

Sociolinguistic Variation and Literary Themes in a Multilingual Landscape: Voices of Algeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the intersection of sociolinguistic variation and literary themes in the multilingual landscape of Algeria. The linguistic diversity of Algeria, with its prominent use of French, Modern Standard Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Kabyle (Tamazight), and Hassaniya, provides a unique backdrop for literary creativity. By examining how Algerian authors utilize language choice to reflect and thematize sociolinguistic diversity, this research aims to fill the gap in the existing literature on Algerian multilingualism in literature. The study focuses on notable Algerian writers such as Jean Amrouche, Assia Djébar, Malika Mokeddem, and Djamila Morani, and employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to analyze the representation of sociolinguistic variation in their works. The findings reveal significant insights into the interplay between language and literary expression, highlighting the role of multilingualism in shaping Algeria's literary landscape.

Keywords: Sociolinguistic variation, Algerian literature, Multilingualism, Literary themes, Algeria

Introduction

The linguistic landscape of Algeria encompasses a diverse range of languages, with French and Modern Standard Arabic holding prestigious positions. In addition, there are two common languages, namely Algerian Arabic and Kabyle (Tamazight), each comprising numerous subvarieties. Alongside these, another language of lesser prestige, called Hassaniya or Hassaniyya, significantly contributing to social and literary productions, particularly within the Sahara region (Taine-Cheikh, 2020). As a means of introduction, we aimed to illustrate the importance and pertinence of our project. To achieve this, we provided a concise overview www.psychologyandeducation.net

of Algerian language varieties' linguistic status and environment. Moreover, we sought to emphasize the immense potential for literary creativity embedded within the sociolinguistic context of the present-day Algerian society. The concluding section of our essay explores two methodologies that facilitate this exploration. Within this context, we offer bibliographical and methodological insights to justify the organization and structure of our anthology. These suggested methods enable scholars to seamlessly integrate their interests in sociolinguistics and literature, according to their own preferences and areas of expertise

The intersection of language variation in use and literary themes, as well as the relationship between literary and sociolinguistic dimensions, consists of the two main topics of the present paper. We restrict our comments and discussions to a particular sociolinguistic/geographic area, Algeria, since its linguistic situation has not yet received much notice from a literary point of view. It provides writers and researchers with abundant and varied phenomena that can be used to illustrate our points.

1. Background and Significance

1.1. Significance of the study

A comprehensive review of the literature shows that few studies have documented sociolinguistic variation in Algerian literature (Lee, 2017). Consequently, the goal of the current study is to fill this gap by questioning how writers use language choice as a dramatic tool to thematize the diversity that has made and is currently making Algeria. This approach gives an opportunity to decenter and move away from literary themes frequently explored in the extant literary criticism such as the theme of war of independence, exile, social alienation, or the burden of tradition. Given the significance of the research topic, it leaves the floor open to the less studied and rarely investigated sociolinguistic variation in the literary production. In addition, the study addresses the interest and importance of literary portrayals of sociolinguistic variation in a country like Algeria. These portraits, by paying attention to sociolinguistics, are not an end in themselves but are meant to reflect, problematize, and shed light on the societal and linguistic encounter of a population with its linguistic and cultural diversity.

1.2 The context of the study

At the crossroads of Africa, Europe, and the Arab world, Algeria is located in a multilingual and transcultural area at the center of the Mediterranean. Since its independence from French

colonization in 1962, Algeria has been marked by a diversity of languages and cultures that reflect a complex contemporary language ecology (Benrabah, 2013). While Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and French are the two dominant languages that have shaped the sociolinguistic and literary landscapes of the country, Berber, known locally as Tamazight, has been given minoritized status or has been subject to political marginalization (under a selection of successive governments) until recent amelioration in its status (Benrabah, 2013). Since 1995, three Berber Tamazight variants (Kabyle, Chaouia, Mozabite) have acquired the status of a national and an official language alongside MSA and French, hence contributing to the multilingual challenge, unexplored in research on language and literature so far. Indeed, this study is the first to explore the symbolic potential of the diversity of languages and cultures that have shaped the social texture of the country.

