

***Language Shift and Maintenance:
The Case of Algerian Immigrants in France***

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Abstract :

The focus of the present study is on language choice among Arabic/French bilinguals in the Algerian immigrant community in France. Such a choice reflects the status of Arabic maintenance/shift as a minority language in France. This research aims to answer the question: In the case of Algerian immigrants in France, does Arabic undergo a language shift or maintenance? Why? In order to end up with illuminating results, an email questionnaire was conducted with 20 Algerian immigrants in France. The findings indicate that Arabic is lost starting from the third generation.

Even though this small-scale investigation has its inadequacies, it throws light on some causes behind the decay of Arabic in the host country. Once reasons are known, remedial measures can be identified and taken. Besides, one of the important results is that our immigrants share positive attitudes towards their mother tongue which can be relied on as a strong maintenance factor eventually.

Key words: *bilingualism, language shift, language maintenance, Arabic, Algerian immigrants in France.*

الملخص:

هدفت تتركز هذه الدراسة حول الاختيار بين اللغتين العربية والفرنسية وسط مزدوجي اللغة من المهاجرين الجزائريين بفرنسا. فمن شأن هذا الاختيار أن يعكس وضعية اللغة العربية كلغة أقليات في فرنسا. إذن يهدف هذا البحث إلى الإجابة على السؤال التالي: هل يتم الحفاظ على اللغة العربية أم التخلي عنها لصالح الفرنسية في حالة المهاجرين الجزائريين بفرنسا؟ لماذا؟ وبغية التوصل إلى نتائج موضحة أرسلنا 20 استبياناً عبر البريد الإلكتروني لمهاجريننا هناك. أثبتت النتائج أنه ثمة حفاظ على اللغة العربية وأن فقدانها يلاحظ بدءاً من الجيل الثالث من المهاجرين.

رغم نقائص هذه الدراسة المطبقة على عينة صغيرة إلا أنها تسلط الضوء على بعض من أسباب فقدان اللغة العربية في البلد المضيف، حيث أن تحديد الأسباب يسهل إيجاد الحلول وتطبيقها. ومن أهم النتائج أيضاً تسجيل مواقف إيجابية المهاجرين الجزائريين تجاه لغتهم الأم، إذ يمكن اتخاذ هذا العامل كركيزة للحفاظ على اللغة العربية في غير موطنها مستقبلاً.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ازدواجية اللغة، التخلي عن اللغة، الحفاظ على اللغة، العربية، المهاجرين الجزائريين بفرنسا.

Introduction

A plethora of studies describing and explaining language shift have grown out of the literature on language contact, or the study of the languages and communities of bilingual speakers. The ultimate result of language contact must either be stable multilingualism – i.e., maintenance of the two (or more) languages in some form – or language shift, whereby the community eventually shifts to the use of one language over the other. Research on two languages in contact generally focuses either on the structural effects of one language on the other or on the sociocultural factors promoting language shift. Little has studied the relationship between social factors and linguistic changes. In this paper, I will provide a theoretical review on bilingualism, language contact, shift and maintenance in the first part; and find out the ideologies and attitudes of language use among the Algerian community in France and determine the situation of Arabic¹ there (whether maintained or not) in the second part.

Part One: The Literature Review

While *bilingualism* commonly designates the use of at least two languages by an individual, the term has several meanings depending on one's area of specialization. Apart from its definition, the questions that often rise about bilinguals are: what happens when they no longer practice one of their languages because of some change in their linguistic needs (due to immigration for example)? how can sociolinguists know that language shift is taking place? and what factors lie behind it? To tackle these grey spots, they provided models of language shift.

1.1 Definition of Bilingualism

Early research in Bilingualism goes back to 1920's. It has been defined from various perspectives namely: linguistic, psychological and sociological.

1.1.1 Linguistic Definition

Bilingualism has been defined as the ability to speak or write fluently in two languages. However, the precise meaning of the term *bilingualism* is a matter of debate among linguists. If we break the word into its constituents (*bi* from the Latin word for "two", *lingual* meaning "articulated with the tongue", and *ism* being the suffix that describes an action or process) we deduce that it means to speak two languages. To be

sure, there are a myriad of definitions. The following are two types of bilingualism discussed in the literature.

