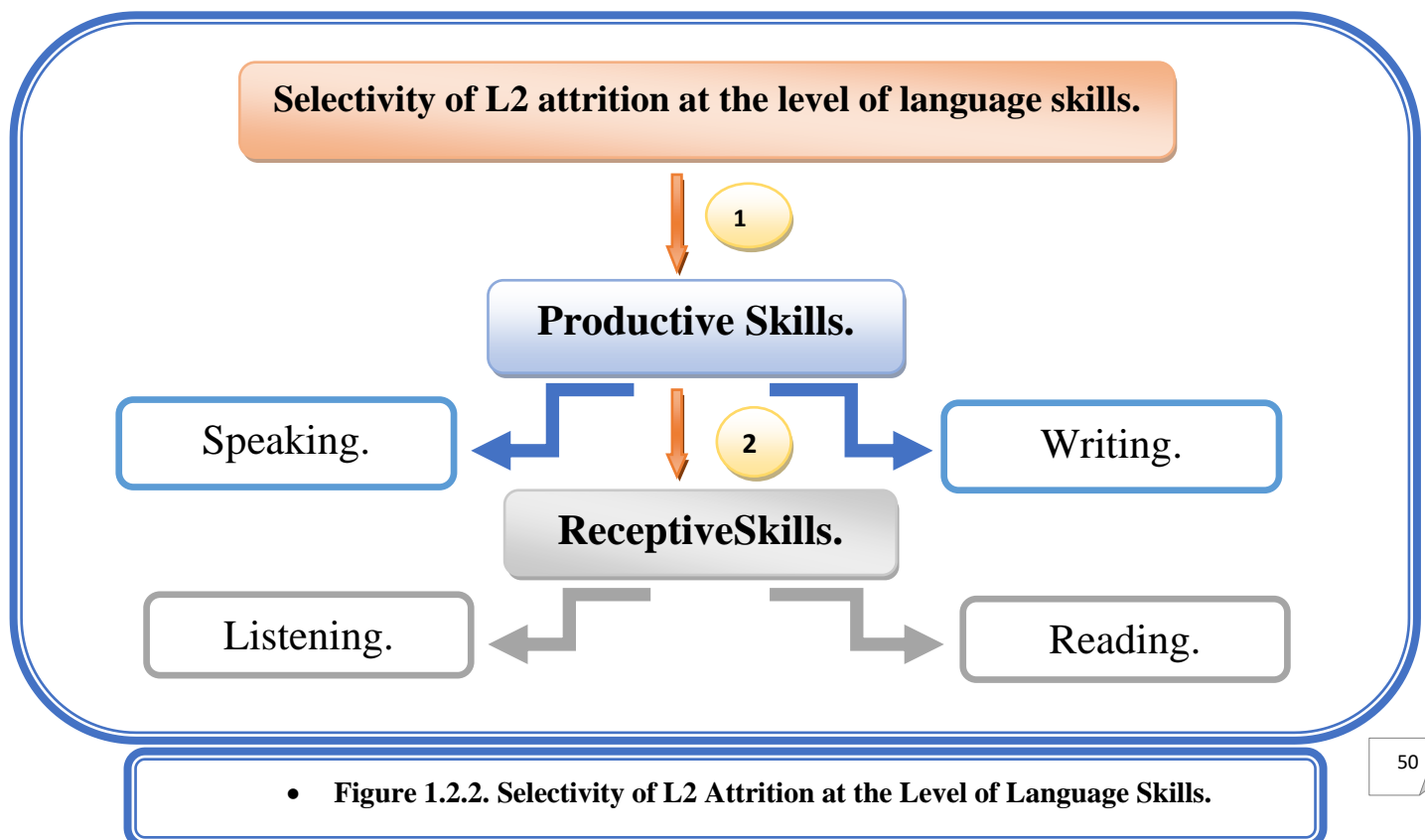
- **Figure 1.2.2. Selectivity of L2 Attrition at the Level of Language Skills.**

Section Three: Theoretical Background on Second Language Attrition

While L1 attrition studies have been established within the framework of theoretical linguistics, studies on L2/ FL attrition are usually driven by practical aims and lack solid theoretical foundations. Nevertheless, researchers have formulated a set of testable theories and hypotheses to help interpret the findings of L2 attrition investigations.

1.3.1. The Regression Hypothesis

One of the first models introduced in the attrition area is the regression hypothesis, which is mainly concerned with the sequence or the order that the attrition process follows. It was originally developed alongside the research on aphasia, where it has been investigated in both pathological and non-pathological situations. Regression hypothesis or "last in, first out" model suggests that, when a language endures attrition, it is lost following the reverse pattern in which it was acquired. Said differently, the linguistic aspects first learned by a speaker are more reluctant to loss, while those learned last are the most susceptible to it (they would be lost first). In this vein, Mehotcheva and Kopke cited:

> *The Regression Hypothesis was finally adapted to language by Jakobson who applied it to phonological regression in aphasics as compared to language acquisition in children (Berko-Gleason 1982, p. 17) [...] The Regression Hypothesis postulates that language dissolution is the mirror process of language acquisition – that is, what has been acquired last is the first to be gone and vice versa.* (2019, p. 342)

This hypothesis has little empirical support because it only seems to describe the track of attrition for some linguistic features but not others. This might be justified by the number of additional factors that get to be involved within the erosion of a given language (L1 or L2), including the attriters' age, proficiency, literacy level, and typological proximity. Apart from that, Bardovi-Harlig and Stringer (2010) asserted that any study testing the regression hypothesis is obstructed by the need for establishing the exact acquisition sequence of the target language. So it will be used as a baseline for comparing the erosion sequence, which is not always easily displayed (as cited in Park, 2018, p. 3).

1.3.2. Critical Threshold Hypothesis

Another proposed model that received a significant attention in both L1 and L2 attrition research is the critical threshold hypothesis. This theory focuses on the level of proficiency that has to be reached in order to retrieve the competence in a language. Unlike regression, this hypothesis postulates that the language knowledge least susceptible to erosion is what is learned best, not what is learned last (best learned, last out). Additionally, it implies that when a certain degree of use (a threshold) is reached/ achieved, knowledge would be more reluctant to attrition. This hypothesis is developed upon Neisser's idea (1984) about a point, where a speaker has enough unfluctuating cognitive representations of some linguistic structures/ elements that they get more resilient to attrition. Neisser refers to this point as "critical threshold" (as cited in Park, 2018, p. 3). Another thing that this hypothesis proposes is that once a speaker achieves a certain proficiency level, he/ she can easily retain the language knowledge. Said differently, the pre- attrition attainment is regarded as the dominant indicator for both attrition and maintenance. That is a specific level of proficiency has the potential to critically determine the loss or non-loss of a language.

One of the major studies taken as evidence to support the critical threshold model is Bahrick's (1984) research on language retention in L2 learners, whose competence of L2-Spanish (Spanish as a second language) remained robust after twenty-five years of non-use.

1.3.3. The Interference Hypothesis

It revolves around the cross-linguistic influence (CLI), more specifically, the influence inL2 acquisition and both L1 and L2 attrition. The interference hypothesis, also known as the 'interlanguage model,' anticipates that attrition is the result of shifting to a newly dominant language (replacing language). Berman and Olshtain's (1983) investigations have revealed that structural properties, notably those different from the attriting language to the replacing dominant one, are the ones most affected by attrition. In another expression, the linguistic elements that are not shared by both the declining language and the dominant one are the element more vulnerable to loss. Additionally, Olshtain (1989) argued that the typological proximity between the two languages systems affects how the replacing language interferes in the use of the declining language (as cited in Park, 2018, p. 4). Overall, the cross-linguistic effects in both L1 and L2 attrition are both inevitable and undeniable, and they seem to interact with the attrition process selectively. For this reason, the interference hypothesis is mostly used to interpret the results out of the attrition data, instead of being empirically tested.

1.3.4. The Dormant Language Hypothesis

The concern of this model is the general psychological issues related to processing and memory. It is different from the hypotheses above in terms that it focuses on what happens to the attriters' linguistic knowledge at the end of the attrition process. More precisely, it tries to find whether the ending point of attrition is where some linguistic knowledge kinds are entirely lost, or some traces continue to exist in the attriter's mind.

In other words, this hypothesis postulates that attrition of a language is more about difficulty of access than of complete erasure of the knowledge.

This model is built upon the concept of 'savings' that is widely used in the psychological perspective to forgetting which suggests that information merely becomes inaccessible in the memory due to different factors. It can be obtained again in the existence of the right stimulations or cues. Given that relearning a language takes less time than learning it for the first time, the concept of 'savings' has been included in L2 studies on relearning; it implies access to unconscious linguistic knowledge instead of its total erosion. In this light, Park (2018) cited:

> *Proponents of the dormant language hypothesis maintain that knowledge seemingly lost can be reactivated in a situation of relearning under appropriate conditions and with the proper triggers. This hypothesis has received empirical support from studies on relearning of forgotten words (e.g., Hansen, 2011). In addition, findings from studies using a relatively unconventional method of hypnosis (e.g., Footnick, 2007) have shown that knowledge of a forgotten childhood language can be recalled using age-regression hypnosis.* (p.4)

As a final note, it is worth mentioning that the question of whether forgetting portions of knowledge make them permanently inaccessible or just difficult to access (need the right cues), has become a major problematic that needs further examinations.

1.3.5. The Plateau Hypothesis

This hypothesis suggests that L2 learners do not experience attrition immediately after being removed from the acquisition environment. Instead, attrition starts after a period of continuous proficiency

in the L2, or a plateau phase (expansion). Smith (2007) stated "[…], L2 learners will not immediately experience attrition,but that attrition sets in after a period of sustained linguistic proficiency in the L2, or a plateauphase." (p. 10)

The following table displays hypotheses relevant to L2 attrition and summarizes their main postulations:

Hypothesis	Main Ideas
• **The Regression Hypothesis**	• <u>**Last in, first out**</u>: This means; • The linguistic elements first learned by a speaker are more reluctant to loss. • The linguistic elements last learned by a speaker are more vulnerable to loss. • Language is lost in the reverse pattern in which it was acquired.
• **The Critical Threshold Hypothesis**	• <u>**Best learned, last out:**</u> This implies that: • When a certain degree of use is achieved, Linguistic knowledge would be vigorous and hard to lose. • Once a certain proficiency level is achieved, the language knowledge can be easily retained. • The pre-attrition attainment is the dominant factor in both attrition and maintenance.
• **The Interference Hypothesis (Interlanguage Model)**	• It is concerned with the cross-linguistic influence. • Attrition is the result of shifting to a newly dominant language (replacing language). • The structures that are not shared by the attriting and the replacing language are more susceptible to loss. • The typological proximity between the two language systems affects the use and attrition of the attriting language.
• **The Dormant Language Hypothesis (The Savings paradigm)**	• Language attrition is about difficulty of access, instead of complete loss. • Language knowledge can be obtained again in the existence of the right cues.
• **The plateau Hypothesis**	• L2 learners do not experience attrition right after being removed from the learning/ acquisition environment. • Attrition sets in after a continuous period.

• **Table 1.3.1. Theories of Second Language Attrition.**

There are more models relevant to the phenomenon of L2 attrition. However, the hypotheses mentioned above are the ones that received more attention in the field. This study will try to interpret the collected data using the tackled hypotheses only.

5. Conclusion

Throughout this theoretical chapter, a comprehensive review has been given to the phenomenon investigated in this research work (second language attrition). The first section has shed light on the whole concept and history of attrition. Then, it delved more into second language attrition and provided explanation to the most used terminologies in this field. In the second section, the focus was on the variables that may interfere and influence the L2 attrition process and on how selective it can be in terms of the linguistic elements that are more subjected or reluctant to loss. Finally, the third part was dedicated to highlight a set of theories that can be used to interpret and discuss the findings in L2 attrition enquiries.

Chapter Two

A Sociolinguistic Perspective to Modern

Standard Arabic in Algeria

"We betray our mother tongues for the languages of nations

that will never fully accept us. We let the strangeness infest our

mouths until we forget how to accommodate our original tongues."

Farah Gabdon, 'Because language is awesome.'

2.1. Introduction

The term Arabic has always been of an ambiguous nature in the Algerian context. Saying that Arabic is the official language in Algeria, does not specify which variety is it (CA, MSA, or ADA). Given that MSA is the primary focus of this study, the following chapter aims at bringing various insights to its position amid the diverse Algerian sociolinguistic context. The first section tackles the versatility of the Algerian linguistic reservoir and the richness of its linguistic phenomena, in relation to MSA. In the second the section, a brief background is providedabout the Arabization process and the emergence of the new variety, ESA, in Algeria. Lastly, the third section is for general aspects and indicators to the decline of MSA that are applicable in the Algerian

Section One: Modern Standard Arabic within the Algerian Verbal Repertoire

2.1.1. The Versatility of the Algerian Verbal Repertoire

The Algerian sociolinguistic context is known for its complexity manifested in the coexistence of several languages and varieties: Arabic, Berber, French, English, and others. However, despite its acknowledged diversity, the Algerian context is renowned for promoting the Arabic language as the

national and official language of all Algerians (in addition to Berber nowadays). Arabic has always been in constant contact with the other existing codes resisting to maintain and preserve both its status and value in Algeria. Additionally, the term Arabic here is blurry since it does not point out to whether the dead Classical Arabic (CA) is valid, or that Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is to be used within formal settings.

Of all Arabic varieties existing in Algeria, the study at hand targets the formal written variety, taught in all Algerian schools, MSA.

2.1.1.1. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

Also known as Literary or Standard Arabic, MSA is derived from the language of the Quran (CA). It is a simpler, less complex, modern variety of Arabic, with more simplified vocabulary and grammar in comparison to CA. Due to the wide number of words and expressions that were introduced to Arabic from foreign languages, MSA was derived from CA in the nineteenth century. It was mainly developed to achieve unity among Arab countries, preserve the language, guard its integrity, and adjust it to modern use in order to meet social and linguistic needs. In Algeria, MSA is perceived as both spoken and written formal variety. It is instructed in schools, and it serves academic educational purposes, political discourses, and national constitutions. Moreover, it is used in the mass media. Most educated Algerians have received their general education in MSA from primary to secondary school. However, as mentioned above, MSA is not the soul variety that Algerians are introduced to since their country encompasses other languages and codes. In addition to MSA, the Algerian verbal repertoire also includes the following:

2.1.1.2. Classical Arabic (CA)

The stable variety, and the classical form of Arabic, which was introduced in Algeria after the first Arabic Islamic conquest of North Africa. It is regarded in Arabian countries (North Africa, Middle East, and Arabian Peninsula) as the language of the Holy Qur'an, Islamic studies, religious matters, and earliest literature. Furthermore, it is used in prayers by all Muslims regardless of their nationality and mother tongue. CA is a codified variety, and it has a significant number of religious, grammar books, and a great literary heritage that represents the biggest part of Arabic literature. Classical Arabic remains nowadays a frozen, almost dead, language used for holy scripts and religious matters only.

2.1.1.3. Algerian Dialectal Arabic (ADA)

Or 'Colloquial Arabic' is the informal variety of Arabic. It is regarded as the mother tongue of most Algerians, except for those whose mother tongue is Berber, or one of its varieties, or sometimes French. This variety is varied throughout all Algerian dialect continuums; many different Algerian dialects can be both mutually intelligible, and unintelligible. ADA is used within informal settings, oral situation, and daily conversations. It emerged due to the contact between different languages, Arabic, Berber, French, Turkish, and Spanish. This linguistic contact resulted in the change and creation of new vocabulary, as well as new phonological features of Arabic. In contrast to MSA, ADA is not written, but instead spoken.

2.1.1.4. Berber

This term was used to refer to the mother tongue of people who occupied North Africa, mostly in the central Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Libya). Tamazight was the central spoken variety of Berber, alongside with other varieties (Chaouia, Tamasheq, and Mozabie), and it

remains until today the dominant variety of Berber. Tamazight and Arabic have existed side by side for as soon as Muslims settled in Numidia, and Muslim Berbers began learning Arabic after the Arab conquest. It was a matter of time before Arabic took over and became the dominant language. After the French colonization, Tamazight was marginalized, and the French government at that time had a negative attitude towards Tamazight varieties as they were considered illiterates. Arabic was the official and national language in Algeria until 2002 when Tamazight became the second national language, and it became an official language in Algeria by 2016.

2.1.1.5. French

It was introduced to the Algerian linguistic repertoire after the French colonization of Algeria (1830). It became the only official language in Algeria while Arabic and Berber were marginalized, and considered as languages of the illiterate people. After independence, the French was so difficult to remove from the Algerian linguistic repertoire as it represented the language of the educated elite, and was used in different sectors (education, administration, media, etc.). Most Algerians speak French as their first foreign language, and for some others, notably in Berber regions, as a second acquired language, or a mother tongue. It is considered as the lingua franca of Algeria, as stated The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use (PCGN), and it is a crucial part of the Algerian dialect. Nowadays, French is the first foreign language in Algeria. It is taught in schools (from the third grade in the primary school to the final year of the secondary school); however, it is not properly spoken by a great number of Algerians. In addition to that, all scientific subjects in the Algerian universities are taught in French, except for few in English. Nevertheless, the French language has begun to lose its value and status in Algeria in competition with English due to globalization.

2.1.1.6. English

It has been the second foreign language in Algeria since 2002, after the government introduced the educational reform that states that English is to be taught in schools starting at the first grade in middle school to the final year in secondary school. English gained a high status in the Algerian society due to globalization and its great importance. Currently, most Algerians use English instead of French in different fields (daily conversations, media, social media, restaurants, etc.). In addition to being taught in governmental schools, English is also taught in private schools for those who do not have a degree in English language. Algerians also seek to pass language proficiency tests, such as **IELTS** and **TOEFL**, to enhance their opportunities to teach English or to work in foreign/ international companies.

2.1.1.7. Other Foreign Languages

In addition to French and English, other foreign languages are taught in Algerian schools. Spanish and German are taught in the second year and final year in secondary schools, Turkish and Russian are taught as a major subject at some universities. Moreover, there are private schools that teach all these languages as well as Chinese, and sometimes Korean or Japanese.

2.1.2. Modern Standard Arabic in the Midst of Language Contact in Algeria

The richness of the Algerian verbal repertoire certainly implies that there is an intense and a significant contact between all the coexisting codes mentioned above. This intensity has led to the emergence of several linguistic phenomena, notably: diglossia, bilingualism/multilingualism, code switching, code mixing, code switching, diglossic-code shifting, and borrowing. However, when speaking of MSA, it can be noticed that this particular variety is more related to particular outcomes of language contact rather than the others, which are diglossia and diglossic-code shifting.

2.1.2.1. Diglossia

The term diglossia is used to describe a linguistic phenomenon where two varieties of the same language coexist side by side for different purposes. These two varieties are referred to as the High Variety (HV); used in academic/formal settings, and the Low Variety, which is used for daily conversations.

Ferguson (1959, p. 435) states that,

> *"DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation."*

Ferguson describes diglossia as a kind of bilingualism, and he classifies the High and the Low varieties according to their functions. Concerning the Arabic world, he adds that, "these two varieties, classical and colloquial, exist side by side in the Arabic speech community in a diglossia relationship" (1959, p. 359).

It is assumed that the Arab world has known diglossia since the pre-Islamic period (AL-Jahilia). Nuri (2013) claimed that every tribe had its own dialect (LV) while they shared one common standard variety as the (HV).

Areas of use	CA	MSA	Dialects
• **Holy scripts (Qur'an/Hadith)**	+		
• **Earliestliterature**	+		
• **Modern Literature**		+	
• **Codification/Grammatical rules**	+	+	
• **Written**	+	+	
• **Spoken**	+	+	+
• **Daily conversations/informal**			+
• **Standardized**		+	
• **Official Academic settings/political discourses/formal**		+	

• **Table 2.1.1. CA, MSA, and ADA in Relation to the Functions of the HV, and LV.**

As far as Algeria is concerned, MSA (also called *Fus'ha*) and ADA (*Ammiyya*) are two varieties of the same language that are used for different purposes, and in different settings. ADA is used for ordinary, informal, daily conversations, whereas MSA is used in formal, academic settings. Marçais (1930) describes the situation of Arabic as follow

"The Arabic language appears under two perceptibly different aspects. 1) a literary language so called written Arabic or regular or literal or classical, the only that has always and everywhere been written in the past, and only one in which still today are written literary of scientific works… and which in any case is not spoken now anywhere. 2) Spoken idioms, patois […] none of which has ever been written […] but which everywhere and perhaps for a long time are the only language of conversation in all popular and cultural circles." (p. 401)

According to Marçais, Classical Arabic is to be considered as the HV; however, in the case of Algeria, as well as all Arab countries, MSA has taken over CA (used now in Qur'an and Hadith only), as demonstrated in the table above. Therefore, one should bear in mind that the existence of ADA alongside with MSA has created a diglossic situation (Bouamrane. A, 1986, Chapter 1). In this respect, MSA, in Algeria, is considered as the HV, and ADA as the LV.

	MSA	ADA
• **Poetry**	+	
• **Radio**		+
• **Newspapers/ Magazines**	+	
• **Folk Literature**	+	+
• **Political Discourses**	+	+
• **Music**		+
• **Cartoons**	+	

• **Mosque**	+	+
• **Daily conversation with family and friends**		+

- **Table 2.1.2. The Different Situations for Using MSA and ADA in Algeria.**

2.1.2.2. Bilingualism

Bilingualism is one of the frequent outcomes of contact linguistics. In its simplest definition, bilingualism revolves around the use and contact of two languages (Weinreich, 1953); however, it is difficult to provide an accurate definition for this particular outcome. It is a relative concept that can refer to different things in different contexts. That is why, different scholars have provided many definitions for the term 'Bilingual' or 'Bilingualism'.

Some consider bilingualism as the perfect mastery of two different languages, as Bloomfield (1933) suggests that it is "the native-like control of two languages" (p.65). In the same vein, Haugen (1953) relates bilingualism to the ability to produce: "complete meaningful utterances in the other language." (p. 07). Of all the provided definitions, it is recommended to rely on the one of Prof. Bouamrane's where he managed to combine the different definitions of scholars. He states that bilingualism is "the use by an individual, a group or nation of two or more languages in all uses in which they put either." (1986, p. 15).

For the context of the study, bilingualism in Algeria is characterized by the co-existence of two unrelated languages: Arabic with its three varieties (CA, MSA, and ADA) and French. The Arabic-French bilingualism has begun as soon as Algerians learnt and acquired the French language during the

French colonial era. However, French is used actively by the educated group only, and in some of the big cities. Moreover, the idea of an Algerian bilingual who knows both French and Arabic does not clearly explain which variety of the three Arabic varieties he does master alongside French.

To properly frame the bilingual situation in Algeria, one should take all the previous definitions of the concept into account. According to this, it is fair to say that bilingualism in Algeria exists at the individuals' level rather than the societal level. Added to that, the degrees of bilingualism vary from one speaker to another. There are many Algerians who can speak different languages, such as English, French, Spanish, German, Chinese, etc. both actively and passively. Nevertheless, not all Algerians can use foreign languages, especially those living in rural areas. Thus, bilingualism in Algeria functions in different ways, by different users.

2.1.2.3. Borrowing

The concept of borrowing is used to denote the process of adopting single words from other languages. This phenomenon happens when two distinct linguistic systems, or codes, interact. Sapir (1921) points outs that "the simplest kind of influence that one language may exert on another is the "Borrowing" of words, when there is the likelihood that the associated words may be borrowed too…" (p.193). Borrowing occurs when bilinguals begin to code-switch ending up having foreign incorporated in their native language.

Dulay, et.al concluded that,

> *linguistic borrowing […] is something that has happened whenever these have been bilinguals. It is, in fact, unthinkable without the existence of bilinguals, and apparently inevitable where there is a considerable group of bilinguals.* (1982, p. 263)

Accordingly, borrowing occurs in a bilingual context when speakers of different languages influence one another, and exchange linguistic items.

Borrowing in Algeria is the result of language contact that happened throughout history. This sociolinguistic phenomenon was born as soon as Muslim Arabs occupied North Africa. However, in the case the study's target language, MSA has borrowed many words with the attempt to adjust to the modern world requirements. The words that MSA borrowed are often adapted/ adjusted phonologically or morphologically to fit its system.

- **List of some English borrowed words in Modern Standard Arabic:**

The following table demonstrates a set of some English loanwords which found their way into MSA. The pieces of information gathered are: the English words, the MSA words, the meaning of the word, and the phonetic transcription of the word in MSA.

Word in English	Meaning	Word in MSA	Phonetic transcription
• **Adrenaline**	➤ A hormone secreted by the adrenal glands, especially in the condition of stress.	الأدرينالين	/ʔal'ʔadrinali:n/
• **Cathedral**	➤ A main church of a district, under the care of a bishop.	الكاتدرائية	/ʔal'katidraʔiya/
• **Gene**	➤ *A unit inside a cell which controls a particular quality in a living thing that has been passed on from its parents.*	الجينة	/ʔal'ǰina/
• Influenza	➤ *An infectious disease like a very bad cold, that causes fever, pains and weakness.*	الإنفلونزا	/ʔal'ʔinfluwanza/
• **Oxygen**	➤ *A chemical element. Oxygen is a gas that is present it air and water and is necessary for people, animals and plants to live*	الأوكسيجين	/ʔal'ʔoxsiǰi:n/
• **Raccoon**	➤ *A small American animal with grayish brown fur, black marks on its face and a thick tail*	الراكون	/ʔal'ra:kun/

> • **Table 2.1.3. English Borrowed Words in MSA.**
> **(Adapted from: Al-Mashkoor & Sahan, n.d., p. 10)**

- **List of some French Borrowed Words in Modern Standard Arabic:**

The following table demonstrates a set of some French loanwords which found their way into MSA. The pieces of information gathered are: the French words, their translation in English, the MSA words, and the phonetic transcription of the word in MSA.

Word in French	Word translation in English	Word in MSA	Phonetic transcription
• Céramiques	➤ Ceramics	سيراميك	/sirami:k/
• Cassette	➤ Cassette	كاسيت	/Ka:sit/
• Pontalon	➤ Trousers	بنطلون	/bantalu:n/
• Parfum	➤ Perfume	بارفان	/barfa:n/
• Ballet	➤ Ballet	باليه	/bali:/
• Comédie	➤ Comedy	كوميديا	/kumidya/

- **Table 2.1.4. French Borrowed Words in MSA.**
  (Adapted from: Ibrahim, 2006)

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2.1.2.4. Diglossic-Code Shifting

As inferred and discussed in previous parts of this research work, The Arabic language is now defined as a diglossic one. MSA (HV) and the local colloquial Arabic (LV) differ at several levels: syntax, lexis, morphology, and phonology. MSA is significant across the entire Arab world as it is the formal standard variety in both education and media. In parallel, colloquial or dialectal Arabic is the mother tongue and the means of daily communication; it varies between and within countries. Arab speakers, educated ones specifically, tend to code-switch between the two producing a speech that involves both the features of MSA and the features of their dialects.