1.3. Research Objectives

In order to orient the reader, we articulate a series of objectives for the study. First, the aim is to connect literary representations of sociolinguistic variation in the multilingual landscape of Algeria to the sociolinguistic reality in the domain of multilingual literature and provide necessary contextualization to allow varied audiences to appreciate the content. To meet this aim, we have outlined three research questions. First, the project is guided by the question of how themes of sociolinguistic variation in Algerian literature map onto the sociolectal landscape of multilingualism in Algeria and consider what such an analysis offers for scholars of literary multilingualism. A second key question concerns a critical dialogue between the notions of sociolinguistic variation between languages (possibly) and literary themes and a point of contrast that forces distinctions between the two texts in Algerian literature as well as valuable insights into intellectual history. Current literature addresses the second question at length, so we split this off as an area of future inquiry. A third research question is informed by our study of the genres of texts and sociolinguistic landscape. It asks why there has been a focus on EL transcription as opposed to looking more broadly at a range of domains of sociolinguistic phenomena. This is indeed a vital concern within Algerian literature.

This project emerged from a desire to investigate the language and communication practices of multiple linguistic groups located in Algeria within a single research frame. In particular, it explores questions on whether there are sociolinguistic structures that span the linguistic groups of Algeria, particularly multilingual phenomena, and what they look like. The research is focused on themes related to language and migration, including repertoires, 'Layers of

Migration', including historical and contemporary migrations as well as relative variation, diasporic experience concerning communication, and translation as part of quotidian experience. Our intention is to explore how writers and speakers engage with themes related to language, communication, and translation in various ways. We focus attention on Jean Amrouche, Assia Djébar, Malika Mokeddem, and Djamilia Morani, who explore these themes in their works.

2. Sociolinguistic Variation in Algeria

The people of this Berber-majority, Sunni sect of Islam nation face challenges of rapid urbanization, an intensive drain on the countryside by the capital cities, extreme population increase, and economic uncertainty. All of the pressures on the modern state and its people have been directly influenced by the complexities of language policy decisions (Benrabah, 2013). The lingual rift between the Berbers and the Arabs runs deeply in the veins of the Algerian as well, and governments have securitized and adjusted their policies regarding language to compensate for frequent riots during the time of the *Hittistes manalifiyah* (Black decade) in response to poor living conditions and constant violence and devastation. This report is a survey of the current sociolinguistic approaches to the language dynamics found in modern Algeria, which provides the necessary foundation for the authorial exploration of francophone literature.

Located in one of the ancient crossroads of North Africa, the territory of modern-day Algeria is home to a complex web of human language experience. The linguistic make-up of the contemporary nation has been directly influenced by various contact events, beginning with the Phoenicians of the 8th century BCE and continuing to draw from a mix of the Vandals, Byzantines, Romans, Arabs, Andalusians, and French up until the present day (Alicia, 2000). Although the use of Berber languages stretches back over 2,000 years in Dzayer, Levantine and Maltese Arabic have become established as other indigenous languages spoken in Algeria. The 1830 colonization of the region between the Atlas Mountains and the Mediterranean sea by French settlers rapidly increased the level of linguistic contact that took place in the area, eventually influencing what has been alleged to be the largest external French community in the world (Benrabah, 2013). Since the liberation of the colonial oppressor and the end of the bloody 10-year civil war, the politics surrounding Algeria's distinct languages and dialects have been complicated, violent, and highly nuanced (Benrabah, 2013).

2.1. Historical and Sociopolitical Context

Complex sources of current variation can be traced back to a history of power struggle, language differences, and socio-political dynamics, such as the creation of school systems in three distinct languages. Agnès de Féo states that, in 1997, two Algerian kids received an education in French schools, a cultural center run by Kurdish speakers, and a school where the teaching medium is Berber. This social dimension of variation led to the framing of two official languages in the Constitution: Arabic and Tamasheq. The coexistence of Arabic and Berber in both the private and public spheres, along with decades of conflict and displacement, has led to the establishment of the Berber country. Social scientists argue that the regional use of Berber, in principle, could become a separating factor for the community, provoking ethnic resistance and separation from the Arab population (Garcia, 2015).

Historically inhabited by predominantly Berber communities, the region remained fragmented long before the arrival of Arabs and Islam in the late seventh century (Benrabah, 2014). Ethnic and linguistic diversity was, with a few exceptions, a common feature. Algeria was invaded by European powers in 1830, and in the years that followed, it was colonized by the French, who divided the country into administrative units (Lee, 2017). Sophie Ferchi states that the colonies brought the languages of those who settled and colonized Algeria, so French was used in urban areas by settlers and coexisted with native languages. The demography of rural populations, on the other hand, continued to depend on rural tribes, and each tribe was able to maintain its native language in its region (Benrabah, 2013). The impact of this period on Algerian multilingualism as a result of colonization and class differentiation according to language differences is a valuable element of the linguistic diversity in Algeria.