First, societal bilingualism occurs when in a given society two or more languages are spoken. In this sense, nearly all societies are bilingual, but they can differ with regard to the degree of the form of bilingualism (Appel & Muysken, 1987).

The second type is individual bilingualism (sometimes known as *bilinguality*) which is pertinent to "... determining whether a given person is bilingual or not [which] is far from simple" (Appel & Muysken, 1987).

1.1.2 Psychological Definition

Hamers and Blanc (2000) view bilingualism as a psychological state, whereby an individual has access to "more than one linguistic code" (6).

1.1.3 Sociological Definitions

With regard to the sociological definitions of bilingualism, diverse definitions exist in different parts of the world.

In many African countries, the term bilingualism may be used to describe a mastery of European languages in addition to the use of their native African tongues. In these cases, the ability to speak more than one local language is rarely considered by the speakers to be a case of bilingualism. This is because few of them have been codified; as a result, they have no official status. In fact, Speaking more than one dialect is known as bidialectism (Appel & Muysken, 1987).

So where a person is from could have an effect on their view of bilingualism. The British or the Americans, for instance, tend to see bilingualism as something rare and fascinating.

It is noteworthy that the sociolinguistic perspective has produced two distinctions in our understanding of bilingualism based on the social status of the languages involved. First, Lambert (1975) proposes two possible types: additive and subtractive bilingualism to designate the situation whether the second language enriches or threatens the native language. Second, Valdés (1992) opposes elective and circumstantial bilingualism in reference to whether bilingualism is a consequence of individual choice or an accompaniment of social reality such as immigration

or annexation. Such dichotomies help account for whether bilingualism is maintained or allowed to shift into monolingualism.

1.1.4 Bilingualism: sociolinguistic vs psycholinguistic dimensions

It is essential to mention that the psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic dimensions of bilingualism are separable from one another. For example, in the United States, many individuals with proficiency in English and another language spend most of their lives as monolinguals- practicing only English (Veltman, 1983). These individuals are psycholinguistically bilingual but sociolinguistically monolingual. This distinction is useful in grasping what happens to the native language of minority communities or of immigrants. More precisely, the shift towards a second language among immigrants is not a psycholinguistic phenomenon, i.e., the result of individuals who lose their bilingual proficiency in the course of their lifetime. Rather, it is a sociolinguistic phenomenon where the low status immigrant language is no longer used, and then fails to be transmitted from one generation to the next (Hakuta & D'Andrea, 1992). Thus, it is the sociolinguistic perspective that tells us how language is lost in the community.

1.2 Language Contact

By language contact is meant the use of more than one language in the same place at the same time. Language contact in this substantive sense does not require bilingualism or multilingualism, but some communication between speakers of different languages is necessary. According to Apple and Mysken (1987), however, language contact inevitably leads to bilingualism. One way in which language contact occurs is via migration.

Migration from one place to another has a far reaching on the language people speak because when it occurs two languages come into contact; this could lead to a number of linguistic implications such as language borrowing, language shift, language endangerment, and sometimes language death, decay, or extinction and even creation of a new language (Ayeomoni, 2011) just like pidgins and creoles. Equally, the immigration of thousands of Algerians to France has not been void of some linguistic consequences.

1.3 Language Shift

Language shift; sometimes referred to as language transfer, language replacement or assimilation; happens in a situation of language contact. It is

not a new phenomenon. Rather, it is rooted in history. Whenever two cultures/populations with different languages come in intense contact, shift is a possibility.

By definition, language shift is the progressive process whereby a speech community of a language shifts to speaking another language. It takes place when the younger members of a minority speech community no longer speak the language of their parents, but speak a dominant language instead, that is the language of the majority. The language of the parents is therefore not passed on to the next generation.

Kamwangamalu (2003) defines language shift as a gradual process where one speech community adopts another language and gives up its own language. "A community which was once monolingual becomes bilingual as a result of contact in the new language until their own language is given up altogether." It is to be noted that dialect shift is a case of language shift, e.g. the Shawi dialect is dispensed with by the new generation in East Algeria.