Speaking of Algeria, code switching and code mixing are highly frequent sociolinguistic phenomena that can be observed in most Algerian speech communities. Algerians code-switch between ADA, French, and Berber and its varieties. Added to that, the diglossic-code shifting also has its own share in the Algerian speech.

The following examples are illustrations of Algerians using diglossic-code shifting in their speech:

Example 01:

- **MSA:** ليس لدي مشكلة أنا قادر على أن أتحاور مع أي إنسان

- **PhoneticTranscription:** [læysa laday amuʃkilaʔana qa:dir ʕælaʔænʔataħa:wara maʕaʔæyʔinsa:n]

- **Diglossic-code shifting:** ما عنديش مشكل نقدر نتحاور مع أي إنسان

- **Phonetictranscription:** [mæʔandiʃ muʃkil naqdar natħawar mʕa ʔæyʔinsa:n]

- **English gloss:** *I have no problem, I can communicate with anyone.*

Example 02:

- **MSA:** الذي عنده شيء إضافي .. فليتفضل

- **Phonetictranscription:** [al'laði ʕindahu ʃæyʔ ʔidafi fal'yætæfaḍal]

- **Diglossic-code shifting:** اللي عندو حاجة يضيفها .. يتفضل.

- **Phonetictranscription:** [lli ʕandah ħaja yzi:dha yatfædal]

- **English gloss:** *who wants to add anything is welcomed.*

The tendency of Arabs to shift between their high and low varieties led to the emergence of a third level of Arabic labeled as "Educated Spoken Arabic". In the same vein, this third level is also emerging and spreading among educated people in Algeria as another tool of communication. This tool is supposed to reduce the intensity of the gap that separates the educated from the non-educated (Kerma, 2015, p. 2). The emergence of this variety in the Algerian will be more discussed in the section that follows.

Section Two: Arabization and the Emergence of a New Variety in Algeria

2.2.1. Arabization:

Broadly defined, Arabization refers to both the process of growing Arab influence on non-Arab populations, attempting to cause a language shift by their gradual adoption of the Arabic and culture, and the Arab nationalist policies of some governments in modern Arab countries, including: Iraq, Sudan, Mauritania, Syria, Algeria, and others ('Arabization', n.d., para. 1).

2.2.1.1. Arabization in Algeria.

Attempting to eradicate the Algerian Muslim identity, the French colonizer declared, on March 8th, 1938, Classical Arabic as a foreign language, and French became the official language of Algeria. Then, the Arabization process was launched aiming at restoring the Algerian identity and Arabic as the national language, after the 132 years linguistic heritage of French as the dominant language. This goal was not going to be realized unless French was replaced with Arabic in all sectors: government, education, business, administration, and media. The first call for officiating Arabic and regaining the Algerian identity was the November 1st proclamation (1954), the first official document published by the **National Liberation Front**, which paved the way for Arabic to take over French.

Arabization is the process of promoting the Arabic and Islamic culture. Therefore, regaining the high status of Arabic was an essential step to take by the Algerian Nationalists; the importance of Arabic was highlighted by Si Mohamed, the FLN commandant, when he emphasized:

> *Language is an element of reconciliation between men. Above the diversity of the local languages and dialects, the nation, in order to be unified and organized, must possess a national language. Our national language is Arabic. It is the language of our religion, culture, and historical past. (1961)*

However, the Arabization process was weakened by the Algerian francophone elites. They considered Arabic as an issue of religion, and traditional matters, claiming that Arabic was not suitable for technology, development, and French was their means towards modern life.

2.2.1.2. Outcomes and Attitudes towards Arabization

The success and failure of the Arabization Policy were highly dependent on the Algerian population's attitude. The Algerian speech community was mainly divided into three groups; francophone group, Arabophone group, and the Berbers. The francophone elites were against the Arabization process as they considered French to be the language of modernity, and technology while Arabic reflected ignorance and low social status. This group included the educated Algerian elites; doctors, teachers, engineers, university lecturer, etc. and mainly those who had a French education in France or were taught in Algeria by French teachers. For the Amazigh, Arabic; being a language of religion only, was seen as an imposed language, and the varieties they spoke (French and Tamazight) were enough for them for both communication and modern life requirements.

Consequently, the Arabization process did not succeed as most Algerians continued using ADA almost everywhere, whereas MSA was used as a medium of instructions in schools only. The French language, however, was by any definition, to hold a strong position in the Algerian speech community; it is, until this day, used as means of instruction in higher education (medicine, science, technology, etc.). The educated elite, especially the elderly, still use it, and it represents a big part of the Algerian dialect. Therefore, the Arabic language was confronted by a negative attitude for being used in religious matters, and for being difficult to learn. Politically, the term Arabic in Algeria remains fuzzy, as it does not point out which variety of Arabic is the official/national language; CA, MSA, ADA, or the new variety Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA). (see Chapter TWO, Section Two, 2).

2.2.1.3. The impact of English and Globalization on Algeria and the Arabization Policy

According to Oxford dictionary, globalization in its most general meaning refers to "the fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world are becoming connected and similar to each other because of the influence of large multinational companies and of improved communication". In simpler words, globalization is a strategy to make the world interconnected and interdependent, or "the process of world shrinkage", as referred to by Thomas Larsson in his book, "The Race to the Top: The Real Story of Globalization". Even though the term globalization did not come to existence until recently, its concept has existed since ancient civilizations. Globalization first emerged to entangle the world at the economic level; however, later on, it expanded at the political, financial, educational, cultural, and linguistic level.

In the frame of this study, it worth noting that the linguistic level of globalization has led to the rise of specific languages, most notably, the English language. English has been empowered by the American globalization, as Graddol (2006, p. 13) claimed, "The current enthusiasm for English is closely tied to the complex processes of globalization", and it is now regarded as a must-learnt global language, and the lingua franca of the world. In fact, the linguistic globalization aims at unifying the world under one language, and soon, under one culture, which can seriously lead to language attrition, language death, as well as the extermination of world cultures. In other words, when people speak a language, they speak its culture, and when people learn a language, they will be influenced by its culture.

Unifying the world under one language implies that this language will take over, be spoken worldwide, and used in all, or most, countries. This would weaken other languages, and in worst-case

scenario, results in the loss of a language if its people stop using it and use the global dominant language instead.

English, nowadays, is used in education, cross-cultural communication, schools, higher education, media, technology, etc. Learning this language has become crucial, and English speakers all over the world are more likely to find job opportunities, whether in national companies, or international ones.

In Algeria, speaking English is a non-replaceable prestigious feature. In fact, not only is it taught in schools for seven years (middle school and secondary school), but also it is a significant subject for higher education regardless of the study field or specialty. Children who still have not learnt it at school are acquiring it from cartoons and media. In addition to that, English is used by the new generation in direct, face-to-face conversations, social media (Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, etc.) for chatting, posting, announcements. Almost every new shop, store, restaurant prefers to have an English name to attract customers, for example, Burger Space, Celtics Food, Stella food. Moreover, English is used for international tourism, in arts, and most of the music that Algerians listen to, the TV shows, and films they watch are in English. Even though English the second foreign language in Algeria; it has gained a high status in the Algerian speech community, especially after the 2000 reform (see Chapter Two, Section One, 2.4.).

In closure, it is fair to say that Algerians' daily use of English and their urge to learn it has a significant share in the failure of the Arabization Policy, and the marginalization of the Arabic language in Algeria, most notably MSA.

2.2.2. Emergence of a New Arabic Variety in Algeria

2.2.2.1. Language Use in Algeria

2.2.2.1.1. Official and National Languages

An official language, on the one hand, is the language in which a government chooses to operate; it is used in government, administration, and education. The status of "official language" can be regarded as the highest status that can be given to a language. On the other hand, a national language is the language that reflects and symbolizes the identity of a country. When a language is recognized as a national language, this implies that the government is promoting that language so that citizens use it more readily, for instance, promoting the Arabic language in Algeria using the Arabization policy.

According to W. Fasold and Connor-Linton,

> *A national language is like the national flag. Its value is more symbolic than functional. An official language is comparable to the national railroads. A railroad's primary purpose is functional, getting people and goods from one part of the country to another…* (p.377)

Which suggests that:

- As long as a national language reflects the identity, it does not necessarily need to be spoken.

- An official language is not necessarily loved, or accepted, by citizens, but it is functional in the government.

Given the Algerian sociolinguistic situation, both Arabic and Tamazight are official and national languages. Arabic became a national language soon after the independence (1962); in 1976, it was assumed by the President Houari Boumediene as national and official, and in 1990, it officially became an official language of the country. Tamazight was given the status of a national language in 2002, and was standardized in 2016 as an official language. Even though

MSA is assumed to be the official and national variety of Arabic by Algerian linguists, decision makers still have not pointed out the status of CA and ADA, and they have not declared a clear statement about MSA as official and national.

MSA is used for political discourses, government announcements, newspapers, media (only the official/national TV Channels, and religious ones; A3, Programme National, TV5 Qur'an… etc), and is supposedly used in education as means of instructions. Additionally, it is used in mosques for Khotba (the Imam's speech), but Imams tend to blend ADA with MSA for the reason that some elder people may not be able to fully understand the standard form of Arabic. MSA is taught in schools starting from primary school to secondary schools, but the Algerian citizens do not use it in their daily conversations.

Tamazight is taught in schools (in Great Kabylia: Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia…), is it used in the government, administration, and media. However, unlike MSA, Tamazight is used in communication and daily conversations by its people.

2.2.2.1.2. Dialects

a) **ADA:** it is spoken everywhere; in the streets, at home, with friends, in the media, the social media, in administrations, and even at schools; teachers sometimes use ADA, or mix it with MSA, in order to explain for the pupils. ADA is varied, and every region in Algeria has its own dialect. ADA is also used by the Berbers.

b) **Berber and its varieties (Chaoui, Mzabi, and Targui):** they are used for communication and daily purposes (except Tamazight), and it is spoken by its people only as they represent a minority in the Algerian speech community.

2.2.2.1.3. Foreign Languages

a) **French:** its use in Algeria is inevitable. It is used in almost all sectors. Algerians start leaning French in the third grade (primary school) and it continues to the final year in the secondary school (baccalaureate). It is used as means of instructions in higher education in almost all fields. French represents a huge part of ADA, and it is used on a daily basis; in communication, media, social media, newspaper, governments, administrations, etc.

b) **Other foreign languages:** currently, Algerians tend to learn and use more foreign languages as manifested in all the private schools that teach English, Spanish, German, and other languages as well.

2.2.2.2. Language Conflict in Algeria

Language conflict occurs when two or more languages/ varieties exist side by side in one speech community. The conflict arises when these linguistic codes confront each other politically and socially. The competition between languages is motivated by the language speakers who attempt to prioritize one language and neglect the other. The Algerian context is a perfect platform to study and investigate the conflict between its coexisting varieties, which can be summarized in the following:

a) MSA and CA:

Most Algerians do not draw a clear distinction between MSA and CA; both of them are referred to as Arabic (Ɂal'ʕarabi:yatu l'fusħa). The status of CA in Algeria is unknown; it is not used anywhere by anyone except in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith. CA is clearly more difficult than MSA; the most noticeable difference between the two varieties is the vocabulary. MSA has borrowed many foreign words to meet the requirements of the modern world, and many CA words have a simpler alternative in

MSA. Despite the fact that Algerians may not be able to fully distinguish between CA and MSA, they would refer to any difficult Arabic words that they may not understand as Arabic of Al-Jahilya (a name given to the period before Islam). Moreover, the astonishing thing is that if an Algerian speaks CA, they would be praised; however, they would also be made fun of as CA is can possibly sound as foreign language to the Algerian linguistic repertoire. Nevertheless, if one refers to Arabic or CA as a dead language, they are likely to be faced with a negative attitude for even if Algerians do not master MSA or CA, they always perceive as a part of their identity.[1]

b) MSA and Berber:

The initiation of the Arabization process led to marginalizing and eroding Berber and its varieties. The Arab nationalism in Algeria gave the Arabic language the space to extend at the expense of Berber, and Berber leaders felt threatened and forced to use MSA and ADA, which resulted in physical violence and incarceration in the 1980s. Berbers considered Arabic as an imposed language that does not represent them, and as a weapon that will eradicate their own language and culture. However, in order to keep peace and create a unified linguistic and cultural facet of Algeria, Tamazight was acknowledged by the Algerian constitution as a national (2002) and official (2016) language[2].

c) MSA and French:

The conflict between Arabic and French can be traced back to the beginning of the French colonialism. Despite the government's effort to arabize the country, French will never cease to exist in

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[1] [2] Kerma, M.(2018). The Linguistic Friction in Algeria,2(2), 135-139. Retrieved from
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328141366_The_Linguistic_Friction_in_Algeria

the Algerian linguistic repertoire. Most Algerians refer to French as the language of the enemy, and they grew up having negative attitude towards it. In the colonization era, those who spoke alternatively French with MSA, were usually referred to as 'HARKI'. Recently, a great number of Algerian students have launched campaigns demanding to replace French with English. However, French has grown to represent a solid part of the Algerian dialects and removing, it will lead to radical changes in ADA. In addition to that, replacing the French language with English means that the entire core of the higher education system will change. In some cases, there were claims that Arabic should be replaced with French in schools as means of instruction.

d) MSA and ADA:

The conflict between MSA and ADA exists in the sense that Algerians use either ADA or Berber and its varieties, but they are obliged to use MSA in schools. Statistics show that 80% of them are native speakers of ADA whereas 20% are Berbers, with few exceptions (French as a mother tongue in some cases). Mitchell (1974, p.124) states that: "Modern Standard Arabic is not a spoken language, it is nobody's mother tongue, and the man who wants to talk at all times like a book or a newspaper is a decided oddity." Not only in Algeria, but in all Arab countries, MSA is not perceived as a mother tongue, and whoever decides to speak MSA, must have a thorough knowledge of it. Achouche states that, "An Algerian reader whose level of education equivalent to the Baccalaureate cannot read a page of an Arabic newspaper without making mistakes of interpretation." (quoted in Kerma, 2018, p.136).Very few Algerians can use MSA spontaneously and extemporaneously as opposed to most of them who have a passive knowledge of it; they cannot speak it or write it properly. Serious grammatical and pronunciation mistakes are made due to the lack of competency and lack of vowel

indication, or diacritics (Tashkeel/ Harakat), which refers to the marks used as phonetic guides. The original Arabic language was read by Arabs without the need for phonetic guides; however, they added these marks to make it easily readable to foreigners, and to read the Qur'an correctly. The extraordinary reality is that Arabs nowadays, similar to foreigners, seem unable to read Arabic without Tashkeel, which has resulted in the serious pronunciation mistakes.

In Algeria, a large number of children acquire MSA via television (cartoons) as a second language while many of them learn it at school. At the age of six, Algerian pupils are confronted with MSA; a new language, new vocabulary, new pronunciation of words, and new grammatical rules. MSA is taught at all levels (primary, middle, and secondary school); young pupils who are new to this variety find themselves lost in a diglossic circle between the daily use of ADA, and the imposed MSA at schools.

Even though most Algerians study MSA for thirteen years, a great number of them is unable to operate in it, and in most cases, they mix it with ADA. Moreover, once they go to university, they study in French, or English, except for students of law, political sciences, psychology and very few other subjects, which are taught in MSA. As a result, they will have begun to lose their MSA by their first year in university.

It has become inevitable to mix between ADA and MSA, or code-switch between the two when attempting to speak MSA. Bishai (1996) states that, *"Desirous of reaching the general public and perhaps also because they had not fully mastered CA the speakers of the revolutions have often used colloquial expression in their formal speech."* (p. 86). This contact between the two varieties will for better or for worse lead to the creation of a new variety of Arabic. Consequently, MSA is more subjected to attrition/ loss, and Arab countries will have their own versions of Arabic.

The following table illustrates the gap that exists between MSA and ADA, presenting a cluster of words that differ from one region to another:

MSA	ماذا	ثياب /ملابس	انتظر	نعم	لا أستطيع
English	What	Clothes	Wait	Yes	I can't
Region	ADA				
Tiaret	Shtahi/shtahi Shaho/shtaho	Hwala	Qaraa	Hih	Mantigsh
Oran	Shawala	Qash	Qaraa	Wah	Manqadsh
Naama	Wesh	Qash	Stena	Wah	Manqadsh
Constantine	Weshia	Qash	Essena	Hih	Maneqdersh
Algiers	Weshno	Lebsa	Sbor	Eh	Maneqdersh

- **Table 2.2.1. The Difference between MSA and ADA through several Algerian Regions.**

2.2.2.3. Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA)

Alongside with MSA, each Arab country has its own dialect; this diversity has created serious difficulties in regard to teaching Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL). The question that was raised is that of which variety of Arabic is to be taught/learnt by foreigners. As an attempt to solve these problems faced by foreigners, Pormadi suggested using a new form of Arabic referred to as "Educated Spoken Arabic" (ESA), or "Formal Spoken Arabic". This variety is not particularly standard 'fusha', nor is it a dialect, but rather a form that includes features of both the standard form, and the dialect.

In this regard, Altoma (n.d.) describes,

> *Between these two forms of Arabic there exist a variety of intermediary Arabic often called /al-lugha al wusta/, "the middle language", and described as a result of Classical and Colloquial fusion. The basic features of this middle language are predominantly colloquial, but the reveal a noticeable degree of classicism especially in the use of lexical items.*

- **Ferguson's Classification**:

ESA, also referred to as intermediate Arabic, was recognized by Ferguson (1959), he puts forth,

> *A kind of spoken Arabic much used in semi-formal and cross-dialectal situations which has a highly classical vocabulary with few or no inflectional endings, with certain features of classical syntax, but with a fundamentally colloquial base in morphology and syntax, and a generous admixture of colloquial vocabulary.* (p. 433) (quoted in El Hassan 1977, p.113)

Accordingly, ESA is a mixture of colloquial Arabic, and MSA, used in normal educated speeches by educated people. Ferguson contributed remarkably to the field of Arabic linguistics. He reclassified the Arabic diglossia situation:

- ➢ CA/ MSA as a high variety.

- ➢ ESA as an intermediate form.

- ➢ Colloquial Arabic as the low variety.

Many linguists after Ferguson attempted to investigate the intermediate form of Arabic, and reclassify the different varieties of Arabic. Mitchell (1974, p.125) claims that " yet, it is the virtually unregistered 'mixed' Arabic provide the basis for the koineised Arabic of intercommunication between Arabs of different countries." The term koine refers to any modified language/dialect that has developed due to the contact between languages/dialects.

- • **El Hassan Classification:**

El Hassan (1978, p.32) distinguished three main levels of Arabic, he claimed,

> *Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the written language of contemporary literature, journalism, and spoken prose. It exists side by side with great number of regional vernaculars, usually referred to globally as Colloquial Arabic. Educated speakers in the Arab world use the variety of Arabic which we call Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA) which draw upon both MSA and Colloquial Arabic and constitute a continuum. These varieties of Arabic are neither discrete nor homogenous; rather they are characterized by gradation and variation.*

He mentions three main levels:

- ➢ Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

- ➢ Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA).

- ➢ Colloquial Arabic (Ca).

According to him, the use of these varieties is determined by the setting, the participants, and the topic of discussion. His assumption that the three levels of Arabic form a continuum indicates that ESA has emerged from both MSA and Colloquial Arabic. He added that ESA is not used by all people, but by educated ones for the reason that the use of ESA requires a speaker who can use MSA, not only Colloquial Arabic.

2.2.2.3.1. Emergence of Educated Spoken Arabic in Algeria

The lack of competency in MSA, and the fact that ADA cannot be advocated as a standard variety were the main key that opened the door to the new variety of ESA in Algeria. Bouhadiba (1998, p. 1-15) stated that, "The phenomenon of varieties fusion in presence within the continuum, as well as the Pan Arabic communication worry gave birth to a new form of Arabic '*allugha al wusta*' or intermediate Arabic.". It is a variety that borrows from MSA, and is expressed fluently in ADA; it is expected to be the code that will bridge gap between ADA and MSA. ESA is not standard, nor is it a native variety.

The diagram below shows the different varieties of Arabic in Algeria,
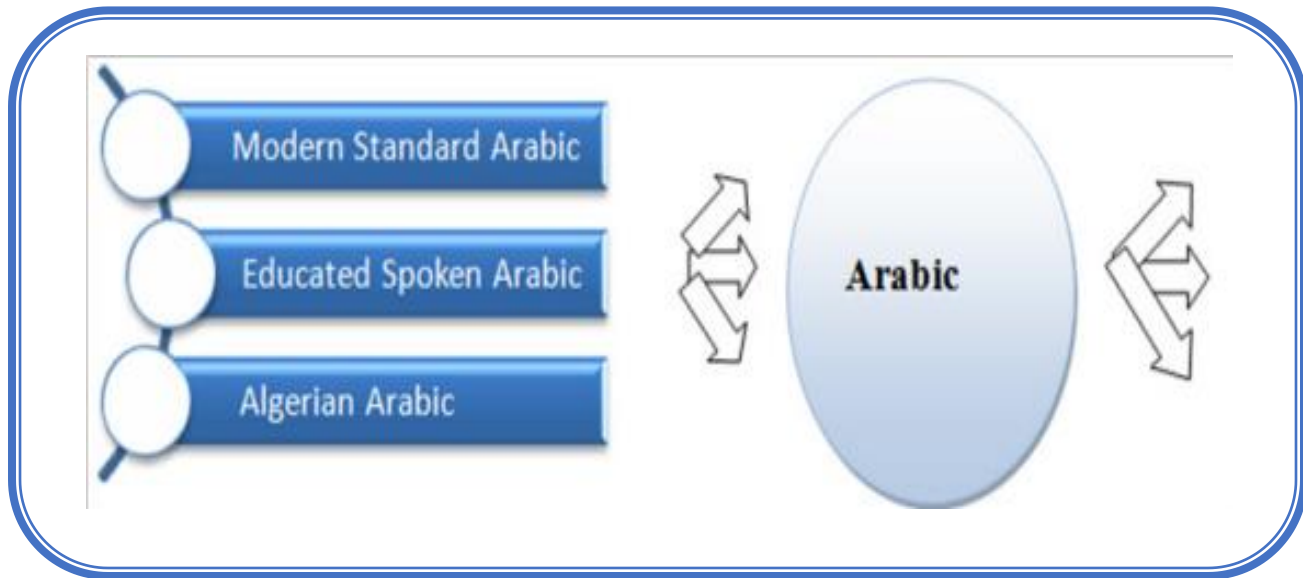
- **Figure 2.2.1. The Arabic Varieties in Algeria.**
  (Adopted from: Kerma, 2018, p. 139)

The stylistics of ESA, linguistic forms and structures are not yet determined; however, it is still in the process of developing, and it has started to establish itself in the Algerian linguistic repertoire due to compulsory and free mass-education. Even though they are not yet aware of this new linguistic code, Algerians tend to use ESA to overcome regional unintelligibility, and to show solidarity with the other regional speech community.

The following passages are examples of ESA in Algeria:

- **Passage 01: (Translated from: www.research.ox.ac.uk)**

"... باش نجاوبوا على هذا السؤال لازم أولاً نفهموا أن تطوير اللقاحات ليس بالأمر الهيّن، تخيل تخدم لقاح وتروح توزعوا على آلافوملايين من البشر ثم تبدا تظهر الكوارث اللي تسبب فيها اللقاح تاعك.. لذلك تم وضع شروط ومراحل لازم يفوت بيها أي لقاح في العالم حتى يتم المصادقة عليه و إعتماده كلقاح قابل للإستخدام.."

➢ **Phonetic transcription:**

o [Baʃ nǰawbu ʕla had suʔæl lazæm awallan næfahmuʔæn taṭwi:r al'luqa:ħa:t laysab il'ʔamr al'hayin, txayæl tæxdem luqa:ħ w tru:ħt wazʕu ʕlaʔælaf w mallayi:n mn l'baʃar θumma tebda: tedhar al'kawariθ lli tsabab fiħaluqa:ħ taʕæk .. lidalik tam wadʕ ʃuruṭ w maraħil læzæm y'fut biħaʔæy luqa:ħ f l'ʕælam ħata y'tim al'musadaqa ʕlih wa ʔiʕ timadih ka'luqa:ħ qa:bil li'l'ʔistixdam]

➢ **English gloss**:

o *"... to answer this question, we should understand that developing a vaccine is not an easy thing. Imagine manufacturing a vaccine and distributing it to thousands and millions of people, then the disasters your vaccine cause starts to show. For this reason, some conditions and procedures have been put for any vaccine to go through until it is approved and promoted as a usable one."*

• **Passage 02: (Translated from:** www.languageinsight.com 'The origin of language':

Evolution's greatest mystery**)**

" ... ممكن شخص يتساءل تعدد اللغات هذا منين جا ؟واش هي اللغة لي نطق بيها الإنسان أول ما تخلق ؟ولا الإنسان هذا منطقش خلاص؟ كاين بزاف علماء و مختصين في اللغات وصلوا بحثهم بنظرية شهيرة"اللغة الإلهية" لي تنص على أنو الإنسان تخلق بلغة معينة .لكن العديد من الحقائق تكذب الفرضية هذي لأنو كاين اختلاف كبير جدا بين اللغات مثلا الصينية و الانجليزية ... يعني كون جا الأصل تاع اللغة واحد ممكن يكون الاختلاف صغير جدا .."

➢ **Phonetic transcription:**

o [mumkin ʃaxs yetsæʔal taʕadud ll'uɣat hada mnin ǰa:ʔ waʃ hiya ll'uɣa li n'ṭaq biha al'ʔinsan ʔawal ma: taxlaq? w'la l'ʔinsan hada ma: nṭaqʃ xlas? Kayen bæzaf ʕulamaʕ w muxtasin f ll'uɣat waslu: baħθhum b'nadariya ʃahira "all'uɣa al'ʔilahiya" li tnos ʕlaʔannou "al'ʔinsan taxlaq b ll'uɣa muʕayana" lakin l'ʕadid mn l'ħaqaʔiq tkadeb al'faradiya hadi liʔanu kayæn ixtilaf kbir ǰidan bin ll'uɣat maθlan al'siniya w l'ʔingliziya … yaʕni kun ǰa: l'ʔasl taʕ ll'u ɣawaħed mumkin ykun l'ʔixtilaf sɣir ǰidan …]

➢ **English gloss:**

o *"… anyone can wonder about the source of languages' versatility, and what is the first language the first human spoke?or this human did not speak in the first place? There are a lot of scientists and language specialists who related their research to a famous theory, "the divine language", which suggest that the human being was created with a specific language. However, there are many facts belie this hypothesis because there is a big difference between languages, for example: Chinese and English. This implies that if the origin of languages was one, the difference could be very small …"*

Section Three: The Erosion of Modern Standard Arabic

It is said that the world's language history is merely a story of loss and decline. Linguists estimated that upwards of 20.000 languages might have existed around 8000 BC. Nowadays, the

number stands at over 7000 languages and is declining at an unprecedented rate. Recent statistics predict that, by 2100, half of these languages will be vanished, their last speakers dead, their words recorded in dusty archives, but most likely undocumented (Hieber, 2012, para. 1).