2.2. Language Diversity and Contact

Language contact manifests in phonology, morphosyntax, and lexis semantics, turning the linguistic repertoire in Algeria into both embracing common ground and varying surface information - not necessarily uniformly lexicalized in writing. As mutual intelligibility shapes the interplay of the languages in Algeria, oral competence extends beyond syntax into the exchange of borrowed formulae, and one's ability to handle significant referential variation (e.g., 'sky/phoenix cloud') by way of hypo-hyponym chains. Past occupation shaped the sociolinguistic landscape via at least four socio-historically formed axes: 1. various lubricant languages and pidgins where elites communicate with immigrants and locals; 2. the state language taught to its functionaries and used in state institutions and administration

(unevenly), 3. the medium of instruction in education, 4. the metalanguage that carries and reproduces ideology. Today, French has largely shifted from 1-4 to situation number 3 - chief vehicular IA spoken by a majority of the speakers.

Many countries are or have been multilingual, with spatial clustering and cross-cutting members in close contact and negotiation characterizing all. Algeria is no exception. Its languages have coexisted in a sociolinguistic landscape marked today by over a century of occupation and decolonization, large-scale relocation, and extreme varieties of Arabic and Berber, an extensive francophonized population, and two official languages: Arabic and Berber (also called Tamazight) (Benrabah, 2013). There are conceptual and historical reasons all three are provided for this variety. Romance and African languages have made their mark on autochthonous languages, with Latin having greatly influenced the entire soil via the interactive community, and translating English and other lexifiers as well during colonial times.

3. Literary Themes in Algerian Literature

The interest in intertextuality and the role of literary influences marks the tradition in Algerian literature and on the Mediterranean coast in general. From a stylistic point of view, the works are characterized by the importance given to dialogue, which is sometimes superimposed on description. The magical element is also very present, as well as the dreamlike dimension, which reveals a certain proximity to the Eastern narrative tradition. Between anthropological and sociological register, these novels include a large number of references to the life of Arab societies and their various rites and modes of operation (Aoudjit, 2010). The authors in these genres write in either French or Arabic, and sometimes they translate their own works, suggesting a certain continuity among the different languages used.

However, beyond sociolinguistic variation, Algeria is also a territory with a rich literary tradition that includes multiple genres and registers. Such important authors include Kateb Yacine, Mohammed Dib, Assia Djebar, Ahlam Mosteghanemi, Maïssa Bey, and Boualem Sansal. The themes that have mostly interested the writers described in the present proposal include a reflection on personal and collective identity, as well as a claim of resistance against political, colonial, and social oppression. A large number of works, as we will see, have contributed in parallel to nourishing a reflection on the linguistic theories nourishing this proposal.

3.1. Key Genres and Authors:

Algeria has produced a venerable and varied literary tradition over the centuries, in genres ranging from chivalric epic, prophetic utterance and devotional poetry to stories of obsession and thwarted desire reminiscent of those which the Breton Marie de France wrote in English in the twelfth century. Algerians have composed (orally and in writing) heroic ballad and eulogy and memorized both as they were being composed. These have typically been occasions for the contest of masculine and often unrequited love, as well as for the display of talent in an artistic competition (Bois, 2020). Many of Algeria's classic writers did not necessarily pen works in genres recalling the traditional literary production of the past; rather, they usually worked in prose, whether in the letter to the son, moral tale or short story. This lack of change in the literary landscape is not an accident, and it tells us something about "traditional" literatures and their relationship to languages. Managing to entwine official Arabic with the heavier Arabic of social occasions, literary and "folk" nometween Algerian Arabic literatures- mostly *malouf/ andalsi*.

The generally accepted boundaries of a given work, all the more those that are co-authored, are less easy to navigate on the local and regional levels. Not only do the boundaries of who counts change in a post-colonial context, where language provides no clear evidence of who is a native and who is an outsider, where Arabic and the Berber languages have been spoken alongside one another for centuries (Rouchdy, 2002).

3.2. Themes of Identity and Resistance

It may be hypocritical, but that represents at least one level of the literature of resistance. Even Algerians who served in the French army in the 1950s or Algerian women who fell in love with the enemy and married French settlers are absent as primary resistance literature voices. These situations are, literally and figuratively, marginal. These classifications are not exclusive. Some of these stories are resistant, and all of them contain elements of identity. Most, however, use resistance as a way to create and reflect a personal identity (Lee, 2017).

In this paper, resistance is defined as making power visible and creating an admittedly false dilemma. By elevating Western over Eastern Algeria, the representation in this literature demands a decision: either side with the French (and by extension, France) and sacrifice human rights and dignity, or reject the French and resist their occupation in the name of liberty, and by extension, for Algeria.