Indeed, language shift is always preceded by multilingualism: you can't shift to a new language unless you learn to speak it. However, societal multilingualism does not always lead immediately to language shift: it can be a stable condition.

As for its speed and scope, the shift can be gradual or rapid; it can happen at the level of a speaker, a group of speakers, and/or a speech community.

It is worth noting that language shift happens in a speech community but it can of course be studied psycholinguistically at the level of the individual speaker, but for sociolinguistic studies it only becomes interesting once the shift happens community-wide. We can ask two kinds of about language shift:

- i. What effects does language shift have on the structures of the languages involved?
- ii. What information (mainly social, but also linguistic and cultural) is needed in order to predict language shift? i.e. what causes language shift?

1.3.1 Possible Language Shift Scenarios

Any language shift always requires a language which experiences shift within a majority community whose language is different from the first one. Such a situation has a variety of facets; the following are the most common.

a. Language Shift Scenario 1: indigenous language(s) spoken by a small minority within a settler community can be replaced by the language of the new settlers, as the case of native Americans in USA and Canada, aborigines in Australia, or the Maori in New Zealand.

b. Language Shift Scenario 2: immigrant language(s) spoken by a minority within a settler community. For example, South Africa with the Indian community transferred there between 1860- 1911.

c. Language Shift Scenario 3: indigenous or immigrant language(s) spoken by a minority within a nonsettler community. Immigrant Algerians in France are a case in point.

d. Language Shift Scenario 4: regional languages might be abandoned in favor to the national language. For instance, today's generation of Shawi tend to use more Arabic than Shawi in Algeria; it is the same case for Africans and English in South Africa.

e. Language Shift Scenario 5: language death is the extreme case: the complete disappearance of a language. Most commonly it is a gradual process spanning several generations. It may occur as a result of genocide, the sudden elimination of an entire population. For example, over 350 Australian Aboriginal languages were spoken when Captain Cook landed in 1770. Two thousand years later, only 90 survived as viable languages and only 10% of Aboriginal people still speak native languages (Gibson & Vialle, (2007).

1.3.2 Language Maintenance/ Language Preservation

Language maintenance is closely linked to the term “language shift”. It occurs when a language continues to be used across all generations despite the presence of other languages also being used by a community – the kind of stable diglossia defined by Fishman (1972).

1.3.4 Models of Language Maintenance/Shift

Several models have been supplied by various scholars to account for language shift and maintenance. Some of the proposed measures, however, are too specific or rigid, thus, difficult to apply to other populations (Clyne, 2003). On the basis of this, only three selected models will be reviewed for they seem to be more general.

1.3.4.1 Kloss's (1966) Model

Kloss (1966) provides a model which identifies factors promoting language maintenance or shift. His model comprises the following elements:

- a. the language utilized in places of worship and educational institutions;
- b. the educational level of the immigrant;
- c. the numerical strength;
- d. the linguistic and cultural distance from the dominant group; and
- e. the attitude of the majority towards the language of the minority or to the minority group in its entirety.

1.3.4.2 Conklin and Lourie's (1983) Model

The model set forth by Conklin and Lourie's (1983) to explain and predict language shift incorporates demographic and social, cultural, and linguistic aspects.

To begin with, the demographic and social factors include:

- concentration of the minority population, which if high, leads to maintenance;
- geographical proximity and ease of travel to homeland which promote language maintenance if they are high; and
- permanence of residence, which can be a language maintenance factor if it is low and vice versa.

Next, the cultural factors include:

- prevalence of community language institutions; if prevalent, language maintenance is promoted, for example schools, mosques, churches, etc;
- frequency of religious ceremonies requiring the command of the community language; for instance, prayers and reciting the Quran have to be in Arabic for Arabic speaking communities; and

- the emotional attachment to the community language as a defining characteristic of ethnicity or identity.

Finally, the linguistic factors are relevant to the script of the community language. If it is different from the one used by the language of the host country, this promotes language shift. Arabic, for instance, does not use Latin script by which the French language is written. Still, this can promote maintenance since it reflects linguistic distance from the dominant language (c.f. 1.3.4.1). Meanwhile, having a distinct script does not always promote language shift in that “some of the best- maintained languages in Australia do indeed use a script other than Latin (Macedonian, Arabic, Greek)” (Clyne, 2003: 54).