In the case of the Arabic language, several signs postulate that Standard Arabic (MSA) is on the decline, and many people still show the same disinterest in this language. No accurate statistics prove that MSA is at the risk of decline. However, people mostly judge that based on individual and global indicators.

The section below is for discussing the indicators of MSA decline on both the global and individuals' levels:

2.3.1. The Decline of MSA on the Global Level

MSA is commonly used in pan-Arab media, formal contexts such as religious sermons and texts, political speeches, and literature. When people mention the decline of MSA, they generally point out the decline in literacy, literature, and the growing tendencies of Arabs to use dialects or foreign languages instead of MSA.

A living example of the severe decline of MSA in the Arab world can be seen in the statistics of the '2017 Arab Youth Survey' run in Gulf countries. The statistics revealed that the number of people who are comfortable speaking and writing MSA (fus'ha) has been steadily reducing (Khalaf, 2018, para 1), whereas the number of people who speak English comfortably has been increasing. In fact, "English is encroaching on Arabic in the public sector, private schools, and tourism" (Morrow & Castleton, n.d. p. 210). In the UAE, the entire educational system was converted to English, and it has become the official language for business and tourism in most Arab countries (Al-Allaq, n.d. p. 7).

Moreover, in Lebanon, English is used in education as an instruction means alongside French[2].The need for foreign languages, English in particular, has been increasing extensively; in scientific research, higher education, and tourism. Said differently, due to economy, business, technology, and globalization, the prioritization of English, and foreign languages, in the Arab world has contributed to the decline of MSA (Al-Allaq, n.d. p. 4).

Another leading cause to the erosion of MSA is war; in countries like Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Libya, and Yemen, most schools were destroyed (around 9000 schools according to the UNICEF), and 14.3 million children were prevented from attending schools (Ali, 2019, para. 6). For instance, Syria was recognized for its contribution to the spread and development of Arabic (MSA) as its entire education system, including higher education, was in Arabic before its destruction during the 2011 war. At present, most Arab refugees are obliged to use foreign languages, while the use of MSA has been decreasing (Ali, 2019, para. 7).

In addition to that, widespread illiteracy throughout the Arab world has had a significant effect on MSA. According to UNICEF, 52 million Arab adults are illiterate (Ali, 2019, para. 5).It is important to note that the annual production of books in the entire Arab world nowadays is estimated around 15,000 and 18,000 books, which equals the production of Penguin Random House only (Ali, 2019, para. 3). In Egypt, the production of books written in MSA has dropped by seventy percent (70%) after the 2011 revolution (Abouzahr, 2018, para. 5).

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[2]HossamAbouzahr (2018). Standard Arabic is on the decline: Here's what's worrying about that. AtlanticCouncil. Retrieved September 7, 2020 from https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/standard-arabic-is-on-the-decline-

2.3.2. The Decline of MSA on the Individuals' Level (MSA as a Second Language)

The root cause for the erosion of MSA lies at the level of individuals, "languages die because people stop speaking them" (Kulick, 2019). People no longer use or study MSA; indeed, the department of Arabic at the UAE University reported that the number of students has decreased as only five students graduated in 2012 compared to eighty-two graduates in 2006 (Abbas, 2012-2013).

Additionally, other examples concerning the decline of MSA were provided by different Arab teachers and professors; the dean of Qatar campus in the University of Northwestern stated that the majority of its Arab students "don't speak Arabic well enough to appear on Al Jazeera." (The New York Times, n.d.). In Morocco, the writer and literary critic Abdel Fattah Kilito said that his Master's students "don't read anything at all." (Abouzahr, 2018, para. 5).

Nowadays, the social media has become the main tools to express different cultures and languages, yet MSA has not benefited from it as much as expected. According to a study conducted by Northwestern University, the number of Arabic-speaking internet users has increased; however, the Arabic language is one of the most under-represented languages online. Another reason for the decline of MSA on the individuals' level is society. Journalist ErinBurnett claims that "The wealthier the family, the less likely its members [are to] speak Arabic at home," (Fortune Magazine, n.d.), which indicates that most Arab parents favor learning foreign languages at the expense of MSA.

Moreover, several studies were conducted to examine the status of MSA, in Arab countries, as a second language. Dr. Raphiq Ibrahim (***The Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities at the University of Haifa's Department of Learning Disabilities***) stated that MSA is expressed in the brain of Arabs as a second language, not as a mother tongue.

He adds,

> *The cognitive disparity between the two languages is similar to the difference between a native and a second language. This offers an explanation for the objective and day-to-day difficulties that confront Arabic-speaking students when attempting to learn to read the non-spoken language.* ('What is Unique?, 2009, para. 1)

His researches have shown that MSA is perceived as a second language as its users face difficulties when using it. The results of his studies have given evidence that the cognitive process in using MSA is less similar to that in using a mother tongue, and more similar to that in using a second language. Accordingly, the fluent use of MSA by Arabs can be considered as a form of bilingualism. [3]

As a result of the global and individual decline of MSA, most Arab primary school pupils often find it hard to learn MSA sinceit is similar to a new language to them.

Dr. Raphiq Ibrahim state that,

> *The results of this study indicate that linguistic structures of MSA that constitute the basis for reading acquisition are likely to be unfamiliar to the Arabic-speaking child when beginning to learn to read in first grade. This makes learning to read in Arabic a double mission, whereby children are expected to acquire in parallel an auditory linguistic system as well as a complex orthographic-visual language system.*[4]

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that/?fbclid=IwAR3Vn1JQWy0vn27UnDhYRDdfV4o9T3yCvLl0nvLlJu0vVGEQzqJa6jMAupQ

[3]University of Haifa. (2009, November 5). Literary Arabic Is Expressed In Brain Of Arabic Speakers As A Second Language. ScienceDaily. Retrieved September 7, 2020 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/11/091104091724.htm

[4]University of Haifa. (2009, November 5). Literary Arabic Is Expressed In Brain Of Arabic Speakers As A Second Language. ScienceDaily. Retrieved September 7, 2020 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/11/091104091724.htm

According to his claim, teachers are ought to teach MSA following the same methods of teaching a second, or foreign, language.

2.3.3. The Case in Algeria

In Algeria, MSA has been subjected to decline since the French colonization in 1830. The French colonizer did its best to eradicate the Algerian identity starting from The Arabic language, the language of Islam and the Holy Qu'ran. Nowadays, the educated elite of the elderly prefers using French while the young prefer English and other foreign languages. This linguistic situation, dominated by the presence of such languages made it difficult for MSA to prevail.

Generally, the use of MSA in Algeria is waning because of the carelessness displayed by most Algerians towards this particular variety of Arabic. Additionally, despite having the key to revive and spread it in all kinds of sectors, Algerian public officials, instead, constrain the use of MSA. In this respect, Altwaijri (2017) stated:

> *The current situation of the Arabic language in general, and on many levels,*
>
> *is unbecoming; not due to the nature of the language itself (syntax, structure or*
>
> *patterns), but mainly on account of the inattention and carelessness shown by its*
>
> *speakers, particularly the exclusion and marginalization displayed by public officials*
>
> *who hold the key of bringing Arabic back to life, instead of constraining its use.* (p. 12)

Furthermore, Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri claims that despite the ground MSA gained in social networks and media, it is regressing at school level. He explains this regression by weaknesses in the teaching methods and the poor teachers' levels. He puts forth:

> *The category of students who join Arabic language departments at faculties*
>
> *of letters and education and teachers' training centers. They are usually composed of*
>
> *students who failed to join other faculties and found themselves compelled to make this*
>
> *choice, which, in turn, impacts badly the knowledge level of these faculties' graduates,*
>
> *particularly those hired as teachers in primary, secondary and high school levels.*
>
> (2017, p. 12)

There have not been many studies concerning the erosion of MSA, particularly in Algeria; however, the literature information provided in the two previous titles can be applicable to the Algerian speech community since it examines the situation of MSA in the Arab world.

3.5. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, a multidimensional sociolinguistic description was given to MSA amid the Algerian community. The first section detailed how MSA exists side by side with several other languages in the Algerian linguistic environment. Furthermore, it provided insights into the phenomenon of language contact in relation to MSA. Then, the second section discussed the process of Arabization in addition to the emergence of ESA as a new variety in Algeria. Finally, the third section was about the indicators of MSA decline all through the Arab world, in general, and in Algeria, in particular. In conclusion, this chapter illustrates how MSA is in constant conflict and contact with several varieties in the Algerian context. This diverse linguistic situation is a perfect platform to investigate the factors of MSA attrition.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology and Data Analysis

"Research is what I do when I do not know what I am doing."

Wernher Von Braun.

3.1. Introduction

The study at hand is devoted to investigate whether Educated Algerians experience erosion at the level of MSA skills, after the end of their general education/ instruction and getting more involved in learning a foreign language (English in this case). Added to that, it attempts to shed light on the use of ESA by this particular sample and whether it interferes with the attrition of MSA. In this regard, the following three-section-chapter deals with the implemented methodology for the requirements of this research; and eventually report the collected data quantitatively and qualitatively. In the first section, a comprehensive description is provided to the methodology and the sample of the study. The second section is devoted to reporting the results from the collected data and discussing the findings. Finally, the third section will present implications and recommendations of the study in addition to some suggestions for further research.

Section One: Description of the Study

3.1.1. Research Design

The research methodology used in this enquiry was designed in accordance with the cluster of objectives it tries to fulfill. The main aim is to investigate whether the chosen educated sample of Algerians (M2 students of English language at the university of Ibn Khaldoun, in Tiartet) experience any kind of decline at the level of MSA skills, after the end of their general instruction and getting more involved in learning a foreign language (English in this case). Additionally, the study tries to explore the use of ESA by this sample and question whether it has a relationship to the erosion of

MSA. In this regard, the study is conducted using two common data collecting tools: Online

Questionnaire and Online Interview.

3.1.1.1. Research Methods and Data Collection Tools

For the sake of the investigation subtlety, the research at hand yielded to using a mixed

methodology encompassing both Quantitative and Qualitative approaches.

3.1.1.1.1. Quantitative Approach

The aim of this approach/ method is to answer questions like *Who? How much? What? When?*

etc. It is merely conducted by utilizing and analyzing numerical data via specific statistical techniques.

Leedy and Omrod (2001) stated that "Quantitative research involves the collection of data so that

information can be quantified and subjected to statistical treatment in order to support or refute

alternative knowledge claims" (as cited in Apuke, 2017, p. 41) . Quantitative research method helps the

researcher:

     a)   Test hypotheses, look at cause and effect, and make predictions;

     b)   Randomly select larger samples;

     c)   Specific variables can be easily tested;

     d)   Statistically report the findings by establishing their correlations and significance.

In this research work, the quantitative method was conducted through the use of an online

questionnaire.

3.1.1.1.2. Description and Objectives of the Questionnaire

An online questionnaire is a structured questionnaire that the targeted sample completes over the internet, usually through filling out a designed form. Online questionnaires can vary in length and format. Moreover, the data is stored in a database where the questionnaire designing tool (Google Forms in our case) usually provides some levels of analysis to the data. Online questionnaires have several advantages that can help us to fulfill and meet our study requirements and objectives, in terms that:

1) It facilitates the data collection process for researchers;

2) Respondents feel more secured when answering as their identities are completely anonymous;

3) It can reach distant respondents;

4) It has no financial costs.

In this research, the questionnaire we opted for encompasses four different sections. Following the common standards for designing a questionnaire, the first section was merely dedicated to illustrate more information about our respondents, so we construct a better image on how the sample population is. The second section was devoted to explore some sociolinguistic aspects related to the attitudinal and motivational sides of our respondents towards both MSA and foreign languages. In the third section we tried to shed light on our sample's linguistic background through a cluster of closed and open-ended questions about their use and proficiency of MSA, English, and other varieties. In the final fourth section, we continued exploring the linguistic skills of our participants by asking them to compare their proficiency in MSA to the one they have in English in various tasks. As a final point, we tried to tackle some psychological aspects where we asked the respondents about the impact that losing MSA could have on them and what ideas they might have to strengthen its status.

3.1.1.1.3. Qualitative Approach

The qualitative approach focuses on the quality of things, their nature, how they are like, and how they can be described. Schunk (2012) stated that qualitative approach is characterized by "intensive study, descriptions of events, and interpretation of meanings" (p. 12). It often involves views or internal worlds of the participants in addition to data gathered through the use of interviews, observations, focus groups, etc. The data collected via these tools, often take the form of words, narratives, and descriptions that are not easy to encrypt and analyze. Overall, the qualitative approach tries to preserve the voice and perspectives of the participants and it is good for:

1) Flexibility where the data can be adapted as new ideas or patterns emerge.

2) Meaningful insights in which detailed and thorough descriptions of the participants can be used to test the hypotheses from alternative angles.

3) Generation of new ideas where the respondents' open-ended responses can help researchers unveil novel problems that they wouldn't have thought of otherwise.

In this enquiry, the qualitative data was collected through the use of an online interview (a semi-structured one).

3.1.1.1.4. Description and Objectives of the Interview

An online interview is conducted through 'Computer Mediated Communication' (CMC), such as video/ phone calls, e-mails, instant messaging, etc. Interviews, semi-structured ones, in particular, are a qualitative data collection method through which the researcher asks the interviewees a cluster of open-ended questions to understand the meanings they assign to their activities, their motives, perspectives, and experiences. A semi-structured interview is a cooperative tool that helps the investigators to:

1) Provide an opportunity to the interviewees to bring new insights to the topic;

2) Allows them to open up about sensitive and critical issues;

3) Provide qualitative data to compare with previous and future data.

The semi-structured interview that we opted for is designed to match and fulfill the following objectives:

1) Compare the interviewees' fluency of MSA to that of English.

2) Shed light on some psychological and attitudinal aspects of the interviewees towards both MSA and English.

3) Test the participants' fluency in MSA and check whether they can properly talk using it without shifting to their mother tongue or any other foreign language.

In this regard the interview will consist of four open-ended questions: two questions are to be answered in English language, and two are to be answered using MSA.

3.1.2. Sampling Method and Target Population

3.1.2.1. Population Sampling

The population selected for the fulfillment of this study is 'Master Two students of English language at Tiaret University of Ibn Khaldoun'. The reason behind opting for this particular population is the fact that its members have ceased receiving their general instruction in MSA, at least four years ago. This sets the minimum time for the incubation period to four years (or more for some participants). The sample was randomly chosen (probability sampling), where each member of the population had a fair chance to be part of the investigation. The sample size is limited to only 40 students out of all M2 students at the department of English language.

3.1.2.2. Students' Profile (The Participants)

Given the limitations in time and resources that this study encountered, only 40 students of the whole population were randomly selected to be the sample under investigation. Students from both branches (Linguistics and Didactics) were involved in the range of this enquiry. After analyzing the data obtained from the respondents' answers to the questionnaire, the statistics revealed that the sample consists of:

➢ 13 Male respondents, making (32.5%) of the population.

➢ 27 Female respondents, making (67.5%) of the population.

➢ 30 of the respondents are specialized in Linguistics, making (75%) of the population

➢ Only 10 respondents are specialized in Didactics, making (25%) of the population.

➢ The participants' age ranges from 20 to 28 years old.

Section Two: Reporting and Discussing the Findings

3.2.1. Students' Online Questionnaire Results

The data obtained from the online questionnaire is reported using percentages and frequencies.

Section 01: Participants' General Information

Question 01 : Participants' Personal Information

Gender	N	%	Speciality	N	%	Age	N	%
Male	13	32.5	Linguistic	30	75	20-23	11	27.5
Female	27	67.5	Didactics	10	25	23-28	28	70
Total	40	100	Total	40	100	+28	1	2.5
						Total	40	100

Table 3.2.1. Gender, Specialty, and Age of the Informants.

- According to table 3.2.1., the first item introduces gender where the majority of participants are females (67.5%) while less than half of them (32.5%) are males (Graph 3.2.1.). The second item represents the participants' specialty (Graph 3.2.2.) where students of linguistics (75%) are three times more than students of didactics (25%). In the last item, we included participants' age (Graph 3.2.3.): the age of most students ranges from 23 to 28 years old (70%), only 27.5% of them are 20-23 years old, while 2.5% are 28 years old.
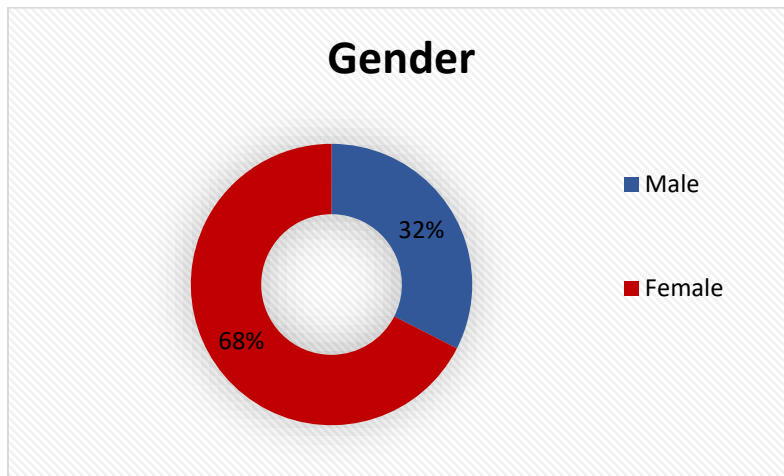
Graph 3.2.1. Students' Gender.
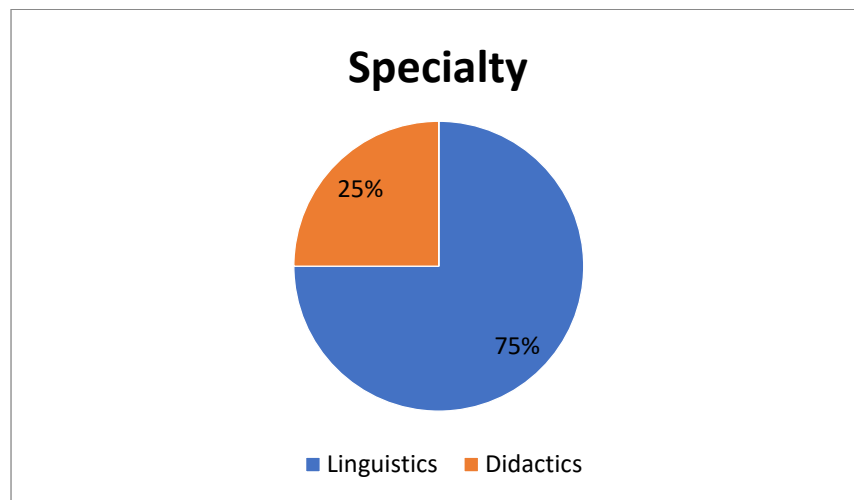
Graph3.2.2. Students' Specialty.
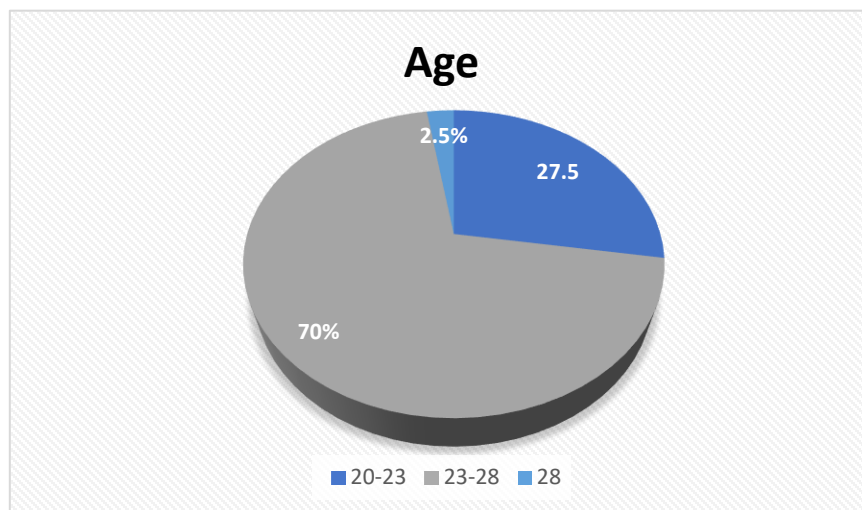
Graph3.2.3. Participants' Age.

Question 02: Participants' Mother Tongue and Spoken languages

Mother Tongue	ADA	Berber	French	Total
N	38	2	0	**40**
%	95	5	0	**100**

Table3.2.2. Participants' Mother Tongue.

- Looking at Table 3.2.2., ADA is the mother tongue of the vast majority of participants (95%) while students whose mother tongue is Berber represent only 5%, and 0% for French, which indicates that most students grew up speaking ADA (graph 3.2.4.).

Spoken Languages	Arabic	English	French	Spanish	German	Turkish
N	38	40	26	5	3	1
%	95	100	65	12.5	7.5	2.5

Table 3.2.3. Participants' Spoken Languages.

- From Table 3.2.3., we can see that English is spoken by all participants (100%), and Arabic by 95% of them. A large number of students (65%) speaks French whereas only 12.5%, 7.5%, and 2.5% speak Spanish, German, and Turkish, respectively. These results suggest that the three dominant languages are English, Arabic, and French.
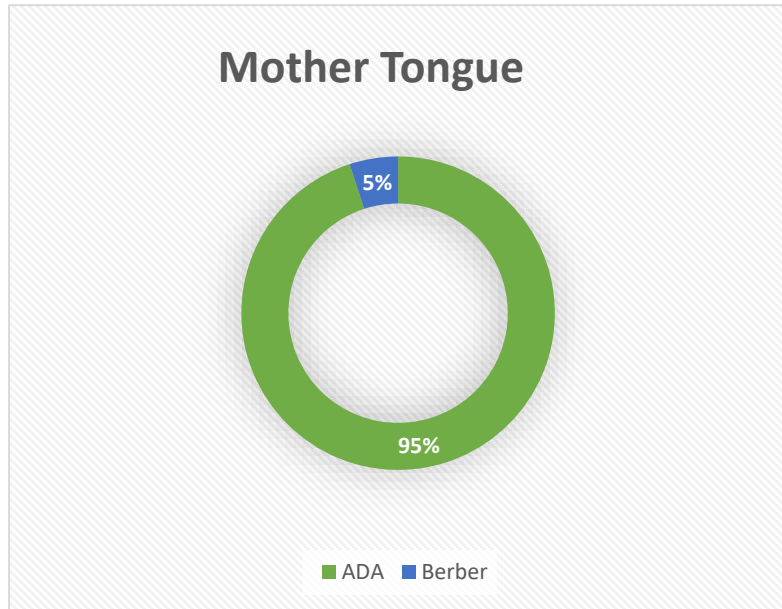
Graph 3.2.4. Participants' Mother Tongue.
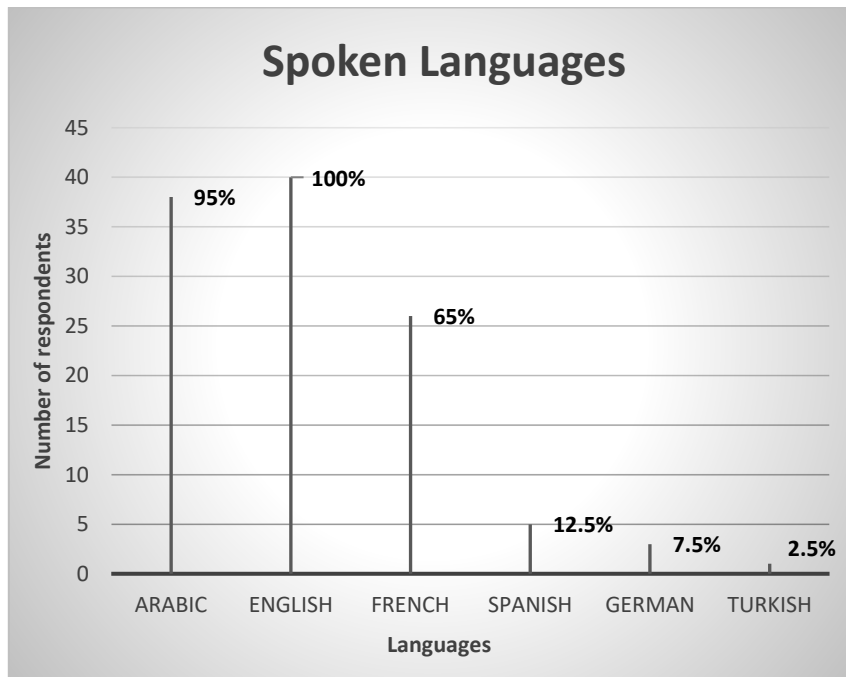
Graph 3.2.5. Participants' Spoken Languages.

Section 02: Attitudes and Motivation towards Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Foreign

Languages

Question 01: Do you believe that MSA is a vital part of your culture and identity? Why?

Answers	Yes	No	Total
N	33	7	40
%	82.5	17.5	100

Table3.2.4. MSA as a Vital Part of the Culture and Identity of Participants.

- As demonstrated in both Table 3.2.4 and graph 3.2.6, MSA is seen and perceived as a crucial part of the culture and identity of most students as 82.5% of them answered "Yes" while 17.5% answered with "No".

- The answers to the question whether they believe that MSA is a vital part of their culture show that most students answered "Yes" because:

    a) They consider Arabic to be the language of Muslims (Holy Qur'an and religion).

    b) Few of them believe that MSA is the official language of Algeria and thus it is a vital part of their culture.

- Students whose answer was "No" vary from:

    a) Those who believe that foreign languages and cultures are taking over;

    b) Those who are Berber (Amazigh) and consider MSA to reflect religion only, not the entire culture and identity.

    c) Those who see that MSA is not vital part of their identity because it is not used anywhere

- From these answers it can be deduced that MSA is vital in terms that it reflects participants' culture

  and identity mainly, since Arabic is the language of Islam and the Holy Qur'an.
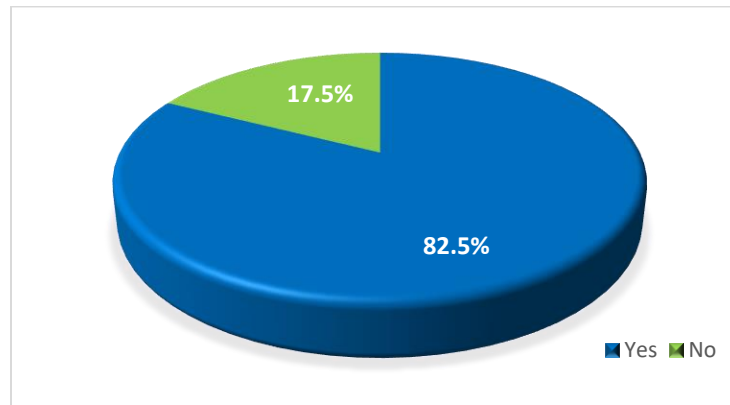
Graph 3.2.6. MSA as a Vital Part of the Culture and Identity of Participants.