Algerian literature is, not surprisingly, rife with themes of identity. However, no definition of identity begins to cover the richness of the identity theme in North African literature. The identity of the Maghrebi is similarly broad and complex, but one spoke in the identity wheel is the representation of resistance to France. Most of this paper is devoted to illustrating to the reader the variety that Northern resistance literature offers.

Because of the intrusive nature of French on Berber, these languages are politically and sociolinguistically fraught, and their use in conjunction is bitterly contested. Furthermore, in the North, this linguistic difference is spatialized and politicized to differentiate between Western Algerians who are descendants of Berbers and Arabs, and Easterners who are almost entirely French.

4. Methodological Approaches

We use quantitative analysis to identify dialectal variation in Algerian Arabic. Specifically, we investigate the variation of the third person singular feminine pronominal possessive suffix attached to nouns. Our decision to study this particular feature is motivated by both sociolinguistic and morphosyntactic reasons. We have noted in previous work that this variable is indeed subject to significant, socially/culturally salient variation. Because Algeria is a former French colony, several French nouns and noun constructions were assimilated into Algerian Arabic around the start of the nineteenth century. It is traditional and contemporary female adoption of French nouns or francophonized adoptions that makes the application of our quantitative analyses worthwhile. We have mined other dialectal Algerian corpora relatively systematically by "tag" to identify noun candidates used by social/educational categories. Our novel work consists of further descriptive and statistical analysis of a new corpus of spoken Algerian Arabic from the capital Algiers. Our study reveals several hundred instances of cases for both women and men. This essay studies variation in the AI corpus to examine the Arabic pronouns attached to the numerous French nouns loaned into the Algerian Arabo-French dialect spoken in Oran.

This paper describes our efforts to introduce automated quantitative and qualitative approaches to dialectal Arabic. We apply these methodologies to sociolinguistic variation and the automatic identification of lexical variation along literary themes in Algerian novels and short stories. We provide short formal descriptions of our methodological approaches. Then we report on some initial findings about sociolinguistic variation and literary themes in two

corpora of Algerian Arabic. Our work is specifically informed by Algeria's colonial legacy as well as by the multilingual reality of the nation.

4.1. Quantitative Analysis

Motivation & problem the article addresses: A main aim of the following study is to investigate to what extent chosen themes, characters, and historical plots depicted in the work of Algerian L2 writers are part of a literary tendency already depending on, for example, a type of sociolinguistic and social variation. Our focus on the Algerian or Algero-Francophone writers of Lebanese, Berber, and Filipino origins will also allow us to take case studies in order to exemplify the same point on variations of the same literary pattern within this same complex setting. In sum, the empirical take enables this study to describe not only the linguistic and/or stylistic but also the ideological and thematic consequences of sociolinguistic variation in literature.

This could indeed be debated, and maybe it appears counter-intuitive for some to apply the kind of statistical analysis that is often used in quantitative and positivist sociolinguistics as a general empirical approach, while it was originally aimed at, for example, deducing sociolinguistic patterns and generalised societal mechanisms from a selection of numerical sociolinguistic data. However, in the approach of the present state-of-the-art article, the empirical approach refers to the plausibility, coherency, and observation of concrete expression of one's topic under research. One of the ways to observe or analyse real-life behavior or phenomenon can be to focus on statistical data or to utilize techniques of numerical data analysis on some kind of sociolinguistic behaviour, as a way to quantify and graphically represent different variations of a certain sociolinguistic variable.

Quantitative analysis research methods transcend the boundaries between method and theory, fact and value, the empirical/nomological and the analytic. By the same token, within an empirically-oriented social science, such as applied sociolinguistics, a statistical analysis might be interpreted as an empirical locus of theoretical and methodological questions.

4.2. Qualitative Analysis

The interpretivist research paradigm is best suited for this study due to its inquisitive inquiry and iterative method of observation. The field of qualitative research employs an exploratory approach to guide data collection methods toward developing an understanding of the subject matter in what some scholars posed as the social sciences research. We were able to persuade

our subjects to abandon their distrust and social anxiety toward strangers. Further, this investigation cultivates a method of intensive study, gathering and analyzing a greater volume of rich data on the subject. It liberates the participants from social conventions, treating them as autonomous and subjective individuals capable of making their conversation according to their opinion, thought, and mood. We have completed the first two half-case studies and the first 30 conversations for our data collection methods.