1.3.4.3 Fishman’s (1991) model

Fishman (1991) offers a model of ‘reversing language shift’, which diagnoses the difficulties encountered in maintaining minority languages *and suggests means to improve the situation*. In this model Fishman asserts the importance of community language literacy in home and the necessity of supplying mass media in the community language.

1.3.4.4 Towards a New Model of Language Shift: factors for predicting or promoting language shift

In order not to see the previous taxonomic factor in isolation but in interaction I propose the following comprehensive model which supplies aspects influencing language shift and maintenance. I consider that this taxonomy is much more pertinent to the case of Algerian immigrants in France; therefore, they will provide the framework for the current study.

a. Language skills: the availability of the written mode increases the chances for a language to survive. By contrast, a language that works only for speaking, not writing, is threatened for death.

b. Domains: by the domains of language use in a community is meant which language is used and where? (Fishman, 1965) Is it used at home, with friends, at work, in the street, at the mosque, at the market, at school, and so on? Conklin and Lourie (1983), for instance, contend that the mosque, as a domain and a cultural factor, can be considered as a weekend school where Arab children and adults spend about five hours learning the Quran and socializing. Prayers and reciting the Quran require command of the community language which is Arabic in our case. It seems that religious

meeting have little role in comparison with home. Indeed, the language spoken by the immigrant at home is the most essential factor at predicting shift or maintenance since it is at home that children-the next generations-learn and stick to their native language.

c. Language attitudes: both personal and group attitudes play a role at leading a language towards its prosperity or decay (Kloss, 1966). A group in a society usually distinguishes itself by its language and its cultural norms and values which are transmitted through language. The identity and pride in a culture of a group are expressed through its language. The attitude towards one's language represents the emotional and psychological attachment to the first language for self-identity. The answer to the question: do your community members encourage you to use your native language? tells us whether or not this community members have positive or negative attitudes towards their language.

d. Age: according to Veltman (1989), the age of the immigrant at time of arrival to the host country may influence their use and attitude towards L1 or L2.

e. Entertainment: when the community members benefit from various means of entertainment in their mother tongue, their language is more likely to be preserved and vice versa. In other terms, the availability of TV channels, radio programs, newspapers, internet sites and the like in a given language contribute to its maintenance.

f. Code-switching: when immigrants or minority groups code-switch in some contexts, language shift appears to be inevitable.

g. The Educational Level of the Immigrant: Kloss (1966) suggests that a higher educational level on the part of the immigrant may promote shift since it brings immigrants closer to the dominant group's culture, and vice versa. This state of affairs, I think, bears another possibility. The high educational level of the immigrant could be a maintenance factor as it makes them more aware of the importance of their native language, culture and identity. This awareness turns them to be keen on pushing their children to keep their first language.

h. Social factors: Myers-Scotton (2006: 90) considers that a variety of social factors influence the maintenance of a given language. Those social dynamics include:

- demographic factors: The demographic factors refer to the numerical strength. More explicitly, the high concentration of immigrants in one place leads to maintenance (Conklin & Lourie, 1983) because this enables them to have their schools, gatherings, cultural activities, and even religious ceremonies. Thus, large groups can afford more maintenance possibilities (Kloss, 1966).
 - occupational factors: working with fellow speakers of the first language can promote language maintenance Myers-Scotton (2006: 90).
 - educational factors: language shift is also less predictable if the first language is officially supplied as a medium of instruction Myers-Scotton (2006).
 - permanence of residence: permanence of residence is a hint to the length of the period spent in the host country (Veltman, 1989), which can be a language maintenance factor if it is short and vice versa.
 - geographical proximity: The proximity and ease of travel to homeland promote language maintenance.
- i. The linguistic factors:* if a community language is not the standard written variety, this definitely undermines language maintenance (Conklin & Lourie, 1983).

Part two: Methodology

The methodology section describes the type of this research, its significance, the research question and research tool. A discussion about the gathered data will follow and the whole talk will be wrapped up by some recommendations and suggestions for other routes for research on the light of the shortcomings of this study.