Question 02: The importance of Learning MSA and Foreign Languages

 The tables below show the importance of learning MSA in comparison to learning foreign languages.

Importance of MSA:

options	Very important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Total
N	13	20	6	1	**40**
%	32.5	50	15	2.5	**100**

Table3.2.5. The Importance of Having a Command of MSA.

- According to table3.2.5., 32.5% believe that it is very important to have a command of MSA while

  half of them (50%) say that it is important. Only 2.5% of the participants answered with

  unimportant while 15% of them are neutral.

- In general, most students believe that it is important to master or have a good control of their MSA linguistic abilities.

- **Importance of English:**

options	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Total
N	17	22	1	0	40
%	42.5	55	2.5	0	100

Table3.2.6. The Importance of Having a Command of a Foreign Language.

- Table 3.2.6. shows that having a command of a foreign language is very important to 42.5% of the participants and important to 55% whereas only 2.5% is neutral, and no participants (0%) believe that it is unimportant.

- Overall, comparing the two tables demonstrates that having a command of a foreign language is more important to the informants than having a command of MSA (Graph 3.2.7).
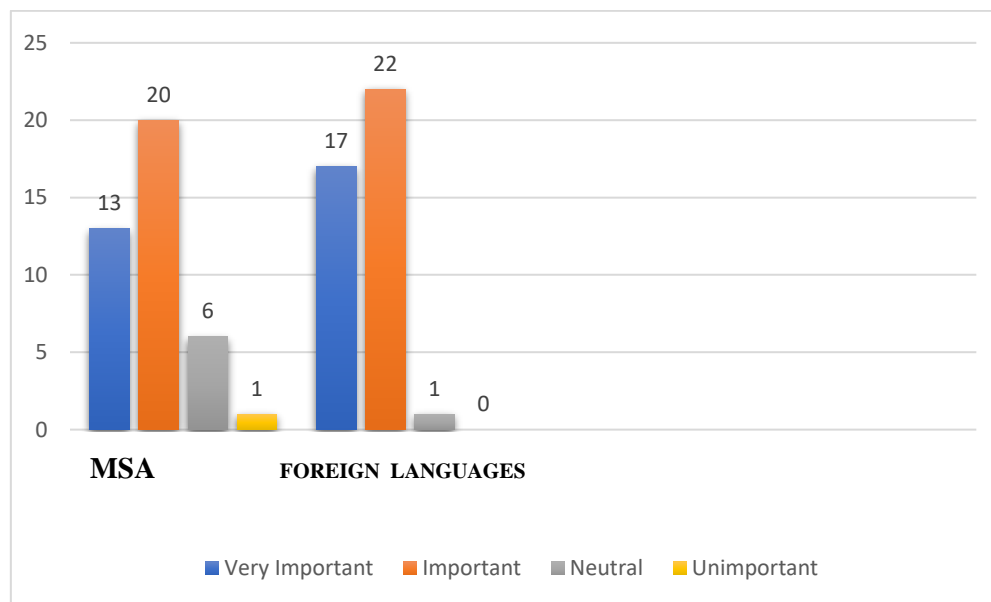
Graph 3.2.7. The Importance of Having a Command of MSA and Foreign Languages

Question 03: The Motivation behind Learning Foreign Languages.

The table represents different motives that students have for learning foreign languages

options	1. To express my feelings, ideas, and interests in different ways.	2. Be able to travel the world easily.	3. Be able to communicate with people in various dialects.	4. Enhancing your skill to get international and foreign business opportunities	5. Have an easy access to scientific domains and information	Total
N	16	20	25	21	14	**40**
%	40	50	62.5	52.5	35	**100**

Table 3.2.7. Motives behind Learning Foreign Languages.

- As represented in table 3.2.7. and graph 3.2.8., most participants learn foreign languages to be able to communicate (62.5%), to enhance their linguistic skills for foreign businesses (52.5%), and to be able to travel (50%). Expressing feelings and ideas in different ways is the motive of 40% of them while 35% learn foreign languages to have access to scientific domains and information. Four (10%) of the participants gave other reasons including watching foreign movies and understanding their language without the need for translation (Graph 3.2.8.). This means that most students learn other languages to communicate, travel, express themselves and find jobs.
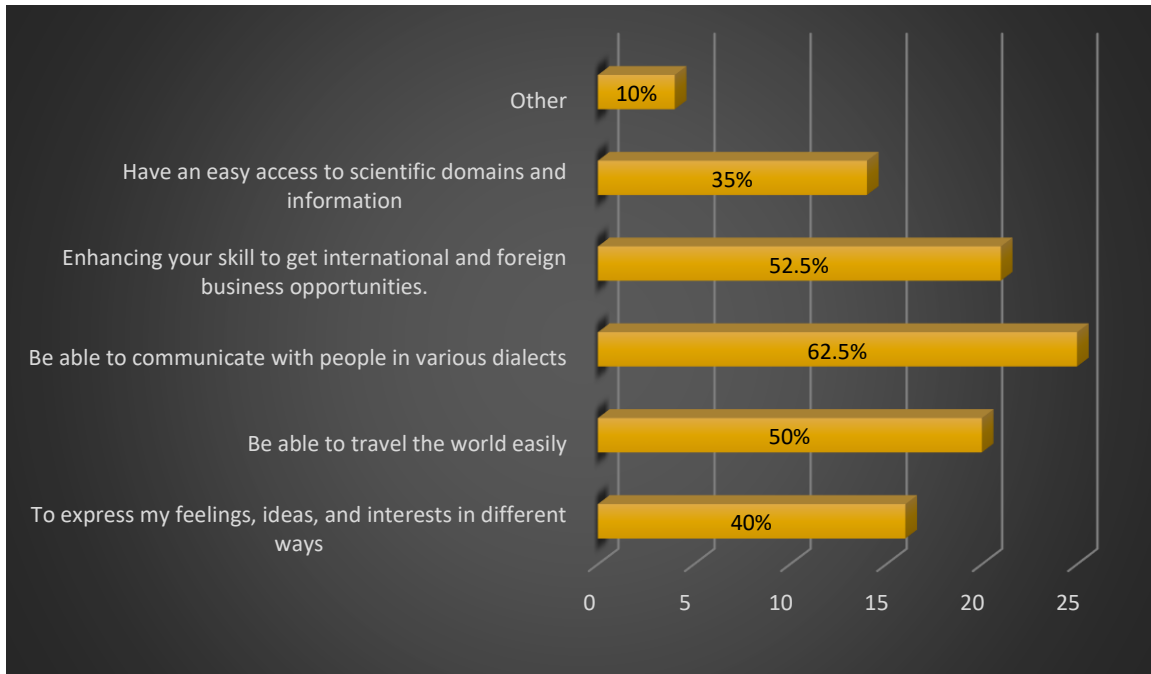
Graph 3.2.8. Motives behind Learning Foreign Languages.

Question 04: Frequency of the Use of MSA after Secondary Schools.

The table below shows the frequency the participants use to MSA after secondary school.

Options	Never	Rare	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Total
N	3	16	18	3	0	**40**
%	7.5	40	45	7.5	0	**100**

Table 3.2.8. Frequency of using MSA after Secondary School.

- Looking at table3.2.8., 7.5% of students never used MSA after secondary school, 40% rarely use it while 45% use it sometimes, and 7.5% of them use it often (Graph 3.2.9.).

- The analysis of the table indicates that after secondary school most of the participants rarely use MSA. This can be because the formal education of MSA ends at the final year of secondary school.
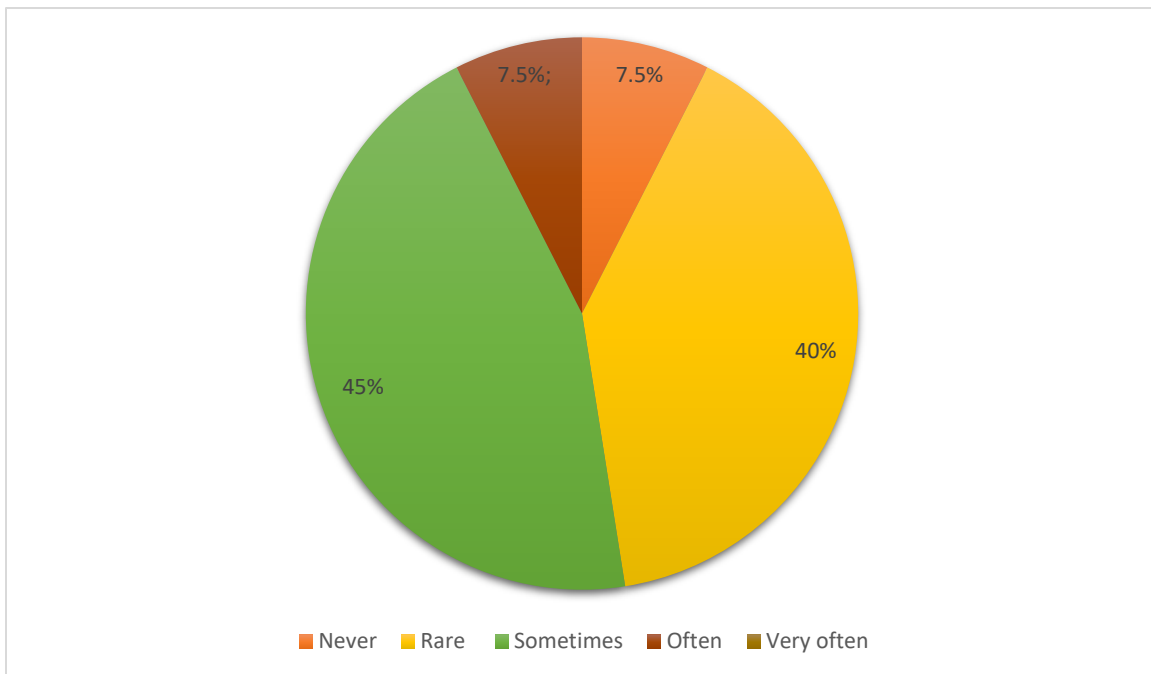
Graph 3.2.9. Frequency of Using MSA after Secondary School.

Question 05: Using MSA

The table includes occasions/activities where the informants use MSA:

options	Reading books	Listeningto music	Writingi nmyjour nals	Watching movies… etc.	Surfing the web & social media	Formally interacting with teachers	Islamic religious books	Reading Qur'an
N	32	4	8	10	21	7	1	1
%	80	10	20	25	52.5	17.5	2.5	2.5

Table 3.2.9. Occasions/ Activities of Using MSA.

- The analysis of table 3.2.9. illustrates that 80% of students use MSA when reading books and 52.5% use it on the web and social media. MSA is used for watching movies by 25% of the respondents, in personal journals (20%), and formally interacting with teachers (17.5%). Only some students use MSA when listening to music (10%), for Islamic/religious books (2.5%), and for reading Qur'an (2.5%).

- According to the analysis, the use of MSA can almost be restricted to reading and surfing the web only
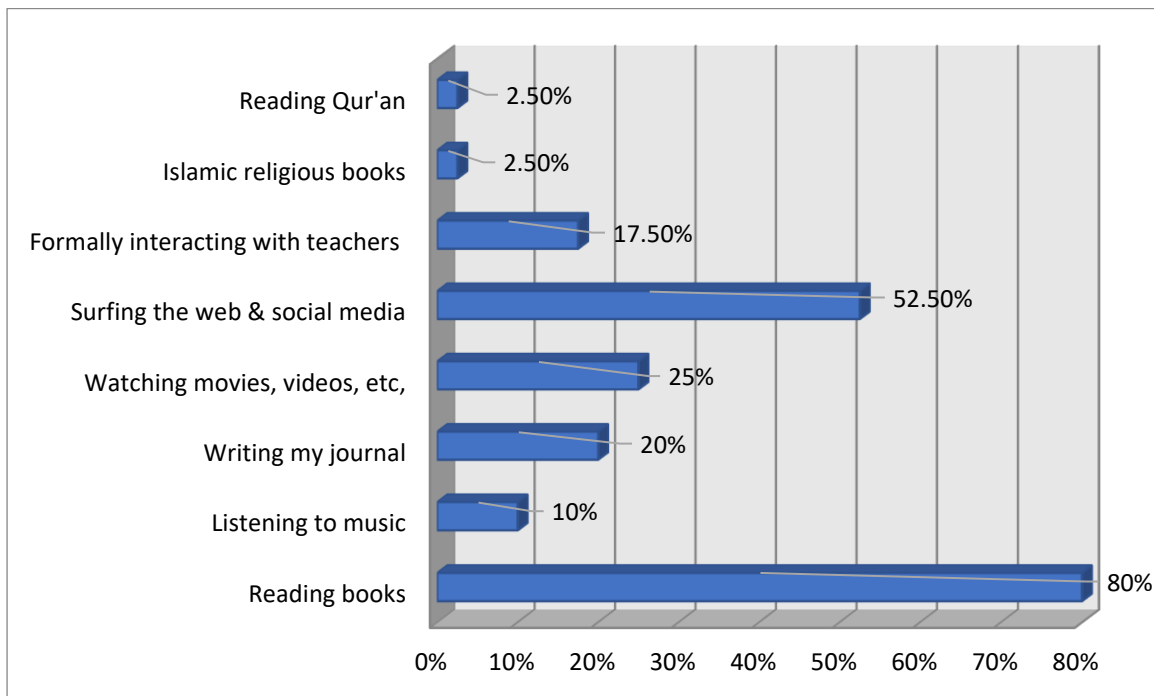
Graph 3.2.10. Occasions/ Activities of Using MSA.

Section3: MSA vs. Other Languages/ Varieties.

Question 01: Learning/Acquiring MSA.

The following table demonstrates where our respondents did learn/ acquire MSA.

Options	Quranic schools	Reading books	Private courses	Watching TV shows & cartoons
N	25	22	1	24
%	62.5	55	2.5	60

Table 3.2.10. Manner of Learning/ Acquiring MSA.

- Table 3.2.10. shows that, in addition to formal education, 62.5% of informants learnt/acquired MSA in Quranic schools; whereas, 60% of them acquired it while watching TV shows and cartoons. Additionally 50% said that they used to learn MSA through reading books, and only 2.5% through receiving private courses in MSA.

- Most children acquire MSA at a young age when watching cartoons, and the learning/acquisition process continues with Quranic schools, formal education, and reading books.
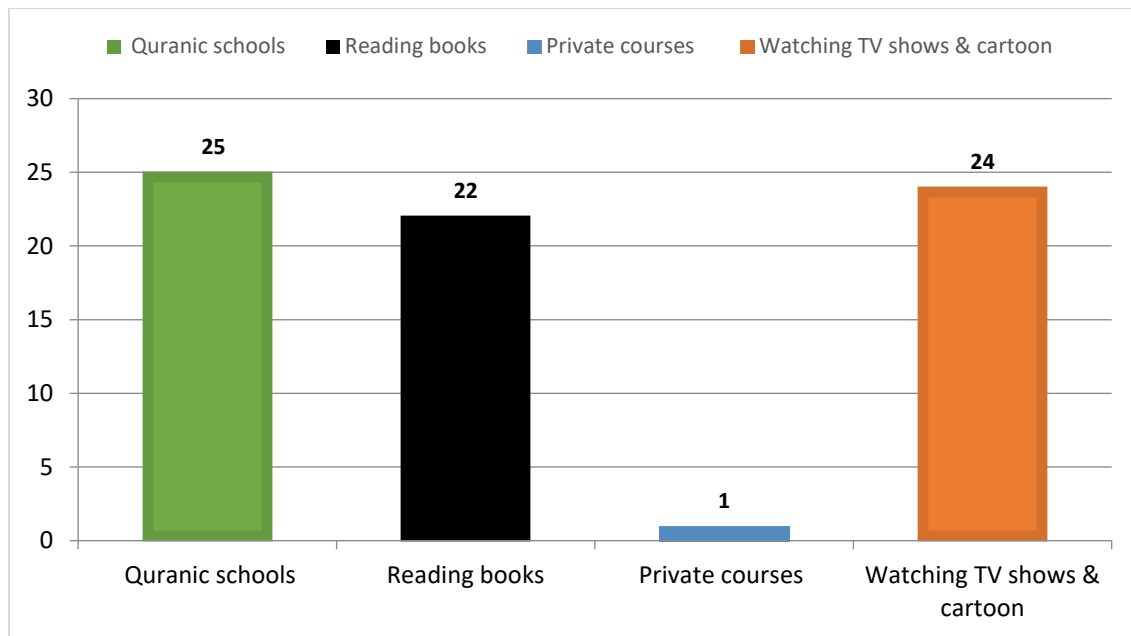
Graph 3.2.11. Manners of Learning/ Acquiring MSA.

Question 02: MSA/English Proficiency level

The table below compares between MSA skills at the end of secondary school and at present, as well as the level of English proficiency. The statements in the table are labeled as items A, B, and C:

Statements		Advanced	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	Total
A- How would you describe your skills in MSA at the final year of secondary school (before university)?	N	8	22	10	0	0	**40**
	%	20	55	25	0	0	**100**
B- How would you describe your skills in MSA at present (NOW)?	N	3	18	10	9	0	**40**
	%	7.5	45	25	22.5	0	**100**
C- How would you rate your English language level?	N	10	18	11	1	0	**40**
	%	25	45	27.5	2.5	0	**100**

Table 3.2.11. MSA and English Skills.

- **Item A: MSA skills at the final year of secondary school:**

  ➢ More than half the informants described their skills as good (55%), 25% of them as average, 20% as advanced and 0% for poor and very poor.

- **Item B: MSA skills at present:**

  ➢ Only 7.5% described their current MSA skills as advanced while less than half of them described it as good (45%). Very few students have average skills (25%), and 22.5% have poor skills.

- **Item C: English language level:**

  ➢ Few participants described their level as advanced (25%), 45% as good, 27.5% as average, and only 2.5% as poor.

- The analysis of this data highlights the fact that most students start losing their skills in MSA as soon as their formal education (secondary school) ends.

- Students who still have a good level in MSA at present are mostly those who read, and use MSA sometimes, or often.

- Item C shows that, at present, most students have a better level in English than in MSA since they are more immersed in learning it (graph 3.2.12.). This may postulate the idea that English is indeed encroaching itself over MSA.
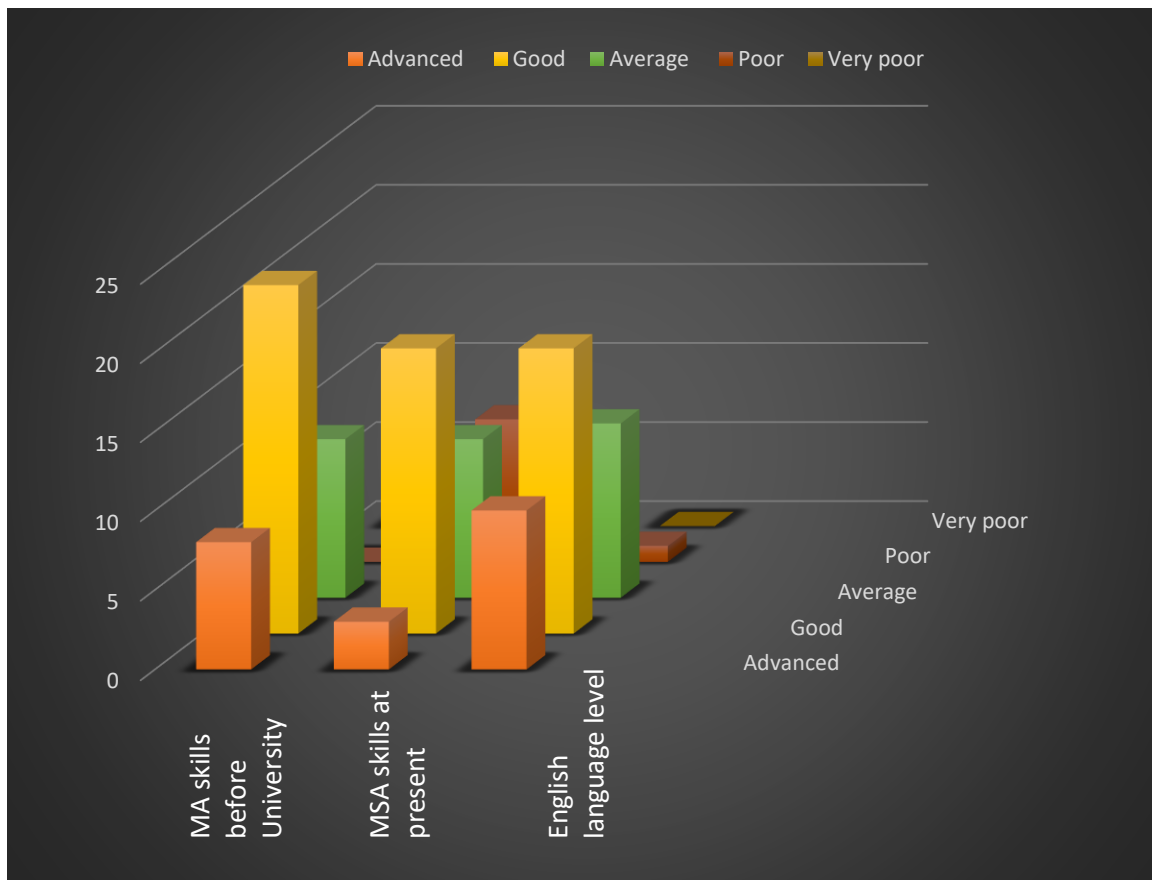
Graph 3.2.12. MSA/English level.

Question 03: English vs. MSA within the Respondents' Verbal Repertoires

The table below illustrates whether the informants agree on that English is encroaching itself over MSA and the other varieties they know or not.

Answers	Yes	No	Total
N	30	10	**40**
%	75	25	**100**

Table 3.2.12. English vs. MSA in the Respondents' Verbal Repertoires.

- As demonstrated in table 3.2.12., 75% of students agree (Yes) that English is taking over while 25% of them disagree (No).

- A great number of those who answered with "Yes" believe that English is replacing MSA and other languages because:

  a) It is the lingua franca of the world.

  b) Some of them said that English has become dominant since they use it every day and everywhere; they believe that English is the reason why they started to lose their skills in MSA.

- Students whose answer was "No" claim that:

  ➢ English cannot replace MSA because the latter reflects their identity.

- It is therefore clear that MSA has lost the race against English and French
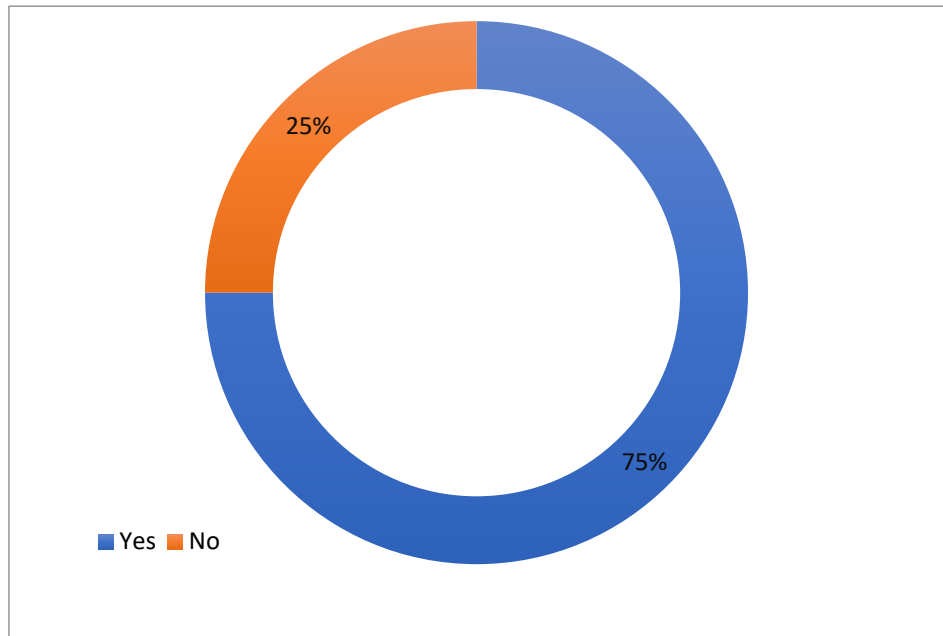
Graph 3.2.13. English vs. MSA in the Respondents' Verbal Repertoires.

Question 04: the use of MSA in a conversation

This table shows the ability of students to maintain a conversation using pure MSA without the interference of other varieties/languages.

answers	N	%
Yes	19	47.5
No	21	52.5
Total	40	100

Table 3.2.13. The Ability of the Informants' to Maintain a Conversation Using Pure MSA.

- Looking at table 3.2.13., 47.5% of students, on the one hand, are able to maintain a conversation using pure MSA, i.e. no interference from other dialects/ languages. On the other hand, almost half of them (52.5%) are unable to do it (Graph 3.2.14.).
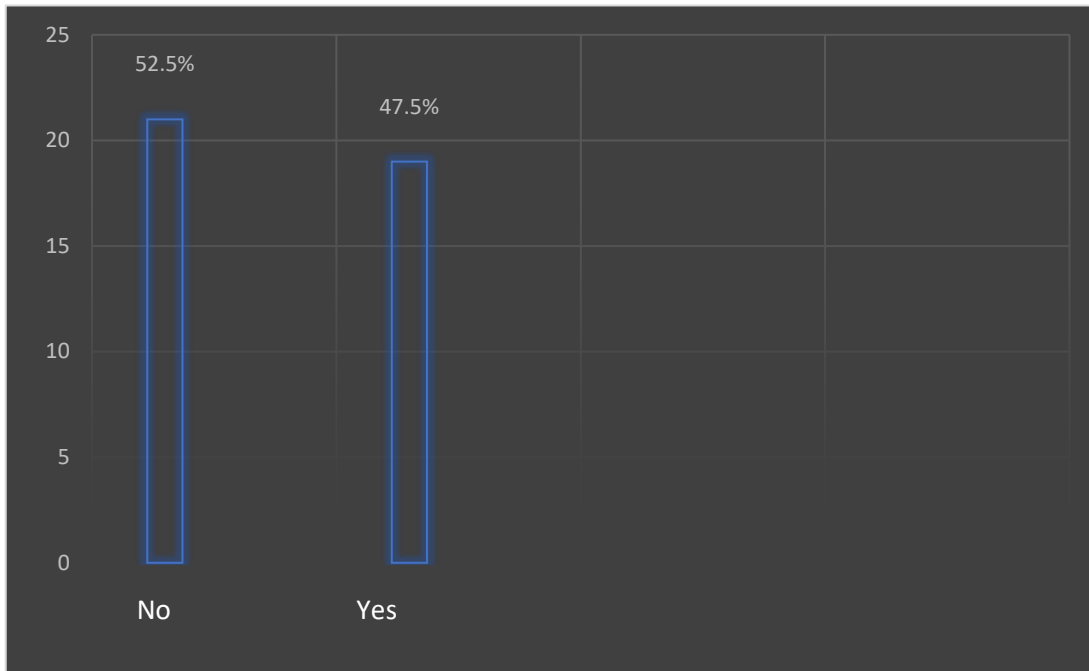
Graph 3.2.14. The Ability to Maintain a Conversation Using Pure MSA.