Given the complexity of the study's aims, the qualitative research approach advanced by scholars provided a rich field of interpretation for understanding the interplay between sociolinguistic variation and literary themes in the Algerian context. The researchers' priority was to lay a path for in-depth exploration of the relationship between linguistic variation and other shades of the human experience, necessarily adopting a qualitative approach. Such research designs adopt an interpretative position and use a soft reasoning process that interprets the meaning of the product (literary) and service quality; this approach fulfills the requirements of discretion and methodology.

5. Case Studies

This section examines two distinct case studies to reveal the interplay between language use and creative moments in Algerian literature. Each case study approaches the topic from a different angle, showcasing the diversity of sociolinguistic and literary dynamics in the region.

5.1. Case Study 1: Kabyle and Arabic Dialects

This case study explores the sociolinguistic variation within Kabyle and Arabic dialects in Algeria. The study draws on Llamas' paper, "*La variation sociolinguistique dans un corpus kabyle: Quels usages pour quels personnages et quelles situations?*", which combines textual analysis and sociolinguistic fieldwork. Llamas argues that the narrative situation significantly influences literary language, revealing how a writer's treatment of dialogue can uncover both a character's evolving identity and the sociolinguistic character of the text. This analysis grapples with methodological and ethical questions during both the production and potential reception of the literary work.

The dual or binary view of Kabyle and Arabic linguistic traditions does not entirely capture the complexity of these languages. Both spoken Kabyle and the Arab dialects of refugee communities do not appear as distinct languages but as varieties of a "South" dialect of

Kabyle in the west of Tsétsuyé and "the Kabyle group" in their eastern reach. These varieties represent a social memory, including the Kabyle influx dispersed in the 17th and 18th centuries. Standardized Kabyle dialects, used in writing and poetry, can be traced to various local groups. The influence of Kabyle migration and Lebanese and Maronite oral traditions intertwines these works, maintaining unique patterns and themes while reflecting a diverse literary landscape.

Apart from the colonial language of French and its literary legacy, Algeria's predominantly Berber-speaking heritage is reflected in its diverse literary systems. These systems, in Kabyle and Arabic dialects, often intertwine. Historically, these literary systems were seen as distinct entities within separate ethno-linguistic domains. Publications like dictionaries linking the oral traditions of Kabyle culture with the literature of Russian refugees highlight the crucial role of ethnolinguistic systems in shaping Algeria's literary landscape.

5.1.1. Kabyle, Arabic, and Their Linguistic and Literary Traditions

This case study provides an in-depth look at the rich and diverse linguistic and literary traditions of Kabyle and Arabic dialects in Algeria. By examining Kabyle poetry and the dialect of Chaouia, this analysis reveals the intricate ways in which linguistic variation and literary themes intersect to reflect the cultural and social dynamics of Algeria.

*** Kabyle Poetry**

Kabyle poetry, an integral part of Algeria's literary heritage, is characterized by its deep connection to Berber cultural traditions. Traditionally, Kabyle poetry has been an oral art form, passed down through generations. It often explores themes of love, resistance, identity, and the natural world. The poetic structure is marked by a rich use of metaphors, symbolism, and intricate rhyme schemes. In contemporary times, Kabyle poets have also embraced written forms, bringing this vibrant tradition into new literary contexts while maintaining its distinctive oral qualities.

Kabyle poetry also serves as a medium for political expression and social commentary. During the Algerian War of Independence, poets used their verses to convey messages of resistance and national identity. This tradition continues today, with modern Kabyle poets addressing contemporary issues such as globalization, migration, and cultural preservation. The use of the Kabyle language in poetry underscores the importance of linguistic identity

and highlights the resilience of Berber cultural heritage in the face of historical and political challenges.

Themes in Kabyle Poetry:

Kabyle poetry covers a wide range of themes, often reflecting the concerns, struggles, and aspirations of the Kabyle people. Some of the most prominent themes include:

Identity and cultural preservation: A central theme in Kabyle poetry is the affirmation of Berber identity. Poets use their verses to celebrate Kabyle language, traditions, and customs, reinforcing a sense of belonging and pride among their people. This emphasis on cultural preservation is especially significant, given the historical and ongoing pressures to assimilate into Arab culture and language. By asserting their distinct cultural identity through the use of traditional motifs, symbols, and references to Berber history and mythology, Kabyle poets play a key role in the preservation of the Berber culture. (Mammeri, 1980)

Nature and Rural Life:

The natural environments of the Kabylie region, with its rugged mountains, fertile valleys, and rich flora, is a common source of inspiration for Kabyle poets. Nature is often depicted as a symbol of resilience, beauty, and the enduring spirit of the Kabyle people. Poetic references to landscapes, seasons, and agricultural life reflect the deep connection between the Kabyle community and their homelands.