Study Design

I have opted for an exploratory descriptive qualitative perspective in order to approach the issue of maintaining or shifting from Arabic once an Algerian settles in France.

The Research Question

The aim of the present study is to answer the following research question:

In the case of Algerian immigrants in France, does Arabic undergo a language shift or maintenance? Why?

Significance of the Study

The current investigation reveals the gradual attrition Arabic faces when it is a minority language. Furthermore, it may well raise the awareness of our immigrants to preserve their mother tongue.

Data Collection Tool and Procedure

This is a qualitative research based on data collected from Algerian immigrants in France via a self-completion questionnaire (c.f. appendix) which was sent by e.mail to be completed and returned.

The Participants

A sample of 20 Algerian immigrants that I got in touch with via facebook participated in the study. All of them belong to the first, second or third generations. By a first-generation immigrant, I mean the immigrant himself. A second-generation immigrant refers to the children of the first-generation and the third-generation immigrants are the grandchildren.

The Theoretical Framework for the Study

The construction of the questionnaire was grounded on the new model of language shift supplied in the review of the literature (c.f.1.3.4.4).

The Pilot Study

Piloting the questionnaire was a prelude to make sure that the wording and structure are clear and adequate in terms of the participants' command of French or Arabic. I found that all the informants master French; as a result, the questionnaire was given in this language. The pilot study was, besides, necessary, to make sure that the items would yield the kind of information needed to meet the objectives of this study. After having piloted my questionnaire, I made adjustments in the light of the respondents' comments and the preliminary analysis.

Data Analysis

The obtained data were analysed and are displayed in the table below. The numbers in the tables are given in percentages.

The questionnaire items		1 st generation	2 nd generation	3 rd generation		
Arabic	Proficiency in Arabic	Good	100	100	33	
		weak	00	00	33	
		No Arabic	00	00	34	
	Use of Arabic in France		100	100	33	
	Language Skills	Speaking	100	100	33	
		Listening	100	100	33	
		Reading	22	00	00	
		Writing	00	00	00	
	Domains of use	home	44	100	33	
		friends	67	20	00	
		street	22	20	00	
		mosque	11	20	00	
		chopping	11	00	00	
		work	00	00	33	
	School/ University		00	00	00	
	Attitudes Towards Arabic	Personal attitudes	Symbol of culture and identity	66	80	33(for culture only)
			Means of communication	30	00	00
			important	20	00	00
			beautiful	22	20	00
			religious	11	00	00
prestigious			11	20	00	
Symbol of pride			11	20	00	
Symbol of power			11	20	00	
easy			00	20	00	
Means for economic gains			00	00	00	
Necessary for our children to learn Arabic		100	80	100		
We choose Arabic to be the mother tongue for our children	44	80	16			
The group's attitudes	The Arabs encourage us to talk in Arabic	78	80	33		
The	Parents talk with us in	77	80	33		

immigrant	Arabic				
	Educational level	high	22	20	33
		medium	00	00	67
	weak	78	80	00	
	Live in a large Arab community	56	80	33	
	Work with Arabs	56	20	33	
	Entertainment means in Arabic	11	40	16	
	Code-switching	100	100	00	

Table representing the results of the questionnaire on the maintenance of Arabic among the Algerian immigrants in France .

General Discussion

The obtained results suggest that 100% in the first and second generations are proficient in Arabic but only 33% of the third generation master it, a fact implying that Arabic commences to cede its place in favor of the second language starting from the third generation.

The first-generation respondents reported that they learnt French in Algeria. In other terms, they had no need to acquire it in France. This can be linked to colonization and to the fact that French is already Algeria's second language which may lead to quick shift to this language once the Algerians leave their motherland.

Regarding language skills, the Arabic oral skills are maintained among the members of the first and second generations but such a trend discontinues in the third generation. As for reading in Arabic, it is abandoned completely after being slightly sustained in the first generation. We conclude, then, that there is language loss more in reading and writing than in speaking and listening. We fully know that in order to maintain a language, literacy skills need be perpetuated; nevertheless, the participants do not bother to learn writing and reading. Such a negative attitude is definitely detrimental to the language maintenance efforts and leads to quick erosion of language ability. Such a reality could also be attributed to the linguistic factors in that Standard Arabic is different from the spoken dialect and this latter lacks the written mode.