- The students who answered with no were asked about the reasons that may prevent them to converse in MSA

- The following table shows the reasons behind the inability of respondents to maintain a conversation using MSA.

Statements	N	%
A- My proficiency in MSA got reduced.	9	42.9
B- It is hard for me to keep using MSAand I find myself switching to otherlanguages/varieties (ADA, Berber,French, English, or others).	11	52.4
C- My speaking skills in MSA have alwaysbeen weak.	1	4.8
Total	**21**	**100**

Table3.2.14. Reasons Behind the inability of Respondents to Converse Using MSA Only.

- Table3.2.14. represents the main reasons for why these students are unable to maintain a conversation in MSA. Most of the respondents (52.4%) claim that it is hard to use MSA and they always switch to other languages/varieties (ADA, French, etc.) whereas 42.9% of them believe that their MSA proficiency was reduced. Only 4.8% of the participants say that they have always had weak speaking skills in MSA (3.2.15.). These results imply that almost half of students find difficulties using MSA when conversing: because most of them stop using MSA when their formal education in secondary school ends.
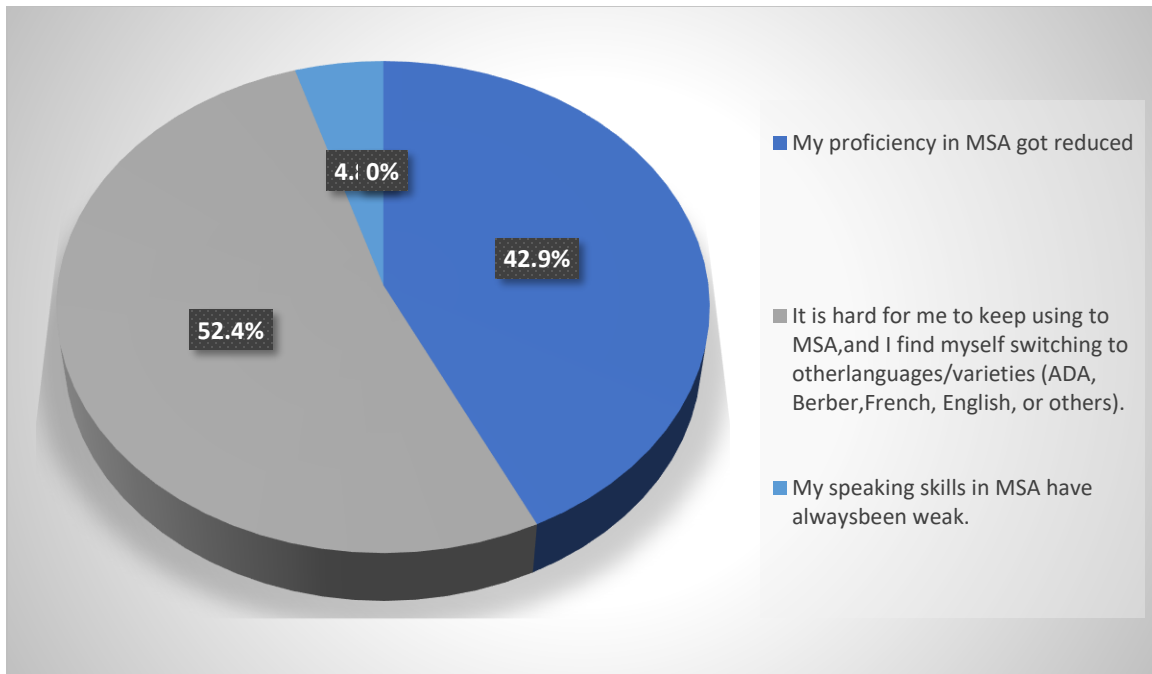
Graph3.2.15. Reasons Behind the Inability of Respondents to Converse Using MSA Only.

Question 05: Familiarity with Educated Spoken Arabic

The table below represents the number/percentage of students who are/ are not familiar with ESA

Answers	Yes	No	Total
N	1	39	40
%	2.5	97.5	100

Table 3.2.15. Respondents' Familiarity with ESA.

- As table 3.2.15 shows, 97.5% of participants are unfamiliar with the ESA variety while only one respondent (2.5%) is familiar with it. This maybe resulted from the fact that ESA is a new variety, it is still being investigated, and most people have not heard of it yet.

- We asked those whose answer is "Yes" to explain why Algerians are shifting from MSA to ESA, and the only answer was that ESA is used more than MSA because it is easier and more flexible.
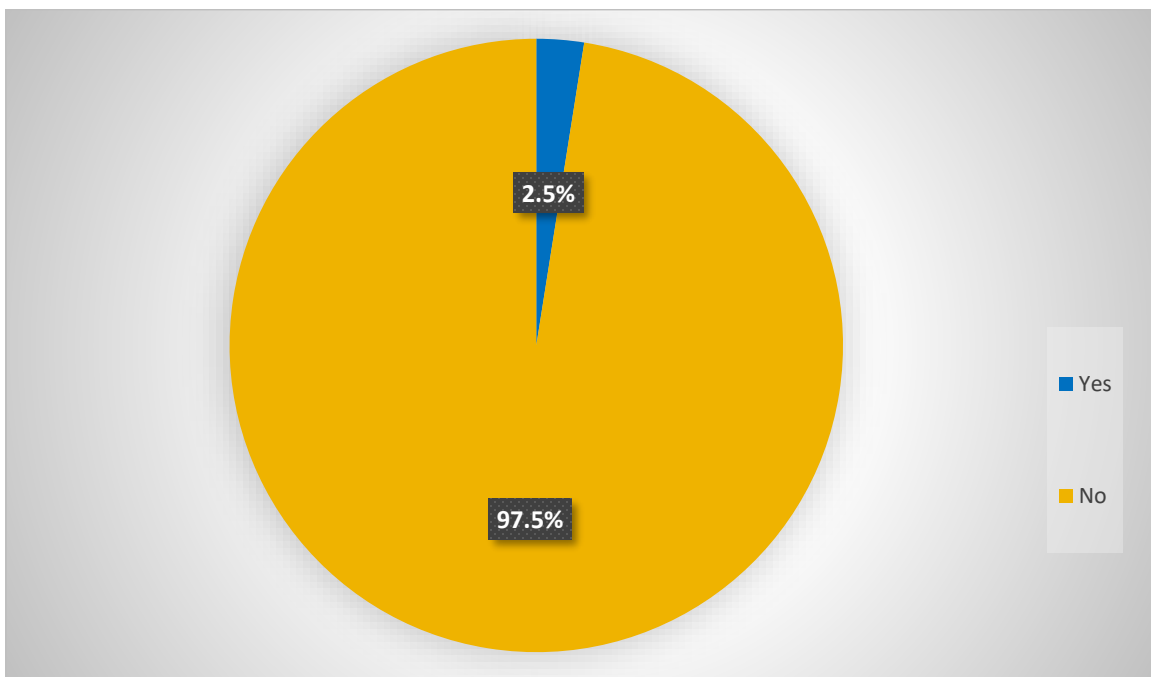
Graph 3.2.16. Respondents' Familiarity with ESA.

Section 04: MSA Proficiency vs. English Language Proficiency.

Question 01: The Four Language Skills in both MSA and English

Respondents were asked to rank their language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) from the easiest to the hardest in relation to both MSA and English.

- **After collecting the answers and analyzing them, we have found that:**

  - The skill that was ranked the easiest by most students (in MSA) is listening, followed by reading. Writing and speaking skills were ranked as the hardest for most students while very few said that they can write and speak MSA easily.

  - The passive linguistic skills (listening and reading) are considered to be easier than the active skills (speaking and writing) as most students find it difficult to produce the language (MSA) or to use it actively.

- **Most of the answers concerning the English language skills were as the following:**

  - **1- Reading and listening, 2-Speaking and writing:** The vast majority of students do not find difficulties reading and listening to English, also a great number of them said that speaking is the easiest skill.

  - Writing skill was ranked as easy by very few, whereas most of the students find writing very difficult.

- Accordingly, most students can easily read and listen to both languages, whereas writing in MSA and English is considered very hard for the majority. Speaking in English is easy and manageable for most of them, while it is hard in MSA.

Question 02: Language Proficiency in both MSA and English.

Participants were given a number of tasks, and they were asked to rate themselves according to their ability to accomplish each task. Each one of the four following tables includes one linguistic skill with several tasks related to it. Each task is dealt with and analyzed separately

The following table demonstrates students' listening comprehension proficiency in both English

and MSA

ListeningComprehension:	language		Extremelydifficult	difficult	manageable	easy	Extremely Easy	Total
A-Understanding any kind of spoken language.	MSA	N	2	10	9	15	4	**40**
		%	5	25	22.5	37.5	10	**100**
	ENG	N	4	8	12	15	1	**40**
		%	10	20	30	37.5	2.5	**100**
B-Understanding extended speech even when it is not clearly structured.	MSA	N	2	10	16	10	2	**40**
		%	5	25	40	25	5	**100**
	ENG	N	2	15	11	11	1	**40**
		%	5	37.5	27.5	27.5	2.5	**100**
C- Understanding Television programs and films without too much efforts	MSA	N	1	5	4	16	14	**40**
		%	2.5	12.5	10	40	35	**100**
	ENG	N	1	6	15	11	7	**40**
		%	2.5	14	37.5	27.5	17.5	**100**

Table 3.2.16. Listening Comprehension Tasks in both MSA and English.

Task A: Understanding any kind of Spoken Language

- Looking at graph 3.2.17., understanding spoken MSA is extremely difficult to 5% of students, difficult to 25% of them, manageable to 22.5%, easy to 37.5%, and extremely easy to 10% of the students. Understanding spoken English is extremely difficult to 10% of the respondents, difficult to 20%, manageable to 30%, easy to 37.5%, and extremely easy to 2.5% of them. According to these results, the degree of difficulty for understanding spoken MSA is slightly higher than that of understanding spoken English (25%, 20%, in order). Moreover, the numbers show that spoken English is more manageable to understand than MSA while the same number of students considers understanding both spoken MSA and spoken English easy (37.5 %, 37.5%, respectively). Few students see spoken MSA as extremely easy while very few have spoken English as extremely easy. Only 5% of participants consider spoken MSA as extremely difficult in comparison to the 10% who believe that spoken English is extremely difficult.
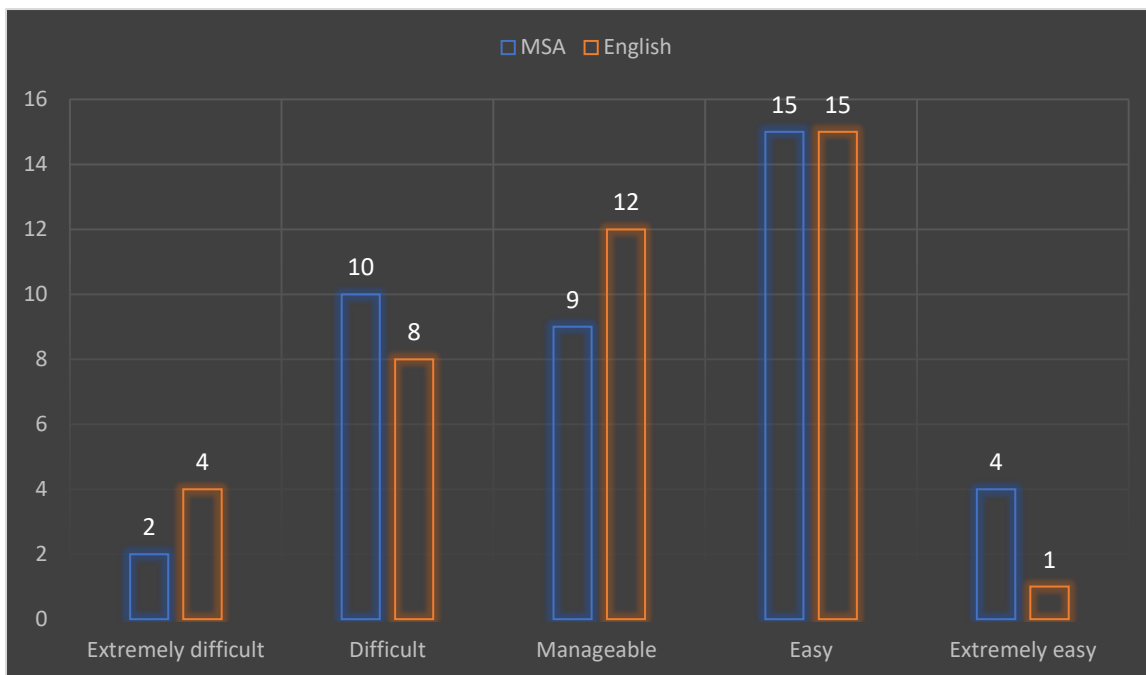
Graph 3.2.17. Understanding any Kind of Spoken Language.

Task B: Understanding extended speech even when it is not clearly structured.

- According to graph 3.2.18., both MSA and English share the same degree of extreme difficulty concerning understanding unstructured extended speech (5%, 5%). Students who consider English extended speech as difficult are 37.5% in comparison to 25% in MSA. In addition to that, it is manageable in MSA to 40% of the respondents and in English to 27.5%. Task B is easier (27.5%) in English than in MSA (25%) whereas it is extremely easy in MSA (5%) in contrast to English (2.5).

Graph 3.2.18. Understanding Extended Speech Even When It Is Not Clearly Structured.

Task C: Understanding Television programs and films without too much effort

- As table3.2.16. and graph 3.2.19. show, understanding television programs and films without too much efforts appears to be slightly more difficult in English (14%) than in MSA (12.5%) while very few of respondents consider it extremely difficult in English (2.5%) and MSA (2.5%). The task is manageable in English to 37.5% of the students, easy to 27.5%, and extremely easy to 17.5% of them.

- Contrastingly, task C seems to be manageable in MSA to only 10% of participants, easy to 40%, and extremely easy to 35% of them.
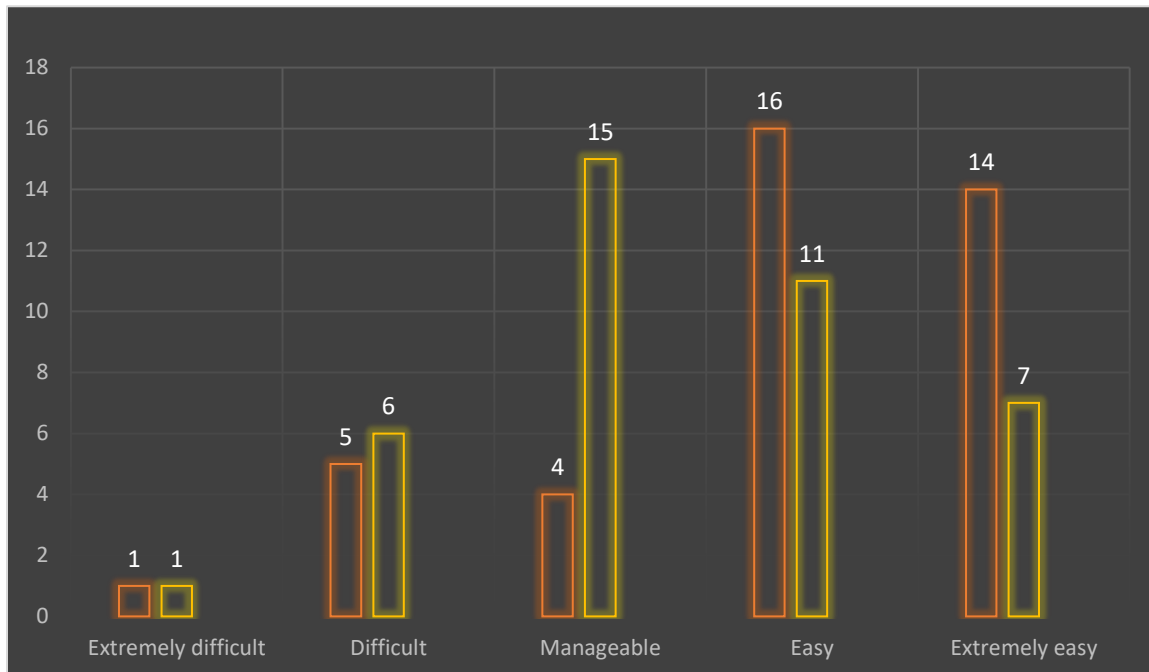
Graph 3.2.19. Understanding Television Programs and Films without too much Effort.

- As a final remark, it can be said that the listening skill of MSA is slightly easier than in English as students find it somehow effortless to understand any kind of spoken language in MSA given that it is well structured. This can be due to the fact that the length of their exposure to MSA was longer than that of English, so their listening comprehension abilities are more reluctant to attrition.

❖ The following table shows students reading proficiency of students in both MSA and English:

Reading proficiency	language		Extremely difficult	difficult	manageable	easy	Extremelyeasy	Total
A-Understanding long and complex, factual and literary texts, with appreciating distinctions of styles.	MSA	N	5	12	13	7	3	**40**
		%	12.5	30	32.5	17.5	7.5	**100**
	ENG	N	6	12	14	8	0	**40**
		%	14	30	35	20	0	**100**
B-Understanding the description of events, feelings, and wishes in personal letters.	MSA	N	2	2	11	16	9	**40**
		%	5	5	27.5	40	22.5	**100**
	ENG	N	0	4	10	20	6	**40**
		%		10	25	50	14	**100**
B-Understanding contemporary literary prose.	MSA	N	4	15	12	5	4	**40**
		%	10	37.5	30	12.5	10	**100**
	ENG	N	6	11	12	10	1	**40**
		%	14	27.5	30	25	2.5	**100**

Table 3.2.17. Reading Proficiency in MSA and English.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Data Analysis.

Task A: Understanding long and complex, factual and literary texts, with appreciating distinctions of styles.

- As table 3.2.17.andgraph 3.2.20. represent, understanding long and complex, factual and literary texts, with appreciating distinctions of styles in MSA is extremely difficult to 12.5% of students and difficult to 30% in comparison to the same task in English where it is extremely difficult to 14% of them, and difficult to the same number in MSA (30%). Task A is more manageable in English than in MSA (35%, 32.5%, respectively). Moreover, it is easier in English to 20% whereas fewer participants consider it easy in MSA (17.5); however, the task appears to be extremely easy in MSA to 7.5% while no student (0%) consider it extremely easy in English.
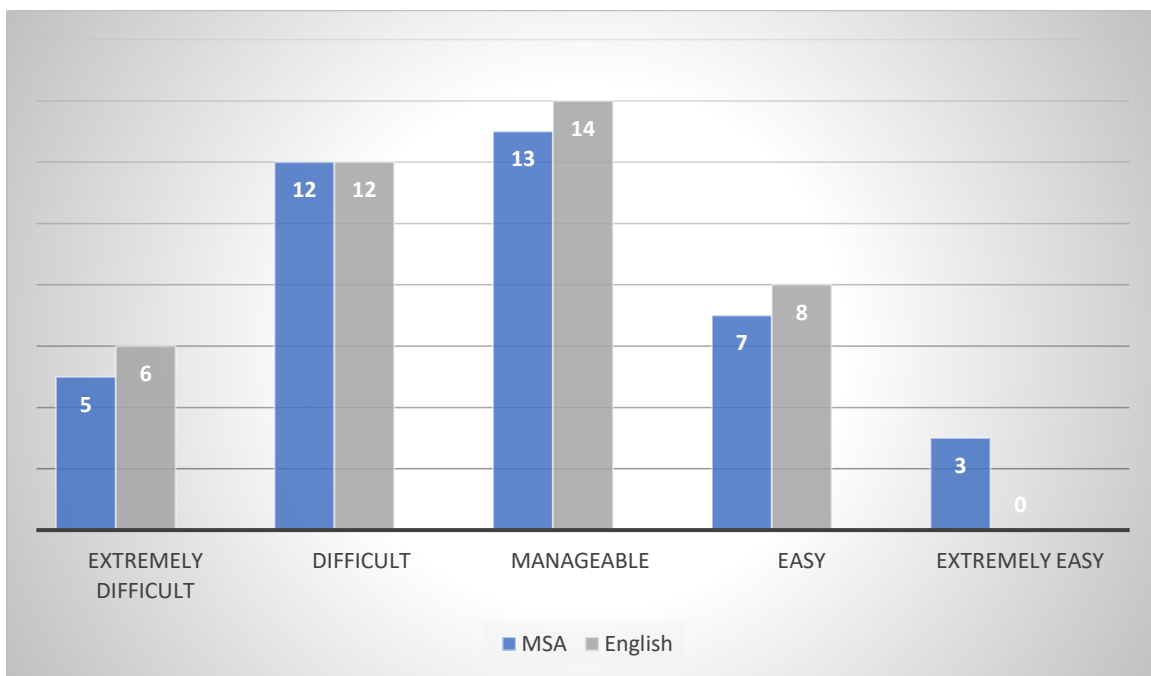
Graph 3.2.20. Understanding Long and Complex, Factual and Literary texts, with Appreciating Distinctions of Styles.

Task B: **Understanding the description of events, feelings, and wishes in personal letters.**

- Graph 3.2.21. represents task B, understanding the description of events, feelings, and wishes in personal letters. According to the graph and table, the task is extremely difficult to 5% in MSA and to 0% in English more participants consider it difficult in English (10%) in comparison to MSA

(2.5%). It is more manageable to have a command of task B in MSA (27.5%) than in English (25%). Contrastingly, the task in English seems to be easier to 50% than in MSA 40% whereas 9% of students consider it extremely easy in MSA than in English (6%).
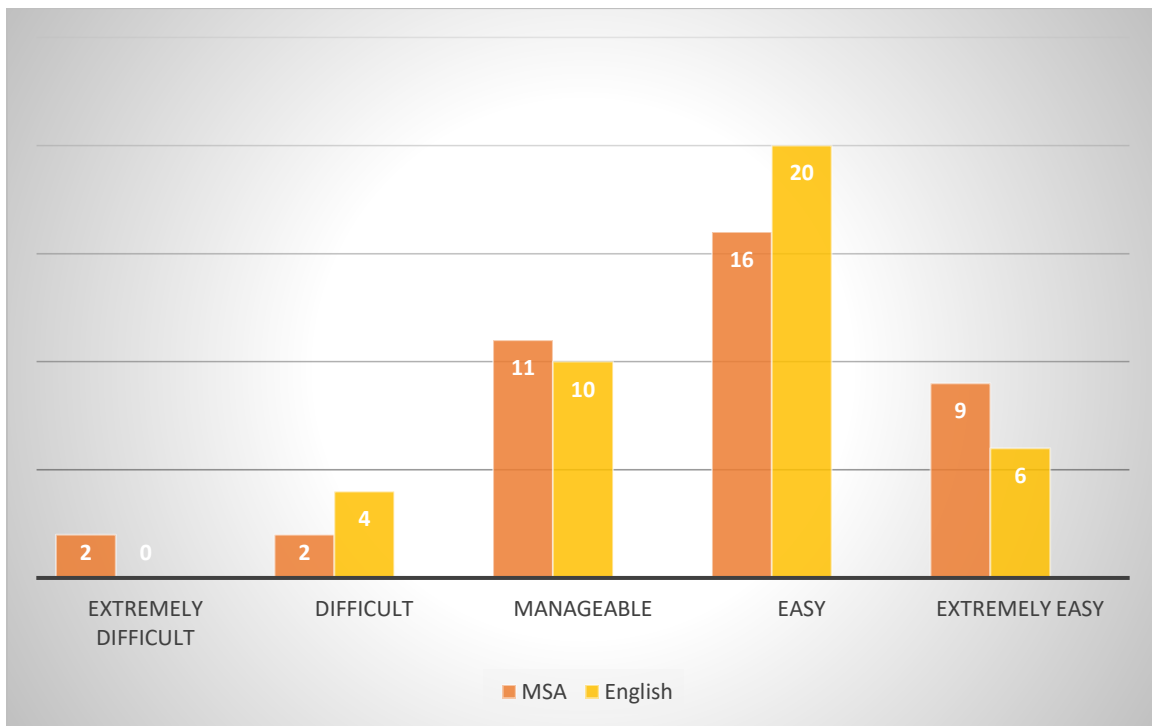
Graph 3.2.21. Understanding the Description of Events, Feelings, and Wishes in Personal Letters.

Task C: Understanding contemporary literary prose.

- Looking at graph 3.2.22., understanding contemporary literary prose is extremely difficult in English to 15% of respondents, and in MSA to 10% while it is difficult in MSA to more students (37.5%) than in English (27.5%). The number of students who can manage to understand the task in MSA (30%) is even to that in English (30%). However, 25% of participants believe the task to be easy in comparison to MSA (2.5%) whereas 10% of them consider the task extremely easier in MSA than in English (2.5%).
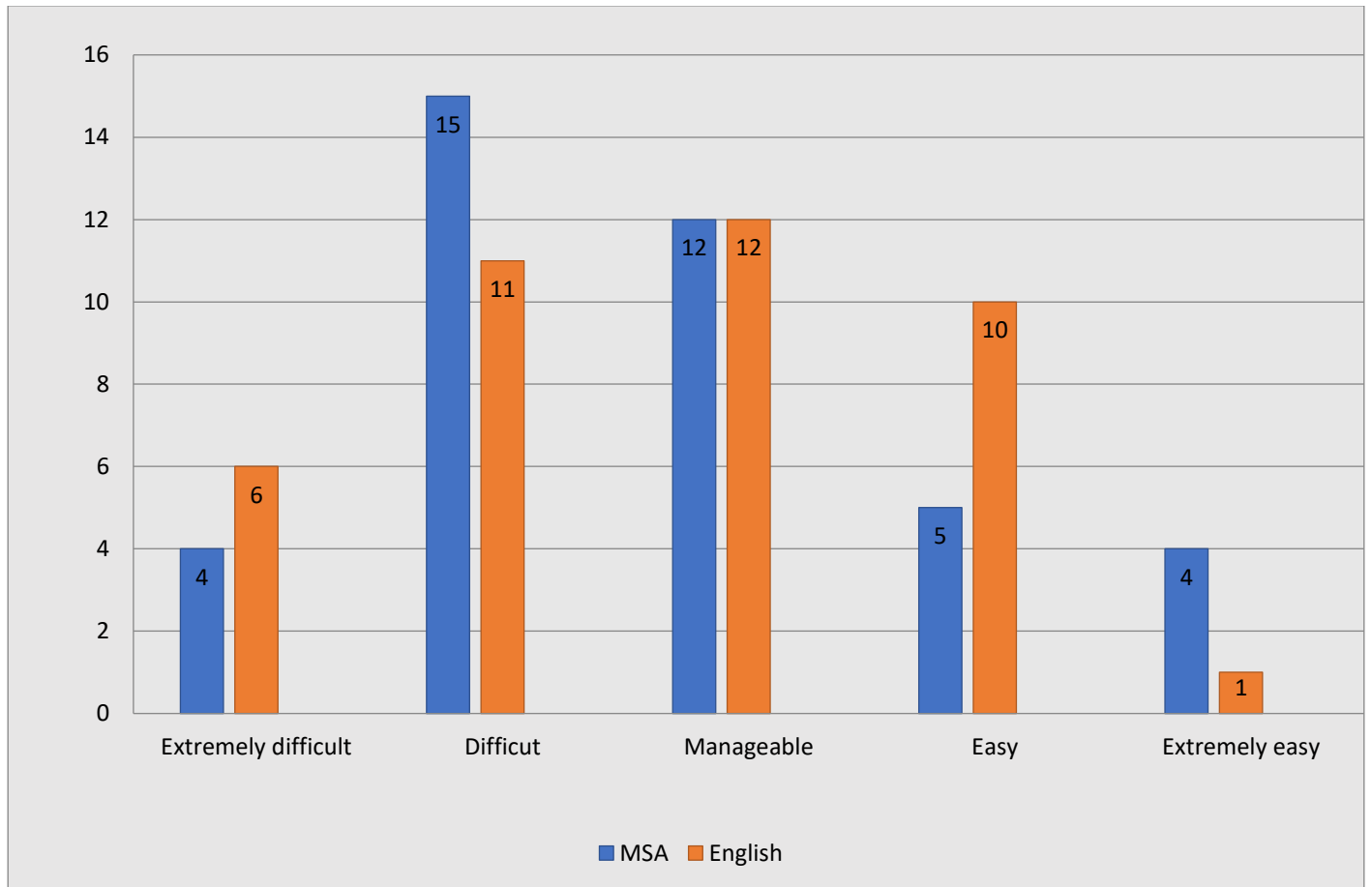
Graph 3.2.22. Understanding Contemporary Literary Prose.