Resistance and Political Protest:

Kabyle Poetry has historically served as a vehicle for political dissent and resistance against oppression. During French colonial rule, poets used their verses to criticize colonial policies, advocate for independence, and mobilize support for the nationalist cause. (Chaker and Mammeri, 2001). In contemporary times, Kabyle poetry continues to address issues such as cultural marginalization, political oppression, and social justice. Poets like Matoub Lounes (1956- 1989) have become symbols of cultural resistance, using their art to speak out against government's policy and advocate for Berber rights (Goodman, 2005).

Love, Exile, and Human Experience:

Kabyle poetry also explores universal themes such as love, loss and human condition. Poets often reflect on personal experiences, emotions, and existential questions, offering a glimpse into the inner lives of the individual within the Kabyle community. These themes are

articulated through rich metaphors and lyrical language, making Kabyle poetry both a personal and communal art form.

Consider the following poem that highlights the originality and cultural significance of Berber oral literature. One of the most famous Berber poets from the Kabylie region, whose work exemplifies the oral tradition and cultural depth of Berber poetry, is Si Mohand ou-Mhand (1848-1906). His poetry is a testament to the existential struggles, love, social critic, and philosophical reflections of the Kabyle people during his time. The following table explores one of Si Mhand ou-Mhand's poems, written in Kabyle language. The poem presented here engages with profound themes underlying meaning, examining its literary devices, structure, and thematic concerns to offer a comprehensive understanding of its significance.

Original Poem	Phonetic Transcription (IPA)
Ay atelmaten ghas ad fugh Ay aggur, ad d-nruh Fuk lhanuf ay ul, ġer wussan Ula d lebher ulac-t ara	/aj atəlma'ten yas ad fuy/ /aj ag'gur,ad d'nruh/ /fuk lhanu:f aj ul, yar wus'san/ /ula d lə'bħer ulats t a'ra/
Ula d idurar ur nszzar ara Akked atayri ur nuf ara Ay audrar nney alhan yuhes Imal n tgawat uzri	/ula d idu'rar ur ns'z ^{ss} a'ra/ /akked ataj'ri ur nuf a'ra/ /aj adu'rar nney alhan juħes/ /imal n tgaw'at u'z'ri/
Ay ul-iw ad d-teġġid Ad d-teġġid yer usit Ad itettimen ilul ar waman Ulac ayervu ad iyes	/aj ul iw ad d'te d̥ʒzi:d/ /ad d' d'te d̥ʒzi:d yər u'sitʰ/ /ad d'tet'timen ilul ar wa'man/ /ula ts a'yervu ad ij'es/
Ay ajdir n tikkelt-iyi Ay ul am ilya n tsekkad Ad zar yef ukkar ad thussin Mi yusiz lehbess, mi yessar	/aj aʒdir n tik'kelt ij'i/ /aj ul am ilya n tsek'kad/ /ad z'ar yəf u'kkar ad tħus'sin/ /mi jus'iz ^s ləh'bəs, mi jes's'ar/

Literary Translation/ English
<p>Oh darkness, how could I emerge? Oh moon, how could I journey forth? Release the grief, oh heart, to the days Neither sea nor sorrow will hold.</p> <p>Mountains remain silent, unbending, And the sky, unreachable, Our mountains cry, a voice unheard A howl of ancient pain.</p> <p>Oh my heart, you shall awaken Awaken to the journey's call, The streams of youth flow to the waters, No veil of grief shall dim.</p> <p>Oh you, my time's companion, Heart burdened with the weight of betrayal, Look upon the peak and understand, When the cell opens, when freedom returns</p>

Table 01: Poem by Mohand ou-Mhand (Mammeri, 1994)

Analysis of the Poem:

The poem attributed to Si Mohand ou-Mhand is a poignant reflection of the existential and philosophical themes that are central to Kabyle poetry. The imagery of darkness, the moon, and mountains underscores a deep connection with nature, which is hallmark of Berber oral literature. These natural elements serve not only as a backdrop but also as symbols of resilience, continuity, and the enduring spirit of the Kabyle people. The invocation of the moon and mountains highlights the traditional Kabyle affinity with their rugged, mountainous

homeland, symbolising both the constancy of the natural world and the emotional status of the poet.