In truth, investigating language shift and maintenance is often done through the identification of domains and situations in which a language is no longer utilised or is gradually making way for another language. Our data show that the use of Arabic in various domains is maintained by the first and second generations but decreases sharply in the third generation. So, it is at the level of the third generation that language decay starts to be manifested.

Generally speaking, few of the first and second generation immigrants reported some positive attitudes towards Arabic as a language embodying their culture and identity and bestowed with importance and beauty. Unfortunately, these attitudes are, approximately, entirely reversed when it comes to the third generation. The only positive attitude recorded in most responses is the one relevant to the importance of teaching Arabic to one's children which remains a mere aspiration since most chose French to be their children's mother tongue. Such a contradictory set of views towards the mother tongue indicates an ongoing conflict between their linguistic identity and the utility of the language as an enabling factor to settle in a new environment. This justifies the evidence we got that patterns of language use often contradict language attitudes. The positive regard for French among the third generation (i.e. Arabic is a must for their children) is not matched by proficiency in use nor by taking concrete steps to teach their children the language of their motherland.

Again, it is in the third generation that language shift becomes visible: the group positive attitudes towards Arabic start to turn down within this category.

Perhaps one of the reasons for discarding Arabic is its disuse on the part of the parents especially those of the third generation. Surprisingly, the higher the educational level of the parents is, the more they shift to French and neglect their origins. This is because their education paves the way to complete successful integration in the host country.

Still another cause for abandonment of Arabic by the third generation is that only 33% of them live and work among Arab people. That is to say, they have less opportunities to communicate in their Arabic when compared with the first and second generation who (the majority of them) reported that they worked and/or lived within a large Arab community and that they used Arabic in at home, with friends, in streets and mosques with varying degrees which means they can find with whom to practice the language. It is, besides, interesting to find that they encourage each other to use the language of their origins. What is really striking about the results is that Arabic is never resorted to at the educational institutions where French is the official means of instruction.

Our immigrants seem to prefer more French as the language of their means of entertainment. Obviously, this is one of the factors challenging maintenance.

As mentioned in the literature, code-switching is a measure of language shift. This technique is resorted to by the first and second generation groups but is completely absent among the third generation. One may, conclude, then, that this latter has totally shifted into French and no single Arabic word appears in their speech.

Last but not least, although the participants were required to supply information about their age, gender and the period spent in the host country, these data were not very telling during the analysis, hence, they are ignored.

On the whole, the questionnaire results demonstrate a gradual shift from Arabic to French across the three generations. The shift is very slow from the first to the second generations but takes a relatively rapid pace among the third generation members who mostly regard themselves as French and forget about their origins as they believe in the association of their identity with their place of birth. The shift is principally noticed via the information obtained from the rubrics of: skills, domains, attitudes, language spoken by parents, entertainment and code-switching. Two chief reasons leading to shift are uncovered: (1) the language spoken at home and (2) power (i.e. the official language spoken at school, job, communication, linguistic hegemony, and necessity of integration). There might be other explanations for this language shift that are not tackled in this study for space constraints as the attitude of the majority group, oppression, mass media, and so forth. I deem most of the factors dealt with here to be individual and few are social. Yet, the individual factors may have underlying (social, economic or political) incentives.

At any rate, these results are consistent with other studies of the kind because immigrants consciously place more importance on the language of the host country to enable them to integrate and settle.

Recommendations

If the Algerian community feels the need for language maintenance for reasons of cultural and ethnic identity, it needs to come together and take explicit steps rather urgently to prevent further loss of their first language and strive to maintain it. One way to do so is by having schools under their control where they teach their own programs to help their children learn their ancestors' language of their homeland.

Limitations of the study

Getting in touch with immigrants in France via facebook was difficult and time consuming. The response rate was very low: out of 60 emails, I received only 20 responses. Some questions were left unanswered. Since the sample is a small one and triangulation is absent, this study is just illuminating and its findings are not meant to be generalisable.