- By reviewing the three results higlighted above, the respondents reading skill of MSA seem to be equal to that of English. This can result from the fact that a great part of them still read books in MSA besides reading in English (the language of their specialty).

- ❖ The table below shows the data illustrated from the informants about their writing proficiency in both MSA and English:

Writingproficiency	language		Extremely difficult	difficult	manageable	easy	Extremelyeasy	Total
A-Write simple coherent text on topics I am familiar with or interested in.	MSA	N	0	8	15	12	5	**40**
		%	0	20	37.5	30	12.5	**100**
	ENG	N	1	2	12	20	5	**40**
		%	2.5	5	30	50	12.5	**100**
B-Write an essay or a report and delivering information, or supporting a particular point of view	MSA	N	2	14	13	8	3	**40**
		%	4	35	32.5	20	7.5	**100**
	ENG	N	0	8	13	18	1	**40**
		%	0	20	32.5	45	2.5	**100**
C-Express my thoughts and my feelings in a clear well-structured text.	MSA	N	1	10	15	9	5	**40**
		%	2.5	25	37.5	22.5	12.5	**100**
	ENG	N	0	4	9	15	12	**40**
		%	0	10	22.5	37.5	30	**100**

Table 3.2.18. Students' Writing Skill in both MSA and English.

Task A: Write simple coherent text on topics I am familiar with or interested in.

- As illustrated in graph 3.2.23., 20% of respondents find difficulties writing simple coherent texts on familiar/interesting topics in MSA whereas only 5% of them find it difficult to do it in English. The task is manageable to accomplish to 37.5% of students in MSA and to 30% of them in English. However, task A seems to be easier in English to half of participants (50%) while it is easier in MSA to 30% of them, and extremely easy to few of students in both English (12.5%) and MSA (12.5%).
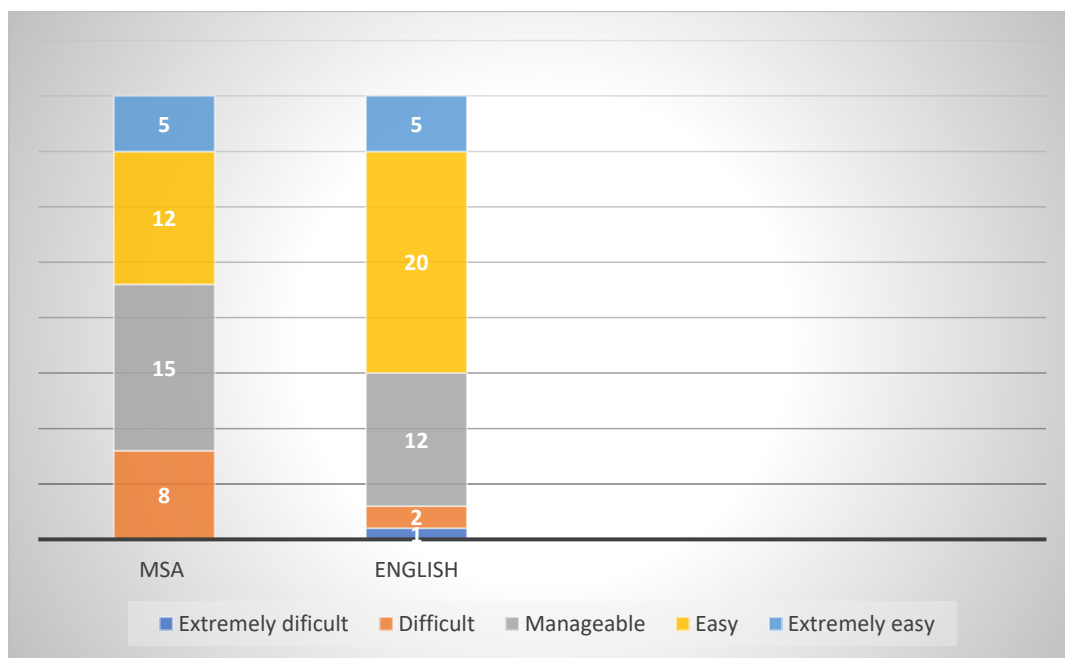
Graph 3.2.23. Write Simple Coherent Text on Topics I am Familiar with or Interested in.

Task B: Write an essay or a report and delivering information, or supporting a particular point of view

- In table3.2.18, Task B demonstrates the ability to write an essay/report, deliver information, or support a point of view. According to graph 3.2.24., the task is extremely difficult only in MSA to 4% of respondents while it is difficult in MSA to 35% of them in comparison to 20% who find it difficult in English. Task B is manageable evenly in both languages (MSA: 32.5%, English: 32.5%) whereas it is easy in English to 45% and in MSA 20% of Students.

However, only 2.5% of them find the task extremely easy in English while more respondents

find it extremely easy in MSA (7.5%).
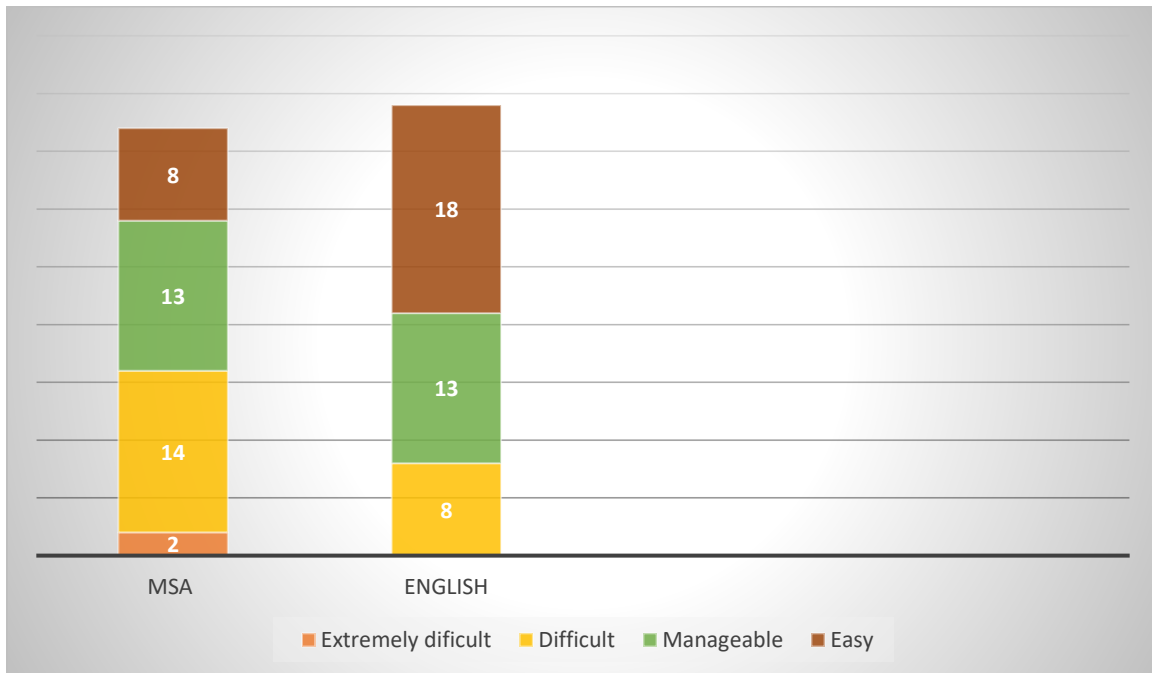
Graph 3.2.24. Write an Essay or a Report and Delivering information, or Supporting a Particular Point

of View.

Task C: Express my thoughts and my feelings in a clear well structured text

- Looking at task C in table 3.2.18, expressing oneself in a well-structured way is extremely difficult

  to 2.5% of respondents in MSA while to 0% in English. It is difficult in MSA to 25% and

  manageable to 37.5% whereas, in English, it is difficult to only 10% of them and manageable to

  22.5%. Contrastingly, the task is easier in English to 37.5% of the students and extremely easy to

  30% of them in comparison to MSA where 22.5% of respondents consider task C easy, and only

  12.5 of them consider it extremely easy (graph 3.2.25.).
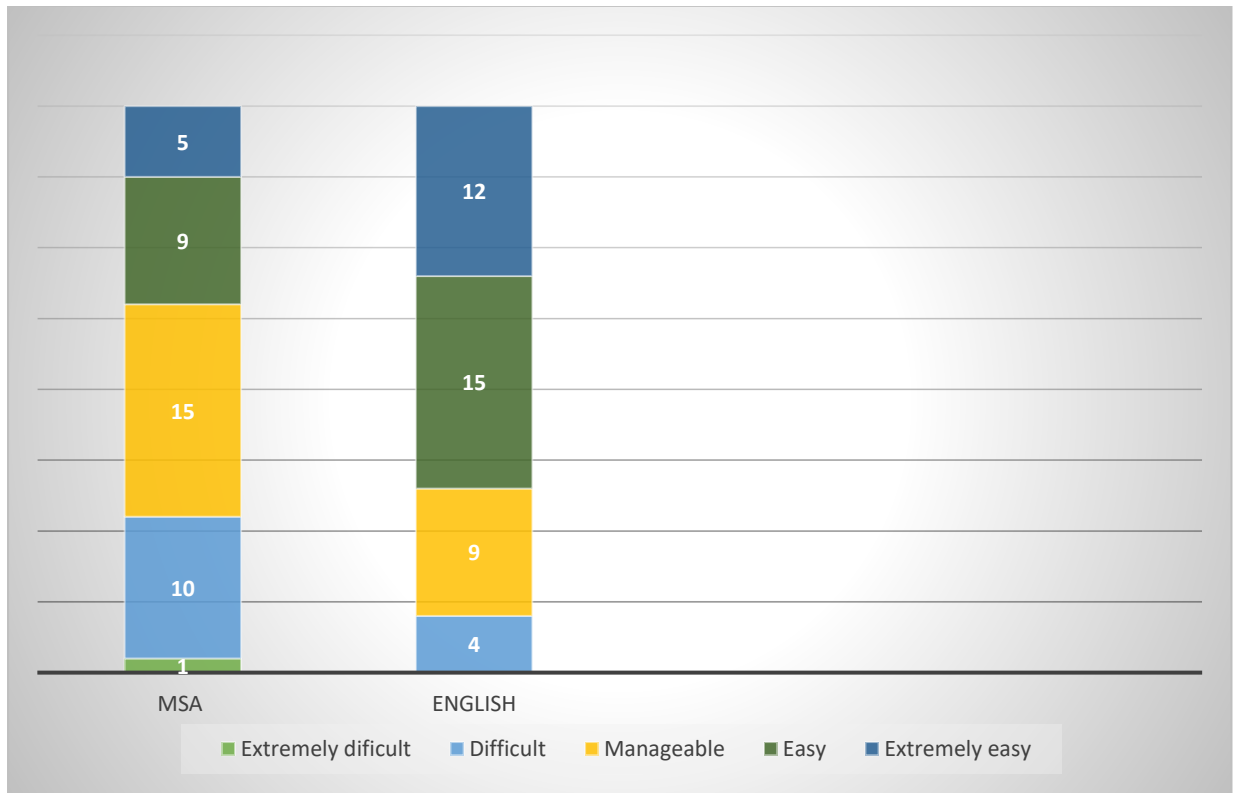
Graph3.2.25. Express my Thoughts and my Feelings in a Clear Well Structured Text.

- These results indicate that the students' writing skill in English is better than that of MSA. This means that they are more productive in English than in MSA. In other words, since English is used frequently for the last five years, it is easier for them to be productive using it.

❖ The following table shows the informants speaking proficiency in both MSA and English

Speaking ability	language		Extremely difficult	difficult	manageable	easy	Extremely easy	Total
A-Interacting with a degree of fluency and spontaneity and maintain long conversation.	MSA	N	6	10	15	5	4	**40**
		%	15	25	37.5	12.5	10	**100**
	ENG	N	3	8	12	16	1	**40**
		%	7.5	20	30	40	2.5	**100**
B-Using the language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes.	MSA	N	1	15	14	7	3	**40**
		%	2.5	37.5	35	17.5	7.5	**100**
	ENG	N	3	6	14	15	2	**40**
		%	7.5	15	35	37.5	5	**100**
C-Narrating a story or the plot of a book or a film.	MSA	N	4	10	13	7	6	**40**
		%	10	25	32.5	17.5	15	**100**
	ENG	N	2	6	10	19	3	**40**
		%	5	15	25	47.5	7.5	**100**

Table 3.2.19. Speaking Skill in both MSA and English.

Task A: Interacting with a degree of fluency and spontaneity and maintain long conversation.

- According to the graph 3.2.26., task A seems to be extremely difficult in MSA (15%) in comparison to English (7.5%), and less difficult in English (20%) than in MSA. According to participants, the task is more manageable in MSA (37.5%) than in English (30%). Nevertheless, the graph shows that task A appears to be easy in English to 40%, and in MSA to only 12.5% of the respondents. However, it is extremely easy in MSA to 10% of them in comparison to only 2.5% in English.
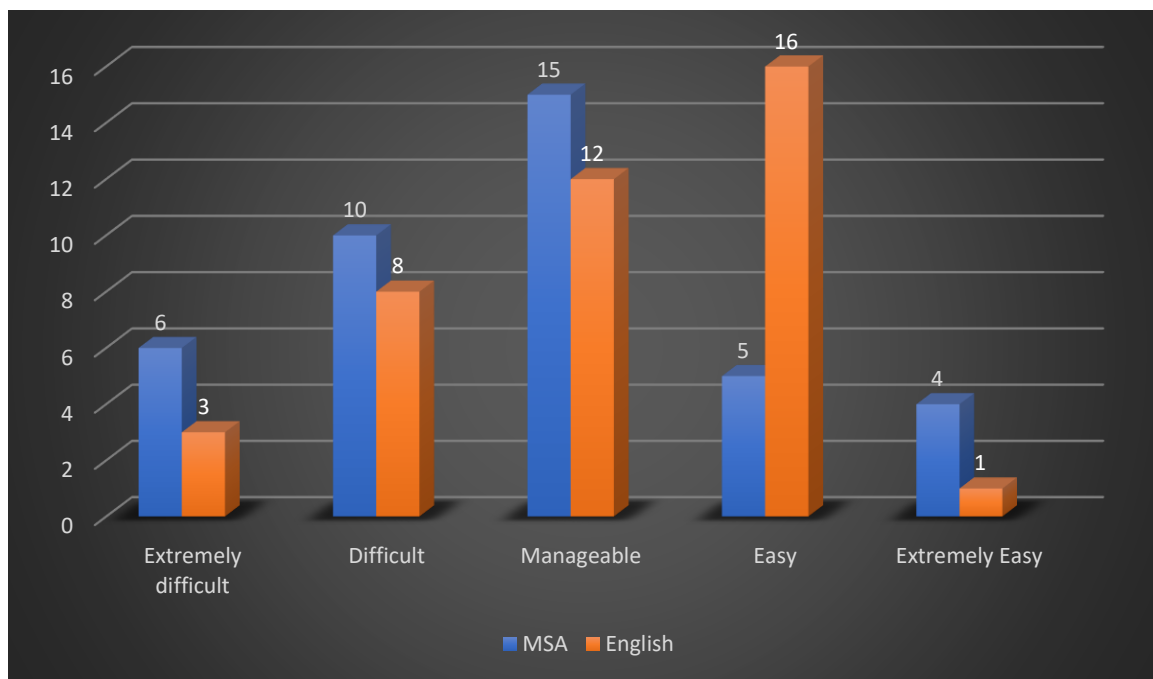
Graph 3.2.26. Interacting with a Degree of Fluency and Spontaneity and Maintain Long Conversation.

Task B: Using the language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes

- Looking at table 3.2.19. and graph 3.2.27., using the language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes appears to be extremely difficult in MSA to 2.5% of the participants and difficult to 37.5% whereas in English it is extremely difficult to 7.5% and difficult to 15%. The task is manageable in both language (MSA: 35%, English: 35%). Additionally, 37.5% of respondents believe

the task to be easy in English while 17.5% of them believe it to be easier in MSA; however, task B is

extremely to only 5% of them in English, and to 7.5% in MSA.
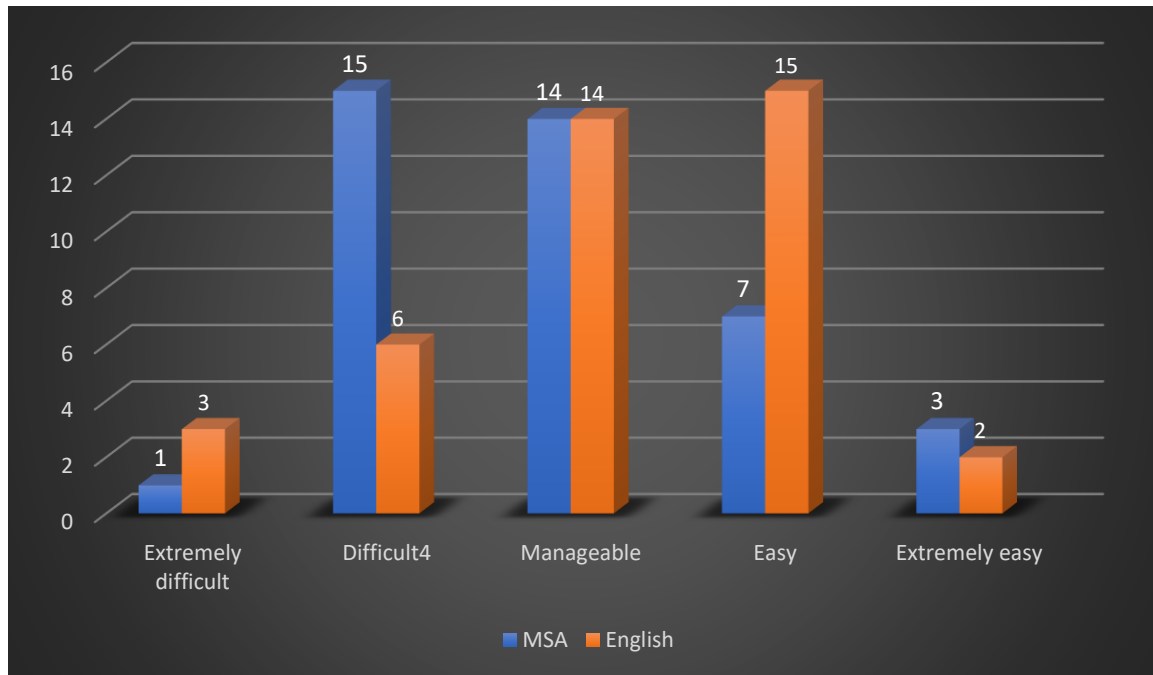
Graph 3.2.27. Using the Language Flexibly and Effectively for Social and Professional Purposes.

Task C: Narrating a story or the plot of a book or a film.

- Graph 3.2.28.shows a comparison between the ability to narrate a story or the plot of a book or a

  film in MSA and in English. According to results, the task appears to be extremely difficult in MSA

  to 10% of participants, and difficult to 25% of them. Contrastingly, the task in English is extremely

  difficult to only 5%, and difficult to 15%. The number of students able to manage task C is higher

  in MSA (32.5%) than in English (25%). However, the task is easier in English to 47.5% whereas

  only 17.5% of participants consider it easy in MSA whereas more students (15%) believe the task

  to be extremely easy in MSA in comparison to 7.5% in English
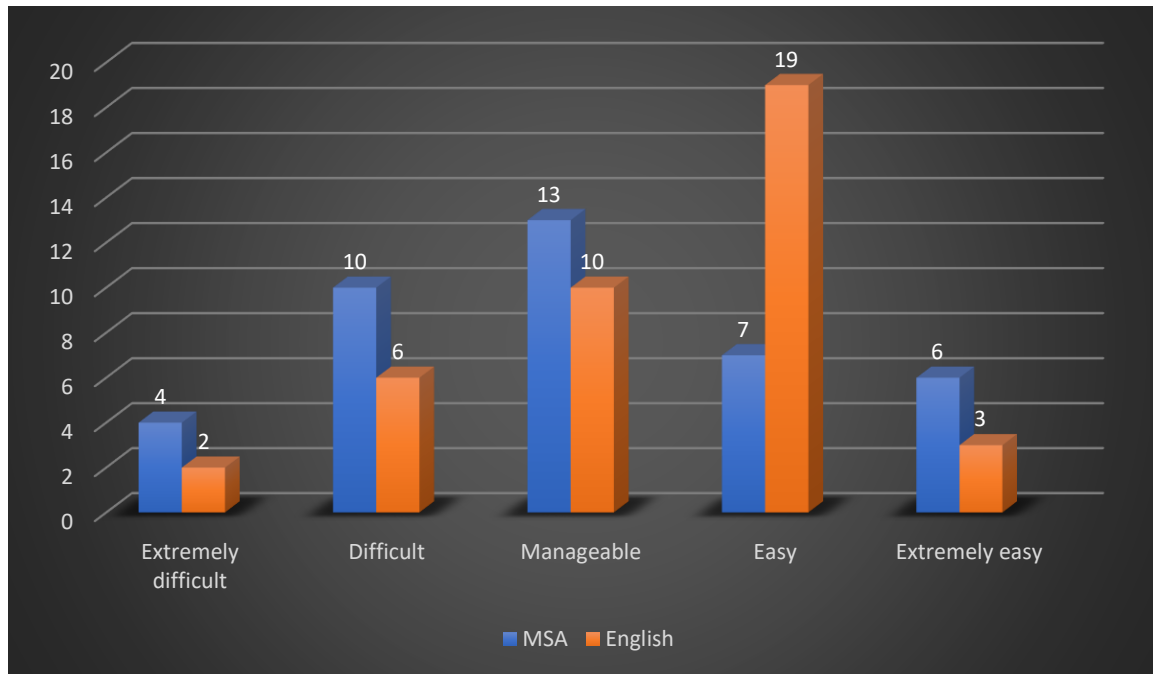
Graph 3.2.28. Narrating a Story or the Plot of a Book or a Film.

- In view of these of these results, it is evident that students find it much easier to speak in English rather than in MSA. This can be explained by the frequency and the recency of their use to English.

- Summing up, the comparative analysis of the four tables and twelve graphs of question 02 gives evidence that most students find the passive language skill of listening more difficult in English than in MSA. Simultaneously, the passive skill of reading in both English and MSA seem to be equal for students. Regarding the active skills (speaking and writing), most students find it easier and much more effortless to accomplish these skills in English rather than MSA.

Question 03: Participants were asked about their personal opinions regarding losing MSA and its effect on Algeria.

- After collecting the forty answers of respondents, it appears that half of them think that losing MSA would affect Algeria negatively because losing MSA implies losing the identity and culture of the country. Moreover, MSA is the language of Islam; therefore, to a great number of them, it would be impossible to lose MSA; otherwise, they would lose the symbol of religion. Nevertheless, the other half believes that losing would not affect Algeria in anyway because it already is not used anywhere and it does not necessarily reflect their identity. In addition to that, they claim that it would open doors to foreign languages, globalization, and development.

Question 04: solutions to maintain the language

- Respondents were asked to give suggestions to strengthen the status of MSA globally and individually.

- **The analysis of the participants' answers was as the following:**

- Most of students believe that strengthening the status of MSA individually would be through using it on a daily basis, and reinforcing its importance/position among children, and imposing it in schools and other sectors. On the global level, respondents think that it is almost impossible to strengthen the status of MSA globally since it is not the language of technology. An example from the answers says*, "**Parents should reinforce the position of the Arabic language before foreign languages because they have recently become interested in foreign languages because they think it is a criterion for progress and the Ministry of Education should impose the use of the Arabic language in schools between students and their teachers".** However, a number of participants claim that the status of MSA should not be strengthen, but they should rather give importance to foreign languages. Very few students were neutral and they simply said that they do not know.

3.2.2. Discussion of the Questionnaire Results

The section that follows is merely devoted to discuss the results obtained from the students'

questionnaire. Eventually, the discussion will either prove or reject the validity of the hypothesis and

objectives stirring the investigation. It is worth mentioning that the questionnaire did not include any

accurate scales to measure the variables and their intensity in the MSA attrition phenomenon.

Nevertheless, most of the questions allowed the respondents to evaluate themselves and report their

cases (self-evaluation and report).

First of all, in item 2 of the questionnaire (section 2), most informants reported that their mother

tongue, i.e., the language they grew up speaking, is ADA. None of them said that he/ she grew up

speaking MSA. On this ground, it can be more emphasized that MSA is indeed restored in the verbal

repertoire of Educated Algerians as a second language rather than a first. This finding can justify why

the attrition process of MSA was approached based on it being a second language.

In addition to their general instruction, the informants reported in item section 3 (item 1) that they

have also learned/ acquired MSA through different sources. This makes it a challenging task to predict

the exact length of the informants' exposure to MSA. However, it can be estimated by 12 to 13 years at

least, starting from the first year in primary school (**Time 1**). In this respect, our sample's incubation

period starts right after their active contact with MSA is ceased, i.e., after the end of secondary school

(**Time 2**), and ends at the time of this evaluation (**Time 3**). In view of this, this study attempted to

investigate the attrition of MSA as a second language in accordance with the timeline below:

- **Time 01:** the beginning of learning MSA in elementary school. (**start of acquisition**)

- **Time 02:** the end of learning MSA by the end of secondary school. (**end of acquisition/
  beginning of incubation**)

- **Time 03:** assessing and evaluating MSA competence at present (**end of incubation**).