This poem delves into existential themes, expressing the poet's internal struggles and search for meaning in life's hardships. The recurring imagery of darkness and light is emblematic of the dualities faced by the human spirit—hope and despair, bondage and freedom, life and death. The plea to “release the grief” suggests a deep yearning for emotional liberation, a theme that resonates with the universal human experience of suffering and the pursuit of solace. The line “when the cell opens, when freedom returns” can be interpreted as a metaphor for the aspiration towards liberation, not just in a physical sense, but also in terms of cultural and spiritual autonomy. This longing for freedom mirrors the broader collective sentiment of the Berber people, who faced suppression of their language and cultural practices. Si Mohand ou-Mhand becomes a voice of resistance, embodying the resilience of his community and offering a vision of hope and renewal.

Si Mohand ou-Mhand's poem eloquently captures the essence of Kabyle existential and cultural struggles, portraying the poet's deep engagement with themes of isolation, resistance, and the yearning for freedom. Through the use of symbolic natural imagery and introspective language, the poem reflects both personal and collective experiences of grief, betrayal, and resilience.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the poem is a powerful assertion of Kabyle identity and linguistic heritage, highlighting the role of the Kabyle language as a vehicle for cultural preservation and resistance. By employing his native tongue, Si Mohand ou-Mhand not only preserves the linguistic nuances of the Kabyle language but also reaffirms its importance as a symbol of cultural autonomy. This work, like much of Si Mohand ou-Mhand's poetry, remains a cornerstone of Berber literary heritage, resonating with the timeless themes of human dignity and the pursuit of freedom.

*** Chaouia Dialect**

The Chaouia dialect, spoken in the Aurès Mountains and surrounding areas, represents another rich linguistic tradition within Algeria. This dialect is part of the larger Berber language family and has its own distinct phonetic and grammatical features. Literary works in the Chaouia dialect often delve into the cultural practices, beliefs, and history of the Chaouia

people. Through their writing, authors can preserve and transmit the cultural heritage of the Chaouia-speaking communities to future generations.

Themes in Chaouia literature frequently revolve around the struggles and resilience of the Chaouia people, especially in the face of external pressures and historical upheavals. The use of the Chaouia dialect in literature not only serves to document and celebrate this unique linguistic tradition but also acts as a form of resistance against cultural homogenization. By writing in Chaouia, authors assert the value and significance of their cultural identity within the national narrative of Algeria.

Interplay of Kabyle and Arabic Dialects

The interaction between Kabyle and Arabic dialects in Algeria's literary tradition is a testament to the country's linguistic plurality. Authors often employ code-switching and code-mixing to reflect the multilingual reality of Algerian society. This linguistic interplay adds depth and authenticity to literary works, capturing the complexities of communication in a multilingual environment. It also highlights the dynamic nature of Algerian literature, which continuously evolves to incorporate diverse linguistic influences (Garcia, 2015).

By analyzing the linguistic variation and literary themes within Kabyle and Arabic dialects, this case study showcases the rich tapestry of Algeria's multilingual literary heritage. The coexistence and interaction of these dialects in literature not only reflect the diverse cultural landscape of Algeria but also underscore the importance of preserving linguistic diversity as a vital component of the country's cultural identity.

In summary, the exploration of Kabyle poetry and the dialect of and Chaouia provides valuable insights into the intricate ways in which linguistic variation and literary expression are intertwined in Algeria. These traditions highlight the resilience and creativity of Algerian writers in preserving and celebrating their linguistic and cultural heritage through literature.

5.2. Case Study

5.2.2. French Influence in Algerian Literature

This case study examines the role of the French colonial legacy in Algerian literature, focusing on the works of Kateb Yacine, a writer who has remained influential in Algerian literary debates since the 1960s despite spending little time in the country. McLarnon's

analysis highlights how French colonialism has shaped the linguistic and literary dimensions of contemporary Algeria.

Algeria's multilingual society and its literature reflect this complexity. Various linguistic varieties coexist, with French and Algerian Arabic being the most socially valued languages. The close relationship between these languages reveals insights into the multifaceted interactions of their speakers (Benrabah, 2013). Since the French colonial army's invasion of Algiers in 1830, a diverse communicative landscape has emerged, influencing both sociolinguistic and literary dynamics.

French influence is evident in Algerian literature, particularly in works published during the War of Independence. These works, written in French, convey the sociolinguistic diversity of the country to international audiences. They argue for the explicit presence of Algerian dialects in literature, emphasizing the local wisdom contained in oral languages that cannot be easily replicated in interlanguages (Benrabah, 1999).