Suggestions for Future Research

Researchers interested in similar topics may take the following avenues for further investigations in the area of language shift or maintenance: language shift among indigenous groups, e.g. Chawi; language maintenance and the role of attitudes, e.g. Kabyle; and the relationship between religious affiliation and language shift.

Conclusion

Communities have lived in a situation of language contact since the dawn of history. This situation may cause language shift and people become monolinguals after being bilinguals (sociologically speaking). Among the major reasons of shift are attitudes as they represent internal thoughts, feelings and tendencies in behavior across a variety of contexts.

As regards Algerians in France, they generally share positive attitudes towards their native language. Yet, their desire to maintain their own language is not possible to satisfy when confronting the reality of the need to integrate.

Overall, the linguistic situation among Algerian immigrants in France is as follows. Arabic is preferred for emotional and symbolic reasons (maintaining the group's identity) and French is chosen for practical reasons (educational, economic and social). This justifies the shift to French we notice namely among the third generation members. It is advisable to benefit from the immigrants' positive attitudes to push them to strive for their language maintenance in that it vehicles their own culture, identity, traditions, customs, memories, and unique patterns of thinking.

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Appendix**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Cette enquête va nous permettre d'étudier et de comprendre l'état de la langue Arabe en France et les attitudes des immigrés (toute générations) envers le maintien de la langue de leurs ancêtres.

Merci d'y participer. Vous voudrez bien cocher les cases correspondantes à chacune de vos réponses.

A- Renseignements personnels

- 1- Age : _____ Sexe : M F
- 2- Profession : _____
- 3- Depuis combien de temps vous êtes en France (à l'étranger)

- 4- Etes-vous de : La première génération des émigrés
La deuxième génération des émigrés
La troisième génération des émigrés

B- Compétences linguistiques

- 5- En Arabe êtes-vous ? Bon Moyen Faible
- 6- a- Connaissez-vous le français ? Oui Non
b- Si oui est-ce que votre connaissance est : Bonne Moyenne
Faible
c- Comment avez-vous appris le français ?

- 7- a- Vos parents vous adressent en quelle langue ?

- b- Le niveau d'éducation de vos parents : _____

C- L'utilisation de la langue arabe en France

- 8- a- Utilisez-vous l'arabe en France ? Oui Non
b- Si oui, dans quel contexte vous l'utilisez :
A la maison A l'église/mosquée A l'école Avec des amis
 Au travail

D- Attitude envers la langue arabe

- 9- Si vous avez des enfants, pensez-vous qu'il est nécessaire qu'ils apprennent la langue arabe ? Oui Non
Pourquoi ? _____

- 10- Pensez-vous que la langue arabe est :
Symbole d'identité et de culture ? Symbole de puissance ?

Symbole de prestige ? Symbole de religion ?
Une langue belle ? Une langue facile ?
Un moyen pour des gains économiques ? Juste un moyen de
communication ?
11- Etes-vous encouragé par votre entourage à utiliser l'arabe ?
Oui Non

E- Attitude envers le français

- 12- Si vous avez des enfants, pensez-vous qu'il est nécessaire qu'ils
apprennent la langue française ? Oui Non
Pourquoi ? _____

F- Désir et possibilité de transmettre la langue maternelle

- 13- Vos ressources de divertissements tels que, les vidéos, la musique,
les bouquins..., Sont en quelle langue ?

- 14- a – Dans le quartier où vous habitez, les arabes sont-ils nombreux ?
Oui Non
b – Dans votre lieu de travail, les arabes sont-ils nombreux ?
Oui Non
- 15- Quelle est la langue que vous choisissez devenir la langue
maternelle pour vos enfants ?
La langue de ses parents La langue de son pays de
naissance
- 16- L'alternance codique arabe/français, est-elle souvent pratiquée à
votre niveau?
Oui Non

ⁱ In this paper, the word Arabic refers to both Modern Standard Arabic and dialectal Arabic for when investigating language shift among immigrants, we ask questions relevant to the four skills. Because of diglossia in the Arab world, We are fully aware that when probing oral skills, the immigrant's answers would be relevant to the dialect whereas when exploring literacy skills, it becomes a matter of Modern Standard Arabic.