Also in section 3 (item 2), the respondents evaluated their MSA skills at both the onset and the end of the incubation period. The obtained results indicated that the students' MSA skills at the end of the incubation period did decrease since the onset of incubation. Accordingly, we get to answer our first research question laid to establish this study: after the end of their formal/ general instruction, Educated Algerians start to lose the MSA skills they previously acquired.

Although the questionnaire did not include any direct questions about the possible reasons behind the decline of MSA skills after secondary school, several questions probed potential factors, namely: language contact, ATM, and language use. First, to estimate the intensity of language contact that the informants are exposed to, section 1 shows that all of them speak an additional language next to their mother tongue: English is spoken by all the respondents besides French, Spanish, German, and even Turkish to some of them. This finding presupposes the presence of an intense language contact with these foreign languages where MSA is a neglected variety. Second, concerning ATM and language use, section 2 reveals that a greater part of students believe that it is very important to master foreign languages although MSA is essential to them as well. Additionally, the majority used MSA only sometimes or rarely during the incubation period. From these results, we can notice that the students' use of MSA is nearly absent because they are more motivated to use foreign languages, which makes it difficult for Educated Algerians to maintain MSA. These findings match our second hypothesis which states that: ATM, language contact, and use are the usual suspects in MSA attrition.

One of our study main concerns was if getting immersed in learning English can contribute to Educated Algerians losing their MSA skills. To answer this, section 3 reveals that most informants feel that English is encroaching itself on MSA (they use it every day). Additionally, the results of section 4 where the respondents compared their proficiencies in both MSA and English indicate that students' listening and reading skills are somehow balanced in both languages. However, their speaking and writing skills are more advanced in English. These findings imply that students' **receptive skills**

(listening and reading) in MSA are more reluctant to attrition. In parallel, the **productive skills** *(speaking and writing)* of informants are stronger in English than in MSA because the latter is rarely used for communication unlike the former. In conclusion to this part, we can answer our third research question: MSA skills get negatively affected after getting more immersed in learning English, notably: the productive/ active skills.

The first objective of this research was to clarify the fuzziness of the term Arabic as there are several varieties to be considered as Arabic (ADA, MSA, CA, and ESA). As previously mentioned, most informants said that their mother tongue is ADA. However, when asked about the languages they speak, not all informants said that they speak Arabic. This finding postulates that the conceptualization of the term Arabic is being interpreted in different ways (ambiguous term). Moreover, item 5 (section 3) shows that most respondents are clueless of what ESA is. However, item 4 (section 3) reveals that an acknowledged number of informants cannot stick to MSA while conversing as they switch to other varieties (ADA, Berber, English, French, etc). Based on these results, it can be concluded that Educated Algerians use ESA although they are unfamiliar with it. Also, we get to answer our fourth research question: Educated Algerians' use of an intermediate level of Arabic (ESA) is a sign of MSA attrition.

3.2.3. Interviews Results

The following analysis of the two interviews represents the number and type of words used as well as the languages and language varieties spoken in the interviews. The details of the interviews are demonstrated in tables and graphs, and analyzed accordingly.

➢ The three dots **(…)** represent the pauses in participants' speech.

❖ **Interview Number 01:**

➢ **Gender:** Male.

➢ **Age:** 25.

➢ **Level:** Master 2, Linguistics.

Q.01: "It's a common assumption that one cannot fully master a foreign language, unless he first masters his mother languages." Accordingly, do you believe that it is necessary to master MSA before getting involved in learning English?

- **Interviewee:** Well, *Uhh*… to respond to that question, I don't think it's necessary to master MSA to learn either English or other languages. Well, *Uhh*… English is a global language, and, *Uh*, for example, here in Algeria, most people don't, *Uh*, don't speak in, *Uh*, MSA, it is not used. So, they, *Uh*…, mostly if they want to learn English, they will learn, either they know MSA or don't. It's, *Uh*, I think it's not necessary to know MSA in order to learn English.

Q.02: After five years of focusing on learning English rather than MSA, how would you describe the value of MSA to you at present?

- **Interviewee:** Well, *Uh*, at present, MSA… *Uh*, for me, I don't speak it at all. It's a… *Uh*, it doesn't matter to me. It's *Uh*… it doesn't mean that it doesn't matter, but, *Uh*, right now, like in our present life, I don't really use it.

Interviewer: could you please switch to MSA?

- **Interviewee:** could you repeat the question please? *Uh*, well *(laughs)* it's a little bit hard, *Uh*… *(laughs),Uh*, انا...، ،هي استعمال اللغة هو، استعمالها في اي مجال، هي سهل جدا، استعمالها هو سهل جدا، لكن استعمالها مع.../ه.... استعمالها مع.../ه،

  ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:** [Ɂana:…hiya Ɂistiʕma:l Ɂaluɣa huwa, Ɂistiʕma:luha: fi: Ɂay maǰa:l, hiya sahl ǰidan, Ɂistiʕma:luha: howa sahl ǰidan, lakin Ɂistiʕma:luha: maʕa… Ɂah… Ɂistiʕma:luha: maʕa… Ɂah.]

  ✓ **English Gloss:** *I… using the Arabic language is, using it in any domain is very easy, using it is very easy, but using it with…. Uh… using it with… Uh…*

Wait a moment please, just to… *Uh*… *(laughs)* Do you see, I'm… *(laughs)* I can't even… *Uh*… talk in MSA. I

MSA because it's, *Uh*… easier, and it's common between Algerian people. To speak in MSA in this present time is really difficult،أبدا أبد لا اظن انني، استطيع استعمال/آه، اللغة ... الفصحى.Please don't get me wrong… it's *Uh*, you have to link it to our *Uh*… to ADA; we use ADA more than MSA. So, MSA… it's begun to disappear, so we can't use it at all, only… we see it only in books, and Qur'an.

- ✓ **PhoneticTranscription:** [la: ʔaẓun ʔannani ʔastaṭiʕ ʔistʕmal ʔa: ʔalluɣa … ʔa lfusħaʔabadanʔabadan.]

- ✓ **English Gloss:** *I don't think I can use Uh Standard … Arabic.*

Q.03: باعتبار أن المجتمع الجزائري مجتمع يتحدث العديد من اللغات و اللهجات؛ في اعتقادك هل من السهل المحافظة على مكانة اللغة العربية الفصحى في طيات هدا التنوع؟

- **Interviewee:** ...اه... انا لا... انا لا اقول... انه من المستحيل المحافظة على العربية... لكن، انه صعب جدا، صعب جدا في حالنا هذا او في وقتنا هذا... هي... اللغة العربية الفصحى هي لغة... يعني انها... ليست... آه... لا اقول انها قديمة لكن غير مستعملة في الوقت الحالي... باعتبار ان اللغة الانجليزية تسيطر على كل اللغات... لذا... من الافضل ان... من الافضل ان اغلب الناس تتعلم اللغة الانجليزية على ان تبقى في... تبقى... مع... اللغة العربية الفصحى.و نحن كشعب جزائري... من القدم نستعمل... آه... اللغة العامية. لذا نفضل ان نستعمل اللهجة الجزائرية... او اللغة الانجليزية... او اللغة الفرنسية... هاذي هي... تقريبا كل الناس...

- ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:**[ʔah… ʔana: la:… ʔana la : ʔaqul… ʔanahu mina lmustaħi:l ʔalmuħa:faẓa ʕala : ʔal ʕarabiya… lakin, ʔinahu ṣaʕb ǰidan, ṣaʕb ǰidan fi: ħalina: hada: ʔaw fi waqtina: hada:… hiya… ʔa'luɣa ʔalʕarabiya alfuṣħa: hiya luɣa… yaʕni: ʔnaha:… laysat… ʔah… la ʔaqul ʔnaha: qadi:ma lakin ɣayrmustaʕma la fi ʔalwaqt lħali:… bi'ʕtib:ar ʔanna ʔal'uɣa ʔal ʔingli:ziya tusayṭir ʕala: kul ʔalluɣa:t… liða: mina l ʔafḍal ʔan… mina l'ʔafḍal ʔana ʔaɣlab ʔana:s tataʕalam ʔaluɣa ʔalʔingli:ziya ʕala: ʔan tabqa: fi:… tabqa:… maʕa… ʔa'luɣa ʔal ʕarabiya al'fuṣħa:, wa naħnu ka ʃaʕb ǰazaʔiri:… mina alqidam nastaʕmil… ʔah… ʔalluɣ al'ʕamiya , liða: nufaḍil ʔan nastaʕmil… ʔallahǰ al'ǰazaʔiriya… ʔaw ʔal'uɣa ʔalʔingli:ziya… ʔaw ʔal'luɣal firansiya… haði: hiya… taqriban kul ʔanas…]

- ✓ **English Gloss:** *Uh … I am not … I'm not saying … it is impossible to preserve Arabic … but, it is very difficult, very difficult in our case or in this mean time. Arabic language is a language … which means that … it is not …Uh… I am not saying it is old, but it is not used currently … Given that the English is controlling*

all languages … so it would be better … it would be better if all people learned English , instead of sticking to Standard Arabic … and we as Algerians … since the old days we use … Uh … the colloquial dialect, so we prefer to use the Algerian dialect … or English … or French … this is pretty much it for all people.

Q.04: في الوقت الراهن تعتبر اللغة الإنجليزية لغة عالمية و مسيطرة مادا لو تحدث العالم كله اللغة الإنجليزية؛ كيف سيكون موقفك حيال التخلي عن اللغة العربية الفصحى؟

- **Interviewee:** آه... سوف اقوم ب... سوف ارد على هذا السؤال... و ذلك ... و ذلك ... آه... انا... انا ارى نفسي كمسلم... انا مسلم... اللغة العربية الفصحى و...هي... لغة القرآن، لذا سوف... كيف اقول ذلك... لن... لن اتخلى عنها

  - ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:**[ʔah… sawfa ʔaqu:mu bi… sawfa ʔarudu ʕala: haða: ʔal suʔal… waðalika… ʔah… ʔana:… ʔana: ʔara: nafsi: ka muslim… ʔana: muslim… ʔa'luɣa ʔal'ʕarabiya alfuṣḥa:… luɣat ʔal'qurʔan, liðas awfa… kayfa ʔaqulu ðalik… lan… lan ʔataxala: ʕanha:… wa…]

  - ✓ **English Gloss:** *Uh… I will… I will answer this question… and that is… Uh… I… I see myself as a Muslim… I am a Muslim… MSA is… the language of the Qur'an, so I will… how to say that… I will not… I will not give it up.*

  Interviewer: could you please switch to English?

- **Interviewee:** *Uh…* okay, so… as I was saying… I will not… *Uh…* give up MSA easily because I'm a Muslim. Otherwise, if I were not a Muslim maybe I would accept English as a…whole domination. So, maybe if I were Christian or Jewish I would accept English as my… I will accept it… maybe… maybe I will leave my first language and mother tongue, and adopt myself with English. I think… to me… MSA is mainly related to religion and that's because I wasn't raised in a… in an area where MSA is like Holy… a holy language. Most people use ADA, as I told you, so maybe they would rather give up MSA and not give up ADA. As you see the generation is degrading, maybe after 10 years, you will not hear of MSA. But as Muslims, I don't think we will give up MSA at all… so as you see… it a religious… a religious matter.

Q.05: في سياق آخر، هلاً اطلعتنا عن كيف قضيت ايامك خلال الحجر الصحي؟

- **Interviewee:** ... و في ... و انا اعني بأكثرية... في الاكثر مشاهدة التلفاز... و مشاهدة... هي في الاغلبية كنت اقوم ب... بال... بممارسة الرياضة... هذا ال... في وقت كورونا هاذا... لقد اشتقت الى اصدقائي كثيرا، و اريد... اريد رؤيتهم بشدة... آه، هاذي هي ال... هاذي

هي حياتي فالكورونا.

- ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:**[Hiya f l'ʔaʕlabiya kuntu ʔaqum bi… bil… bimuma:rasat ʔariyaḍa… wa muʃa:hadat… fi lʔakθar muʃa:hadat ʔatilfaz… wa ʔana: ʔaʒni: biʔ akθariya.. wahiya fi haða:l… fi: waqt ko:ro:na: ha:ða:… laqad ʔiʃtaqtu ʔila: ʔaSdiqa:ʔi: kaθiran… wa ʔurid…ʔuridu ruʔyatahum bi ʃidda… ʔah, ha:ði: hiyal… ha:ði: hiya ħya:ti: fal ko:ro:na:].

- ✓ **English Gloss:** *Most of the time… I was doing… I was working-out… and watching… mostly watching TV… and I mean a lot… and in this… during this time of CoronaVirus… I have missed my friends so much… and I want to… I really want to see them… Uh… this is it… this is my life during Corona.*

- In the interview above, the total number of words is 617 + 87 pauses; divided into 404 words in English, and 213 words in Arabic. More details of these words are classified in the following table:

	English	**pauses**	**MSA**	**Pauses**	**ADA**	**Nonverbal English**	**NonverbalArabic**	**Total**
N	383	33	188	54	13	21	12	**704**
%	54.4	4.68	24.7	7.67	1.84	2.98	1.70	**100**

Table 3.2.20. Speech details of interview 01.
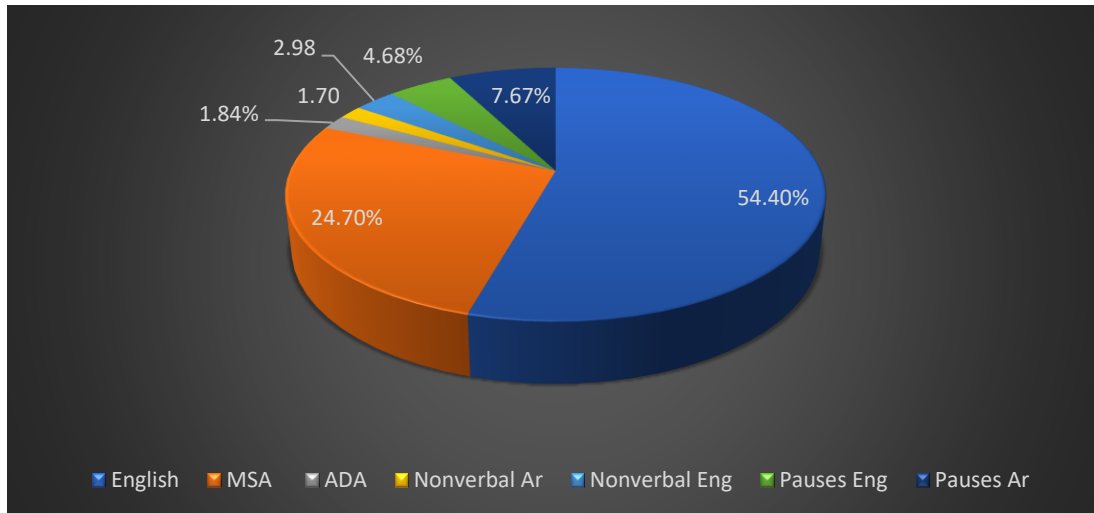
Graph 3.2.29. Speech details of interview 01.

- Table 3.2.20. and graph 3.2.29. represent the details of speech in interview01. Accordingly, the speech contains 617 words in total; more than half of the words are in English (54.4%) with 2.98% of nonverbal expressions in English, and 4.68% pauses. In Arabic, 24.7% of words are in MSA and 1.84% in ADA. The nonverbal expressions in Arabic represent 1.7% of speech while the pauses represent 7.67% of the speech. According to these results, the participant used more nonverbal expressions and pauses in the Arabic part than in the English one, which means that he faced more difficulties while speaking MSA. Moreover, it appears that the interviewee was unable to answer using pure MSA only as he used 1.7% of ADA in the entire speech.

- **Analysis of the interviewee's answers:**

➢ In the first question, the participant was asked about his opinion concerning the necessity of mastering MSA before learning English. The interviewee's point of view was that mastering MSA before Learning English, or any other foreign language, is not necessary since MSA is not used in daily conversations, and communication.

➢ The second question was about the value of MSA after five of learning English. The answer was that MSA is not much important because the participant never uses it, but he rather uses ADA and

other languages (English, French). He added that MSA has begun to disappear and Algerians nowadays use it in books and Qur'an only.

➢ The third question was in Arabic; whether it is easy to maintain the status of MSA within the Algerian speech community, which is rich in languages, and language varieties. The interviewee's answer was that it is extremely hard, yet not impossible, to maintain the status of MSA; however, since it is almost an old and unused language, and because Algerians prefer using their own dialects, it is better to learn other languages rather than focusing on MSA.

➢ Question N° 04 was about giving up MSA in case English dominates the entire world. The participant answered that he will not give up MSA because he is Muslim, and MSA reflects the identity of Muslims. According to his answers, if he were not a Muslim, he could easily switch from his mother tongue to another language.

➢ To sum up, based on the interviewee's answers, attitudes, and viewpoints, MSA holds an important place in the Algerian speech community only because it is related to the religion of Islam. Accordingly, MSA maintains its high status because it is the language of Islam regardless of the fact that most Algerians do not use MSA, and that they prefer using ADA and other languages. The interviewee has a positive attitude towards MSA; however, he prefers to use and learn other foreign languages.

- **Linguistic fluency:**

➢ **English:** when using English to answer, the participant seemed to be comfortable and at ease. His speech was fluent to a certain degree with few nonverbal expressions (2.98%), pauses (4.68%), and very few mistakes. When the interviewee was asked to switch from MSA to English, he paused and continued using English immediately.

➢ **MSA:** when the interview was asked to switch form English to MSA for the first time, he panicked, and sounded uncomfortable. He took a long time, said few words in MSA and switched back to English. The participant hesitated to use MSA and he answered that he does not think that he can use MSA. The answers provided in MSA were not as fluent as those in English were. The interviewee used too much pauses and nonverbal expressions, along with few mistakes. When he was asked to switch from English to MSA, he would take a long pause to answer.

Looking at the participant's language use, we can draw that he is more fluent in English than in MSA.

➢ **Arabic language use:** after analyzing the participant's speech in MSA, we can notice that he was unable to maintain the conversation using pure MSA. First, he took a long time to think of the vocabulary, and second, he used few ADA words and mixed them with MSA, for example, هي،في وقتنا هذا،هي،هاذيهي،هي،هاذي هي حياتي فالكورونا.Accordingly, this use of ADA with MSA can be considered as traces of the use of ESA.

➢ **Attrition Features in interview 01:**

<u>من الأفضل أن اغلب الناس تتعلم اللغة الانجليزية على ان تبقى في... تبقى... مع... اللغة العربية الفصحى</u>

[mina l'ʔafḍal ʔana ʔaɣlab ʔana:s tataʕalam ʔa'luɣa ʔal'ʔingli:ziya ʕala: ʔan tabqa: fi:…

tabqa:… maʕa… ʔaluɣa ʔal'ʕarabiyaʔal'fuṣħa]

➢   In this sentence, it can be noticed that the structure does not follow the grammatical norms of MSA.

➢The first part of the sentence could be influenced by the English language structure, as the informant meant to say '**It's better for people to learn the English language'**

➢ The second part of the sentence could be influenced by ADA, as the informant meant to say ' خير من اللي يقعدو مع العربية [xir m'li yuquʕdu mʕa lʕarbiya]

➢ The correct structure of MSA would be:

➢ [ʕala ʔa'nnas ʔan]على الناس أن تعي أن تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية أفضل بكثير من مواصلة تكلم اللغة العربية الفصحى

     taʕi: ʔanna taʕaluma ʔal'luɣati ʔal'ʔingliziya ʔafḍalu bi kaθirin min muwa:ssalti

     takalumi ʔal'luɣati ʔal ʕarabiyati ʔal fusħa]

<u>**... انا ارى نفسي كمسلم**</u>

[ʔana: ʔara: nafsi: kamuslim]

➢ This sentence could be influenced by English, as the informant meant to say: '**I see myself as a muslim'**

➢ In MSA, it would be more suitable to say:'**باعتباري مسلما'** [bi'ʕtibariii: musliman]

❖ **Interview Number 02:**

➢ **Gender:** Female.

➢ **Age:** 24.

➢ **Level:** Master 2, Linguistics.

Q.01: ''It's a common assumption that one cannot fully master a foreign language, unless he first masters his mother languages.'' Accordingly, do you believe that it is necessary to master MSA before getting involved in learning English?

• **Interviewee:** Of course, it's necessary for him to master MSA. So, Uh… he should know his language, and, Uh, culture… before an, Uh, another language… because it's necessary for him… Uh... I don't Know…

Q.02: After five years of focusing on learning English rather than MSA, how would you describe the value of MSA to you at present?

Interviewee: It's like…a dead language for me, Ah ah, I don't use it at all not outside the classroom or…

Interviewer: could you please switch to MSA?

- **Interviewee:** Okay... آه...الل...آه...I'm gonna speak Arabic... ... من سنوات خمس قضاء بعد ...هي لي بالنسبة العربية اللغة ،آه

- آه... دراسة اللغة الانجليزية... آه... فهي تعتبر لغة ميتة، لأني لا استعملها... لا في البيت، لا في الخارج مع أصدقائي... لا استعمل... لا استعملها بتاتا.

- ✓ **Phonetic Transcrption:**[ʔa:h…ʔall… ʔaluɣa ʔal ʕarabiya binisba li: hia… baʕd qaḍa:ʔ xams sanawa:t min…

  ʔa:h… dira:sa ʔaluɣa ʔal'ʔingli:ziya… ʔa:h… fa hia tuʕtabar luɣa mayta li ʔani: la: ʔastaʕmiluha:… la: fi: lbayt,

  la: fi: lxa:riǰ maʕa ʔaṣdiqa:ʔi:… la: astaʕmil… la: astaʕmiluha: bata:tan].

- ✓ **English Gloss:** *Uh... the... Uh the Arabic language for me is... after spending five years in... studying English...*

  Uh... so, it is a dead language, because I do not use it... not at home, nor outside with my friends... I do not use....

  I do not use it at all.

Q.03: باعتبار أن المجتمع الجزائري مجتمع يتحدث العديد من اللغات و اللهجات؛ في اعتقادك هل من السهل المحافظة على مكانة اللغة العربية الفصحى في طيات هدا التنوع؟

- **Interviewee:** آه... هو بالنسبة لينا... لنا... آه، أمر صعب جدا لأننا استعملنا اللغة العربية الفصحى فقط في... الل... المدارس... آه...و... و لكن بعد... آه...،... بعد الل... كلما... آه... كي شغل... آه كلما نكبر، كلما اللغة العربية الفصحي تنقص... لأننا لا نستعملها كثيرا... نادرا... الا في... استخراج الملفات... و... تكون فقط مكتوبة، يعني لا نتكلمها.

  - ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:** [ʔa:h… huwa binisba li:na:… lana:… ʔa:h…, ʔamr ṣaʕbǰidan li ʔanana: staʕmalna:

    ʔa'luɣa ʔal ʕarabiya al'fuṣħa: faqaṭ fi:… ʔll… mada:ris… ʔa:h…wa…wa… lakin baʕd… ʔa:h…,… baʕd

    ʔall… kulama:… ʔa:h… ki: ʃɣul… ʔa:h kulama: nakbur, kulama: ʔa'luɣa ʔal'ʕarabiya al'fuṣħa: tanquṣ…

    li'ʔanana: la: nastaʕmiluha: kaθi:ran… na:diran… ʔila: fi:… ʔstixra:ǰ ʔal'milafa:t…wa… taku:n faqaṭ

    maktu:ba, yaʕni: la: natakalamuha: …]

  - ✓ **English Translation:** *Uh for us…Uh… is it a very difficult thing because we only used MSA in… schools…*

    Uh… and… but after… Uh…,… after the… it is like… the more we grow up, the less we use it…. Because we

    do not use it very often… rarely… only in administrations… and… it would be written only; we do not speak it.

Q.04: في الوقت الراهن تعتبر اللغة الإنجليزية لغة عالمية و مسيطرة مادا لو تحدث العالم كله اللغة الإنجليزية؛ كيف سيكون موقفك حيال التخلي عن اللغة العربية الفصحى؟

- **Interviewee:** سيكون رد فعلي... آه... بلا لأن اللغة... حتى و لم تكن اللغة العربية الفصحى، و لكن... آه... و لكنها الدارجة... تمثلني، تمثل أصلي، تمثل بلدي، تمثل... كل شيء...سو لا يمكنني التخلي عن هويتي... آه

- ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:**[Sayaku:n rad fiʕli:… ʔa:h… bila:… liʔana ʔaluɣa… ħata: wa lam takun ʔaluɣa ʔal'ʕarabiya al'fuṣḥa:,walakin… ʔa:h… walakinha: aldariǰa… tumaθiluni:, tumaθil ʔaṣli:, tumaθil baladi:, tumaθil…kula ʃayʔ… SO la yumkinuni: ʔataxali: ʕan hawiyati:… ʔa:h…]

- ✓ **English Gloss:***my reaction would be… Uh… No! Because the language… even if it is not MSA, but… Uh… it is the dialect "ammiya"… it represents me, it represents my origins, my country… it represents… everything… so, I cannot let go of my identity… Uh…*

Interviewer: could you please switch to English?

- **Interviewee:**We cannot… Uh… it's so hard… (laughs). Our… Even… Uh… MSA and our dialect, even it's not MSA… I mean… MSA we can… we can a little bit, not that much, like, it not important, like, for us as much as our dialect. So, even if they… gonna… give up MSA, so… it won't be that much important for us… like… normally, because it represents our identity, but we don't use it.

Q.05: في سياق آخر، هلاً أطلعتنا عن كيف قضيت أيامك خلال الحجر الصحي؟

- **Interviewee:** لكن ...او، كتابا اقرأ ان... دائما اريد كنت...و و... والدتي... آه... مساعدة يعني... البيت في العمل ...ال... منقسم بين... كان وقتي ...آه نعم ...منقسم كان وقتي... سو... مذكرتي... آه... بتجهيز... آه... ب مشغولة كنت... كذلك و ...لي... آه... مي فور... مستحيلا شبه كان ذلك...