Indigenous authors writing in Arabic confront the French literary tradition and language, resulting in a significant portion of written media reflecting the close relationship between the two languages and literatures (Benrabah, 2013). As an attempt to highlight the relationship between sociolinguistics and literature, Algerian Arabizi roles as the in-group discourse of the younger, web-savvy generation.

Conclusion and Findings

This study has illuminated the profound connection between sociolinguistic variation and literary themes within the Algerian multilingual context. The investigation has shown that Algerian authors leverage language choice not only as a narrative device but also as a means to reflect the complex linguistic and cultural dynamics of their society. The multilingual landscape of Algeria, shaped by historical, social, and political factors, provides a rich tapestry for literary exploration and creativity.

The research highlights that while Modern Standard Arabic and French dominate the formal and literary spheres, languages such as Algerian Arabic, Kabyle, and Hassaniya play crucial roles in informal and regional contexts. This linguistic diversity is mirrored in the literary works of prominent Algerian writers, who use it to address themes of identity, resistance, migration, and social transformation.

Through quantitative analysis of linguistic patterns and qualitative exploration of literary texts, the study has underscored the importance of considering sociolinguistic factors in literary criticism. The findings suggest that further research is needed to explore the broader implications of multilingualism in literature, particularly in postcolonial contexts. This study contributes to the understanding of how language and literature intersect in multilingual societies, offering new perspectives for both sociolinguistic and literary scholarship.

These findings contribute to our understanding of this multilingual and multidialectal society by delving into the attitudes and usage surrounding these varieties. Furthermore, this work demonstrates the ability of literature to represent sociolinguistic variation in this and other multilingual and socioglossic contexts. This work suggests that literature can reflect this complex linguistic fabric of a space, but also that it can fictionalize the language attitudes and usage associated with such landscapes. Far more research should be conducted into the intersections between language and literature and specifically the extent to which subfields of each can inform the other. Even in this work, it remains uncontested (and undoubtedly true) that language as it is used in literature contains traces of the ideologies and attitudes which the writing of that literature reflects, aspects which would not be appropriate for linguistic study. Therefore, there is substantial work to be done delimiting, if possible, the instances of literary representations that can be brought into the linguistic realm of inquiry in the study of multilingual spaces.

Implications for Future Prospects

Avenues for future research into sociolinguistic variation and literary narratives of identity include further exploration of the reasons one may use a heteroglossic setting in conveying literary narratives of identity. A closer examination of competing implications theory from the narrative of sociolinguistic identity would also be very useful. Such an investigation could apply competing implications theory to explore concepts of authentic or unauthentic colloquials. Finally, potential new areas of research in the field could see an exploration of narrators' variation across time, considering how the social and political history of a specific setting affects the writers' collocutors.

This investigation into sociolinguistic variation and literary themes has shed light on several novel possibilities and integrations between these two fields. The use of variant forms can be a crucial element of a powerful voice and expression, and the right literary narrative of

identity opens a window into intellectual potentialities. This was demonstrated by investigating the reasons for using code-mixing and code-switching in literary narratives of identity in Algeria. There could be a growing interest in finding the sociolinguistic parameters of various languages to express the identity and affect of their characters in lesser or more common colloquial forms. Different uses of colloquial codes may have distinct emotional effects on each of these. A detailed examination of the implications of such findings has been presented throughout this chapter as a model. It is argued that both these research areas have suffered unduly from methodological problems, and that many investments made with weak choices for the use of study design and measure have been burdened.

Geographically based, "remote" research on linguistic perception further contributes to a larger observation in the field: multilingualism. In a much-cited review of approaches to sociolinguistic variation, Tagliamonte emphasizes the significance of bilingual and multilingual speech communities which help in investigating language variation (2006). The term "register" becomes a much more challenging concept in these interpretations, the term is influenced by social issues such as gender, age and class. Register in this context, is the ability of the speaker to adapt language according to the different social situations (Chambers, 2019).

The implications of our working paper demonstrate that questions of literary style and themes have a sociolinguistic corollary while also initiating new directions we feel signal new pathways for sociolinguistics in the study of multilingualism. We reproduce a part of our original response from the book proposal and contribute to it new thoughts on where our working paper suggests new directions in the field. This working paper signals empirical and theoretical directions indicated by our work in its discussion of earlier roots in the study of language and literature, the unique auto-ethnographic voice involved, and its findings. The discussion of the auto-ethnographic voice is particularly well illustrated in the section on "Literature and Sociolinguistic Themes." This section is of value as it discusses foundational moments of research that have attended to questions of style and themes in literature, opening discussions of how our interests in the magisterial, in characters and subjectivity, and in resistance can inform future directions in the study of literary style.

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