- ✓ **Phonetic Transcription:**[ʔa:h… waqti: kan… munqasim bayn…. ʔal… ʔal ʕamal fi: lbayt… yaʕni: musa:ʕadat… ʔa:h… wa:lidati:… wa… kuntu… uridu da:ʔiman… ʔan… ʔaqraʔakita:ban… ʔaw… lakin ðalika kana ʃibh mustaħi:lan… *for me*… li:… ʔa:h… wa kaðalika kunt… maʃɣulatan bi… ʔa:h… bi taǰhi:z… ʔa:h… muðakirati:… SO… waqti: kana munqasim… naʕam…]

- ✓ **English Translation:** *Uh… My time was… divided between… the… working at home…. I mean helping… Uh… my mother… and… I was… I always wanted to… read a book… or… but that was almost impossible… For me… Uh… and I was… busy with… Uh… preparing my dissertation… so… my time was split… Yes…*

In the second interview, the total number of words is 296 + 90 pauses; divided into 129 words in

English, and 164 words in Arabic. The details of the speech are classified in the following table:

	English	pauses	MSA	pauses	ADA	Nonverbal English	Nonverbal Arabic	Total
N	125	22	138	68	5	7	21	386
%	**32.4**	**5.7**	**35.75**	**17.61**	**1.30**	**1.81**	**5.44**	**100**

Table 3.2.21. Speech details of interview 02.
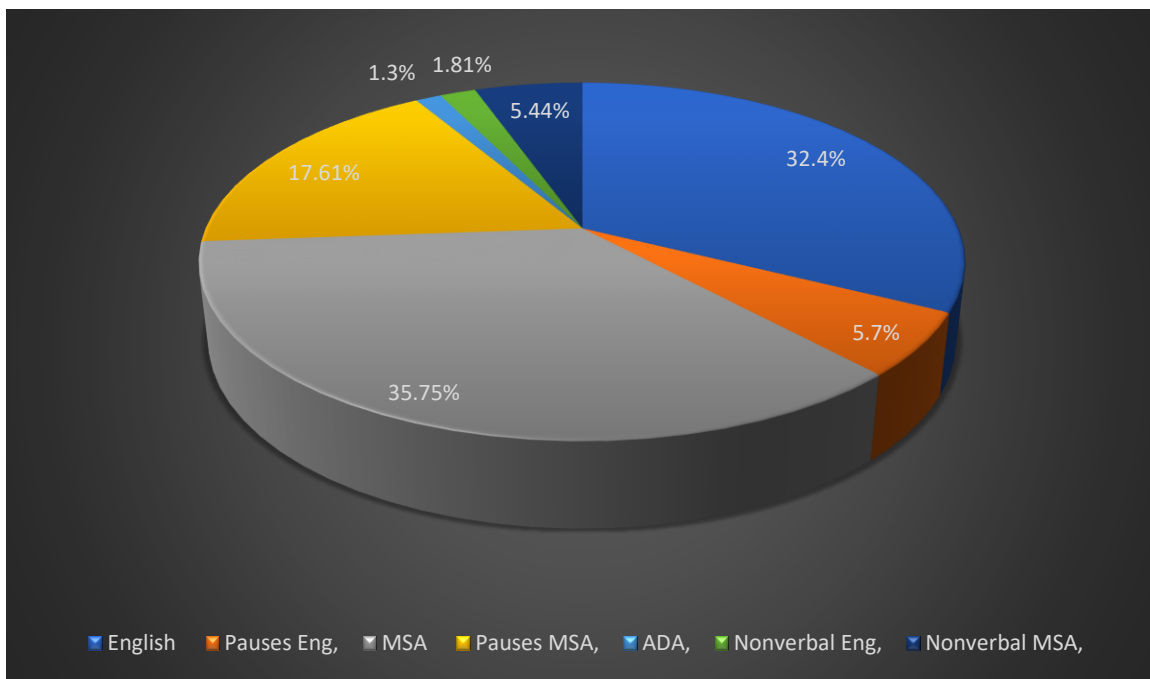
Graph 3.2.30. Speech Details of Interview02.

- Looking at the details of speech of interview2; in table 3.2.21.and graph 3.2.30., there are 382

  words in total where words in Arabic represent 37.05% while words in English represent 32.4%.

  On the one hand, Arabic words are divided into 35.75% in MSA and 1.30% in ADA with 5.44%

  of nonverbal expressions, and 17.61% pauses. On the other hand, English words are divided into

  1.81% of nonverbal expressions, and 5.7% pauses. Accordingly, the large number of nonverbal

  expressions and pauses in

Arabic, in comparison to it in English, indicates that it was more difficult to speak in MSA than in English. In addition to that, the use of ADA with MSA shows an inability to use pure and fluent MSA.

- **Analysis of the interviewee's answers:**

➢ In the first question, the participant gave a narrowed answer concerning the necessity of mastering MSA before learning English; she answered that they have to master MSA, and then hesitated and said that she does not know.

➢ In the second question, concerning the value of value of MSA at present, the interviewee said that MSA is a dead language because she does not use it at all.

➢ The third question was in Arabic about maintaining the status of MSA, her answer was that maintaining MSA would be a difficult task to do because it is not used in the Algerian speech community, and the more they grow up, the less they use it.

➢ The fourth question, also in MSA, was about the interviewee's opinion concerning giving up MSA for English. The participant's first answer was that she would not accept it because MSA reflects her identity and culture; however, she changed her answer and said that she might give up MSA because it is not used anywhere, but she cannot give up ADA because it is more important than MSA.

- **Linguistic fluency:**

➢ **English:** The interviewee's use of English was fluent to a certain degree. She made few mistakes, and she paused 22 times, but she did not use many nonverbal expressions. When asked to switch to English, the participant paused and answered that it was hard; however, she continued to speak in English and sounded more comfortable.

➢ **MSA:** The interviewee hesitated when she was asked to switch to MSA. She paused for a while and answered. Her answers in MSA were less fluent because she paused many times, and used many

nonverbal expressions in comparison to English, which indicate that she was not at complete ease, and had to take a long time to reflect on her use of MSA.

➢ The participant's language use of both MSA and English indicates that even though her answers were limited in both languages, and she used MSA more than English, her English is more fluent than her MSA.

➢ **Arabic language use:** the analysis of the second interview gives evidence that the participant faced difficulties while speaking MSA. She used few words in English to fill in the gap in MSA, such as, so, for me. In addition to that, she used few word sin ADA, for example, بالنسبة لينا، كي شغل، الدارجة, which can be considered as pure evidence for her inability to use pure MSA, on one hand, and on the other hand, for the existence of ESA.

➢ **Attrition features in interview 02:**

<div dir="rtl">

... كي شغل... آه كلما نكبر، كلما اللغة العربية الفصحى تنقص

</div>

[ki: ʃuɣl… ʔa:h kulama: nakbur, kulama: ʔal'uɣa ʔal'ʕarabiy al'fuşħa: tanquş]

     ➢ This sentence could be influenced by English, as the informant meant to say **'It is like the older we get, the lesser we use MSA'**

     ➢ Or itcouldbe influence by ADA, as shemeantsaying:**'كي شغل وحنا نكبرو العربية راها تنقص '**

            [ki: ʃɣul w ħna nækæbru w l'ʕarbiya raha tænqus]

     ➢ The appropriate expression in MSA would be : **'كلما كبرنا كلما قل استعمالنا للغة العربية الفصحى'**[kullama: kabirna, kullama: qallaʔistiʕmaluna li'luɣati ʔal'ʕarabiyati ʔal fusħa]

<div dir="rtl">

سيكون رد فعلي... آه... بلا

</div>

[Sayaku:n rad fiʕli:… ʔa:h… bila:]

     ➢ Here, the informant's expression is clearly impacted by English, as she meant saying **'My reaction/attitude would be negative'**

> ➢ In MSA, itisbetter to say:'سيكون موقفي سلبيا حيال ذلك' **[sæyaku:nu mawqifi salbiyan ĥiya:la**

> **ðalik]**

Discussion of the Interview Findings

Investigations carried out in the field of language attrition, usually encompass a versatile set of tests where the participants both receptive and productive skills are examined. However, due to the time limitation, the semi-structured interview we opted for only aimed to examine the participants speaking skills and attitudes in/ towards both MSA and English. Furthermore, an extra focus is given to the informant's use of MSA where we shed light on the difficulties on the difficulties they faced, and explore their linguistic choices when they cannot keep using MSA.

Based on the findings of the semi-structured interview with both samples, it has been confirmed that Educated Algerians attitude towards MSA is positive. However, they only relate it to religious aspects (the language of Islam and Qu'ran). Furthermore, when talking about foreign languages, English in particular, the informants seemed to be more motivated and supportive of the idea to lean such languages rather than dedicating time to improve neither their MSA skills nor its status in the Algerian community. Nevertheless, the findings also revealed that the informants have a more positive attitude towards their mother dialect and believe that it holds bigger importance than the prestigious standard form of Arabic, MSA.

Concerning their speaking skills in both languages, the outcomes of the interview have shown how difficult it is for the informants to talk in MSA. They were uncomfortable to a large extent when asked to talk in MSA; they laughed, paused a lot, and hesitated to structure their answers. However, the informants seemed more at ease when speaking in English, and they did not expect to be asked in MSA

at all. This confirms the results obtained from the questionnaire which suggests that: MSA speaking skills are more vulnerable to attrition, mainly due to:

a) The lack of its everyday use.

b) Getting more indulged in learning English as a foreign language.

Another thing revealed by the findings from the interview is that when the respondents fail to proceed communicating in MSA, they either code-switch to ADA (diglossic-code shifting), code-switch to English, or take some time to retrieve the right words in MSA. This CLI, manifested in diglossic-code shifting and code switching can be taken as an illustration the informant's use of ESA. This can emphasize that ESA certainly has a relationship with the attrition of MSA. Said differently, the use of Educated Algerians to ESA can be taken as an obvious indicator to the attrition of MSA.

Section Three: Recommendations, Implications, and Suggestions for Further Research

Although the results of the current study are not conclusive, it tried to provide some recommendations and implications to remedy the tackled problem. Additionally, suggestions for further research for the sake of this research continuity.

3.3.1. Recommendations and Implications:

Several reasons make language attrition a worrying phenomenon. Losing a language means losing a vital part in a person's identity and wasting a significant cultural and social heritage of groups. Communities that witnessed language loss talk about it as a deeply personal loss accompanied by a sense of self-loss (Grenoble, 2006, p. 140).

Throughout the chapters of this study, MSA attrition is presented as a special case compared to the usual cases investigated in this area. Although Arabs might perceive MSA as a second language, losing it would result in an emotional load similar to the one of losing a mother tongue. It is because Arabs still think of MSA as a crucial part of their religious and cultural identity. For avoiding and minimizing the decline of MSA, the following recommendations and implications are suggested:

1) MSA is a language-related mainly to the religion of Islam and literature; therefore, most people think of it as an old complex language. To change how MSA is viewed, teachers at all levels have to link MSA to contemporary topics and follow modern, less boring methods to teach it (methods used to teach foreign languages).

2) Algerians should start using MSA in its spoken form without feeling insecure; thus, there should be social activities related to the Arabic language where people can use it. Besides, social media influencers, moviemakers, and TV shows need to focus on MSA's use as people nowadays are more influenced by them.

3) Lately, many Algerians have been interested in studying foreign languages rather than MSA. Hence, decision-makers can work to come up with ways to include MSA as a module in teaching foreign languages, such as a module of translation that can be taught throughout their entire academic teaching.

4) The most significant impact on people comes from their homes, as parents are the ones to decide what languages their children should use. Therefore, parents should push their children to learn and use MSA and influence them to view it differently from the traditional one.

3.3.2. Suggestions for Further Research

Despite the promising findings of this research work, further investigations should be carried out on the remaining issues and overcome the limitations of this study. These investigations could address the following areas:

✓ **Examining and assessing the vitality of MSA on the national and the global level:** this would provide more accurate insights to the real status of MSA in the Arab world. Additionally, giving a proper diagnosis to MSA vitality would help developing better methods to revive and strengthen its use.

✓ **Examining the efficiency of MSA teaching methods and their credibility:** this would help design better curricula for teaching MSA, as the inefficiency of the teaching methods canbe a factor in MSA attrition. These curricula should meet the needs of MSA learners and find ways to remedy their weaknesses.

✓ **Investigating the relationship between the emergence of ESA and the MSA attrition:** finding the link between the two phenomena would provide better explanations to the decline of MSA.

✓ **Comparing the efficiency of MSA and ESA in teaching Arabic as a foreign language:** discovering which variety is most efficient would solve the dilemma that TAFL programs and learners face. Settling on one variety to teach Arabic would make the learning process more effective and clear the confusion that foreign learners face.

✓ **Investigating other extra linguistic factors that might contribute to the attrition of MSA:** For example, examining the effect of the typological proximity between MSA and English, or MSA and Ca, on the MSA attrition process.

✓ **Conducting longitudinal researches to estimate MSA attrition rate and its linguistic selectivity:** this would help to remedy the baseline problem and get more accurate results about rate and amount of loss.

3.5.   Conclusion

The preceding chapter was devoted for the practical part of this study. First, it provided thorough details about the followed methodology and the population sample. Second, it analytically presented the findings obtained from the research instruments besides a detailed critical discussion to draw conclusion at the end. The results showed that Educated Algerians do endure attrition at the level of MSA skill after finalizing their general instruction. The core reasons found are: getting more immersed in learning English (FL), language contact, ATM, and frequency of MSA use. Furthermore, the use of ESA was found as a concrete evidence for the attrition of MSA. Third, despite the obstacles this study faced, this chapter still dedicated a portion for recommendations to remedy the tackled issue, and suggestions for further research.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Recent studies and articles argue that the Arabic language is in danger of decline on both the individuals' and the global levels. This decline may come up with severe consequences for the Arabian culture and heritage. For having a versatile range of dialects all through the Arab world continuum, MSA is the standard form of the Arabic language that bridges the gap between all Arabic dialects (more than 30 dialects). It is used for literature, formal writing, formal instruction, and political speeches, while the colloquial dialects are used for daily communication. When Arabs speak of the decline of Arabic, they usually refer to the decline of MSA in literature, literacy, and the increasing interest in using dialects and foreign languages.

On the individuals' level, researchers suggest that MSA is suffering because of the way Arabs see it and perceive it. They claim that since Arabs grow up speaking their distinct dialects, they restore MSA as a second language when they are introduced to it in formal settings (mostly). Furthermore, researchers detected the emergence of a new variety of Arabic that combines both features of formal MSA (*Fusha*) and colloquial dialects (*Ammiyyah*). They called this variety 'Educated Spoken Arabic', and now it is being discussed as a new alternative for MSA in TAFL programs. Said differently, since Arabs – educated ones in particular – shifted to using ESA in formal settings, TAFL programs are considering developing new curricula for teaching ESA instead of MSA.

Taking all the above mentioned insights and the Algerian context as a focus, the study at hand has sought to investigate the decline of MSA on the individuals' level by applying the second language attrition theories. Moreover, the inquiry also devoted attention to ESA use by the educated sample and examined whether it can be taken as a cause or a consequence of MSA attrition.

To Investigate MSA attrition as a second language, the chosen sample had to be in limited or utterly absent contact with MSA for a significant amount of time (incubation period). For this reason, we chose 'Master 2 students at the department of English language of Ibn Khaldoun Tiaret University'.

To meet the objectives of this study, the work was organized under three main chapters:

❖ In the first chapter, to provide a better understanding of the subject, a comprehensive overview has been given to second language attrition area, its related terminologies, variables, and theories.

❖ In the second chapter, to provide a better view of the study context and target language, a thorough sociolinguistic description has been given to MSA amid the Algerian context.

❖ The third chapter was merely devoted to the empirical investigation part. The followed methodology, data collection tools, and findings have been explicitly detailed. Moreover, the results have been discussed based on the provided literature, and conclusions have been logically drawn

Three major concerns have monitored this study. First, as a psycholinguistic concern, we questioned if Educated Algerians begun losing their MSA skills after finalizing their general instruction. Second, for covering the sociolinguistic facet, the focus was on the potential extra linguistic factors that might cause the informants to lose their MSA skills. Third, the research linguistic dimension was about the use of English and ESA and their relationship with the MSA attrition process.

After using a mixed methodology to collect the data, the analysis and discussion of the findings have revealed that:

✓ After the end of their general instruction, Educated Algerians start losing their previously acquired MSA skills.

✓ ATM, language contact, and use are the frequent suspects in the process of MSA attrition.

✓ Being more immersed in English affects MSA skills negatively; notably, the speaking skills.

✓ The use of ESA can be seen as a direct outcome to the attrition of MSA.

These findings demonstrate that the hypotheses drawn at the onset of this study are valid to an acknowledged extent, yet not fully confirmed. Although the first hypothesis is confirmed, the amount of loss at the level of MSA skills after the end of general instruction varies from one respondent to another (some reported that their MSA skills are stable). Concerning the second and third hypotheses, the impacts of ATM, language contact, frequency of use, and learning English as FL on MSA attrition were explicitly shown in the findings. However, the empirical investigation did not come up with a clear conclusion about the possibility of controlling these variables. Finally, for the hypothesis, the use of ESA was found as a result of MSA attrition only. Further research has to be conducted to find if ESA use is also a suspect in MSA attrition.

Pursuing this work was not an easy task due to the number of methodological obstacles that hindered the process. First, the whole academic year was unusual due to the spread of the international pandemic, Covid-19. This situation made us adjust our materials and research tools to online ones only. Second, the short amount of time did not allow us to have a large scale study. Quantitative data was collected from forty (40) subjects only, and the qualitative corpus was obtained from two subjects (male and female). Moreover, it prevented us from gathering data to establish a baseline for our study or conduct a longitudinal investigation. Third, the lack of resources dealing with the attrition of MSA made us improvise and try to apply the tests conducted on other languages.

In conclusion, the present work is merely an attempt to link the noticeable decline in MSA to the attrition field. It managed to prove that Educated Algerians do suffer from a decline at the level of MSA skills due to a set of factors; ATM, language contact, use, and learning a foreign language. Furthermore, it shed light on the new variety, ESA, as an outcome of MSA attrition. However, it is not possible to validate and generalize these results. Further studies remain an utmost necessity illuminate the puzzling facets related to the subject.

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Appendices

Appendix 01: Online Questionnaire

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire is a part of a Master 2 dissertation. It is devoted for investigating whether the individuals' knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) suffers from any sort of decline after the end of general education (primary to secondary school). You are kindly invited to honestly answer and fill-in in this questionnaire according to your own cases. Bear in mind that this is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Your answers will only be used for academic research purposes and your identities will remain anonymous.

❖ **Initialisms and terms you need to know:**

- **MSA**: it stands for Modern Standard Arabic, i.e. the standard set of the Arabic language, which is

    taught in all Algerian schools from the primary level to the secondary.

- **Mother tongue**: the language which you grew up speaking.

SECTION ONE : PARTICIPANTS' INFORMATION.

Please provide the following information. Put a cross on the valid response.

1. Gender:　　Male　☐　　Female　☐

2. Age:　　20 – 23 ☐　　23- 28 ☐　　28+ ☐

3. Specialty:

    - Linguistics　☐

    - Didactics　☐

4. Mothertongue:

    - Algerian Dialectal Arabic ☐

    - Berber ☐

- French ☐

- Other: ………………………………………………...

5. Spoken Languages (you are allowed to cross more than one box).

- Arabic ☐

- French ☐

- English ☐

- Spanish ☐

- Others:..………………………………………

SECTION TWO: ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION TOWARDS MODERN STANDARD ARABIC (MSA) AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

1. Do you believe that MSA is vital part of your culture and identity?

- Yes ☐

- No ☐

- Why?……………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Please answer to the following questions by crossing the box that refers to your

answer:

Question:	very important	Important	No opinion	Unimportant
• How important it is to you to have a command of MSA?				
• How important it is to you to have a command of a foreign language?				

3. What is your motive behind learning foreign languages?

   • To express my feelings, ideas, and interests in different ways. Be able to ☐

   travel the world easily. ☐

   • Be able to communicate with people in various dialects. ☐

   • Enhancing your skill to get international and foreign business opportunities. ☐

   • Have an easy access to scientific domains and information. ☐

   • Other: …………………………………………………….......

4. How would you describe the frequency of your use of MSA after finishing

   secondary school?

   • Never use it ☐

   • Rarely ☐

   • Sometimes ☐

   • Often ☐

   • Very often ☐

5. In what occasions/ activities do you use MSA?

   • Reading Books ☐

   • Listen to music ☐

- Write in my journals ▢

- Watching movies, videos, News, etc ▢

- Surfing the web and social media ▢

- Formallyinteractingwithteachers ▢

- Others: ……………………………………………………………

SECTION THREE: MSA vs. OTHER LANGUAGES/ VARIETIES.

1. In addition to your formal education in MSA (primary to secondary school) where

   else did you learn/ acquire MSA?

   - Quranic schools (Msjid, Zawya, etc) ▢

   - Reading books ▢

   - Private courses in MSA ▢

   - Watching TV shows and cartoons ▢

2. Please answer to the following questions by crossing the box that refers to your

   answer:

Question:	Advanced	good	average	Poor	verypoor
• How would you describe your skills in MSA at the final year of secondary school (before university)?					
• How would you describe your skills in MSA at present (NOW)?					
• How would you rate your English language level?					

3. Do you sometimes feel that English is overtaking and replacing MSA and other languages you know more and more?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

- Why ?………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………….

4. Can you maintain a conversation using pure MSA?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

- If your answer is "no" it is because:

  - My proficiency in MSA got reduced. ☐

  - It is hard for me to keep using to MSA, and I find myself switching to other languages/varieties (ADA, Berber, French, English, or others). ☐

  - My speaking skills in MSA have always been weak. ☐

5. Are you familiar with the variety known as Educated Spoken Arabic?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

- If your answer is yes, how would you explain that Algerians are shifting more to using ESA instead of MSA?

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

SECTION FOUR: MSA PROFICIENCY vs. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY.

1. Please rewrite the four language skills from the easiest to the hardest to you according to each language (MSA and English):

   The skills: writing, listening, reading, speaking.

   - MSA: …………………………………………………………………

   - English: …………………………………………………………………

2. Can-do-scales:

- The following scales include statements about your language proficiencyin both MSA and English. Please read each description carefully insert the appropriatenumber to indicate how easy or how difficult can you carry out each task in each language.

- You can insert only one number per language and per statement.

Please use the following scale:

1 = extremely difficult.   2 = difficult.   3 = manageable.   4 = easy.   5 = extremely easy.

Example: When I'm watching a podcast or television interviews, I can still understand the participants in the conversation.   MSA (4)   English (2)

Listening Comprehension:	MSA	English
• Understanding any kind of spoken language.		
• Understanding extended speech even when it is not clearly structured.		
• Understanding Television programs and films without too much efforts		
Reading Proficiency:	MSA	English
• Understanding long and complex, factual and literary texts, with appreciating distinctions of styles.		
• Understanding the description of events, feelings, and wishes in personal letters.		
• Understanding contemporary literary prose.		
Speaking Ability:	MSA	English
• Interacting with a degree of fluency and spontaneity and maintain long conversation.		
• Using the language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes		
• Narrating a story or the plot of a book or a film.		
Writing Proficiency	MSA	English
• Write simple coherent text on topics I am familiar with or interested in.		
• Write an essay or a report and delivering information, or supporting a particular point view		
• Express my thoughts and my feelings in a clear well structured text.		

3. How and to what extent do you think losing MSA would impact you and your

country?

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

4. What suggestions you might have for strengthening the status of MSA at the

individuals' and the global levels?

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you so much your time

and your cooperation.

Appendix 02: Online Semi-structued Interview

- The following interview is a semi-structured one where the interviewees are asked two questions in English and Three questions in Arabic.

- Across and in the middle of their answers, the respondents will be asked to shift from using English to using MSA.

➢ **Question 01:**

"It's a common assumption that one cannot fully master a foreign language, unless he first masters his mother languages." Accordingly, do you believe that it is necessary to master MSA before getting involved in learning English?

➢ **Question 02:**

After five years of focusing on learning English rather than MSA, how would you describe the value of MSA to you at present?

➢ **Question 03:**

باعتبار أن المجتمع الجزائري مجتمع يتحدث العديد من اللغات و اللهجات؛ في اعتقادك هل من السهل المحافظة على مكانة اللغة العربية الفصحى في طيات هذا التنوع؟

➢ **Question 04:**

في الوقت الراهن تعتبر اللغة الإنجليزية لغة عالمية و مسيطرة ماذا لو تحدث العالم كله اللغة الإنجليزية؛ كيف سيكون موقفك حيال التخلي عن اللغة العربية الفصحى؟

➢ **Question 05:**

في سياق آخر، هلّا أطلعتنا عن كيف قضيت أيامك خلال الحجر الصحي؟

Glossary of Terms

The key concepts related to the subject:

1- Attriters: According to **en.wiktionary.org**, an attriter is:

a) One who, or that which, **attrites.**

b) *(linguistics)* One who has lost certain abilities in a **language** by learning and using a

different language.

Attriters often experience lexical access problems, i.e. a discrepancy between what they would

like to say, their communicative intention, and what they still know how to say in their L1.

(Monika S. Schmid , 2004) .

2- Cross-linguistic Influence (CLI): according to **link.springer.com**, CLI is typically defined as the

influence that knowledge of one language has on an individual's learning or use of another language.

This influence can involve various aspects of language.

3- Educated Algerians: In context of this study, Educated Algerians are those who have undergone

the process of learning from primary to secondary school and pursued their higher education.

4- Erosion of a language: The term erosion refers to the gradual destruction of something by natural

forces. Accordingly, language erosion is the gradual loss/decline of a given language, i.e., the process

of forgetting a certain language.

5- Verbal Repertoire: Linguistic or verbal repertoire is 'the set of language varieties used in the

speaking and writing practices of a speech community' **(Finegan 2004, glossary)**

Summary:

The present work aims at investigating the applicability of second language attrition to the case of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). The target population involved is Master2 English language students at the faculty of letters and languages at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. The paper focuses on whether MSA is subject to being eroded due to its rare use within the Algerian speech community. Moreover, it discusses the possibility of the use of Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA),amongst Educated Algerians, being a concrete evidence for the erosion of MSA.

Key Words: Educated Algerians, Erosions, Educated Spoken Arabic, Second Language Attrition, Modern Standard Arabic

Résumé :

Le présent travail vise à étudier l'applicabilité de l'attrition de la langue seconde au cas de l'arabe standard moderne (ASM). La population cible concernée est constituée par les étudiants en Master2 de langue anglaise de la faculté des lettres et des langues de l'université Ibn Khaldoun de Tiaret. Le document se concentre sur la question de savoir si l'arabe standard moderne est susceptible de s'éroder en raison de son utilisation rare au sein de la communauté linguistique algérienne. En outre, il examine la possibilité que l'utilisation de l'arabe parlé instruit (ESA), parmi les Algériens instruits, soit une preuve concrète de l'érosion de l'ASM.

Mots Clés : Algériens Instruits, Arab Standard Moderne, Attrition de la Langue Seconde Erosion, ESA (Arab Parlé Insrtuits)

ملخص

يهدف العمل الحالي إلى التحقق من إمكانية تطبيق نظرية تناقص اللغة الثانية على حالة اللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة. الفئة المستهدفة هي طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية ماستر 2 في كلية الآداب واللغات في جامعة ابن خلدون بتيارت. يركز البحث على ما إذا كانت اللغة العربية الفصحى عرضة للتآكل بسبب ندرة استخدامها في المجتمع الجزائري. إضافة إلى ذلك، فإنه يناقش إمكانية استخدام عربية المثقفين، بين الجزائريين المتعلمين، كدليل ملموس على تآكل الفصحى .

الكلمات المفتاحية: استنزاف اللغة الثانية، اللغة العربية الفصحى الحديثة، عربية المثقفين، الجزائريون المتعلمون، التآكل.